

5. Planning policy compliance

Introduction

5.1 This section sets out the national, regional and local planning policy to be considered in the determination of this planning application.

5.2 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, together require that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. “Development plan” is defined in section 38(3) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as the regional strategy for the area, if there is one, the development plan documents (taken as a whole) which have been adopted or approved in relation to that area, and any neighbourhood development plans for the area.

5.3 The Development Plan for South Cambridgeshire comprises:

- Adopted East of England Plan (May 2008), subject to the comments below
- Saved policy CNF6 (Expansion of Existing Sites) of the Adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2004)
- Adopted South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (January 2007)
- Adopted South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies DPD (DCPD) (July 2007)
- Adopted South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies DPD (SSPD) (January 2010)
- Adopted Northstowe Area Action Plan (July 2007)



5.4 The other main policy documents that are material in the determination of this planning application are:

- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough minerals and waste core strategy (July 2011)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough minerals and waste site specific proposals DPD (February 2012)
- Adopted supplementary planning documents prepared by SCDC
- Central government planning policy statements (PPSs) and planning policy guidance notes (PPGs)
- Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.5 The Localism Bill was enacted in November 2011, thereafter becoming the Localism Act. Different parts of the act will come into effect at different times over the coming months. The act enables regional spatial strategies, including the East of England Plan, to be abolished but this will be undertaken by statutory order by the government in due course (it is currently understood that this will be around March/April 2012), subject to consultation. Whilst the East of England Plan remains part of the development plan until it is formally abolished, the government had advised that the proposed abolition of regional strategies should be regarded as a material consideration by local planning authorities when deciding planning applications. It should therefore be afforded limited weight in the determination of this planning application. Reference is included to relevant policies within the core strategy, which takes account of, regional policy.

5.6 The draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which was subject to consultation between July and October 2011, sets out the coalition government's proposals to replace the existing PPGs and PPSs in order to help achieve sustainable development and positive growth. This also represents a material consideration in the determination of this application, representing the government's latest approach to planning policy.

Background

5.7 Gallagher and Defence Estates (the previous owner of Oakington Barracks) first promoted proposals for a new settlement between Longstanton and Oakington in the late nineties. The promotion of the site was initially through submissions to and participation in examinations associated with the Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (RPG6).

5.8 In November 2000, RPG6 confirmed the need for a new settlement to serve the growth of the Cambridge sub Region. Northstowe new town was subsequently identified for the development of 8,000 – 10,000 dwellings in the adopted Cambridge and Peterborough Structure Plan (October 2007) and the East of England Plan (May 2008). It is also allocated within the South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy and an Area Action Plan (NAAP) was adopted by SCDC in July 2007. The NAAP provides the primary policy framework for the development of the town and comprises a number of individual policies to guide development.

Local planning policy

5.9 In light of the site's allocation at a local level, the Local Development Framework (LDF) is a significant consideration in the determination of this planning application. As referred to above, existing national planning policy and the draft NPPF are also a material consideration in many respects and this is addressed below.

5.10 Given that the site is allocated in an adopted development plan document, preparation of the proposed development has been primarily led by the adopted policies within the LDF. The proposal has been examined specifically against each of the relevant policies and objectives within the Core Strategy, DCPDPD, SSPDPD, the NAAP, the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD and Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals DPD. A schedule of relevant planning policies within the main policy documents (namely the Core Strategy, DCPDPD and NAAP) identifying for each where the proposal is considered to be compliant and where it is not is included within appendix 2. In instances where the policy relates to matters that affect the wider Northstowe site or later phases of development, reference is made to the Framework Master Plan. An explanation and where appropriate justification for non-compliance with individual local policies and objectives within each of the three development plan documents is set out below.



5.11 It is important to note that the following supplementary planning documents have also been taken into account in the preparation of the application and are referred to within the individual submission documents:

- Affordable Housing SPD (March 2010)
- Biodiversity SPD (July 2009)
- Landscape in New Developments (March 2010)
- Development Affecting Conservation Areas (January 2009)
- District Design Guide (March 2010)
- Health Impact Assessment (March 2011)
- Open Space in New Developments (January 2009)
- Public Art (January 2009)
- Trees and Development Sites (January 2009)
- RECAP Partnership: Waste Management Draft Design Guide SPD (September 2011)
- The Location and Design of Waste Management Facilities SPD (July 2011).

Core Strategy (January 2007)

5.12 Policy ST/10 states that the development of Northstowe will not be phased. This reference must be qualified because phasing has historically been a planning policy tool used by local planning authorities to restrict or control the delivery of housing numbers. Since the aim of the policy is to achieve a continuous high level of dwelling production there is no such artificial restriction placed on Northstowe. It has always been intended that the construction of Northstowe would be phased geographically, indeed policy NS/2 of the NAAP refers to design guides / design codes being prepared “for each phase of development” in support of reserved matters applications. Paragraph E1.10 of the NAAP also refers to “all phases of development”.

5.13 The reason for a phased approach now is primarily a result of the withdrawal of the Highways Agency A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton scheme following the government’s Spending Review in October 2010.

5.14 The government’s Autumn Statement (HM Treasury November 2011) gives a commitment to increasing capacity and improving performance on the A14, which will support proposed housing developments including Northstowe. The phased approach now being progressed seeks to bring forward much needed market and affordable housing in a sustainable new community alongside those works. The first phase is limited to 1,500 dwellings as this level of development can be accommodated on the existing highway network without a significant adverse impact (as set out within chapter 7 (traffic and transport) of the submitted ES).

