

Green infrastructure

4.36 A clearly defined network of footpaths and cycleways are integral to the green infrastructure provision throughout the site, while ensuring that these routes do not conflict with the other key objectives for this green space regarding the provision of:

- A strong landscape setting to the site
- A range of habitats for wildlife and biodiversity interest
- Informal open space with an emphasis on water conservation
- A series of greenways linking the linear eastern and western landscapes
- A range of environments for children's play including formal play provision and large areas of informal open space for natural play
- A high level of sports provision

4.37 Green separation is achieved between the development and Longstanton through provision of an area of open land between 70m wide at the northern end, adjacent the B1050 roundabout and 290m wide at the southern end to be used as strategic open space, including formal recreation and sports provision and allotments/community gardens.

4.38 A tree survey has been undertaken and submitted in support of the application and where appropriate and feasible existing trees and tree groups of high value are proposed to be retained. Where the loss of existing trees is unavoidable this will be mitigated via the provision of replacement planting across the site. The Arboricultural Implications Statement and chapter 4 of the ES (landscape and visual effects) address this issue in further detail. Details of the proposed landscape strategy for Phase 1 are also included within the Design and Access Statement. The Development Framework Document also includes details of the principles of the landscape strategy for Northstowe.

4.39 The potential for effects on the landscape resources and visual receptors was a key consideration in the design of the scheme. The majority of the hedgerows and trees of higher value will be retained on site. Boundary vegetation will be retained and strategic planting will be provided on the western boundary. The proposed development includes a buffer of public open space between the new built development and Longstanton, and proposed building heights and densities will be lower on the western edge of the development.

4.40 The key landscape areas within the proposed development are:

- Western park – designed to provide separation with Longstanton and opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation and public access to the open countryside
- Eastern water park – provides the main interface between the development and the surrounding countryside; provides the setting for Northstowe in views from the landscape to the north; provides a large and varied area of informal recreation space; is an integral component of the accessibility and permeability strategy and is an important part of the drainage and biodiversity strategy
- Green corridors – connect the western park and eastern water park, providing landscape and biodiversity value and space for informal recreation (including walking, cycling and horse riding), children's play and the main drainage channels (green corridor C1 through the centre of the site is a minimum of 30m width and C2 along the south eastern edge, a minimum of 25m width)
- Community park – centrally located and no further than 600m from any part of the neighbourhood, this area will be a focus for outdoor community activities and events and will include a neighbourhood equipped area of play (NEAP)
- Civic green – will provide the setting to the local centre and contribute to making the gateway into Northstowe an attractive and distinctive experience

4.41 Further details of the above are included within the Design and Access Statement.

4.42 Subject to seasonal restrictions, landscape planting will be introduced in strategic locations at an early stage in order that it can establish early and provide an attractive background to the development.

4.43 The proposal has been designed to link in with existing public rights of way and enhance the usage of these routes. There will inevitably be a requirement for the diversion of certain existing rights of way both during and post construction and these will be subject to formal applications at the appropriate time.

4.44 There will be a number of enhancements to countryside access as part of the proposal including links to Rampton Road / Reynolds Drove and the CGB path as well as links to Station Road. The latter will be provided via two new cycle/pedestrian routes and an existing footpath, which currently runs between Rampton Road and Station Road, across the golf course.

Design rationale

4.45 The Phase 1 master plan has to fulfil two distinct design objectives. Firstly, for the residents of Phase 1, it needs to function with a reasonable degree of self-containment with access to employment, local services, recreation and education and other amenities. At the same time, the layout has to allow for the future phased growth of Northstowe as part of a comprehensive and planned structure (see section 1 in relation to the Framework Master Plan).

4.46 The layout of the Phase 1 master plan has been designed to create a strong sense of place and respond to the site and the surrounding context, with particular regard to Longstanton to the west.

4.47 The master plan is based on a series of key design principles, which aim to ensure that a vibrant new community will flourish at Northstowe in accordance with the vision. It seeks to create an inspiring place to live that is in harmony with its surroundings and that is flexible enough to accommodate both the present and future needs of the community.

4.48 The key design principles are as follows:

1. A legible network of streets encouraging travel by bus, bike or foot

A strong sequence of public spaces along the principal streets will aid legibility. The dedicated busway through the centre of the development (with a commuter cycleway alongside) will in the future bring a rapid transport system to the heart of the new community. In the interim, direct bus only access has been provided to the existing CGB station at Longstanton P&R. Activities, building heights and densities are concentrated along the key routes.



