



Public realm

4.58 A strong framework of public squares, open water and areas of informal open space will be defining features of the public realm. Building heights, higher density development and the social infrastructure is concentrated on key routes, which mirrors the natural growth of towns and helps provide a legible townscape and clear hierarchy of streets.

4.59 Perimeter blocks will consistently define the public realm but will vary in terms of enclosure, height and density, generally being more dense in the centre and less towards the development edge.

4.60 The block structure, based upon a loose grid, provides direct walking and cycling routes. These routes are overlooked and at key public spaces the concept of shared spaces will help prioritise these movements rather than vehicles.

4.61 The main public square (civic green) is central to the local centre and designed to visually link development on both sides of the B1050. The local centre will create a recognisable focus for the proposed development, providing mixed-use accommodation to include retail, commercial and community uses. The square will be designed as a flexible space, which can be managed to

incorporate car parking and allow the opportunity for use for community or commercial uses/ events on an informal basis. Retail and food and drink facilities around the edge of the square will be encouraged to use the outdoor space to increase the social life of the space and the natural surveillance of the area. Shared streets are proposed throughout the development on secondary and tertiary streets to ensure a quality public realm.

Formal open space and recreation

4.62 The site provides a range of formal and informal open space and recreation opportunities. A sports hub is provided for on the western edge of the site, which includes sufficient land in accordance with policy requirements for a range of different pitch layouts, which could include:

- A senior football pitch
- Two junior football pitches
- Two mini football pitches
- A senior rugby pitch
- An artificial turf pitch
- An outdoor bowling green
- A 1 no. court multi use games area (MUGA)
- A pavilion building to include changing rooms, parking and a social space.

4.63 The proximity of the sports hub to Hatton's Park primary school will ensure that pupils of the school are provided with safe access by foot in order that they can also make use of the range of facilities provided.

4.64 The landscaped water park on the eastern edge of the site will provide a significant attractive amenity for Northstowe and a landscape buffer to the open countryside to the east.

4.65 In addition to these two main areas the proposal includes a network of open space throughout the site in the form of greenways both through and around the edges of the development. These areas provide space for NEAPs (neighbourhood equipped area of play), LEAPs (local equipped areas of play) LAPS (local areas of play) and SIPs (space for imaginative play).

4.66 In order to enable the comprehensive planning of facilities, and in accordance with policy NS19 of the NAAP, a strategy for the delivery of the formal sports (including indoor) and play provision across Northstowe will be developed in partnership with organisations such as Sport England and the Governing Bodies of Sport following the grant of outline planning permission.

Open space assessment

4.67 The SCDC requirement for open space in new development is set out within policy SF/11 of the Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DCPDPD), July 2007 and the Open Space in New Developments Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), January 2009. These refer to a need for 1.6 ha of land per 1,000 population for outdoor sport, 0.8 ha per 1,000 population for children's playspace and 0.4 ha per 1,000 population for informal open space. Based on a household multiplier of 2.57, the proposed 1,500 dwellings equates to 3,855 population. As demonstrated within table 2 the Phase 1 provision is more than sufficient to meet this policy requirement.



View across sports hub towards lower density western edge of proposed development



Table 2 - open space provision

	SCDC requirement (ha)	Phase 1 provision (ha)
Outdoor sport	6.17	6.17 ¹
Children's playspace	3.08	Sufficient land available within informal open space (23 ha)
Informal open space	1.54	23 (excluding waterbodies)

¹ This excludes the grass pitches associated with the primary school, in accordance with policy NS/19 of the NAAP

4.68 While not an adopted policy requirement SCDC has also suggested that 0.4 ha of allotment provision per 1,000 population should be incorporated within the proposed development, which equates to 1.54 ha of land. The proposal includes 1.54 ha for allotments, including a community orchard, in accordance with this requirement. This is provided in one main location on the northern edge of the sports hub, in accordance with SCDC's preference for fewer larger sites rather than a number of smaller sites.

