

## **Appendix 3**

**Extract from Town Centre and  
Local Centres Strategy, Arup,  
2007**





# 23 Northstowe

town centre and local centres strategy

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prepared by

**ARUP**

on behalf of

  
**English Partnerships**  
The National Regeneration Agency

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community offices. A further 4,600 sq.m. has been identified for a place of worship/day care/others, public and community uses. This should provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate the evolving plans for civic uses.

- 4.3.4 Capacity for other uses in the town centre, namely the hotel and commercial space, has been influenced by the policy framework, sustainability objectives and market demand. The commercial floorspace proposed provides the potential for creation of a range of job opportunities for local residents that not only reduces the need for travel, hence carbon emissions, but meets aspirations for local jobs. The quantum of commercial floorspace proposed have been subject to commercial evaluation.

#### 4.4 The Town Centre Uses

- 4.4.1 The town centre will be high density, mixed use, and multi-layered, with shops, food and drink outlets, offices, community facilities, a cinema, a hotel, health and fitness provision and post-16 education campus. The town centre will also include a full range of civic uses. A secondary school will be located adjacent to the town centre.
- 4.4.2 An indication of the range and amount of floorspace/area for the town centre uses is set out below in Table 4. These have been determined through a combination of capacity modelling, market review (set out in more detail in section 4.5) and sustainability assessment.

**Table 4: Indicative Quantum of Floorspace and Areas**

Use	Approx Gross External Area (sq.m.)	Rationale
Town Centre B1 Offices	42,500	Based on objective to create a sustainable economic base for the town and support economic growth in the sub region. Commercial viability confirmed by property market advisers – although noted that delivery will take time.  See Document 6: Environmental Statement (socio-economic chapter) and Document 20: Economic Development and Training Strategy.
B1 Offices/ Showroom/ Studios	10,750	
A1 Convenience Retail	8,500	Based on objective to create sufficiently competitive retail offer to attract residents to shop in the town centre – thus providing a valuable local service – without undermining the vitality and vibrancy of surrounding centres. Commercial viability confirmed by property market advisers, albeit phased over time.  See Document 19: Retail Capacity and Impact Report.
A1 Comparison Retail	29,000	
A2 Professional Services	7,000	
A3, A4, A5 Food & Drink	5,000	
C1 Hotel (approx. 180 beds)	8,000	Based on objective to provide facilities that will help create an attractive environment for business location, provide services and

Use	Approx Gross External Area (sq.m.)	Rationale
		generate a mix of activity in the town centre. Generous size to provide flexibility and options for possible conference facilities/phased development. Commercial viability confirmed by property agents.
D1 Community Meeting Centre / Library/ Public Offices / Arts Centre / Health	6,400	Based on specifications for community space provided by SCDC and partners.
D1 Place of Worship / Day Care / Other civic uses	4,600	Additional space provided for other D1 uses to accommodate facilities whose specifications have yet to be confirmed.
D1 Post 16 education	2 ha	Based on population projections and assumptions regarding floorspace requirements for educational provision.
D1 Nursery pre-school	0.2 ha	Based on comparable facilities in other new developments.
D2 Sui Generis (Indoor Leisure / Health and Fitness / Casinos / Nightclubs)	2,500	Based on objective to create a range of uses and activities in the town centre. Scale based on average health and fitness facility size of 1,500 sqm plus additional space for additional uses. Commercial viability confirmed by property agents.
D2 Cinema (approx. 1350 seats)	5,000	Based on objective to create a range of uses and activities in the town centre. Generous scale to enable range of possible concepts from upmarket to multiplex. Commercial viability confirmed by property agents, likely to be developed in later phases.
Residential	1000 homes	Based on objective to create mixed use town centre and higher density accommodation in flatted, maisonette and town house format to contribute to provision of a range of housing types in Northstowe. Testing of the town centre plan by urban designers has confirmed capacity. See Document 10: Housing Strategy.
Cycle parking	Over 5,000 spaces	In general, the number of cycle parking spaces has been derived from SCDC maximum standards (with some allowance for efficiencies). See Document 2: Transport Assessment
Car parking	Approximately 4000 spaces	Based on objective to reduce the use of car and motorbike in travelling to the town centre

Use	Approx Gross External Area (sq.m.)	Rationale
Motorbike parking	100 spaces	yet provide sufficient facilities to support access by those unable to use other modes of transport, thus creating an accessible and viable town centre attractive to shoppers, retailers and other occupiers.  See Document 2: Transport Assessment

- 4.4.3 All of these uses will be easily accessible and located close to public transport nodes, cycleways and pedestrian routes. They will be designed to interact with the public realm to create attractive, distinctive and animated public areas.