2. A development form that is characteristic of Cambridgeshire towns

The gridded street pattern in the centre becoming more organic on the development edge reflects local settlement patterns and allows for a more responsive and sensitive edge to the countryside and the settlement of Longstanton. A deformed grid allows for strong connections with the surroundings, and easy and direct access for pedestrians and cyclists to key facilities.

3. A vibrant local centre and self contained community

The local centre will sit adjacent to the B1050, becoming a prominent and striking new gateway for Northstowe. Significantly, its positioning here will maximise the potential for new shops and business to become established as early as possible, benefiting from passing trade and visibility from the B1050. A mix of commercial, employment and community uses in this locality will profit from the accessibility and economic viability from passing trade afforded by the B1050, Longstanton P&R and the CGB. This strong mix of uses will also ensure lively public spaces, active both day and night.



4. Water as a defining feature

Water will be a defining feature of the public realm, providing a strong sense of place and enriching the quality of the streetscape. The sustainable drainage system comprising large attenuation basins that are permanently wet and a series of greenways with open channels permeate the development form. A linear water park is part of the strategy for the whole of Northstowe and the first half will be delivered on the eastern edge of Phase 1. The network of open water features will also provide extensive recreational and ecological benefits.

5. A strong green framework

A strong landscape is created with a rich hierarchy of interconnected public spaces and public parks, based upon the grain of the land and incorporating existing site assets. A mosaic of habitats and green space is focused around water. Treed streets and greenways will be a defining feature and help provide windbreaks, shading in summer months and variety through the seasons. Strong linear forms characteristic of the expansive fen landscape have been replicated in the green infrastructure.

6. Primary school at the heart of the development

The primary school's central location within the proposed development will encourage families to cycle and walk to school. The school building is located next to one of the key greenways within the development and will benefit from attractive and direct connections with the sports hub and local centre.

7. An active lifestyle and healthy living

Excellent sports provision will be part of Phase 1 for the benefit of existing and new communities alike. The western sports hub will make available a range of sport facilities set within an attractive landscape. A number of allotments, a community

orchard and excellent cycle paths will all help to promote a healthy lifestyle and aid community cohesion. The proposed development has been supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA), which is submitted alongside the application.



8. Innovation in addressing climate change

A combination of energy efficient development solutions, high quality public transport, a mixed use centre and employment zone, innovative technology and communications systems, a network of landscape and water features and a household recycling centre will make Phase 1 an exemplar in sustainability.

4.49 Further details of the design rationale and key design principles set out above are included within the Design and Access Statement.

Access and movement strategy

4.50 The proposed layout aims to make it easy to walk and cycle to local facilities, thereby creating walkable neighbourhoods and accessible public facilities. Existing bus routes will be extended into the proposed development, providing local services along the primary streets. The layout ensures that all residents will be within 400m walking distance of a bus stop.

4.51 The primary road access to the site will be from the B1050, which will be subject to highway improvements with the introduction

of a new junction adjacent to the local centre. A junction will also be introduced to serve the employment land. The parcel of land in Phase 1 on the western side of the B1050 will be accessed via a further junction approximately 100m to the east of the B1050 west Longstanton bypass / Station Road roundabout. An additional bus only access will be introduced through from the northern edge of the site to the Longstanton P&R.

4.52 A route has also been safeguarded for a potential future link from the employment land to the Longstanton P&R access road, but this does not form part of the application proposal.

4.53 A new dedicated busway through the centre of the site, part of which will be safeguarded for the internal busway link to the CGB, and two primary roads have been designed to connect through to a later phase of development on land to the south.

4.54 A clear hierarchy of streets is proposed, reflecting key movement routes and the distribution of land uses. The design speed of the dedicated busway will be 30mph. The primary streets, along which local buses will run, will also be classified as 30mph, although speeds will be reduced to 20mph through a combination of traffic calming measures at important locations such as primary schools or public squares. Secondary streets will be traffic calmed and designated so as to provide safe and direct pedestrian and cycle routes. The network as a whole will achieve high levels of connectivity and legibility.

4.55 In addition to provision for the dedicated busway the local 'Citi 5 Fen' bus service will be extended to serve the development with a route looping around the main primary streets via the Longstanton P&R, connecting to the proposed primary school and local centre.

4.56 A comprehensive network of pedestrian and cycle routes will be introduced throughout the site connecting to surrounding settlements, public rights of way and the countryside. Improvements will also be made to existing off site pedestrian routes. New cycle links will be provided where appropriate to enhance the potential for existing residents of Longstanton to travel to the site and Longstanton P&R and CGB station safely by alternative modes to the private car.