Development Control Policies DPD (July 2007)

5.15 The proposal is fully compliant with the policies within this DPD.

Northstowe Area Action Plan (July 2007)

5.16 Policy NS/6 of the NAAP requires that local centres include a primary school. The proposed development includes a primary school, which is directly linked to the local centre although it does not form part of it. The relative location of these facilities has evolved through joint working with the local authorities in the knowledge that the Phase 1 application is not strictly compliant with this policy.

5.17 As referred to within section 4, key design principles for the Phase 1 master plan include ensuring that a vibrant local centre is created and that the primary school is at the heart of the development. To enhance its vibrancy and provide a gateway to Northstowe the local centre has been sited on the B1050 where passing trade will be maximised. The primary school has been sited to be more central to Phase 1 and adjacent to one of the key greenways to encourage families to cycle and walk to school. The proposal is considered to offer a sustainable alternative to that prescribed within policy NS/6.



5.18 Policy NS/6 also states that local centres should be located with the aim that all residents are within 600m of the town centre or a local centre and the majority within 400m. While the majority of residents will be within 600m of the Phase 1 local centre some will not, although those that are not will be within close proximity to a local bus service that will link to the local centre.

5.19 Policy NS/7 refers to an adequate and continuous supply of land being provided for housing with at least 4,800 dwellings by 2016, and a target of 10,000 dwellings beyond that date. Given the passage of time, and delay in the commencement of development at Northstowe associated with the downturn in the economy from 2008 and more recently the withdrawal of funding for the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton scheme in October 2010, it is no longer feasible to deliver 4,800 dwellings on the site by 2016. Subject to planning permission the proposed development will enable a significant number of dwellings to be constructed to contribute towards this requirement. The Development Framework Document incorporates provision for a target of 10,000 dwellings across the whole Northstowe site as part of the later phases of development (including the reserve land to the north west of Phase 1).

5.20 Policy NS/7 also refers to a net housing density of at least 40 dwellings per ha across the whole of the town. While the Phase 1 proposal has an average density of 37.5 dwellings per ha, slightly below this requirement, there are ample opportunities for higher density development in later phases of Northstowe, particularly around the town centre. As set out within the Development Framework Document this requirement will be met when considered in the context of the whole town.

5.21 Policy NS/27 refers to the submission of management strategies for services, facilities, landscape and infrastructure being submitted to the local planning authority for adoption prior to the granting of outline planning permission. Details such as this are not available at the outline stage, but the key principles are set out within the Design and Access Statement. It is envisaged that further details will be addressed via some form of planning condition on any future consent.

National planning policy

5.22 Appendix 3 includes a schedule of the existing and emerging national planning policy documents that are relevant to the consideration of this planning application.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.23 The draft NPPF was subject to consultation between July and October 2011. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is currently in the process of reviewing the comments received and ministers have committed to publishing the final NPPF by 31 March 2012.

5.24 The content of the draft NPPF is considered below, in the context of the key PPSs.

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development (January 2005) and Planning and Climate Change supplement (December 2007)

5.25 This document sets out the national policy for the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It states that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable development and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development, encouraging the efficient use of land, sustainable building techniques and the use of alternative methods of travel to the car.



5.26 Paragraph 36 identifies key objectives for new developments, which include:

- They are sustainable, durable, adaptable and make efficient and prudent use of resources
- They optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses, (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments)
- They create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion
- They are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

5.27 The draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights the importance of the planning system in contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and that delivering sustainable development means planning for prosperity (an economic role), planning for people (a social role) and planning for places (an environmental role). It notes that good design is a key element in this. It also outlines the presumption in favour of sustainable development highlighting the governments commitment to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. It states at paragraph 13 that “Planning must operate to encourage growth and not act as an impediment.” Paragraph 14 highlights that local planning authorities should “approve development proposals that accord with statutory plans without delay” unless the adverse impacts of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

5.28 Paragraphs 124 to 132 of the draft NPPF address the government’s objective to create sustainable communities by creating a built environment that facilitates social interaction and inclusive communities; delivers the right community facilities, schools, hospitals and services to meet local needs; and ensures



access to open spaces and recreational facilities that promote the health and well-being of the community.

5.29 The development proposal embraces the principles of sustainable development, the objectives outlined in paragraph 36 of PPS1 and the draft NPPF and will achieve the highest levels of urban design to ensure the creation of a sustainable community. As demonstrated throughout this application, any adverse residual impacts of the proposal will be subject to appropriate mitigation. Any harm caused is minimal and the benefits significantly exceed that harm.

5.30 In addition to the draft NPPF, the government has published a number of documents in relation to its approach to growth. The ministerial statement Planning for Growth (March 2011) states that:

“To further ensure that development can go ahead, all local authorities should reconsider, at developers request, existing section 106 agreements that currently render schemes

unviable, and where possible modify those obligations to allow development to proceed; provided this continues to ensure that the development remains acceptable in planning terms.”

5.31 The principle of being realistic with regard to viability should clearly also apply to requests for section 106 planning obligations in relation to planning applications compared to previous requests.

5.32 The ministerial statement goes on to state clearly that:

“in determining planning applications, local planning authorities ... should ensure that they give appropriate weight to the need to support economic recovery, that applications that secure sustainable growth are treated favourably.”

5.33 The government has advised that both the draft NPPF and Planning for Growth should be treated as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

PPS3 Housing (June 2011)

5.34 National planning policy for housing is set out in PPS3, and requires local planning authorities to set out overall levels for housing delivery for the district for at least 15 years. Northstowe is included as a major development site within SCDC's LDF to achieve this requirement.