### **Anchors**

- 4.4.4 There will be a number of anchors within and around the town centre which will help draw residents, workers and visitors to the town centre. These could include the following:
- Principal retail units – including supermarket and small department/variety/homeware store(s)
  - Cinema
  - Hotel and conference facilities
  - Civic hub/health campus
  - Landmark office buildings
  - Hi tech business district
  - Secondary school and post-16 education campus
  - Sports hub
- 4.4.5 There will also be a range of public spaces in the town centre which will draw people to the town centre, particularly when providing a venue for markets and events.

## **4.5 The Potential Offer in Northstowe**

- 4.5.1 There is no certainty what type of occupiers will choose to locate in Northstowe. This will depend on market conditions and contemporary trends in shopping, cinema going, gym usage, patterns of working and other patterns of behaviour.
- 4.5.2 What is clear is that delivery of the proposed town centre will only occur if there is sufficient market demand to take up the supply of space. Even with mechanisms to encourage development and take up of space, without sufficient trade to support shop turnover (which ultimately drives demand for space) businesses will ultimately fail. The Northstowe retail, leisure and commercial proposals have been subject to a commercial assessment which

## 6 The Proposal for the Local Centres

- 6.1.1 The five local centres will provide for the day-to-day needs of local residents for convenience shopping and service provision and act as a focus for small-scale local employment. Their offer will complement rather than compete with the town centre.
- 6.1.2 There will be development of the local centres in conjunction with build out of residential districts to help create community identity from the outset. Each local centre is likely to offer a different combination of facilities, creating individual identity and meeting the profile of likely demand.

**Image 8: Flower and hardware shop at a Local Centre**



### 6.2 SCDC Emerging Specification for Community Centres

- 6.2.1 SCDC has investigated community centre requirements in some detail and has provided indicative specifications. The ultimate size, range of facilities and funding arrangements will be discussed, negotiated and agreed as part of the Section 106 Agreement.
- 6.2.2 The latest draft specifications propose three community centres to be provided at three local centres in Northstowe. These could potentially serve each of the three neighbourhood areas at Northstowe.
- 6.2.3 The community centres will have the following potential functions:
- Arts and Culture activities (i.e. performing art, rehearsals, dance);
  - Community gatherings (i.e. meetings, worship);
  - Community Groups (i.e. Mother & Toddler, Pre-School, Senior Citizens);
  - Information Centre (particularly initial usage – could be central information point);

- Performance (i.e. drama, music);
- Social gatherings (i.e. dancing, dinners, weddings, christenings);
- Sport (i.e. badminton, tennis, softball games); and
- Training/Conference facility.

6.2.4 It is proposed that the first community centre should be as flexible as possible and should be developed to provide interim civic hub facilities until such time as the Town Centre Civic Hub is completed, thereafter it could become the community centre at Local Centre A; the second Community Centre could be known as the Ecumenical Community Centre; and the third Community Centre could provide a Youth Wing<sup>6</sup>.

6.2.5 The draft specifications propose that each community centre facilities should ideally comprise of a hall, kitchen, meeting room, bar, IT points, and multi-function space. There may also be potential for co-locating a small retail unit within the community centre building and there may be additional benefits from co-locating the community centres with other community facilities (such as the sports hubs and pavilions). Public buildings will be built to high energy efficiency specifications and will be procured by the local authorities.

### **6.3 Case Studies**

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6.3.1 Best practice advice on local centres and community centres is included at Appendix E. A number of proposals have been reviewed to establish the level of provision that is made in respect of local centres. These include:

- Cranbrook, East Devon;
- Filton, South Gloucestershire;
- Hampton, Peterborough;
- Eastern Quarry, Kent; and
- Milton Keynes Growth Areas.

6.3.2 There are a number of consistencies across the schemes. Schemes of less than 3,000 dwellings generally have one local centre, whilst schemes of between 7,000 and 8,000 generally have four or five local centres.

6.3.3 The Milton Keynes policy framework for local centres provides guidance on the scale of local centre catchments and the facilities that should be provided. It states 'local centres will provide facilities for a maximum population of 5,000 and will act as a focus for primary education, local play, and community space and will usually provide local retailing and food/drink uses'. For Northstowe this would equate to four or five local centres being provided to serve the forecast population.

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<sup>6</sup> Proposed floorspace of Local Centre A may increase once requirements of PCT Health Campus have been incorporated.



