

Aim of the process

What we, as a group, are trying to achieve for Cambridge

Brookgate participated in the process to help the Council define and realize the vision for the NEC AAP, defined as:

“North East Cambridge will be a socially and economically inclusive, thriving and low-carbon place for innovative living and working; inheritable walkable where everything is on your doorstep”.

North East Cambridge (NEC)

Brookgate sees NEC as a new gateway to the City. It's potential is a sustainable mixed use district anchored by the new Cambridge North railway station.

The neighbourhood has the opportunity to advance resilient design, sustainable modes of transport, and community identity in order to make a significant contribution to Greater Cambridge's future growth needs.

Engagement Process

Brookgate recognises the significant value in a coordinated approach within the Action Area Plan to create a framework to guide a successful delivery, prioritize “place-making”, and integration within the surrounding communities.



Partners involved

Authorities:

Cambridgeshire County Council

Cambridge City Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Stakeholders:

Chesterton Sidings: Brookgate / Network Rail / DBS

Crown Estate

U+I

Trinity Hall Farm/Dencora

Cambridge Science Park

Anglian Water

Facilitator:

Academy of Urbanism Director

Consultants for Brookgate:

Perkins and Will

Bidwells

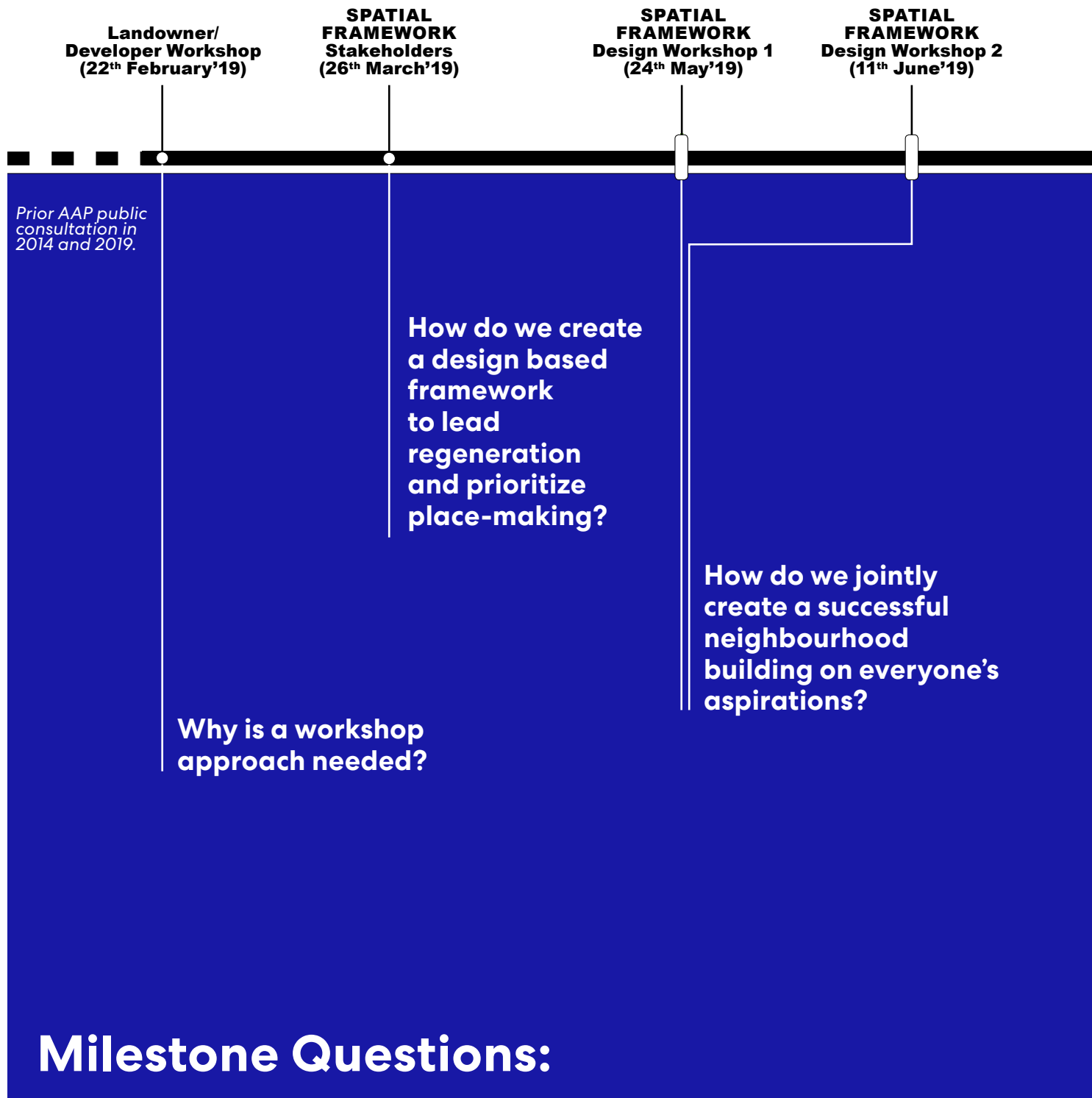
Mott MacDonald

Over **40**
participants in
the course of the
workshop process.

Perkins and Will actively participated in this engagement process between stakeholders, offering its planning and urban design knowledge and experience in regeneration processes involving innovation districts, university campuses, and science locations worldwide.

Timeline

North East Cambridge Area Action Plan_ Spatial Strategy Engagement Process



**GREEN & BLUE
INFRASTRUCTURE
WORKSHOP
(21th June'19)**

**LAND USE &
COMMUNITIES
WORKSHOP
(28th June'19)**

**CONNECTIVITY
WORKSHOP
(4th July'19)**

**FEEDBACK
SESSION
(16th July'19)**

**What will
“High Street”
mean in the
future?**

**What are
the needs of
the existing
and future
community
we are
designing for?**

**Do we have
consensus on
the emerging
spatial
structure?**

**How do we
design
to encourage
active
commuting and
use of public
transport?**

**How do we integrate
natural systems to
create sustainable and
healthy environments?**

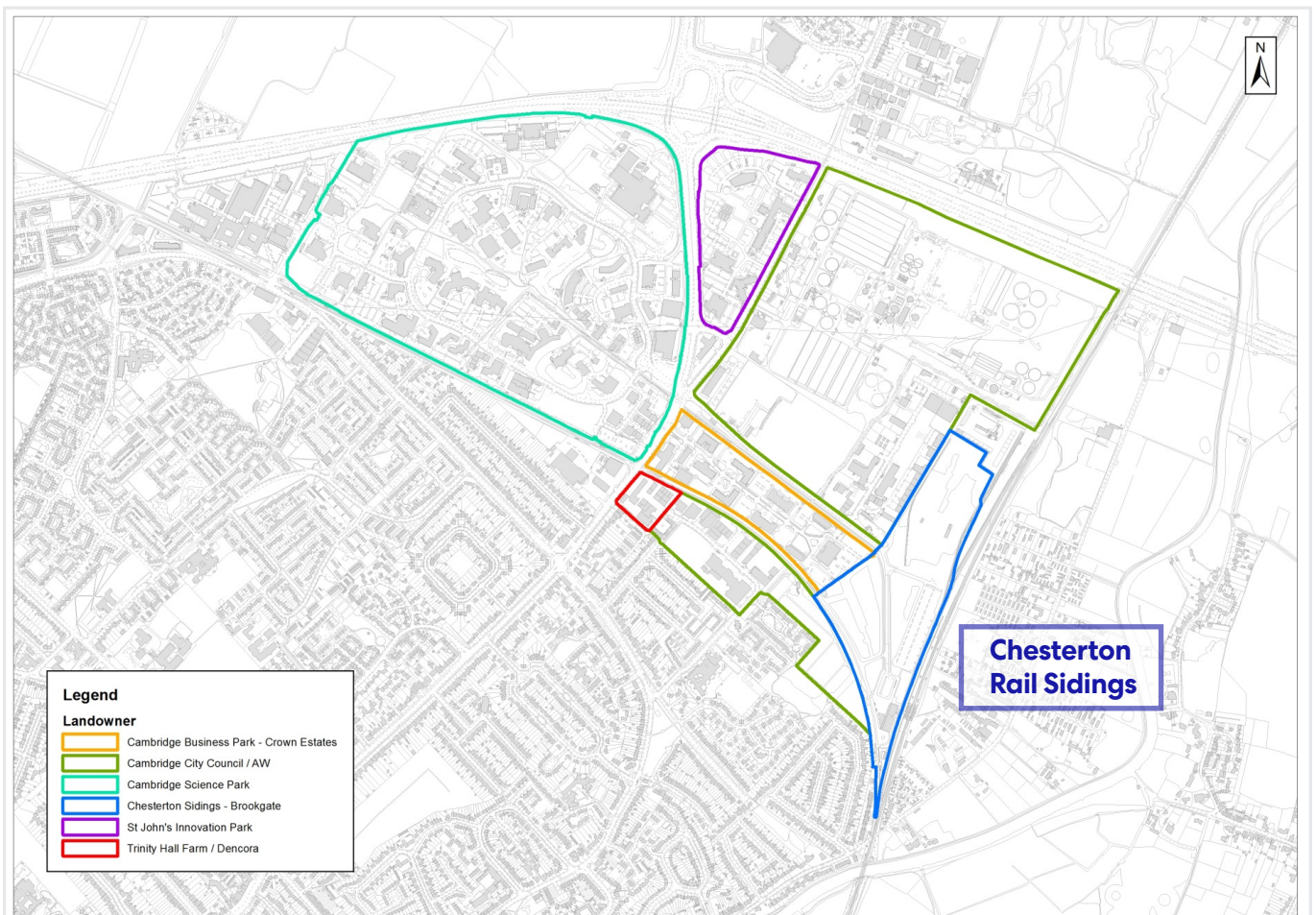
What is a spatial strategy?

