

6.1 Retail Capacity and Impact

The HCA's Property consultants, Deloitte, have carried out a Retail Impact Assessment to assess the floorspace for various uses that could be viable in a town of Northstowe's size and location. The assessment has shown that there will be a sufficient pool of expenditure in Northstowe and the surrounding area to support the development of a town centre, that is at the top of the retail hierarchy for South Cambridgeshire.

This is clearly a broad estimation of expenditure over a significant period of time. Given the exceptional rate of change in high street retailing and the long-term nature of the Northstowe development, these figures are extremely sensitive to change.

The anticipated age profile will influence the planning of other uses, particularly of community, health and social facilities. Modelling the floorspace for these uses has been based on projected population size and likely demand.

The level of floorspace estimated by retail studies to be viable at Northstowe has been integrated into the town centre masterplan which provides sufficient flexibility to accommodate the evolving plans for social uses.

The commercial floorspace proposed provides the potential for creation of a range of job opportunities for local residents that reduces the need for travel, and meets aspirations for local jobs.

In delivery terms, an arrangement similar to that at Bar Hill would be the easiest to achieve. However, in order to create a sustainable centre with a distinct character, the delivery and spatial characteristics of an established town centre have been adopted.

The investment market will not respond to enable delivery all at once. Most retailers are only interested in locating at Northstowe when a sufficient customer base has developed to make their businesses viable. However, some retailers will be able to respond earlier, catering to latent demand in the surrounding area, providing a viable basis for locating in Northstowe.



NORTHSTOWE TOWN CENTRE USES

Use	Rationale
Town Square	The town square will be at the heart of the Northstowe experience. The high quality of the public realm, surrounded by active buildings will create an attractive civic space which can be utilised for events and as a focus for the activity in the evenings.
Residential	The integration of residential accommodation will activate the town centre day and night, and provide housing options for a range of lifestyles. Higher density accommodation will be provided in flatted and townhouse formats, creating building height which will frame public spaces and create a more urban character in the town centre.
A1 Convenience Retail	A complementary mix of businesses offering food, drink and shopping opportunities will offer an exciting variety of attractions which will differentiate Northstowe town centre from nearby trading centres. The mix of activities together with the anticipated employment space and leisure facilities in the centre will create a sociable place to do business and an attractive place to invest.
A1 Comparison Retail	
A2 Financial and Professional Services	
A3, A4, A5 Food & Drink	
B1, A2 Office	Employment space will be intertwined with other uses in the town centre rather than zoning each use separately to create vibrancy. Businesses will cross-fertilise and enable Northstowe to become a sustainable economic centre, contributing to the economic growth of the sub-region. Cleantech, knowledge-based and creative industries are central to the Northstowe Economic Development Strategy. These industries will be encouraged to locate at Northstowe in order to build a critical mass of entrepreneurial activity.
B1 Light Industrial, Research and Development	
D1 Youth Facility	Across Northstowe, there will be facilities provided that help create an attractive environment for all ages. The town centre will have a particularly strong attraction as there are a number of opportunities for younger people to participate in sports, education and community activities.
D1 Place of worship / Day care and other civic uses	Civic uses, day care and places of worship will be carefully integrated into the development according to the demands and needs of residents.
D2 Leisure	Features to encourage leisure/play and health are integrated throughout Phase 2 through pedestrian and cycle routes, greenways and the waterpark. Leisure and health facilities will add to this, offering ways to enjoy free time and have active lifestyles.
D2 Health, Community and Fitness Centre	

6.2 Anchors

Anchors are the uses which act as magnets for visitors. Those visitors can then be attracted to a range of uses throughout the town centre. Northstowe will go beyond the usual anchors, typically large retail stores.

The secondary school will be the first element delivered within the wider town centre area and will provide a number of community facilities on an interim basis until there is sufficient demand for separate permanent facilities this will provide the initial attraction for the town centre area.

Our capacity studies also indicate that there will be a need for food retailer floorspace early in the development of the town centre to serve the new population.

Following these early uses, possible anchors could include;

- Principle retail units
- Landmark office buildings / Business district
- Indoor / Outdoor Marketplace & Event space
- Additional educational facilities
- Health facilities
- Older persons housing

The town square should be designed to encourage visitors to dwell in the town centre and offer connections to the landscaped areas and routes which can be explored further. Potential early anchors for the town square include;

- Health facilities
- Library
- Flexible workspace
- Food and beverage outlets

It is the cross-fertilisation and intensity created by the proximity of these diverse uses would provide an active and attractive business environment.