4.69 LAPs, LEAPs, NEAPs and SIPs will be provided across the site, broadly in accordance with the requirements set out within policy NS/19 of the NAAP. The proposed provision includes:

- A central NEAP, ensuring that all homes will be within 1,000m actual walk distance
- Four LEAPs to ensure that the majority of homes are within 400m actual distance
- A large amount of land has been allowed for the provision of a number of LAPs and SIPs and other informal play areas across the site in order to serve the development

4.70 The design of LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs will be in accordance with SCDC requirements in terms of approved equipment suppliers, but the design of each will respond to the play area context and will reflect the character of its location. In addition to the formal play provision, informal play opportunities (spaces for imaginative play – SIPs) will be an integral part of the range of public open spaces, set within residential areas and within the larger areas and green corridors.

Habitat / ecological strategy

4.71 A comprehensive series of ecological surveys (details of which are included within chapter 6 (Natural Heritage) of the ES) have been undertaken in relation to the proposed development in order to inform the proposal. The results of this survey work have been used to develop the ecological enhancement strategy.

4.72 The strategy has been developed in accordance with policy NE/6 of SCDC's Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, policies NS/16, NS/17 and paragraph D8.4 of the NAAP and the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (July 2009).

4.73 Although the site is home to some protected species the nature of its use (golf course and agricultural fields) has precluded a wide diversity of habitats flourishing. The ecological strategy aims to make a positive biodiversity gain through provision of a rich tapestry of habitats. The key elements of strategy are as follows:

Primary development site

- Provision of an alternative roost for bats currently roosting in the golf course clubhouse
- Provision of screening around the perimeter of the sports ground if required to ensure surrounding areas continue to be used by foraging bats