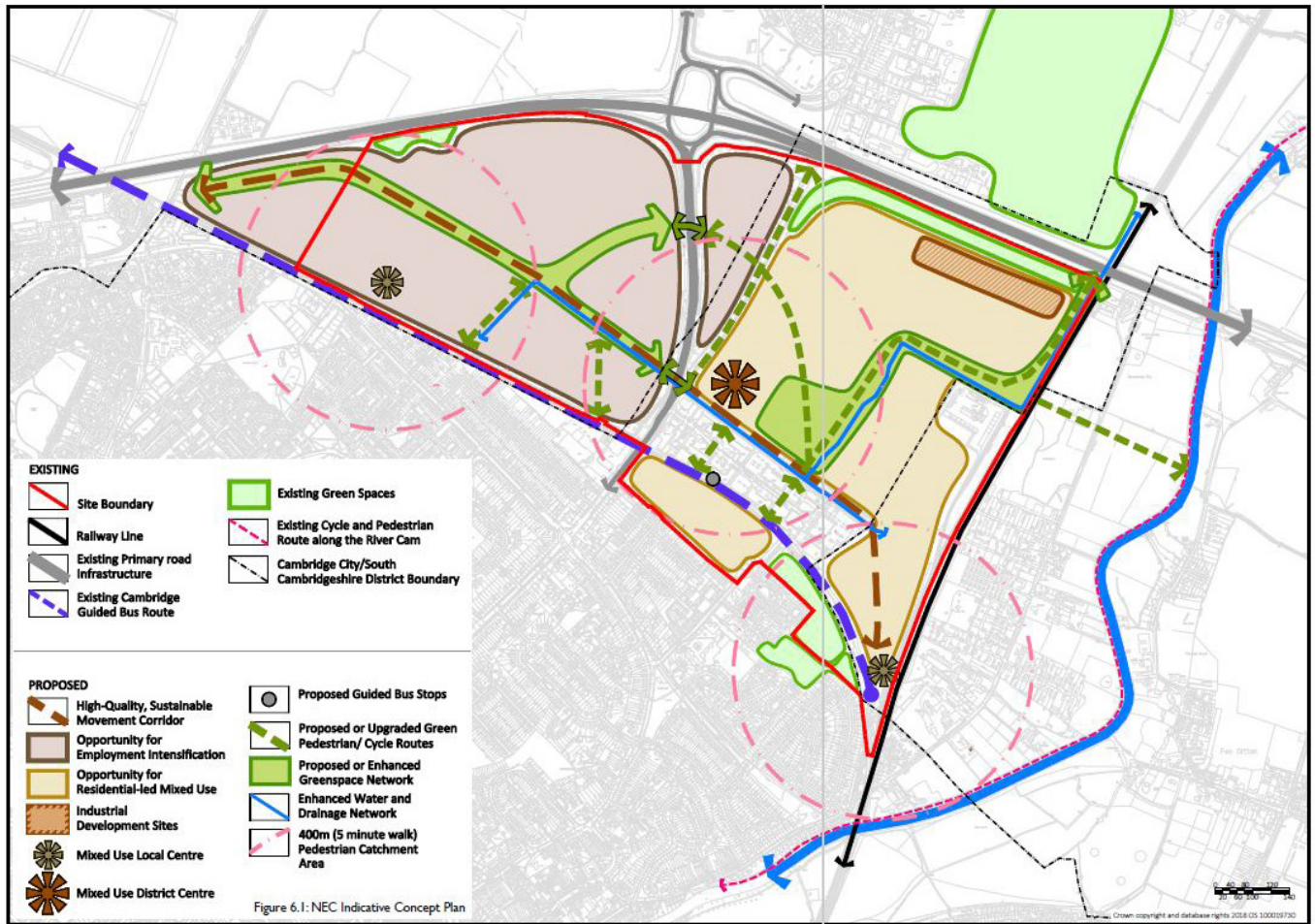
How do we create a design based framework to lead regeneration and prioritize place-making?