6.3 Town Centre Floorspace to serve future phases

There are approximately 5,000 dwelling completions programmed at Northstowe after Phase 2. It is therefore necessary to have regard to any future floorspace requirements in the town centre that may arise from this additional population.

The likely scale of housing completions after Phase 2 means that there should be flexibility within the town centre to accommodate further expansion in the future. As the town centre and the population of Northstowe develop, the temporary soft-uses around the edges of the town centre which have not been developed can be used flexibly to support the most appropriate use.

There will be opportunity to reassess the success of the town centre and adjust its implementation, if necessary, throughout the course of the Phase 2 development. The Economic Development Strategy proposes that an Economic Leadership Group is formed specifically to review issues such as this. The Group is formed of key local stakeholders that will allow effective decisions to be made to modify the Strategy if necessary in the future.

6.4 Town centre parking

Similar to many aspects of Northstowe, parking within the town centre requires an adaptive approach. Solutions for parking will be different in the early stages of development, where only a small population exists and there are fewer services, than in the completed town centre. In order for Northstowe town centre to thrive alongside its neighbouring trading centres, the accessibility and experiential nature of the town centre must be of a high-quality.

It is clear that given the range of uses and its location, Northstowe town centre will require parking for accessibility and to support the economic success of the centre. The use of public transport to access the town centre will be encouraged and a busway stop will be provided adjacent to the town square, with regular services into Northstowe. This should be the easiest way to access the town centre from outside Northstowe and accords with the exemplar nature of the development.

However, not all visitors will be able to use the CGB to access the town centre. For example, residents of local villages that are not served by the guided busway, visitors who want to buy bulky goods or those who have mobility problems cannot necessarily use public transport to access Northstowe.

The provision of parking for the town centre, employment and education is based on the following principles:

- Provision will not be more than the adopted maximum SCDC standard;
- There needs to be an allowance over and above maximum accumulation to enable the town centre to function at busier times. Guidelines for town centre parking recommend that demand should represent no more than 85%¹ of supply;
- Parking for education uses and employment will be provided as part of the school and employment developments and managed by those occupants;
- Parking for town centre uses will be provided in public car parks and shared across the different uses. It is possible that they would be managed by the food stores and made available for other uses, as happens in many retail centres.
- The town centre uses will be introduced over the build out of the development to 2031. There is a need for an evolving and flexible approach to parking space provision, beginning with surface car parks with the opportunity to deck them to increase provision in the medium and longer term. This also enables parking demand to be monitored so that less provision can be made in the later sub-phases of the town centre if it is not required.
- It is assumed that the overall provision will include at least 5% of spaces designated for disabled users in line with parking standards. Provision of parent and child spaces and motorcycle parking will also be required.

¹ CIHT Parking Strategies and Management 2005

The tables below outline the amount of parking provided in the Phase 2 proposals for residential and non-residential uses. Each of the parking standards proposed have been formulated based on South Cambridgeshire DC standards, set out in Appendix 1 of the *Development Control Policies DPD*.

Further details on parking for Northstowe and the town centre can be found in the *Transport Assessment*.

TOWN CENTRE RESIDENTIAL PARKING PROVISION

Town Centre Residential Parking		
Cycle parking	1080	Based on objective to encourage sustainable modes of travel whilst enabling access by those unable to use other modes of transport.
Car parking	692	

TOWN CENTRE NON-RESIDENTIAL PARKING PROVISION

Land Use	Suggested Car Parking Provision	Suggested Cycle Parking Provision	Commentary
Town Centre (retail, leisure, community and health)	1050-1270 spaces	1080	The demand for retail and leisure uses is estimated as in the range of 894 to 1081. Standards allow for substantially more parking as they are intended to address parking needs for individual developments rather than town centres. The provision has been factored so that demand is no more than 85% of supply.
Employment Uses (B1 and B2)	748 spaces	750	Standards allow for a maximum of 748 spaces. Demand is estimated as in the range of 760 to 919 spaces depending on mode share. Provision of the standards means that travel plan measures for workplaces will be required to achieve the target mode share or below to minimise any parking overspill issues into adjacent areas.

6.5 Local trading centres

The offer at Northstowe should reflect the vision of Northstowe town centre to be distinctive, dynamic and convenient. There is no certainty what type of occupiers will choose to locate in Northstowe. This in part depends on market conditions and contemporary trends in shopping and working, but primarily success will be achieved in the long-term by the ability of the town centre to adapt and remain attractive to investors and visitors throughout its development.