5.35 PPS3 also includes a requirement for all local planning authorities to identify a rolling supply of land for housing. They are required to demonstrate that they have a five-year housing supply of deliverable sites. The draft NPPF emphasises that the government's key housing objective is to increase significantly the delivery of new homes and retains the five-year supply requirement but also refers to including an additional allowance of at least 20% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

5.36 The development will make a valuable contribution to housing land supply in the Cambridge area. The five-year land supply (2011-2016) for South Cambridgeshire at December 2010 was calculated at 2.7 years based on Core Strategy policy ST/2. The housing trajectory on which this was based included 800 dwelling completions from Northstowe.

5.37 If no development occurs on the Northstowe site during this period then the shortfall in the five-year supply required by PPS3 will be even more significant. It is worth noting paragraph 110 of the draft NPPF in relation to this matter. It states that "planning permission should be granted where relevant policies are out of date, for example where a local authority cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five year supply of deliverable housing sites."

PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment (March 2010)

5.38 PPS5 sets out the government's national planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. The government's

overarching aim, enshrined in planning policy at all levels is that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. Heritage assets include those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest.

5.39 Chapter 5 (cultural heritage) of the submitted ES addresses built heritage and landscape features and archaeology. Chapter 4 (landscape and visual effects of the ES) also includes an assessment of the potential impact of the development on Longstanton conservation area to the south west.

5.40 The ES concludes that although there will be some harm as a result of the phased approach to archaeological investigation, the proposed mitigation, which includes preservation in situ of known archaeological sites and a comprehensive scheme of archaeological investigation will result in a substantial beneficial impact with respect to archaeology. This is due to the knowledge that will be gained of on site archaeology during the excavation works. The ES also concludes that as a result of the proposed layout and area of green separation along the western edge of the site any adverse effect on the setting of Longstanton conservation area will only be moderate to slight.

5.41 As such the proposal is considered to meet the objectives of national and local planning policy with respect to the protection of cultural heritage.

Planning Policy Statement 9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2005)

5.42 PPS9 seeks to promote sustainable development by conserving and enhancing biological and geological diversity; conserving, enhancing and restoring England's wildlife and ensuring that development proposals take account of the role and value of biodiversity.

Natural heritage

5.43 Site surveys have been undertaken in accordance with national and local policy guidance. A suite of surveys were undertaken by WSP Environmental Ltd in 2007, and were used to determine which protected species surveys were required during 2011 to updated the baseline conditions. These were an extended phase 1 habitat survey, amphibian, badger, bat, invertebrate, reptile, water vole and otter surveys. These surveys form part of Technical Appendix C (Natural Heritage) of the ES.

5.44 As set out in full within chapter 6 of the ES, the proposal will lead to the loss of the arable and grassland habitats on site, which will result in a moderate, significant adverse effect. The proposal incorporates a range of new habitats, including the eastern water park to mitigate effects on other habitat types including hedgerows, scrub, woodland, scattered trees, ponds and ditches in addition to the planting of new meadow and wet grassland. These measures together with the ecological enhancement measures set out within section 4 provide opportunities to enhance the natural environment and biodiversity. The new habitats will be subject to an ecological management plan to enhance their value. The creation and management of these new habitats will ensure that there will be no other significant effects as a result of habitat loss. A programme of best practice mitigation measures will be put in place through a construction environmental management plan to prevent significant adverse effects on retained habitats during construction.

Agricultural land

5.45 The proposal will result in the loss of existing agricultural land, however, the application site is allocated for development in the Local Development Framework and is therefore compliant with policy NE/17 of the DCPDPD.

Landscape and visual effects

5.46 Desk and field studies were undertaken to evaluate the landscape in and around the site, and to identify potential views and visual receptors. Several were selected to provide representative viewpoints from various locations and agreed with SCDC.

5.47 The introduction of new built development will inevitably result in an effect on the landscape character and views of the site. However this must be considered in the context of the site's allocation for development. As detailed within chapter 4 of the ES no significant effects are predicted on the wider landscape character areas.

5.48 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.

5.49 The proposal's compliance with other national planning policy is addressed within section 6.



6. Planning considerations and local benefits

6.1 This section includes details of the various material planning considerations that should be taken into account when determining this outline planning application.

6.2 Northstowe has been established as a commitment in the planning strategy for the Cambridge area for many years with the involvement of the local communities and has the support of SCDC and CCC.

6.3 The delivery of Northstowe with housing, employment, commercial and recreation facilities will make an important contribution to the economic growth of the Cambridge area. It will assist in meeting the demand and need for market and affordable housing. The proposal for Phase 1 is consistent with the delivery of homes and places advocated by the government in its localism agenda and the draft NPPF.



Loss of the golf course and driving range

6.4 Concerns were raised in relation to the loss of the existing golf course and driving range during public consultation on the proposed development. While this is an existing use, the area is allocated in adopted local planning policy for the development of Northstowe. The principle of the loss of the golf course has therefore already been established in planning terms following the examination in public of the NAAP. With regard to the timing of the loss of this facility in the context of the phased approach, reference should be made to the justification provided in section 2.

6.5 Notwithstanding this, the loss of the golf course and driving range must be considered in the context of the significant new recreational facilities that will be provided as part of the proposed development, including the sports hub, formal and informal open space and community building. The provision of these facilities and the wider benefits that they will provide is considered to outweigh the loss of the golfing facilities.

6.6 A number of respondents to the public consultation suggested that the golf course should be reprovided elsewhere. The Inspector who held the public examination into the NAAP gave full consideration to this issue as part of the development of Northstowe. He concluded that it should not as this would adversely affect the sustainability of the development due to the potential financial repercussions. He also noted that there is a relatively good supply of golf facilities in the Northstowe area (paragraph 15.19, Inspectors' Report of the Examination into the NAAP, June 2007).