NEC AAP Indicative Concept Plan

The spatial strategy started from the diagram contained in the 2014 Cambridge Northern Fringe Area Action Plan consultation document and later revised in the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan: Issues and Options 2019 Report. Through the workshop process this diagram has been refined to incorporate stakeholders ideas and feedback aligned with the City's vision for the North East Cambridge area.

This spatial strategy will incorporate ideas on the main urban structure, densities, mixed of uses, main green corridors, activity hubs or main connectors with the surrounding communities.





Above:
 Spatial Strategy from the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan-
 Issues and Options 2019 Report public consultation process

Left:
 Land owners involved in the process

Collaborative Workshops

Topic led design workshops

How do we jointly create a successful neighbourhood building on everyone's aspirations?

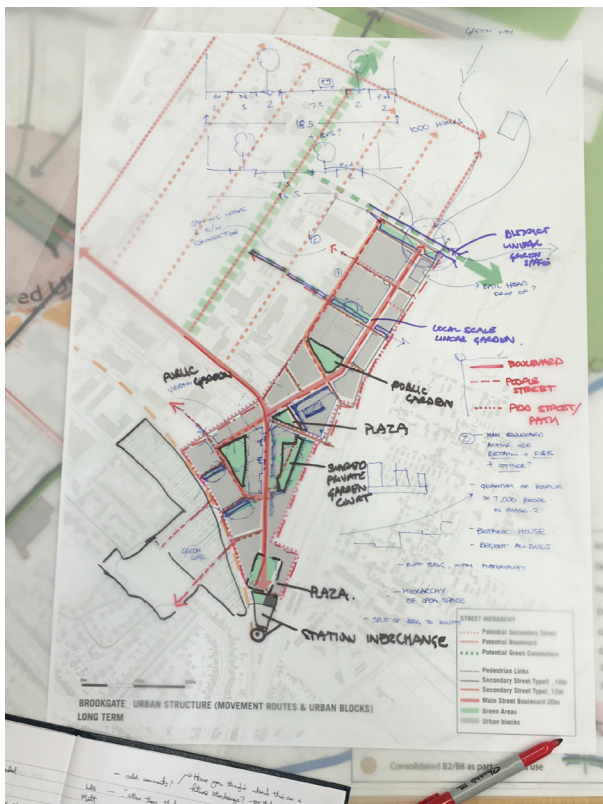
Workshop goals

The workshops were designed to work collaboratively and bring together a coordinated approach to the NEC with the support of the Greater Cambridge Joint Planning Service team, the respective landowners, and their professional teams. This allows alignment on key issues early in the AAP adoption process. Some of the main goals were:

- To map agreed constraints and opportunities for the AAP.
- To understand landowners/developers aspirations.
- To check the AAP vision against draft or existing master plans to ensure they accommodate the main aspects of the vision and that key principles are aligned.
- To facilitate coordination between different landowners, identify areas of collaboration and connections.
- Identify design and infrastructure elements key to deliver a coherent and high-quality new district.

Workshop organisation

The sessions were organized by main topics of interest and targeted to specific outcomes around aspirations, blue/green infrastructure, community facilities, land use, and connectivity. As these were technical workshops, stakeholders committed consultant time to attend and work alongside departments from the Joint Planning Service and Cambridge County Council to give insight, identify innovative opportunities, and enrich the discussion.



Above:
 Combined site specific workshop designs incorporating expert panel feedback
 Chesterton Siding site specific workshop design incorporating expert panel feedback

Spatial Framework

The two first workshops were focused on best urban design practices and how to ensure “**place-making**” was at the heart of the AAP. Community, connectivity, sustainability and identity were some of the pillars identified. The workshops helped to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Workshop 1 included design review insights from an expert panel assembled by the Council.

In terms of **connectivity**, the focus of discussion was how to create a **walkable and integrated urban structure** which encourages **active commuting** and use of **public transport** systems. How to plan against a proposed trip budget, making non-car modes the easiest choice and exploring different options for parking management at district scale, while favouring a balance mix of uses to minimize external trips. For Brookgate this included clarifying street hierarchy and connections to adjacent land ownership.

The **identity** of the place was identified as being tied to wellbeing through upgrading existing green and blue infrastructure and preserving natural corridors. Drawing from Cambridge City centre, quads, squares, and pock parks were identified as opportunities.

A clear need for **sustainability** was embraced as a crucial aspect of the AAP, avoiding mono land use neighbourhoods, and prioritising residential/PRS near the station supported by active ground floor uses.

Collaborative Workshops

Topic led design workshops



How do we integrate natural systems to create sustainable and healthy environments?

Above:
Annotated plan from the Green/Blue Infrastructure workshop

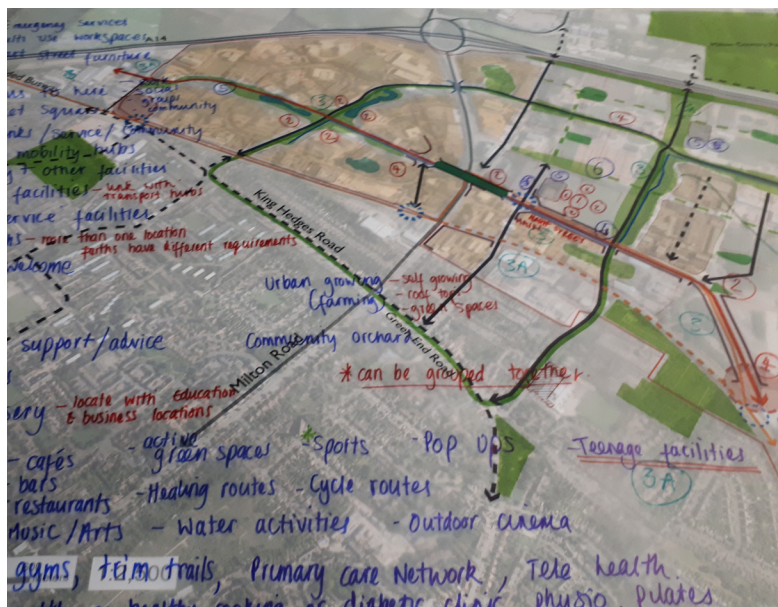
Right:
Annotated plans from the land use workshop

Green/Blue Infrastructure

The conversation at the green and blue infrastructure workshop led to the following aspirations:

- **Green spaces and blue infrastructure** should be knit the district together and interconnected providing a supportive **network** for **active commuting and outdoor activities**.
- This network needs to be linked to the **natural environment systems** beyond the district to support wildlife and ecology; A transition between green belt, fen landscape and the district's network should be explored.
- **The district needs a main green focal point** for **casual social gathering**.
- The green spaces within the district should reflect **Cambridge character**. Equally, the First Public Drain could reinforce the **identity** of the district and become part of its urban character.
- Along with quality of space, **well-being** should be a determinant in design including consideration of productive landscapes and community gardening projects.