It can do this by encouraging concentrated mix of uses (education, employment, leisure and residential) and also a mix of providers (start-up, small/medium enterprises as well as established brands). This creates the fertile ground for Northstowe to build an attractive town centre, further driving footfall and triggering a virtuous cycle of activity.

The type of retail and leisure to develop at Northstowe will be influenced by competing centres. The centre will face particular competition from Cambridge City Centre and Bar Hill.

Cambridge

Cambridge ranks 32nd in the UK rated by annual comparison spend according to CACI's 2012 report. Cambridge also has the advantage of a thriving tourism economy driven by the prestige of the University and its historic architecture, as well as its extensive shopping and leisure offer. The connectivity of the surrounding areas to the existing offer at Cambridge City Centre, may make it more challenging to attract high street multiples into Northstowe until the town is established.

Having said this, Northstowe town centre could potentially offer an improved experience over Cambridge in a number of areas. Cambridge is renowned for its traffic congestion and high cost of parking. Also, a 2010 study by the New Economics Foundation concluded that Cambridge was the 'most cloned town centre in the UK', having little variety and dominated by national brands. Cambridge is the Sub-Regional centre and an undoubted attraction as a historic centre. However, there are opportunities to serve visitors in a distinctive way at Northstowe to enable it to complement rather than compete with Cambridge City Centre.

Bar Hill

Bar Hill is a significant out-of-town retail centre which is located immediately south of Junction 29 of the A14. This is the same junction that Northstowe will be accessed from, and so will be a significant draw for the expenditure of the new population at Northstowe. In addition, the town centre at Northstowe will be a further 3.5-4km journey from this junction than Bar Hill, potentially making the town centre less convenient to visitors from further afield. Bar Hill is anchored by a large Tesco Extra store which sells convenience and

comparison goods. There are also a number of national brands present with warehouse-style units. Bar Hill has easy road access and substantial car parking, giving it a considerable advantage in accessibility.

Northstowe town centre must provide a distinctive and attractive offer in order to capture a share of the new expenditure that might otherwise go to Bar Hill. An emphasis on variety and smaller retail supported by recognised brands is a key principle of this Strategy. The wider leisure and services offer beyond shopping is currently under-developed at Bar Hill and an area of opportunity. Northstowe could offer a town centre which mixes many functions within an attractive environment, providing a more enjoyable experience for visitors.

Waterbeach

Waterbeach has been highlighted in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan as the location for a future new town to be delivered after the commencement of Northstowe. Waterbeach has been designated the same status in the retail hierarchy as Northstowe, and so will have a sizeable quantum of retail and services to serve the new community.

A bespoke economic development strategy for Waterbeach, taking into account the different context and assets of the settlement, would be of benefit to the success of both new towns.

Northstowe's Local Centres

The Northstowe DFD calls for two local centres in addition to the town centre. One will be delivered to the north of the town centre, and is part of the proposals for Phase 1. There is also a local centre proposed to the south of the town centre which will be delivered in future phases.

The local centres are intended to be small areas of retail and/or employment which act as convenient points for people in the residential areas surrounding them to purchase everyday items, catch the bus and gather in a small landscaped area. They will have small-scale convenience stores complementing the provision within the town centre.