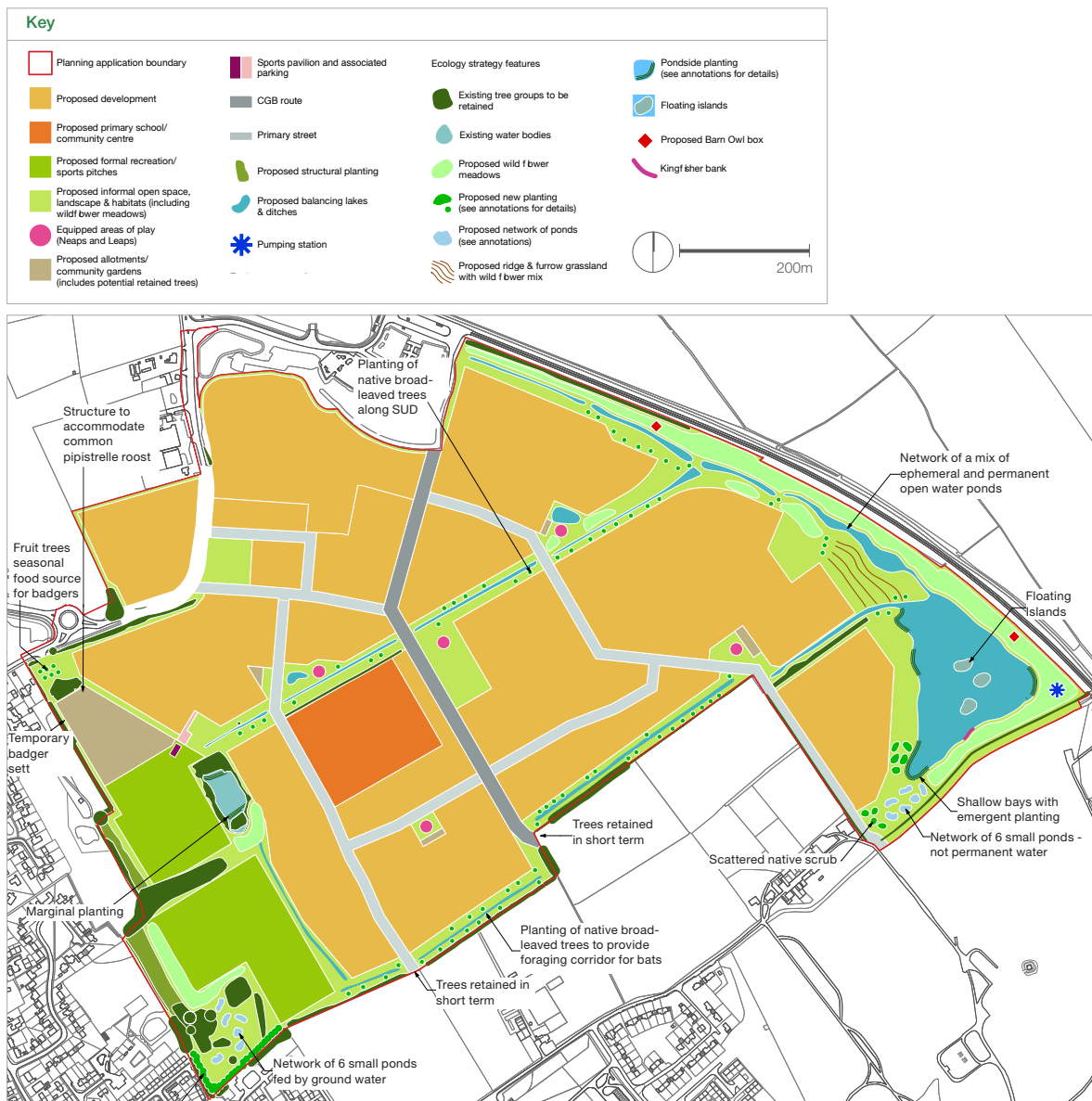


Figure 12: Ecological strategy for primary development site

- Introduction of a temporary sett for badgers in the north western corner of the site within an area of retained vegetation (a licence will be obtained from Natural England prior to closure of the existing sett on the golf course)
- Common reptiles to be accommodated within the green infrastructure within the primary development site with specific areas identified as receptor sites for translocated animals in advance of any ground works commencing
- Areas of green infrastructure to be designed to provide suitable habitat for reptiles, to mitigate the loss of grassland habitats from the golf course, and the loss of foraging habitat for badgers and to provide foraging areas for bats and barn owls
- Introduction of three clusters of six ponds each within the green infrastructure areas to mitigate the loss of existing ponds on the golf course
- Construction of an artificial kingfisher bank in the eastern water park
- Provision of small floating islands in the eastern water park to provide a breeding habitat for birds
- Introduction of bat boxes on mature trees
- Introduction of two barn owl boxes along the edge of the CGB route
- Terracing of grassland on the eastern edge of the primary development site between the development area and the ponds to allow wetter and drier grassland communities to form in close proximity to each other
- Small rotavated plots within the areas of green infrastructure to be sown with corn field annuals to mitigate the loss of arable land
- Re-routed Longstanton Brook to be designed to include features known to be favourable to water voles including emergent vegetation, steep grassy banks and refuge areas for voles to use when vegetation management is being undertaken
- Ponds to be designed to have features favourable to water voles, to provide additional habitat
- Construction of an artificial kingfisher bank in the larger of the two ponds
- Grassland areas around the edge of the ponds to be formed into ridge and furrow



Figure 13: Ecological strategy for Hatton's Road attenuation ponds

Hatton's Road attenuation ponds

- New sections of Longstanton Brook to be constructed and planted in advance of work taking place along the existing section of the brook to create suitable quality habitat for displaced water voles to move into. Common lizards present within the brook also to be translocated to these areas during the works. Area to be managed until the works in the area of the attenuation ponds are complete, including associated landscape planting

Delivery

Method statement for achieving the housing building rate

4.74 Paragraph E3.8 of the NAAP refers to the master developer / consortium of builders for Northstowe being encouraged to submit a method statement alongside the outline planning application setting out measures to be taken to secure a build-rate of at least 600 dwellings per year, including affordable housing. The economic downturn has had a serious impact on the house building industry and this is expected to continue for the next few years. However, as set out in detail with the method statement at appendix 1, the joint promoters commit to encourage delivery through:

- Agreement to the implementation of Planning Performance Agreements with the local authority and co-operative working with the Joint Implementation Team to streamline the process of consents and authorisations in the most efficient and effective way
- Preparation of design codes to streamline and speed up the process of submitting and determining reserved matter applications
- Active marketing and promotion of land for development
- Design and timely provision of infrastructure, services and facilities commensurate with the phased development
- Optimising the servicing and energising of development parcels to facilitate the delivery of new homes



View across western sports hub looking east towards primary school site