## **6.4 Commercial Considerations**

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- 6.4.1 Successful and viable local centres on other schemes in the UK have generally incorporated the following uses:
- convenience store (300-400sqm);
  - doctors surgery;
  - public house;
  - community centre; and
  - possibly a small area for offices.
- 6.4.2 It would therefore be appropriate for some of the local centres to have this type of mix and range of uses.
- 6.4.3 Given the uncertainty of the property market and the take-up of employment and retail premises (particularly where space is provided for employment elsewhere in the scheme, within the town centre and dedicated employment areas), it will be necessary to ensure that employment accommodation is capable of conversion to residential use.
- 6.4.4 The location of the local centres and their relationship with the town centre is important. It will be important to ensure that the scale of commercial floorspace provision within local centres does not impact on the viability or early delivery of the town centre. Local centres should not hinder the success of the town centre but support the main retail offer.
- 6.4.5 Commercial advice suggests that there is likely to be demand for approximately 300-400sqm of A1 convenience floorspace together with other retail floorspace such as, for example, specialist retailer, hairdresser, dry cleaners (A1), estate agent (A2), bank (A2)/cash point, cafe (A3)/bakery, pub (A4) and/or takeaway (A5). In addition, approximately 1,000sq.m. of employment floorspace is to be developed in local centres.
- 6.4.6 It should be noted that the location, level and mix of uses has been considered not just for the residents of Northstowe but also for the existing residents of Longstanton and Oakington.

## **6.5 The Local Centres**

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### **Distribution and Number of Local Centres**

- 6.5.1 The proposed distribution of the local centres within Northstowe seeks to:
- address the policy requirements of the NAAP (where appropriate to meet the objectives for local centres);
  - respond to the commercial viability requirements;
  - draw from examples of where similar centres have been delivered or are in the process of being delivered elsewhere in the UK; and
  - respond to best practice guidance to achieve walkable and distinctive neighbourhoods.

- 6.5.2 For Northstowe a further objective is to ensure that local centres are established at the heart of the various neighbourhood areas that are identified within the overall Masterplan.

### **Northstowe Policy Compliance**

- 6.5.3 To meet the policy requirements associated with the distribution and (thus) the number of local centres, five local centres are proposed in addition to the town centre. The local centres are distributed to maximise accessibility by pedestrians as illustrated by Figure 3, in line with NAAP policy NS/6 the majority of Northstowe is within 600m of a local centre. The format of these local centres will satisfy the requirement to meet the day-to-day needs of all residents and provide the required facilities for local use.
- 6.5.4 All the local centres are located either adjacent or near to one of the six primary schools currently required to serve the forecast population of Northstowe. Supporting text in the NAAP states that local centres will be developed around primary schools 'where appropriate...these primary schools will be located at the heart of their local catchment areas and may provide the basis for small local centres' (Para D2.1).
- 6.5.5 NAAP policy also states that the local centres shall be 'appropriately located along the dedicated busway' (Policy NS6/1a) and consideration will be given to locating these local centres at stops along the dedicated local busway' (Para D2.1). Although only one local centre is proposed to be located directly on the dedicated busway, the other local centres are all to be located on strategic public transport routes, served regularly by local buses, with dedicated cycleways and footpaths, integrating the local centres into the town transport network. The local centres are situated at the heart of the residential districts incorporating public and community services and schools, good accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, those with mobility problems and those using public transport, with availability of parking, but separate from main housing areas.

### **Local Centre A – Northern Gateway**

- 6.5.6 A local centre will be positioned at the Northern Gateway to Northstowe and will serve the north eastern part of the district. The local centre is positioned to the north of the primary school and MUGA and will be central to the first phase of development. The local centre will also serve the needs for the Northern Employment Area – for instance for convenience and service retail. Facilities proposed for this centre are as follows:
- Retail (approx. 750 - 1,250sq.m.) comprising of mini-supermarket (400sq.m.), newsagent (100sq.m.), post office (100sq.m.), dry cleaner/laundrette (50sq.m.), chemist (50sq.m.), two to four specialty shops (200-400sqm), estate agent (50sq.m.), restaurant (100sq.m.), pub (100sq.m.) and hot food takeaway (50sq.m.);
  - Employment (200 - 500sqm);
  - Community centre one;
  - MUGA (provided adjacent to the primary school);
  - Information access point;

- Neighbourhood recycling point; and
- Residential above retail and possibly commercial or community uses.

6.5.7 As this centre will be developed in advance of the town centre, some of the services ultimately to be provided in the town centre could be provided temporarily in flexible accommodation within this local centre. The ability to accommodate space, and in what form, requires further consideration by the promoters and Town Centre Topic Group. When the second local centre in the northern district is developed it may be that facilities would be relocated to that local centre.