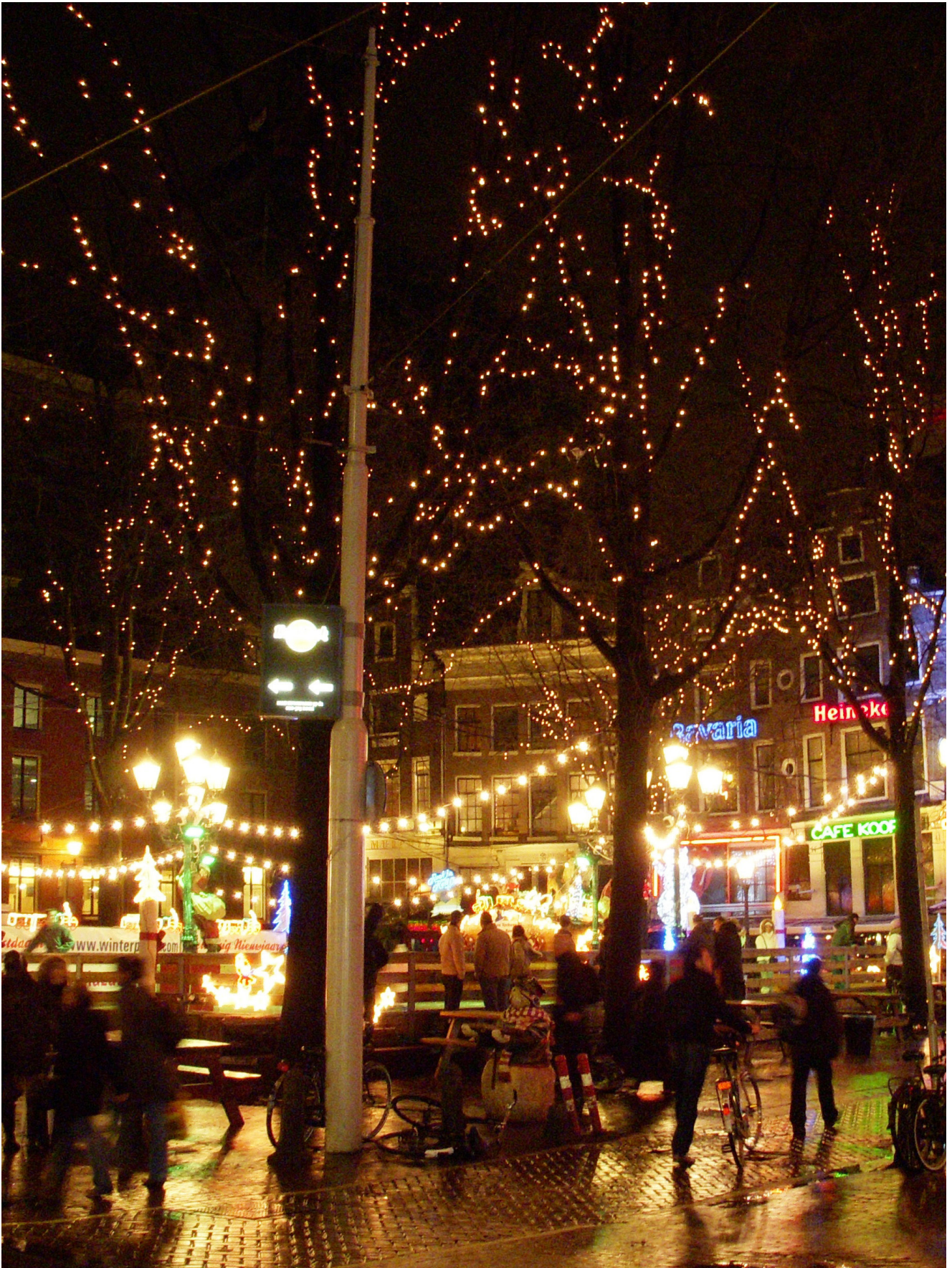
The local centres are small and mainly for convenience purchases and so they will not compete with the broader range of uses in Northstowe town centre. It would not be appropriate to include large-scale high footfall uses in the local centres as this would fragment the offer of the town centre. This could result in visitors travelling across the town to access services they would usually consolidate into one trip to the town centre, reducing the key aim of making the town centre convenient.

7. Guiding Principles

The town centre will evolve over a number of years. Throughout its development, it is almost certain that the economy of the UK and Cambridge will undergo periods of expansion and contraction along with navigating the changing trends of how people use town centres. Using a set of Guiding Principles it should be possible to adapt to this uncertainty and maintain a dynamic and high quality place.

Local Planning policy and EDS guide the type of place the town centre should aspire to be. The list of guiding principles below is a proposed starting point for the implementation of the Strategy aims:

- Highest density and building heights concentrated in the town centre.
- Residential accommodation above commercial units.
- A cross-axis of landscaped leisure route from east-to-west and a commercial high street with busway north-to-south, meeting at the town square.
- Early delivery of key elements – the town square, food store(s) etc.
- A town centre that can be viably delivered and can adapt over the course of the whole Northstowe development.
- Encourage SME traders, supported by established national brands through a range of unit sizes.
- Food stores should not be too large, with the aim of discouraging them from offering comparison goods, and encouraging the diversity of offer in the town centre.
- To explore shared surface car-parking in early stages of development. This should be reviewed and adapted to an appropriate solution as demand grows and land becomes less available.
- Flexibility in the masterplan and planning designations to accommodate changing trends in retail and residential development and economic cycles.
- Positive Meanwhile uses – using landscaping and other functional uses of undeveloped land/buildings to contribute to the town.
- Governance –The Economic Leadership Group proposed in the EDS will support the HCA in developing the governance arrangements for the town centre.