What will “High Street” mean in the future?



Facilities/Land Use

The discussion during the Land Use workshop was around providing a mixed use district with a **main activity focused along Cowley Road** and Milton Road, as a reinterpretation of the high street with variations in activity along its length and opportunities for activity on connecting side streets. Additional **activity centres** will be distributed within the district based on **walking catchments** and with the aim of linking trip destinations.

The idea of **mixed use should be integrated at a range of scales**, offering numerous activities within walking distances. This included a balance of new residential types in walking distance of the station and employment uses that support the global significance of Cambridge Science park and St John's Innovation Centre.

Some of the **existing industrial uses** have the opportunity to be **integrated** in continuity of the functions of the existing district. Solutions to near term integration of industrial uses were explored, and aspirations set out for long term relocation of uses incompatible with the vision.

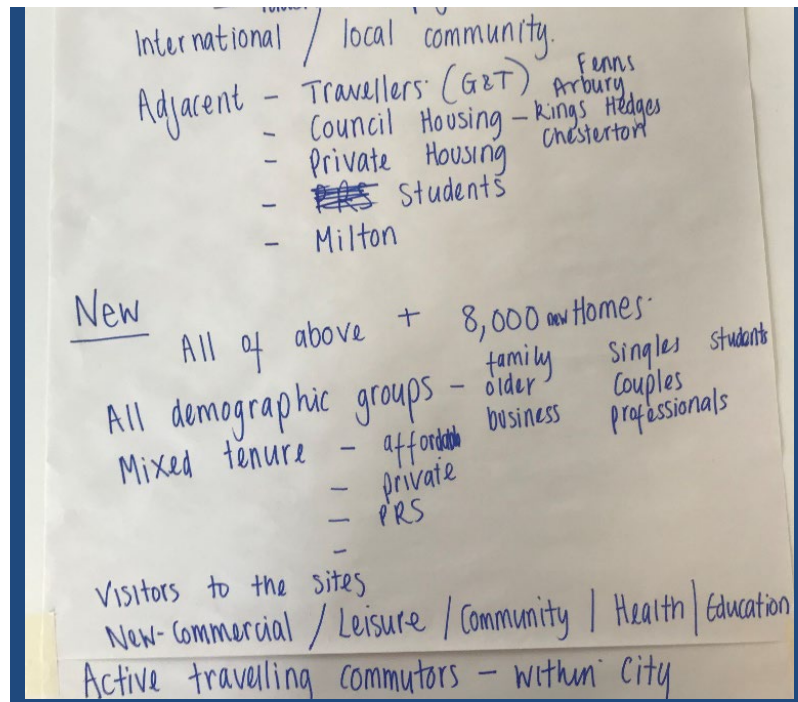
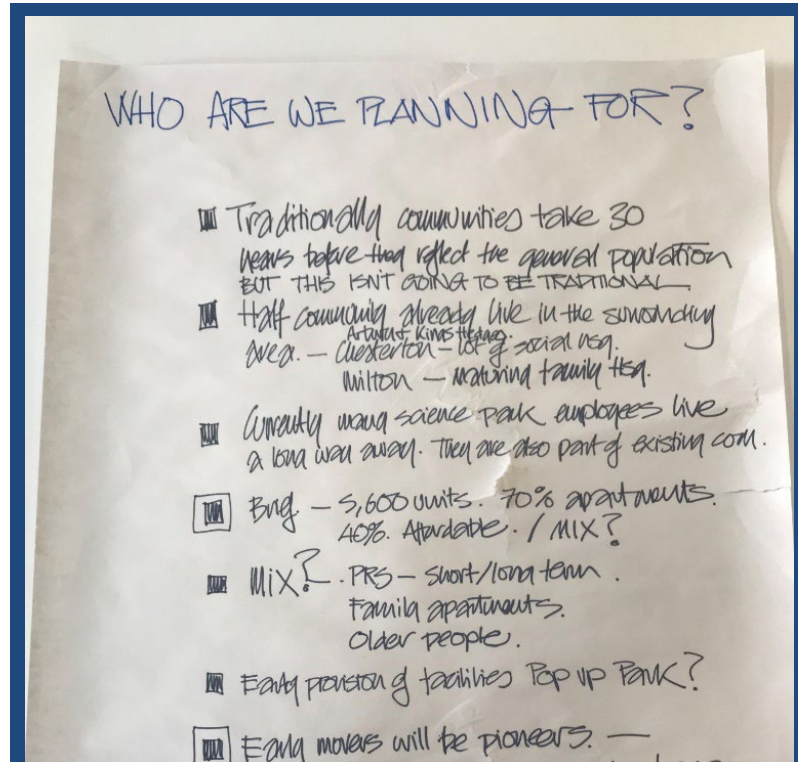
Energy strategy