### **Local Centre B**

6.5.8 Located in the southern district this local centre will serve the immediate population within a 600m radius. The centre will be located on the primary road network which will provide a local bus service. It will also be within five minutes walk of the employment area stop on the dedicated busway. It is close to a primary school and positioned on the historic Oakington – Longstanton link. There is scope for a MUGA to be incorporated into the local centre and an Ecumenical Community Centre could also be part of this centre (Community Centre two). The local centre will be approximately five minutes walk from Sport Hub number three.

6.5.9 This will be the second local centre to be build out to serve the phases of development in the south of the site.

### **Local Centre C**

6.5.10 This local centre will be located within the western part of the central district, on the former barracks site. This area could retain the existing barracks street layout, roadside trees and some buildings – primarily the Officer's Mess (which would be suitable for redevelopment into a community centre). The community centre in this local centre will incorporate a youth wing. A local equipped play area and an open space will be located within close walking distance. The local centre will also be served by local buses.

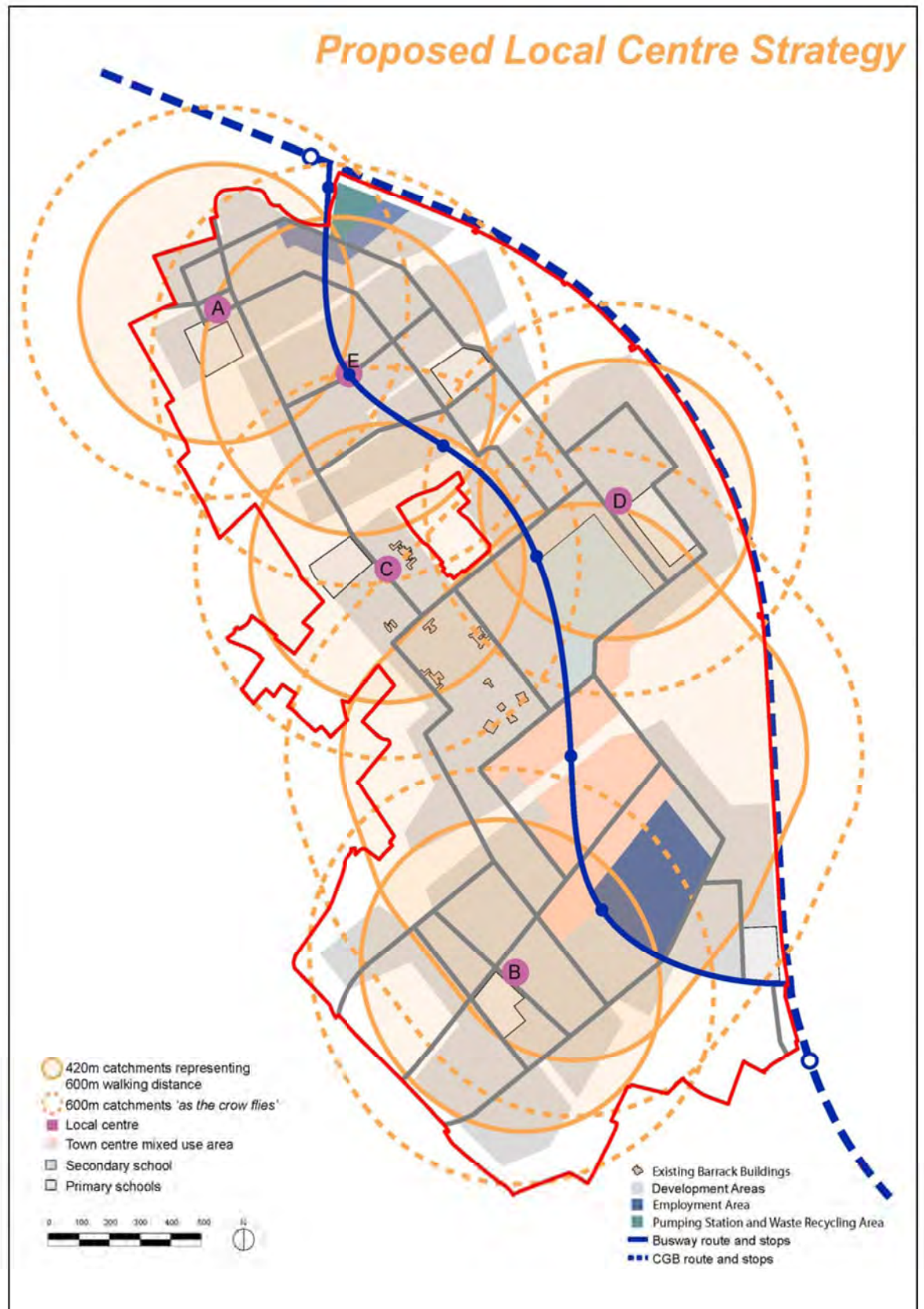
6.5.11 This centre is likely to be the last centre to be developed, although this would not prevent interim uses being provided within some of the barrack buildings (e.g. the Officer's Mess).