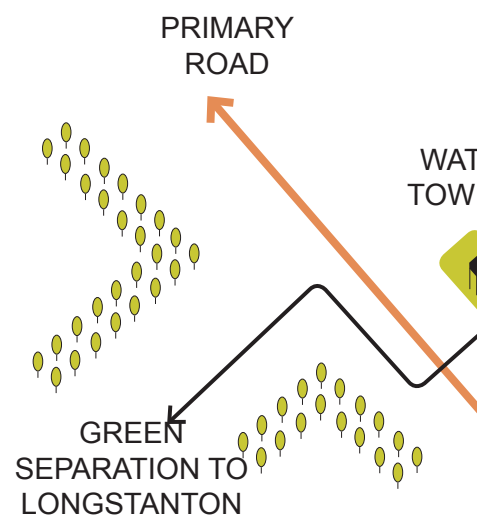
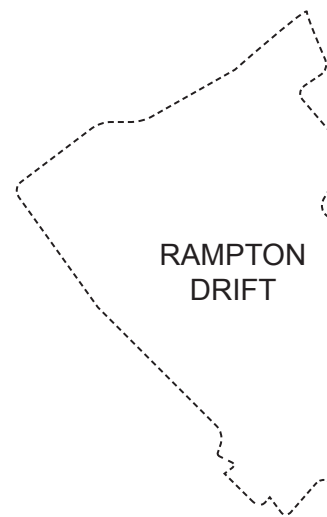
8. Implementing the Strategy

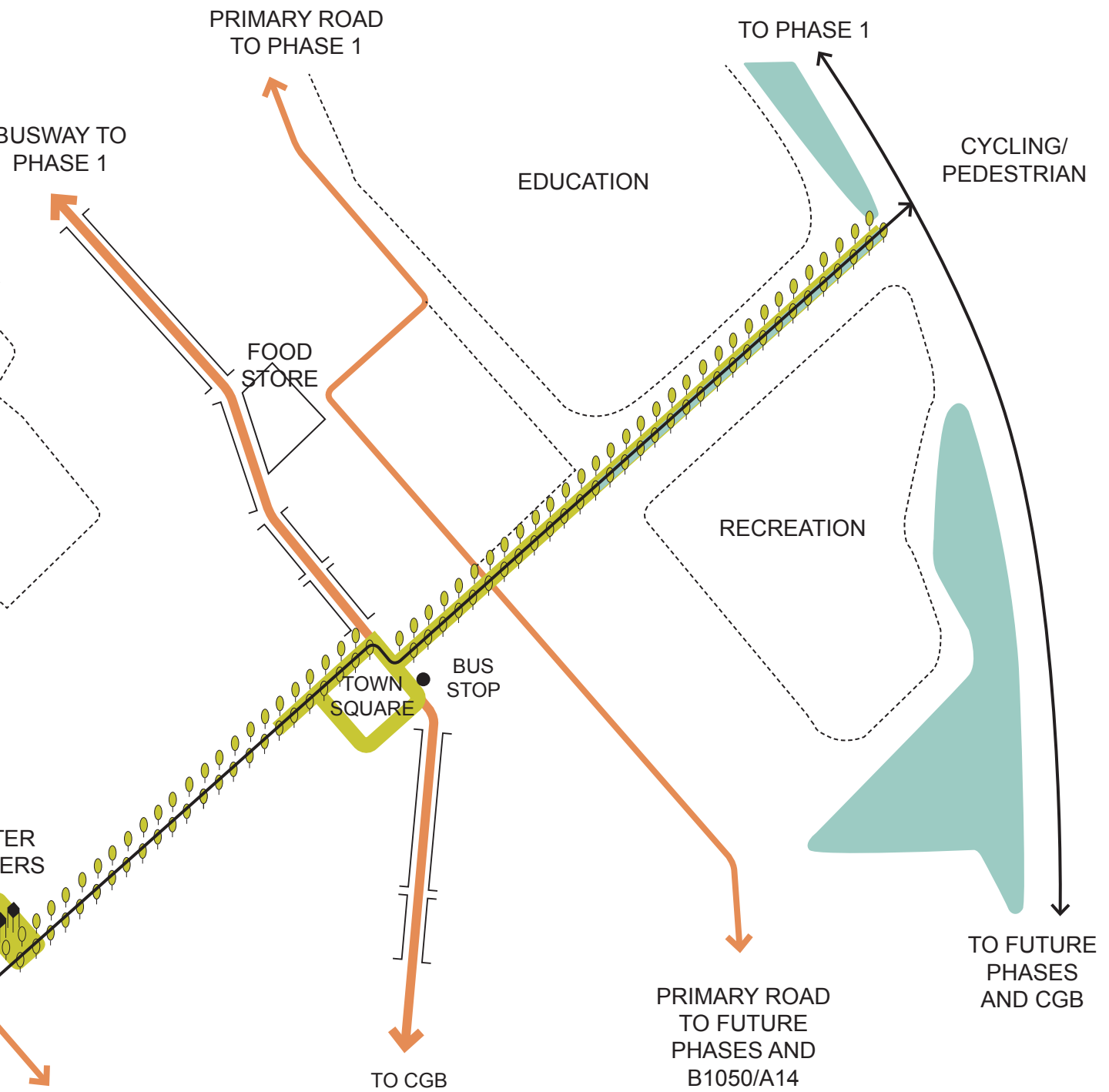
The Strategy sets guidelines for creating the town centre over a long period of time. It is impossible to forecast how the town centre may develop as this will be affected by a multitude of commercial, economic and behavioural factors.