4.57 As set out within Appendix D (traffic and transport) of the Environmental Statement it is proposed to advance a series of modest traffic management measures to mitigate the effects of the development if the traffic flow increase becomes significant. These could include:

- Tackling traffic flow increases through Longstanton High Street
- Managing traffic speeds on Ramper Road
- Enhancing enforcement and/or traffic management on Longstanton (Airfield) Road

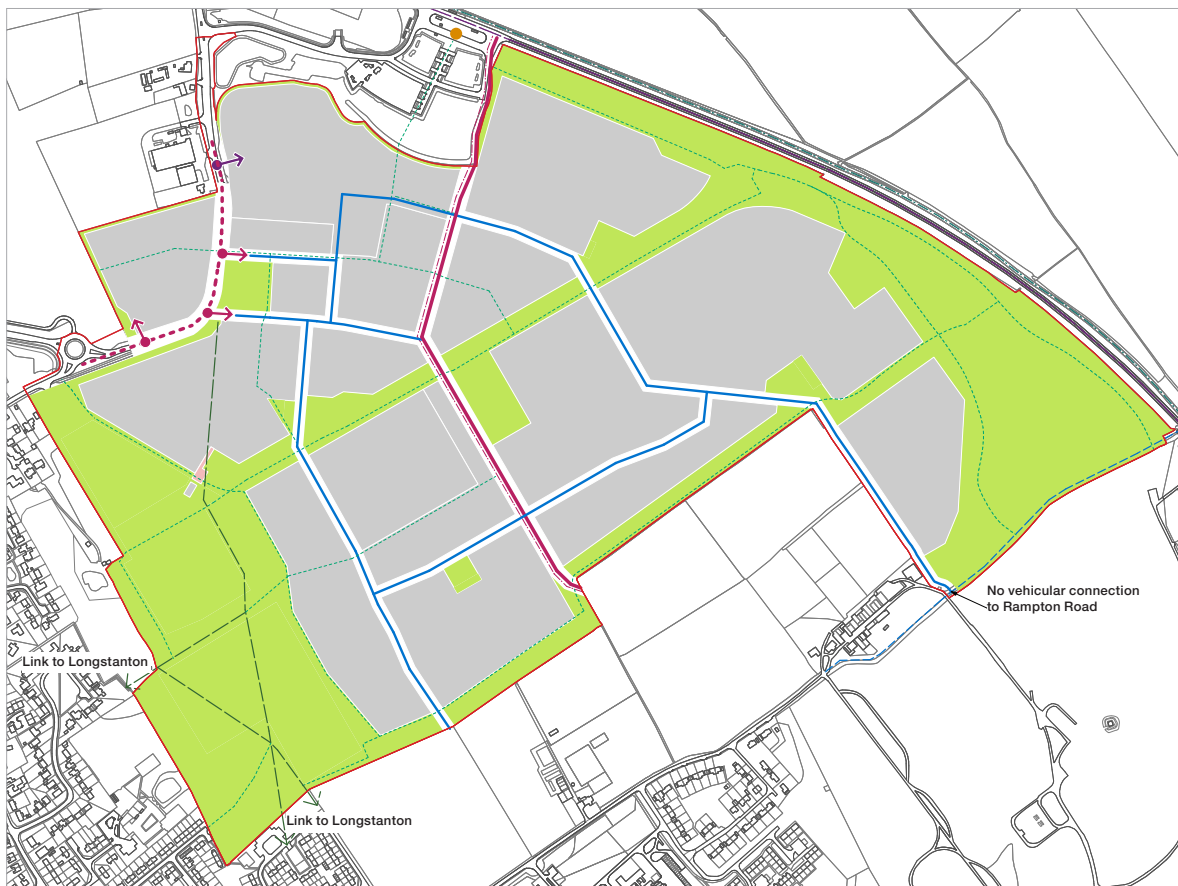
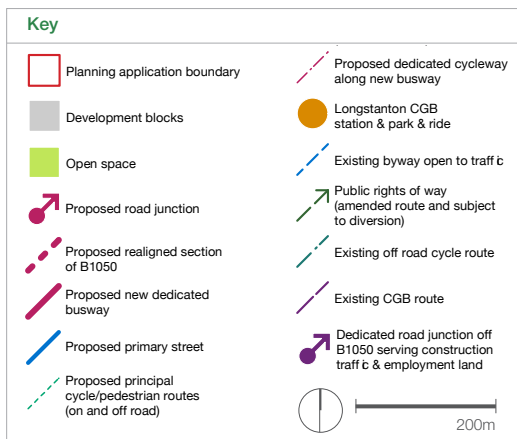


Figure 11: Movement and access parameters plan