### **Local Centre D**

6.5.12 This local centre will be located in the eastern part of the central district. The local centre will be close to one of the proposed primary schools and will be served by local buses. It will also be within five minutes walk of the dedicated busway.

This will be the third centre to be developed to serve the eastern side of the central district area.

Figure 4: Proposed Local Centre Strategy



### **Local Centre E**

- 6.5.13 This local centre will be positioned in the middle of the northern district (almost the whole of the district area falls within the 600m walking distance of the centre) and will be located close to a stop on the dedicated busway. The local centre is positioned between the two primary schools in the northern district and close to the Northern Employment Area. Provision of facilities in this local centre will complement the provision made by Local Centre A.
- 6.5.14 A green corridor, containing an existing fen drain and providing accessible open space is located near to the centre. This Local Centre will be similar to B, C and D, but could also have employment floorspace.

### **Facilities in Local Centres B, C, D and E**

- 6.5.15 Local Centres B, C, D and E will have the following facilities:
- Retail (approx. 300 - 500 sq.m.) comprising local convenience store (100 sq.m.), newsagent (100 sq.m.) and food / beverage retail (100 sq.m.);
  - Community centre (2 and 3);
  - Children's play area;
  - Neighbourhood recycling point;
  - Information recycling point; and
  - Residential above retail.

## 6.6 Design Principles for Local Centres

- 6.6.1 The design principles for the local centres are set out in the Parameter Plans and Design and Access Statement (Document 11). These are summarised below.

### Density and Height

- 6.6.2 Within all local centres, residential development is proposed above commercial uses and, where appropriate, community uses (the latter will be challenging if public buildings are procured by local authority). The residential development in these local centres will create the opportunity for development at higher densities than surrounding residential areas. The density will reflect the vertical mix of uses proposed and has the potential to create landmark buildings within the development. It is proposed that some of the buildings within local centres should be up to four storeys high.

### Flexible Typologies

- 6.6.3 The buildings within local centres should be designed with flexibility in mind so that if there is limited demand for retail or office space within the centres the buildings can be converted into residential use and vice versa. Also, the ground floor height of the residential apartment buildings close to the local centres should be sufficient to accommodate possible future opportunities for commercial uses if there is demand.

### Identity

- 6.6.4 The retention of existing features on the site creates character within Northstowe. These features can influence the design and layout of the local centre and create variety in the built environment. Each local centre should aim to incorporate or respond to the character of the area it serves.