This section discusses the broad approach which could be adopted to the incremental development of the town centre to enhance placemaking.

The town square is central to this plan. The figure to the right shows how the illustrative masterplan could create the opportunity for connectivity and inter-relationships between anchor uses and the town square.

The following pages illustrate how the town centre could be developed alongside the rest of Northstowe.





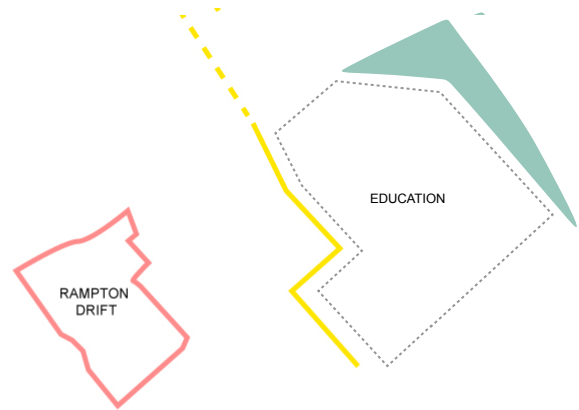
8.1 Town Centre phasing

The Design and Access Statement outlines the way in which the whole of Phase 2 is likely to be built in 'chunks' or sub-phases. Within Phase 2, the town centre will be built in its own smaller sub-phases, which will be decided by the need for services and commercial viability.

The four town centre sub-phases shown in the following pages outline how the town centre could develop over time.

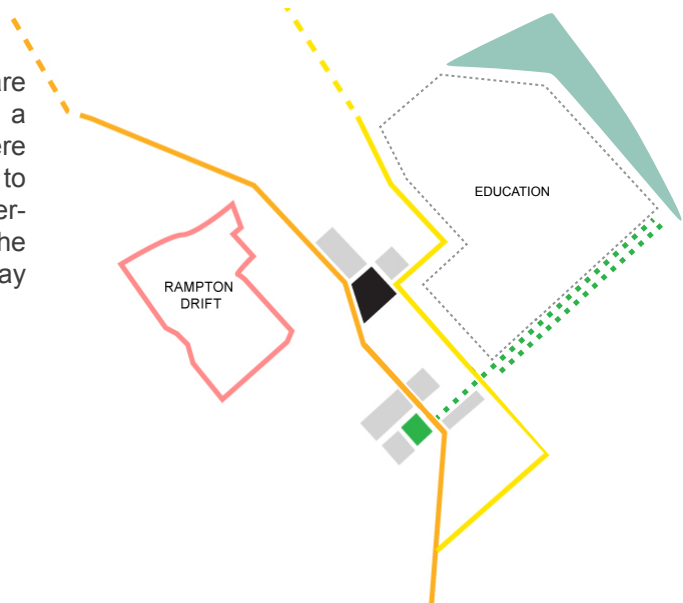
Town Centre – Sub-phase 1

The earliest sub-phase of the town centre will include the continuation of the eastern Primary road link to Phase 1, the construction of the secondary school and the first attenuation pond. Residential housing is likely to begin to the north of Rampton Drift and continue along the eastern edge of the settlement.



Town Centre – Sub-phase 2

Sub-phase 2 is likely to include the town square with some small scale uses surrounding it and a convenience food store to the northern edge. There may be the creation of a cycle and pedestrian link to the water park at this stage, along with some higher-density residential beginning to be delivered in the town centre complemented by the dedicated busway which will link to the CGB.



8.2 Measuring success

For Northstowe to be a great place, it is essential that there are many good reasons for people to live, work and visit and once they are there, it must delight so that they return again and again.