The importance of the delivery of Northstowe

6.7 Aside from the importance of delivery from a housing land supply perspective, there are a number of other key reasons why the delivery of a first phase of development at Northstowe is vital to the future success of South Cambridgeshire district and Cambridgeshire county.

Cambridgeshire Guided Busway

6.8 The importance of development at Northstowe, even partially completed, to the business case of the guided bus system was estimated in 2004 at a forecasted patronage (Origins of CGB Users) of 4,440 trips and 22% of total CGB service patronage for 2016 daily trips. This was reinforced in evidence at the CGB inquiry in September 2004 by the county county's consultants. Indeed it has been suggested that it would be doubtful if the CGB would be viable in the long term if Northstowe were not built.

Growth Area Delivery Grant, Community Infrastructure Fund and other funding programmes

6.9 Since the publication of The Sustainable Communities Plan in 2003, various Government funding programmes have delivered infrastructure and services to support the growth of new communities and growth corridors including the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth corridor. The Northstowe project has benefited directly and indirectly from:

- Growth Area Delivery Grant
- Community Infrastructure Fund
- Growth Area Fund
- Housing Growth Fund

6.10 The directly related, physical works include:

- A contribution to the build costs of the Oakington Sports Pavilion
- Northstowe Area Footpath and Cycleway Network Project
- Eco-town funding towards the new exhibition building at the P&R and retro-fitting of RE infrastructure on homes at Rampton Drift
- Various improvements to roads and cycleways

6.11 Other non-physical and less directly related work has also been justified by the delivery of Northstowe including proposals for:

- Governance
- IT
- Community buildings
- Renewable energy
- Improvements to green space including at Fen Drayton Lakes

6.12 The total amount of Government funding spent directly or indirectly to benefit Northstowe since about 2004 has been approximately £11 million.

New Homes Bonus

6.13 In April 2011, the government announced the commencement of the New Homes Bonus, which match funds the additional council tax raised for new homes and empty properties brought back into use, with an additional amount for affordable homes, for the following six years.

6.14 In a five year period Phase 1 of Northstowe would generate approximately £15million total New Homes Bonus funding for SCDC and CCC to be paid during and beyond this period as a result of council tax matched

funding for six years from the date of each dwelling completion. This is a further significant benefit associated with the delivery of a first phase of development at Northstowe and an important financial consideration to be taken into account.

6.15 The amount of funding that the Northstowe project has received and the funding it will generate in the future are significant, positive material considerations to take into account in the determination of the Phase 1 planning application. This is consistent with and supported by The Localism Act 2011 (section 143 of part 6, chapter 7).

Creating a sustainable mixed use community

6.16 As detailed throughout this application consideration has been given during the preparation of the master plan to the principles of sustainable development set out within PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development, the draft NPPF and the policies within SCDC's Core Strategy, DCPDPD and the NAAP. These include:

- Reducing the need to travel by private car by locating development adjacent to a key public transport node and promoting a range of sustainable travel modes
- Making the best use of previously developed land and minimising the loss of countryside and the best and most versatile agricultural land
- Encouraging community involvement in the development of proposals
- Promoting high quality and inclusive design
- Promoting social cohesion and inclusion
- Providing the necessary infrastructure to support the development
- Protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment
- Tackling climate change

6.17 Ensuring Phase 1 itself creates a sustainable mixed-use community has been central to the key design principles of the master plan referred to within section 4. Details of how the proposals meet the objectives of the Cambridgeshire Quality Chapter for Growth are included within the Design and Access Statement.



Exemplar 'green' travel

Promoting sustainability and tackling climate change

6.18 Northstowe will be planned, designed and promoted as a sustainable new community, limiting energy use and promoting healthy lifestyles. Reducing environmental impacts is central to the master plan, with water conservation, 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.

6.19 SDCDC and CCC have clearly defined targets relating to sustainable design and construction for new development within their administrative area. The Energy Statement submitted in support of this application, sets out how the proposal meets the councils' requirements for sustainable energy.

6.20 Phase 1 will be developed to Code for Sustainable Homes Code Level 4 in accordance with the requirements of any amendment to the Code for Sustainable Homes and to the Building Regulations (2013 and 2106), should these be introduced, and any subsequent amendments to take account of the government's final decision on low/zero carbon requirements and the scope for off-site allowable solutions. Meeting the requirements for Code Level 4 in respect of energy, water conservation and other credit earning measures and the additional costs involved, will require a balance to be struck between this commitment to sustainability and other competing requirements of Northstowe, which represents a major development scheme.

6.21 The proposed development will use enhanced fabric in the construction of the buildings and microgeneration technologies such as solar and photovoltaic panels as well as connection to existing conventional utilities. As set out in detail within the Energy Statement, the use of enhanced energy efficiency measures will exceed a 25% reduction in regulated CO² emissions over Building Regulations (2006) and enable the Zero Carbon Hub Fabric Energy

Efficiency Standards to be met, in accordance with policy NE/1 of DCPDPD. The microgeneration proposals will enable between 11% and 15% of energy to be provided from low carbon or renewable energy technologies in accordance with policy NE/3 of the DCPDPD. In addition to this, in line with the joint promoters' aspirations for Northstowe and the NAAP, a number of exemplar sustainability projects are being explored for the proposed development to increase the proportion above 20%.

6.22 Future phases of Northstowe will build upon the experience of Phase 1 and embrace emerging technologies as they develop for on and off-site provision, including the possible use of district heating for the higher density areas including the town centre. Specific consideration is also being given to the potential for medium scale wind turbines on the Hatton's Road approach to Northstowe from the west. The scale of Northstowe means that it is a long-term project that will be undertaken over a period of 20 years therefore flexibility to meet changing circumstances, technological and environmental change, and in terms of overall value and viability, will be important to ensure the future proofing of the development to cope with the challenge of climate change.