Within the land use discussion, energy considerations were included to ensure the final proposal is supported in a **district wide energy strategy** and local or national strategies are met, such as net zero carbon footprint.

Ideas such as delivery/collection points, electric charging strategies, energy centres, energy production and distribution within the site through micro grids were discussed.

Collaborative Workshops

Topic led design workshops



Above:
Flip chart notes from Community workshop

Right:
Annotated plan from Connectivity workshop

What are the needs of the existing and future community we are designing for?

Community

Following the discussion on land uses, a **cluster of main communities facilities** was discussed as the best option to provide services within walking distance of the new and existing residential areas.

Activity within the district will also be supported through scattered **flexible spaces** for the community to engage with, that evolve with changing needs over time.

Different approaches to the **management of the services** were explored, trying to encourage the community to take over the control of these spaces but probably needing support from the City Council initially.

Technology and art should be embedded in within the community spaces to enrich the activity of the district and facilitate flexibility and efficiency of use.

Considering the different land ownerships and current lack of facilities within the NEC area, **phasing coordination** was identified as a critical to provide amenities from now and early through all phases.

Connectivity

The main discussion during this workshop was tied to the idea of a “trip budget” and its impact on planning land use and infrastructure provision.

The challenge for the group was to identify ideas to **deal with the limited capacity** of the existing network while providing quality of space.

It was agreed that **place making, walkability and urban activity should be prioritized** over infrastructured solutions to facilitate car movement.

Increasing connections for **pedestrians and cycles to the station** was identified as a positive. The Chesterton Sidings site was identified as a key location able to create future links from adjacent land uses.

Public transport alternatives would be embedded in the district proposal, including new mobility options based on emerging technologies which will provide flexible routes with limited in-street infrastructure needs.

In relation to existing industrial uses, alternative **HGV routes** were explored to avoid heavy traffic impacting on the main activity areas and streets, while keeping the functioning of some of the industrial sites and the aggregates yard in the near term.



How do we design to encourage active commuting and use of public transport?