In the early stages of development of the town centre, it is difficult to achieve ten reasons for visitors to come to the town centre. The population of the town will be increasing but not have reached its full potential. It may not be a viable location support a large range of shopping, leisure and services, and might not have the visual appeal of a completed town centre.

8.3 The Power of 10

The Power of 10 is a concept from the Project for Public Spaces² that states that any great place offers at least 10 things to do or 10 reasons to be there. These could include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, doing business, and meeting people.

Ideally, some of these activities are unique to that particular place and are interesting enough to keep people coming back. Local people who will use the space most regularly are the best source of ideas for what uses will work best.

The focus should be on variety and quality. For example, 10 sculptures will not provide a sufficient reason to visit a place on their own. Alternatively, public realm which can be admired (perhaps for its planting display or interesting sculptures), allows for a market and has an area for picnics is a stronger magnet for activity.

Key stakeholders will be able to use this tool to quickly measure future plans for the town centre and square, helping them to become great places. The activities and reasons which make up the Power of 10 for Northstowe town centre will change year-on-year and develop over time. Using the Power of 10 as a simple measuring tool, stakeholders will be able to see what elements of the town centre may be lacking and need attention.

² <http://www.pps.org/>

9. Action Steps

The action steps to progress the Town Centre Strategy will occur in tandem with actions for the Economic Development Strategy so that the town centre contributes effectively to the economic activity of the whole town.

ACTION STEPS - TCS AND EDS ACTIONS

Action	Town Centre Strategy	Economic Development Strategy
0	Prepare the Phase 2 Design Code in collaboration with key stakeholders.	
1	Establish the Economic Leadership Group and Operational team	
2	Consider governance structures for the management of the town centre.	Consider the Economic development management strategy in the context of overarching Northstowe development timelines and programme.
3	Identify objectives of potential partners in the Economic Development Collaboration and discuss asset and financial implications.	Develop potential heads of terms for an Economic Development Collaboration Agreement
4	Develop the Inward Investment Strategy	
5	Identify uses that can be delivered early and incorporate them into the Inward Investment Strategy	Prepare inward investment marketing materials and promotional tools.
6	Identify possible meanwhile uses and site(s). Identify opportunities for public involvement.	Agree inward investment enquiry handling protocols.
7	Review potential for a Local Development Order, Enterprise Zone status or other investment initiatives.	
8	Develop the Enterprise development strategy	
9	Assess the feasibility of establishing an enterprise centre and assessment of the optimum location at Northstowe	
10	Develop marketing for the town centre with a focus on early and meanwhile uses.	Develop a programme of business networking events and activities associated with Northstowe.
11	Refine the Inward Investment Strategy and proposed town centre uses in light of experiences of early delivery.	Assess the viability of a Northstowe Business Growth Fund targeting early-stage businesses.
12	Commission the Sector development strategy	
13	Assess possible sites for business incubator in town centre.	Assess the feasibility of establishing of a Cleantech sector business incubator in Northstowe.
14	Assess possible opportunities to include town centre site(s) within "Living Laboratory".	Establish opportunities for a "Living Laboratory" on a dedicated site(s) in Northstowe.
15	Extend vocational opportunities to include sectors present in town centre such as entrepreneurial, Retail, Cleantech.	Establish a compact between housebuilders in Northstowe and SmartLIFE/BRE centre of excellence and provide vocational training.

10. Policy Review

National, regional and local planning policy has informed development of the Strategy at every stage. The table below summarises the relevant policy principles for each area of the Strategy.

POLICY PRINCIPLES RELATING TO NORTHSTOWE TOWN CENTRE

Theme	Policy	Strategy Response
Location	Must be accessible – close to geographical heart of the town, located on the busway.	Phase 2 parameter plans follow this spatial principle. The walking catchment area gives good accessibility within the town, nearly all of Northstowe will be within 2km of the town square.
Offer	Range of facilities of a scale to meet needs of local residents and those in the immediate catchment without undermining vitality and viability of nearby towns and villages.	Retail Impact Assessment shows no material impact on nearby centres. Services, educational and sporting facilities are central to the offer in the town centre.
	Large number and range of comparison and convenience shop to create attractive urban environment – no one shop to threaten development of the town.	Encouraging small-medium companies with a range of unit sizes and governance structure. Food stores appropriately sized in order that they do not dominate the offer in the town centre.
	Encourage efficient, competitive and innovative retail and leisure.	Strategy proposes early temporary uses, a range of unit sizes and a balanced mix of uses.
	Encourage diversity of uses – tourism, leisure and cultural activities dispersed throughout the centre to ensure balanced day time and night time economy.	Strategy reinforces the concept of leisure/ tourism uses of the greenways, water park and Cross axis. Cross axis spreads the influence of the town centre into wider area providing a variety of spaces for day and night time economic opportunities.
	Locate other uses to generate custom and activity e.g. employment and housing.	Residential and employment integrated into the town centre. Educational and sporting facilities located adjacent and well connected to the centre.
	Promotion of markets	Strategy proposes outdoor marketplace in town square. Strategy proposes integrated marketing for Northstowe and town centre activities.