### Image 9: Traditional Townscape, Huntingdon



## **Appendix 4**

## **Extract from Northstowe Development Framework Consultation Draft, October 2011**





Northstowe Development Framework  
Consultation DRAFT October 2011



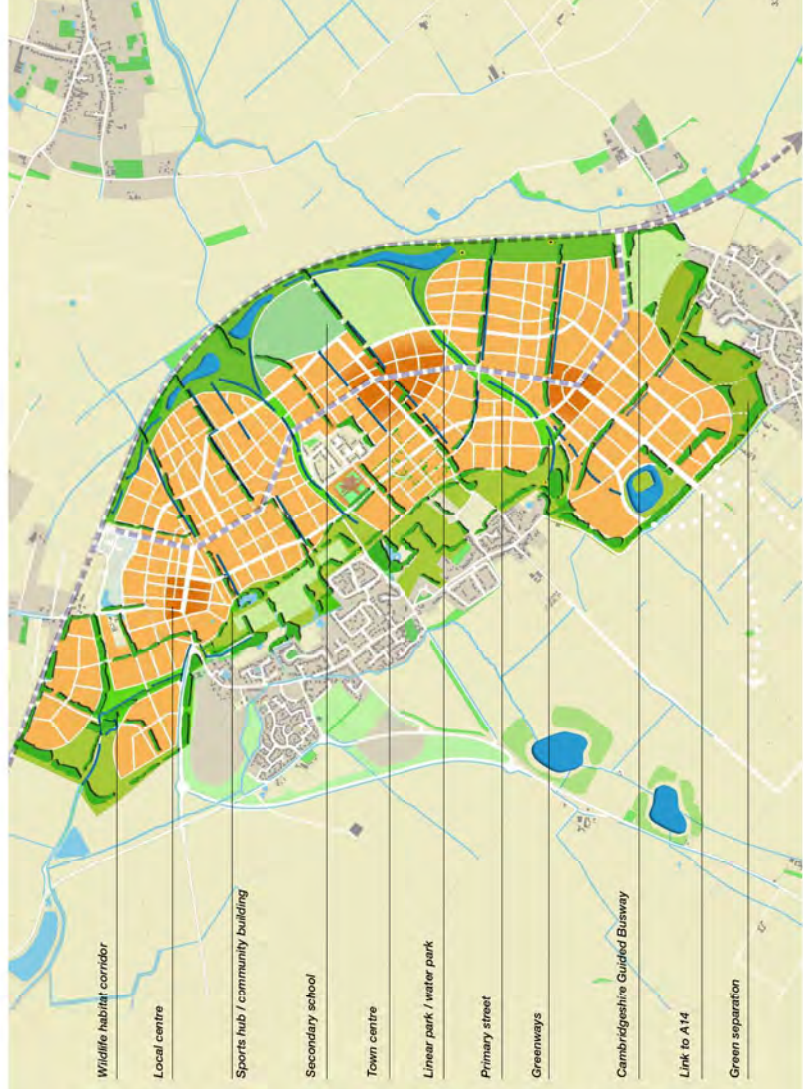
## 4. Development Framework Master Plan

The Development Framework master plan has been informed by a review of the 2007 planning application master plan, including the comments received from statutory organisations and members of the public. In addition a series of workshops have been held with Northstowe Parish Forum. Key changes since the 2007 planning application master plan include:

- Relocation of the town centre further north, closer to phase 1 and the geographical centre of the town
- Relocation of the secondary school north and east (to maintain relationship with town centre)
- Adoption of segmented alignment to busway spine through site (rather than a curved route)
- Fewer local centres but larger
- Northern local centre, close to the B1050 Station Road
- Inclusion of northern reserve land to ensure a comprehensive approach to the development of Northstowe



# Master plan



**Guiding principles**  
Development aligned along key routes with a strong sequence of public spaces to aid legibility

Alternating street alignment reflecting principal nodal points

Canal on foot spots and social infrastructure positioned to create walkable neighbourhoods

Grid-like street pattern in centre becoming deformed and more organic on edge

Excellent connections with the surroundings

Development edge responsive to its setting

A strong landscape 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 focused around water

Activities, building heights and densities concentrated on key routes

Flexibility to change over time within the development form

Walking, cycling and buses given priority on streets

Natural play, food production and traffic-calmed streets defining characteristics of each neighbourhood

Only pedestrian and cycle connections are proposed between Northstowe and the adjoining settlements of Gillingham and Longstanton

## Indicative bus routes



- Cambridge Guided Busway routes
- Primary street / busway
- Existing CGB bus stop
- CGB bus stop
- Secondary bus routes
- Bus only connections