Emerging NEC AAP Spatial Strategy

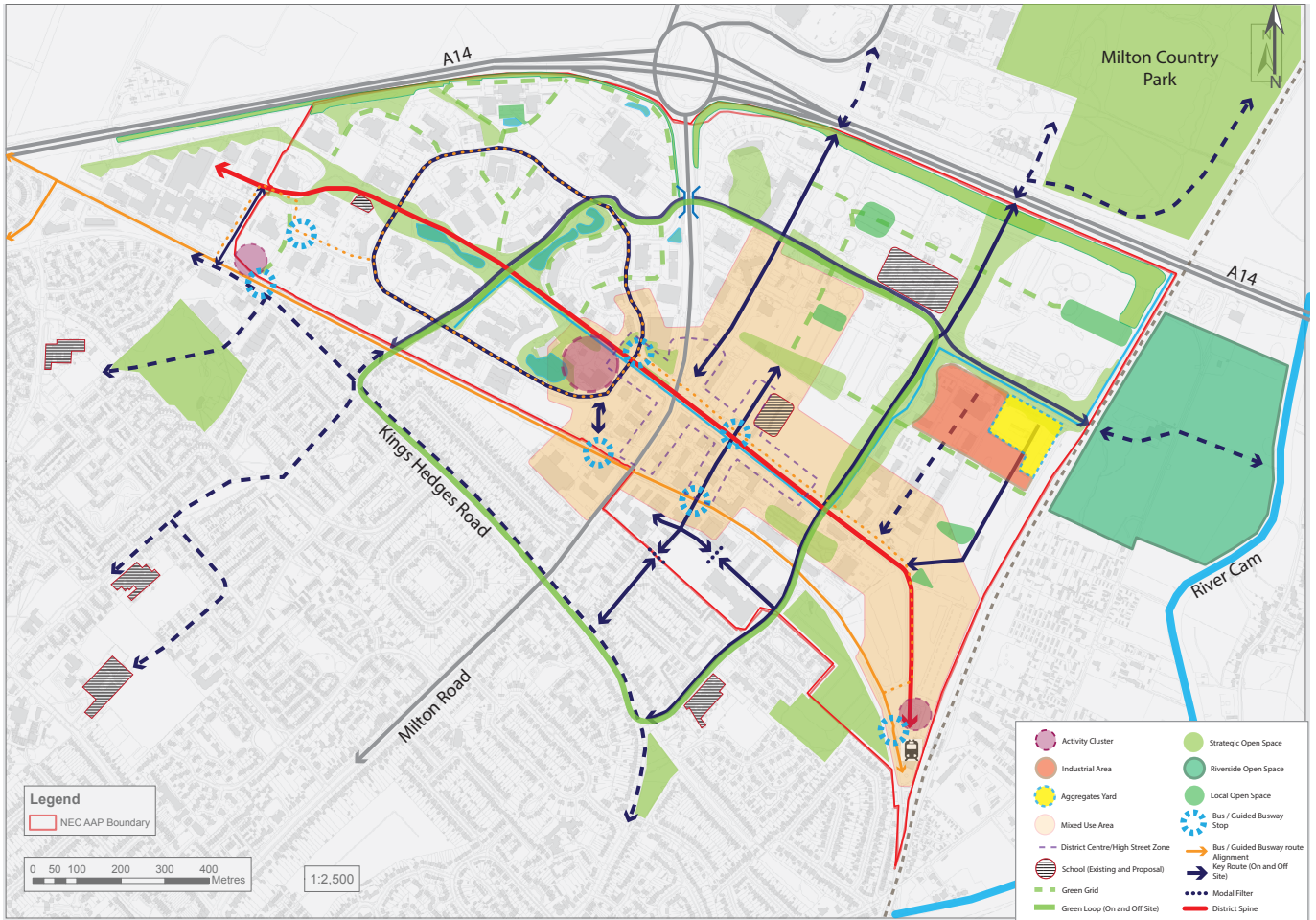
**A joint framework
for an innovative,
sustainable and
socially and
economically
inclusive district.**

The engagement process successfully enabled dialogue and constructive discussion around coordinating the future of the NEC district.

The AAP can incorporate the emerging spatial framework as the based for draft thematic AAP-wide policies, site allocations, schedules of infrastructure requirements, phasing and supporting area wide strategies.

Development of north east Cambridge is an incredible opportunity to transform a part of the City. To capture and extend the character of Cambridge. It carries a long range timeframe, but has to act quickly to take advantage of the now operational station and time limited funding opportunities.

Brookgate is very pleased to have been involved in the process and to be given the opportunity to collaborate in positive way with the Joint Planning Service, Cambridgeshire County, and other land owners in advancing and refining the AAP spatial strategy.



Above:
Emerging Spatial Strategy from AAP Review Workshop



PREPARED FOR

 **BROOKGATE**
LAND LIMITED

ON BEHALF OF THE

CHESTERTON
PARTNERSHIP