A strategy to minimise and manage waste

6.23 A Waste Management Strategy, including a site waste management plan (SWMP) and waste design guide toolkit has been prepared in support of the application to demonstrate how waste prevention, reduction and recovery will be pursued throughout the development of the site. The statement includes indicative details of the volume and type of material to be demolished and/or excavated, opportunities for the re-use and recovery of materials, and demonstrates how



off-site disposal of waste will be minimised and managed. This is in accordance with national policy objectives and best practice guidelines.

6.24 The SWMP will be progressed and adopted by the principal contractor when appointed following submission of reserved matters planning applications.

Achieving quality design

6.25 The principles of achieving quality design have been at the core of the project, acknowledging the value that good design adds in terms of environmental performance, community and social well being and commercial viability. They also enable the creation of a legible and permeable built environment that responds to and embraces neighbouring land uses and creates a positive environment for new residents.

6.26 The design-led approach respects the grain of the surrounding landscape, both built and open, and complements the character of the surrounding area in terms of scale and quality, whilst introducing significantly enhanced accessibility and ease of movement into and around the site in accordance with policy DP/2 of the DCPDPD.

6.27 Design is addressed in full within the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

Meeting affordable housing need

6.28 SCDC's Annual Monitoring Report (December 2010) notes that *"the availability of housing that is affordable and accessible to those in need in South Cambridgeshire is a major and growing issue."*

6.29 As in many parts of the country there are real constraints in terms of earnings and housing costs that prevent many local people from accessing home ownership within the district. In current market and economic conditions, this situation will not ease in the foreseeable future. Affordable housing providers are not able to plug the gap by themselves – they need s.106 opportunities and adequate

grant funding. Both are in short supply, and the government's Comprehensive Spending Review only exacerbated this problem.

6.30 Northstowe is allocated within the Local Development Framework to contribute towards market and affordable housing needs in the area, but development needs to come forward to achieve this. In light of the current position regarding the A14 the proposed phased approach will enable the site to begin making that important contribution alongside improvement works.

6.31 Further details in relation to the delivery of affordable housing are included within the Affordable Housing Statement at appendix 4.

6.32 This application is key to the delivery of the much-needed new private and affordable homes in the area.

Provision of employment

6.33 The proposed employment land for Phase 1 extends to 5 ha, in accordance with policy NS/8 of the NAAP, which refers to the provision of 'approximately' 5 ha. The NAAP also highlights at paragraph D4.4 that the crucial factor is number of jobs as opposed to land provision.



6.34 In addition to the household recycling centre (1.25 ha) required by policy CS16 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (July 2011) and policy SSP W1 of the Minerals and Waste Site Specific Proposals DPD (February 2012) and foul water pumping station, the proposed employment mix for Phase 1 seeks to provide a greater proportion of higher employment generating B1 uses (50% = 1.82 ha) than of B2 (40% = 1.46 ha) and B8 (10% = 0.36 ha), thus increasing the potential number of jobs that will be generated. The proposed level of direct employment, based on the above mix is set out within table 3.

Table 3 - Approx no. of jobs associated with employment land

	B1 (offices)	B2 (general industrial)	B8 (storage and distribution)
Floorspace (based on two storeys and floor area to site ratio of 1:3 or 35%)	6370sqm	5096sqm	1274sqm
Job density (sqm per job) ¹	20	35	60
Sub total jobs (approx.)	319	146	21
Household recycling centre		15 ²	
Total jobs (approx.)	319	161	21

¹ Based on a combination of floorspace multipliers provided in Employment Densities: A Full Guide (English Partnerships, 2001), appendix D of "Employment Land Reviews (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2004) and Employment Densities Guide (Homes and Communities Agency, 2010)

² Based on a similar facility at Witchford, East Cambridgeshire.

6.35 The calculations for B1 use within table 3 assume two storey development, but the proposal allows for development up to 13m in this location (three storeys). The employment generation associated with B1 uses could therefore potentially be greater than 319 jobs.

6.36 Policy NS/8 of the NAAP refers to small-scale local B1 employment being provided within local centres as required. The 5 ha provision does not take account of such uses within the Phase 1 mixed-use local centre, which will include a community building, and floorspace for potential provision for non-residential institutions (eg crèche, library, place of worship), financial and professional services, shops, cafes and restaurants, drinking establishments, and hot food take aways. Employment will also be generated by the three-form entry primary school (approximately 57 jobs based on one member of staff per 11 pupils – based on Department for Education School Workforce in England, January 2010).

6.37 The employment land will be provided as serviced land and marketed by Gallagher, but its physical delivery will be in partnership with SCDC, CCC and the Local Enterprise Partnership, in accordance with the latest economic development strategies.

Improving drainage

6.38 As referred to within section 4, a comprehensive drainage strategy has been designed for Northstowe, which is considered by the Environment Agency to be an exemplar scheme. A summary of the strategy is set out below. Full details are included within chapter 11 (Water, flooding and drainage) of the ES includes as a technical appendix, a Flood Risk Assessment undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy 25 Development and Flood Risk (March 2010).