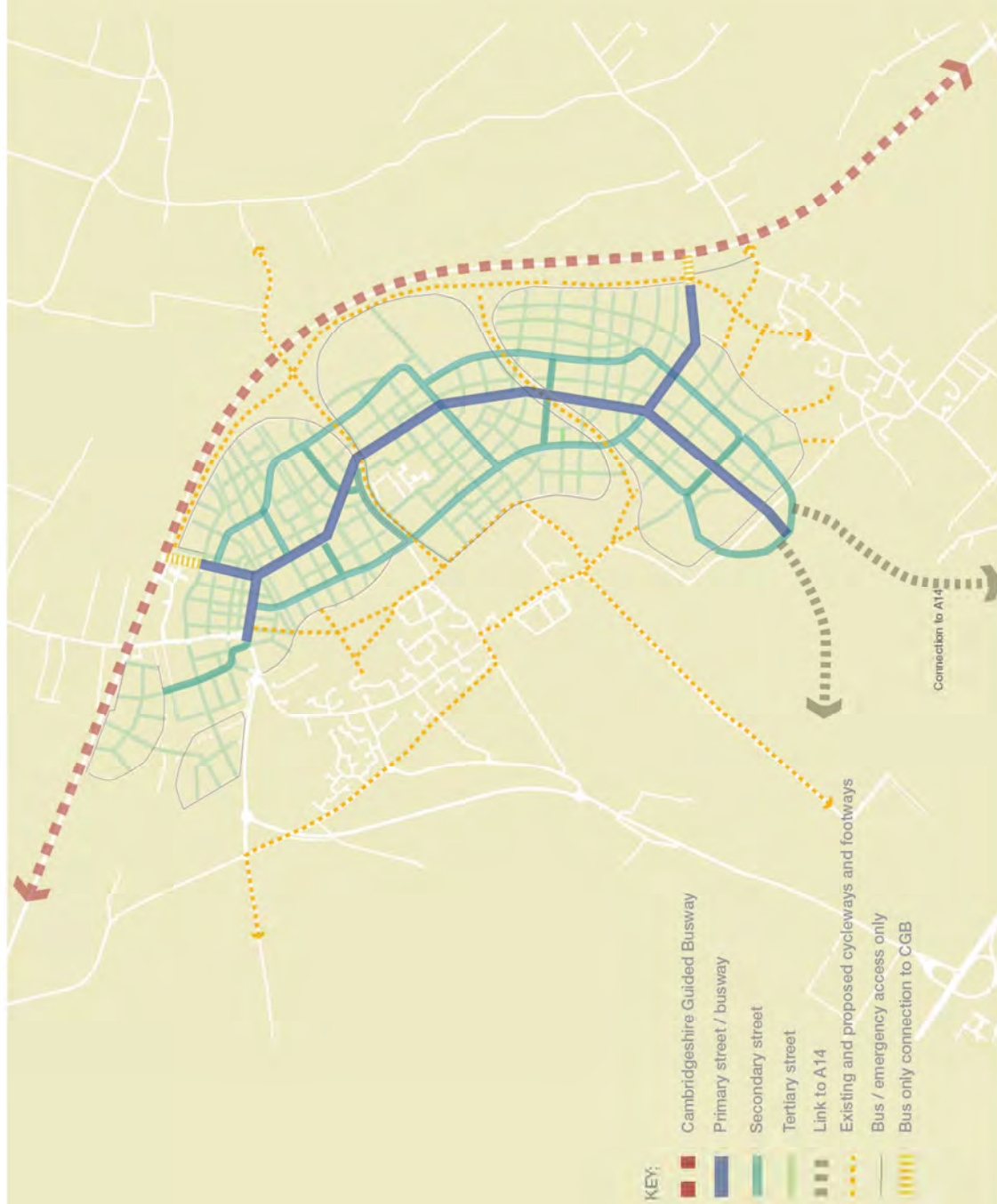
## Connections / linkages

### Movement strategy

The CGB is now operational and provides an express route into Cambridge to the south and Huntingdon to the north. The primary street / busway will branch off the CGB and bring primary public transport through the centre of Northstowe. Existing bus routes will be extended into Northstowe, providing local services primarily along the secondary streets. Nearly all residents of Northstowe will be within 400m walking distance of a bus stop. A bus-only connection to Oakington is proposed at the southern boundary via Station Road.

New cycleways and footpaths will link up with strategic routes, connecting Northstowe with surrounding settlements and the countryside. Safe and direct cycle and pedestrian routes will be a defining feature of the town, as will the principle of walkable neighbourhoods and accessible public facilities.

A clear hierarchy of streets is proposed reflecting key movement routes and the distribution of land uses. The design speed of the primary streets / busway will be 30mph; all other streets will be no more than 20mph. The primary and secondary streets together comprise the main arteries through the town and for the most part key social infrastructure and public amenity is located on these routes. Tertiary streets will be traffic calmed and designed so as to provide safe and direct pedestrian and cycle routes. Dead ends for cyclists or pedestrians will not be permitted, and where roads terminate on the development edge, cycle and pedestrian routes will extend out into the surrounding parkland and beyond. The network as a whole achieves high levels of connectivity and legibility.



- KEY:
- Cambridge Guided Busway
  - Primary street / busway
  - Secondary street
  - Tertiary street
  - Link to A14
  - Existing and proposed cycleways and footways
  - Bus / emergency access only
  - Bus only connection to CGB

## Phasing

The scheme will be delivered over a series of phases as set out below:

Phase one will include:

- A primary school and local centre
- About 1,500 homes
- Sports hub and community facilities
- Household recycling centre
- A range of employment uses
- Significant water features (for drainage, ecology and informal recreation)
- Substantial green space for recreation and habitat creation

Phase two will follow and in particular will contain:

- Further homes
- The heritage core
- An important green way
- Significant water features
- It will also provide access to the town centre and secondary school site

Other phases will follow.