Theme	Policy	Strategy Response
	To contain high quality community services and facilities, and leisure and cultural facilities appropriate to be found in a new town of 24,000 with small catchment of surrounding villages.	Facilities proposed are in accordance with the Northstowe DFD. The Strategy proposes temporary uses for the early stages of development which will provide a test of demand for formalised facilities later in the Northstowe development.
	Public art to create sense of place.	Strategy proposes a number of spatial areas where Art would be visible and have most impact. Art pieces will also build the brand and personality of Northstowe over time.
	Town park – high quality landscape, act as focus for town’s outdoor activities, accessible by footpaths and cycleways.	Eastern Sports Hub is provided to enable a mixture of formal and informal activities on threshold between town centre and open countryside. Connected to wider town through cross axis, cycle and pedestrian routes.
Design and Infra-structure	Maximise usability and accessibility within town centre.	Strategy proposes the balance of reducing unnecessary car trips into the town centre with enabling accessibility for those with mobility problems.
	High-quality design of buildings and public space – fit-for-purpose, comfortable, safe, attractive, accessible and durable – to attract people both day and night.	The design of buildings will be assessed by reference to the Phase 2 Design Code which will be produced post-submission. Town square and other public spaces are along key routes of activity.
	Higher-density, multi-storey development – mixed use development and mixed use areas.	Parameter plans for the town centre area propose mixed-use buildings up to 5 storeys in height.
	Residential or office development above ground floor retail, leisure or other facilities within centres.	Strategy accords with this aim and the capacity for this approach has been incorporated in the parameter plans.
	Buildings – fronts the street, build up to edge of curtilage, maximise active street frontage, level access from public realm, and avoid inward looking designs and blank frontages.	The Phase 2 Design Code will have specific details on the design of frontages and level access. The Strategy encourages a range of building heights, styles and sizes to bring vibrancy and diversity to building frontages and public spaces.
	Opportunities for co-location and joint provision of community services, facilities, leisure, arts and culture.	The Strategy accords with this aim. Feasibility of co-locating services and uses will be undertaken post-submission in partnership with public bodies and private enterprise, where appropriate.

	Appropriate scale of car and cycle parks for market town centre.	The Town Centre Strategy (TCS) implements the findings of the Transport Assessment, which seeks to balance provision, likely demand and seeks to encourage sustainable transport.
	Landmarks to create legible sense of place.	Landmark routes and the use of landscaping characterise the town centre area, as outlined in the TCS. Landmark buildings will further reinforce these routes and public spaces. The location and design of these buildings will feature in the Phase 2 Design Code.
Theme	Policy	Strategy Response
Delivery	Secure early start to development of town centre.	The Strategy seeks to begin the town centre early in the development. It prioritises the delivery of essential services and commercially viable uses which will grow alongside the rest of the Northstowe development.
	Town centre strategy required to support vitality and viability.	The TCS proposes guiding principles for the phased delivery of the town centre which attempt to align spatial delivery with placemaking principles and likely commercial viability.
	Publicly provided services – funded where appropriate and reasonable by the development, or taking every opportunity to draw down funds.	Publicly provided services continue to be discussed with the relevant bodies. The scale and type of provision is unable to be determined with a significant period until implementation.
	Services and facilities to be delivered by community or voluntary sector to be delivered through provision of serviced land.	As above - discussions on type, scale and governance of town centre uses will be discussed with key stakeholders.
	Early and phased delivery of community, leisure, arts, culture facilities.	The capacity for these uses has been accommodated within the parameter plans. The delivery strategy for these uses will need to be determined with the appropriate bodies before implementation.
	Appropriate management strategies for community facilities, leisure, arts and culture.	Management strategies will be produced with relevant bodies as part of the realisation of the Economic Development Strategy.
	Early delivery of landscaping.	Landscaping is crucial to creating the proposed character of the town centre and providing linkages to the wider town. Delivery of landscaping will proceed the built development of the town centre.

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