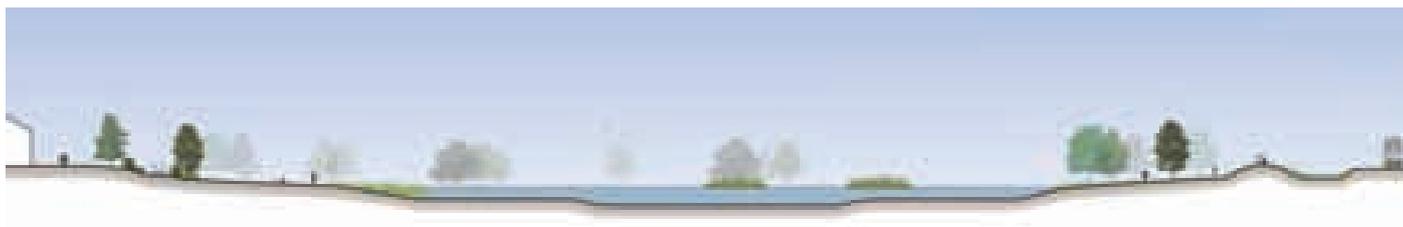


Figure 14: Cross section of Eastern Water Park

Summary of drainage strategy for Northstowe

6.39 Northstowe is primarily located within two river catchments and the majority of the town will drain to the Beck Brook/Cottenham Lode to the east. The northern 'reserve' area (to the north west of the application site) will drain primarily to the Longstanton Brook/ Swavesey Drain to the west.

6.40 Historically, the Longstanton Brook/ Swavesey watercourses have caused flooding within the villages of Longstanton and Oakington. However, the Northstowe drainage strategy will provide flood attenuation areas on these watercourses upstream of Oakington and Longstanton by holding back peak flood flows and mitigating this existing flooding risk. This drainage system will operate independently of Northstowe's.

6.41 For Northstowe, the general principle is to reduce flood risk by holding back surface water in attenuation areas (water parks) located around the edge of the town. The eastern water park (the first half of which is being delivered as part of Phase 1) provides primary attenuation areas and a significant amenity and forms part of the green infrastructure for the town. Its drainage function is designed to have sufficient capacity to cope with requirements for holding back surface water. The water park is designed to have enough capacity for subsequent storms allowing time for the water park to drain down. The water

is to be pumped using two pumping stations via culverts under the CGB into the existing drainage channels of Cottenham Lode/Beck Brook to the east. These pumping stations will be controlled via a telemetry system and only pump when the rivers are not in flood.

6.42 Additional attenuation facilities will be provided within the town as part of later phases of development where the land drains away from the water park, within the northern 'reserve' land and along the Airfield Road between Longstanton and Oakington.

6.43 The creation of the surface water management system requires alterations to the levels of the site. Land needs to be raised to above the flood levels in the Beck Brook to drain the town. The newly created attenuation areas require large excavations to enable the floodwater to be held back. These works have been planned to ensure that there is a balance and it is anticipated that no material will be imported to or exported from the site.

6.44 Within the town, drains will utilise sustainable drainage techniques and will use open water channels designed to be easily accessible for maintenance and visually overlooked from surrounding buildings and open space areas. A regular inspection regime together with public surveillance will help to ensure they are maintained/managed. Along with the water park, they will be a key feature of Northstowe, ensuring that water pervades the landscape of the new town.

Water conservation

6.45 In this part of the UK, water is a precious resource and the Northstowe development aspires to treat it as such. Whilst the local water companies have confirmed that they can supply the development with water and treat and dispose of the sewage, the joint promoters of Northstowe are keen to minimise the impact of the development on local water resources.

6.46 A Water Conservation Strategy has been submitted in support of the Phase 1 application, which sets out the measures to achieve this objective. This includes:

- Water demand reduction through demand minimisation and reuse
- Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) in order to treat surface water runoff and provide ecological and amenity benefits
- An aspiration to instil the need to save water into the minds of the residents of Northstowe and surrounding areas as part of a wider living sustainable strategy for the site

6.47 In addition, in order to contribute towards meeting wider aspirational objectives Northstowe seeks to:

- Introduce pilot projects in parts of the development designed to monitor, control and appraise emerging technologies such as rainwater harvesting and grey water systems in order to understand how they are used, their reliability and the true sustainable benefit they present
- Provide a mechanism for local and regional projects to educate the end users about the importance of saving water and the benefits it can bring to the region
- Work with the water companies to encourage the reduction of water demand throughout the region and building on the education of residents through retrofitting existing dwellings with water saving features such as flow restrictors at taps and cistern capacity reduction

Improving ground conditions and avoiding pollution

6.48 In accordance with PPS23 Planning and Pollution Control (November 2004), which seeks to protect surface and groundwater resources and ensure that contamination will not be a threat to the health of future users or occupiers of the site or adjoining land, chapter 10 (Geology, hydrogeology and contamination) of the ES addresses the issue of ground conditions. A range of mitigation measures are proposed to ensure that there are no significant effects as a result of the development.

Protecting air quality and the noise environment

Air quality

6.49 Chapter 8 of the ES addresses the issue of air quality. The main focus for assessment was the traffic-related pollutants nitrogen dioxide and fine particulate matter, although construction dust was also addressed.

6.50 During the construction process, there is the potential for increased dust and particulate generation from activities such as site preparation, earthworks and transport and storage of materials. A range of best practice mitigation measures will be put in place through the Construction Management Strategy to minimise the potential for adverse effects on local sensitive receptors from increased dust and particulate generation. These measures will include sheeting of lorries, wheel-washing, covering or screening stockpiles, having regard to wind direction during dust-generating activities and covering / vegetating completed earthworks as soon as possible.

6.51 It is likely that the most significant dust generating activities will take place during the early years of construction, while earthworks are in progress. Once the bulk of these works are

completed, the proposed allotments and sports pitches will create a buffer between existing receptors and Longstanton, which will help to reduce the potential for dust nuisance during later stages of the construction process.

6.52 The modelling undertaken to predict emissions related to post-construction traffic activities showed that there will be no significant increase in the concentrations of the traffic pollutants as a result of the proposed development.