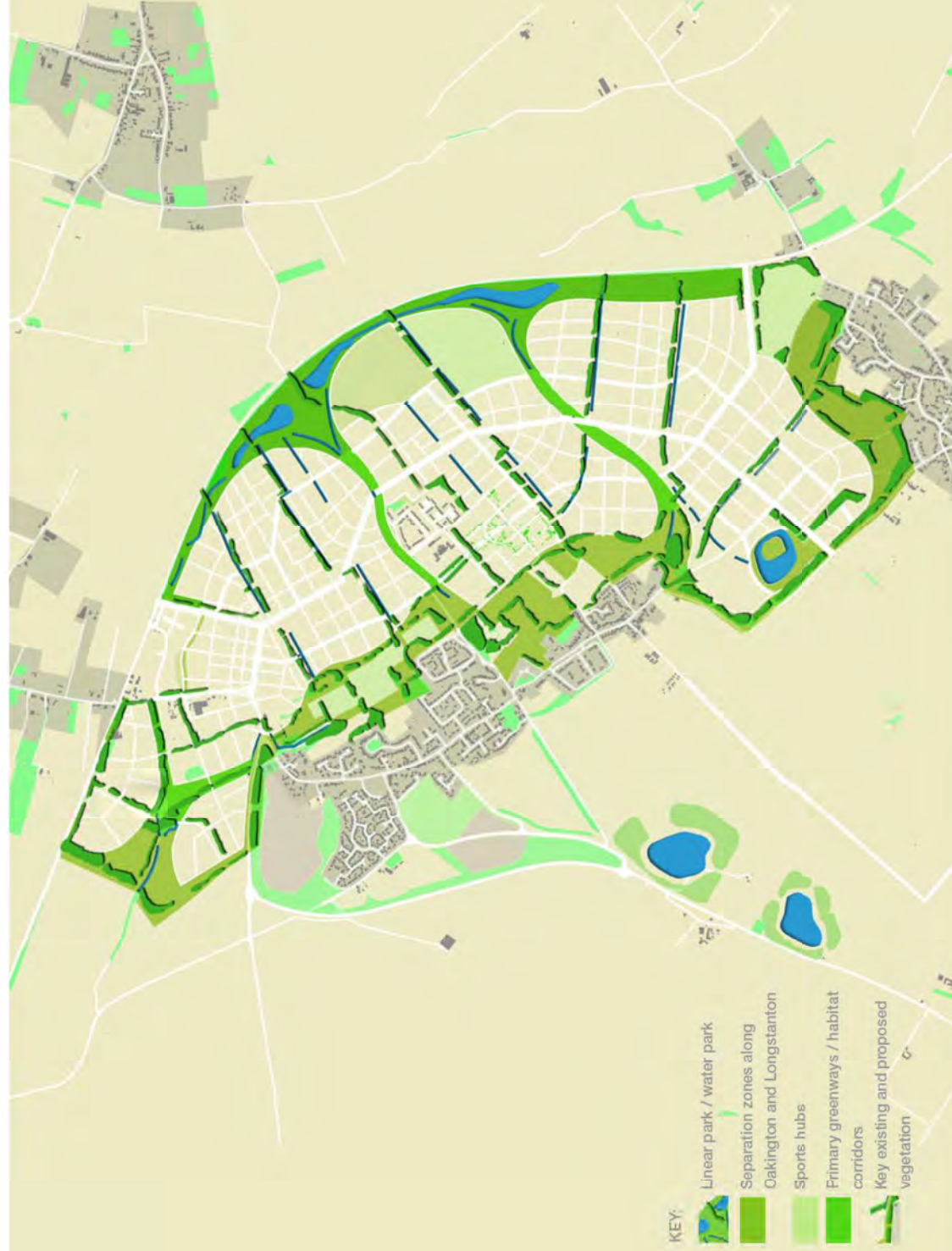
## Green infrastructure

### Landscape strategy

A comprehensive network of green space will provide:

- A strong landscape setting to the town
- 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 such as NEAPs (Neighbourhood Area Equipped for Play) and large areas of informal open space for natural play
- A high level of sports provision via three sports hubs broadly serving each of the three development sectors.

A finer grain of open space and recreational provision including community orchards and allotments, pocket parks and public squares will be developed as part of each phase.



## Sustainability

Northstone will be planned, designed and promoted as a sustainable new community, limiting energy use and promoting healthy lifestyles. The first phase will be developed to Code for Sustainable Homes Code Level 4 and will succeed with any amended standards for carbon emissions and energy use when infitected.

Future phases will build upon phase one experience embracing emerging technologies as they develop. Reducing environmental impacts is central to the master plan with water conservation, food production, excellent public transport links, and a network of green spaces incorporating sustainable urban drainage systems (including rainwater recycling/harvesting) contributing to the creation of a sustainable community.

## Social infrastructure

Key social facilities such as schooling, shops, community buildings, bus services, leisure or local employment areas have all been positioned to ensure that the concept of walkable neighbourhood becomes ingrained. Social infrastructure will be delivered early as part of each phase.

The secondary school and central sports hub are sited close to the town centre on a east west axis, which will help with the movement of people between these key facilities and enliven the town centre.