Noise and vibration

6.53 As set out in detail within chapter 9 of the ES (noise and vibration) during the construction process, there is the potential for increased noise from demolition of buildings associated with the golf course, site preparation, earthworks and building activities. A range of best practice mitigation measures will be put in place through the Construction Management Strategy to ensure that there will be no significant effects on local sensitive receptors from increased noise during construction.

6.54 The potential for increased vibration during construction was also examined. The ES concludes that no significant effects are predicted on existing sensitive receptors and no mitigation measures are required.

6.55 Modelling of post-construction traffic flows has shown that there will be no significant increases in traffic noise at local sensitive receptors. The potential for noise associated with other elements of the proposed development was also considered. Noise limits have been identified for fixed plant associated with the proposed employment area and household recycling centre. Plant items will be selected at the detailed design stage to comply with these limits and ensure there will be no significant

adverse effects. In addition, plant will be located as far as possible from residential areas, and screened where necessary, and no plant will operate in the evenings or at night. The operating hours of the household recycling centre will be set to minimise the potential for noise effects. Measures will also be put in place to minimise the potential for noise effects associated with the proposed sports pitches, such as restrictions on the time of use and consideration of the need for boundary fencing.

6.56 The potential for existing noise sources to affect the proposed development was also examined and mitigation measures specified to ensure that the internal and external noise levels meet relevant standards. These include the use of specified double glazing, consideration at the detailed design stage of site and internal building layouts to maximise screening from noise sources and the potential for use of acoustic barriers in some areas if required.

Sustainable travel

6.57 Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 Transport (January 2011) sets out the government's objectives for transport within new developments. The objectives of the guidance are to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional and local level to:

- Promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and for moving freight
- Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling
- Reduce the need to travel, especially by car

6.58 A comprehensive Transport Assessment (TA) has been undertaken in relation to the proposed development and is included as a Technical Appendix to chapter 7 (traffic and



transport) of the submitted ES, along with residential, school and workplace framework travel plans. The TA examines the effects of the development on the road network both during and post construction and in particular the following issues:

- Construction traffic
- Severance
- Pedestrian / cycle amenity
- Driver stress and delay
- Accidents

6.59 The assessment concludes that there are negligible impacts on traffic flow as a result of the proposed development. The proposal includes a package of measures to mitigate these impacts (see planning obligation / draft scope for S106 heads of terms at appendix 5). These include:

- A permeable network of footways and cycleways which link to external routes and avoid existing roads thereby providing a significantly improved pedestrian and cycle network in the area
- Enhanced access to high quality public transport services, with enhanced bus services on the B1050 – including an extension to the ‘Citi 5’ bus service to Longstanton and into the site. Through this provision, in combination with the CGB, all homes will be within 400m of a bus service offering at least a 20 minute frequency of service to Cambridge city centre
- Site access junctions that preserve journey time reliability on local roads
- Rigorous resident, workplace and school travel plans to change existing travel characteristics

Contributions to local infrastructure

6.60 The applicant is prepared to enter into a planning obligation commensurate with the size of the development, taking account of the associated financial constraints of the development of the site and the viability assessment of the scheme which is being undertaken jointly by the joint promoters and the local authorities. The applicant seeks to ensure that as a major development, the proposal has a positive impact for neighbouring residents and surrounding land uses. Therefore, in accordance with the requirements outlined by SCDC in its Local Development Framework, the applicant will make contributions to ensure sufficient social infrastructure is provided to support the development as set out in the broad scope draft heads of terms for the planning obligation, included as appendix 5 to this document.



6.61 Where possible, these provisions will be made on-site with the provision of children’s play space and public open space for the use of new residents and the wider community in accordance with policy DP/4 of the DCPDPD.

6.62 The proposed development will give rise to a need for additional school places. A three-form entry primary school is included as part of the Phase 1 proposal. It is proposed to make a financial contribution of an agreed sum per secondary school pupil to Cambridgeshire County Council through a planning obligation, or by the payment of a tariff, roof tax or other payment method. As referred to previously there is potential to provide interim secondary school provision within the primary school.

6.63 In accordance with policy NS/10 of the NAAP public highway and access improvements on the B1050 Station Road and surrounding road network will ensure that any additional traffic generated will not have an adverse impact. More sustainable modes of transport will be encouraged by contributions towards the network of cycleways and footpaths in the locality. This will provide current and future residents with a safer means of travelling by a range of modes, particularly between Longstanton village and the P&R, helping to reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle.

6.64 The proposed development has been developed taking into account the strategic infrastructure requirements for the whole of Northstowe. Phase 1 will bring forward strategic flood attenuation works to mitigate the risk of local flooding in Longstanton. Highway and busway links and utilities within the site will be designed and delivered to connect with Phase 2 and later phases of development. Phase 1 is entirely consistent with the Framework Master Plan for Northstowe and will not therefore result in a piecemeal and unsatisfactory form of development. Equally, the proposal will not prejudice development of any sites adjacent to or nearby the development. The proposal is entirely compliant with policy DP/5 of the DCPDPD in this regard.

Community services and facilities strategy

6.65 A range of publicly provided services and facilities will be delivered across Northstowe, in part within Phase 1, in accordance with policy NS/9 of the NAAP. The submitted parameters plans and indicative master plan include sufficient land to accommodate a mix of uses, via provision of new buildings or serviced land. The process for delivering such services and facilities for Phase 1, including the type and quantum to be provided, will be subject to discussions between the applicant and key stakeholders including SCDC and CCC (guided by work being overseen by the Northstowe Public Service Group) and will feed into the planning obligation and planning conditions. The detailed provision will then be subject to separate reserved matters planning applications following the grant of outline consent.

Commercial services and facilities strategy

6.66 Northstowe will also accommodate a mix of commercial services and facilities, part of which will be delivered within Phase 1, primarily within the local centre. The quantum of provision for Phase 1 has been informed by a Local Centre Strategy and Retail Needs Assessment (incorporating a Retail Capacity Assessment), which is submitted in support of this application. Additional work will also be undertaken in relation to the provision of commercial services and facilities in support of the planning applications for future phases of development.

6.67 With regard to Phase 1, the applicant will work closely with SCDC and potential service providers with regard to the delivery of the facilities required to support the proposed development, in accordance with policy NS/9 of the NAAP. It is important to note that ultimately the provision of commercial facilities and services is subject to market factors, which are outside the control of the joint promoters.

Services and utilities provision

6.68 PPS1 and policies DP/4 and NE/9 of the DCPDPD seek to ensure that appropriate infrastructure and facilities required to serve a development are available or will be delivered in an agreed timescale.

6.69 In order to ensure a comprehensive approach to service and utilities provision a utilities strategy has been developed for the whole of Northstowe with the requirements of the Phase 1 development also identified. Utilities within the site will be designed and delivered to connect with Phase 2 and later phases of development.

6.70 A Strategic Utility Report (including a foul sewage assessment) has been undertaken and submitted in support of the Phase 1 application. Following consultation with the relevant providers, this identifies the position in relation to the provision of foul sewage, water, electricity, gas and telecommunication service networks associated with the development and can be summarised as follows:

- Foul drainage – a terminal pumping station is proposed within the employment land to transfer sewage to Uttons Drove Sewage Treatment Works (STW)
- Water supply – a new 300mm diameter branch main will be constructed from the existing trunk mains to the north of Longstanton, following the route of the Longstanton western bypass
- Electricity supply – a number of reinforcements will be required to increase capacity in the area
- Gas supply – some offsite reinforcements will be required to the existing Intermediate Pressure (IP) network to serve the development
- Telecommunications – Gallagher is working with a number of providers to design and deliver a 'Fibre to Home' broadband network to ensure the new residents will have a high speed connection for future telecoms, IT and media purposes

Key considerations

6.71 The proposed development has been carefully considered to ensure that it will meet the requirements and aspirations of the government in terms of national and local planning policy. The application proposal will make a significant contribution towards meeting the housing needs of the district in the form of a sustainable mixed-use development that forms the first phase of the wider development of Northstowe.

6.72 The proposal is in accordance with regional and local planning policy. The joint promoters are committed to delivering a high quality and sustainable development. The proposal embraces the principles of achieving quality design to enable the creation of a legible and permeable built environment that responds to and embraces neighbouring land uses and creates a positive environment for new residents. The design-led approach responds sensitively to its setting, respecting the grain of the surrounding landscape, both built and open, and complementing the character of the surrounding area in terms of scale and quality.

6.73 With regard to the environmental impact of the proposed development, the ES concludes that while there will be a number of changes to the local environment, a range of measures will be put in place to minimise potential significant adverse effects and enhance beneficial effects. The proposed mitigation measures and the residual effects of the proposals that are predicted to remain after mitigation are summarised in more detail in chapter 15 (summary tables) of the ES.

7. Conclusion

7.1 As set out throughout this document, the application proposal represents an important first phase of Northstowe and has been prepared in the context of the Framework Master Plan for the town, which the Phase 1 master plan complements.

7.2 The site is urgently required to contribute towards SCDC's identified five year housing supply, and makes efficient use of previously developed land in accordance with the existing and emerging national and local planning policy.

7.3 The proposal will deliver a high quality environment providing a strong gateway to Northstowe, with sustainability integral to its

design in accordance with the government's objectives to promote sustainable development. The master plan is based on the creation of walkable environments, with excellent access to the local centre, primary school, community facilities and employment area for existing and new residents via a network of greenways. It also provides improved pedestrian and cycle access between the site, Longstanton and Longstanton P&R. Water is a key feature of the site and is integral to the design of the greenways providing a drainage, ecological and informal recreation function. The drainage strategy is exemplar, providing a solution to existing flooding in Longstanton as well as addressing the future drainage of the town.



Illustrative sketch of eastern water park

7.4 Significant areas of formal and informal open space (including a sports hub, eastern water park, allotments and a community orchard) and a comprehensive ecological enhancement strategy will ensure the creation of a highly attractive environment, that people will take pleasure in living and working within. In addition to maximising the opportunity for walking and cycling other sustainable transport measures are a foundation to the delivery of the development. The site's location, adjacent to the Longstanton P&R, ensures that all homes are within 1,000m of this key public transport route, with other existing local public transport services also enhanced as part of the proposal, providing an alternative to car reliance.

7.5 A range of initiatives are promoted to assist the proposed development and ultimately Northstowe become a low carbon town. For instance energy consumption will be minimised through careful design and location of services and land uses, and recycling will be made easier for residents and businesses. Energy efficiency and renewable energy generation through the use of microgeneration technologies will make an important contribution towards

low carbon living. All new homes will be built to Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 and all new homes built from 2016 onwards will be in accordance with the requirements of the amended Building Regulations (2016) and any subsequent amendments to take account of the government's final decision on low/zero carbon requirements.

7.6 As referred to within section 5, paragraph 14 of the draft NPPF local planning authorities should "approve development proposals that accord with statutory plans without delay" unless the adverse impacts of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. As demonstrated throughout this planning application and accompanying ES the proposal is in accordance with local and national planning policy, will provide a number of significant benefits for the area and will not result in any significant residual adverse effects. It is sustainable with respect to planning for prosperity, planning for people and planning for places and as such, is in accordance with all national and local emerging and adopted planning policy.



Delivering a sustainable new community