

## **E Delivering Northstowe**

### **E1 PHASING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

**E1/a To ensure that the impact of the development of Northstowe is kept to a minimum both in terms of physical impact and duration, and where possible adverse impacts are avoided through the management of the development process;**

**E1/b To ensure the early provision of a landscaping strategy for Northstowe;**

**E1/c To ensure that Northstowe is developed using sustainable construction methods and principles;**

**E1/d To ensure that the annual rate of house-building at Northstowe meets the required development rate to deliver 6,000 dwellings by 2016;**

**E1/e To ensure that the development makes an appropriate contribution to the provision of services, facilities and infrastructure that will be needed for the development of the new town.**

E1.1 The new town of Northstowe is an important part of the development strategy for the Cambridge Sub-Region. The Cambridgeshire Structure Plan expects 6,000 dwellings to have been constructed or to be under construction by 2016, going up to at least 8,000 dwellings beyond 2016. Not only is that a challenging target for housebuilders, it is also a challenging target for the providers of the services, facilities, infrastructure and jobs that a small town of approximately 20,000 people will have. Whilst construction is envisaged to start on site in 2006 as required by the Structure Plan, the construction of houses at Northstowe is not likely to start until 2007. In order to achieve 6,000 dwellings by 2016, the anticipated rate of development at Northstowe is likely to be in region of 650 dwellings each year.

#### **CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY**

##### **POLICY NS/26 Construction Strategy**

##### **Site Accesses and Haul Roads**

- a) **The location of the site accesses for construction vehicles will avoid all villages in the locality and ensure that any haul roads are located, designed and landscaped in such a way as to avoid any noise, smell, dust, visual or other adverse impacts on**

**existing residents and businesses, and on the new residents and businesses at Northstowe. Traffic flows will be monitored to ensure that the public has a mechanism to feedback any concerns that arise during development.**

#### **Storage Compounds, Plant and Machinery**

- b) Any storage compounds, plant and machinery will be located, designed and used to avoid any noise, smell, dust, visual or other adverse impact on existing residents and businesses, and on the new residents and businesses at Northstowe.**

#### **Construction Activities**

- c) The preferred approach to the construction activities at Northstowe is that contractors will be required to be bound by the requirements of the 'Considerate Contractors Scheme'.**

#### **Construction Spoil**

- d) All construction spoil should be accommodated within the development site by generally raising ground levels. There will be limited opportunities for mounding to act as noise barriers to protect communities from traffic noise. A strategy to demonstrate how this is to be addressed will be required to be prepared and approved before development commences.**

#### **Development Starting on Site**

- e) In the event that development commences at more than one location, all phases of development will be connected to each other and to any services and facilities by public transport, cycle and pedestrian routes through the site.**

#### **Site Accesses**

- E1.2 Northstowe will be under construction for a very long period of time and the construction process will need careful management in order that disruption to the surrounding villages as well as to the already built parts of Northstowe is avoided. Avoidance of impact will be the objective, but where this is not possible disruption will be kept to a minimum both in magnitude and duration. Realistically it will not be possible to avoid any impact when development is being undertaken immediately adjoining existing areas but measures should be taken to reduce that impact as far as possible. Forecasts of the development traffic should be taken into account in planning for construction traffic.**

- E1.3 Northstowe will be developed close to the two villages of Longstanton and Oakington. For all of the site options the principal road accesses for construction vehicles will be from the A14 to the southwest of Longstanton and Oakington. However, it is possible that the sand and gravel works north of Willingham may be called upon to provide sand and gravel for this major construction project. In all cases, it will be necessary to ensure that disruption to existing residents is avoided wherever practicable and otherwise minimised in effect and duration.

#### Storage Compounds, Plant and Machinery

- E1.4 As part of an overall strategy to minimise the impact of construction activity, storage compounds, plant and machinery must be located where they will have least impact on the amenity of existing businesses and residents of Longstanton and Oakington villages and of the residents on Station Road, Longstanton, Toads Acre and Rampton Drift as well as the new residents and businesses at Northstowe.

#### Construction Activities

- E1.5 Cambridge City Council, in association with the Cambridge Forum for the Construction Industry runs a 'Considerate Contractors Scheme' designed to ensure that construction activities do not make life unpleasant for people who live and work nearby.
- E1.6 The 'Considerate Contractors Scheme' requires that all contractors, sub contractors, suppliers and others working on a project:
- Have **consideration** to neighbouring uses to minimise disturbance;
  - Keep **noise** to a minimum and in particular that there are no works that are audible at the site boundary outside permitted working hours;
  - Keep all areas adjacent **clean** including from dust and smoke;
  - Keep each development site **tidy**;
  - Ensure that all activities, vehicle movements etc are carried out **safely** for workers and the general public.
- E1.7 Adopting this scheme will go a long way to minimising disruption from this long term development project.

#### Construction Spoil

- E1.8 Development on the scale and density proposed will lead to a very significant amount of material being dug out which will form construction spoil. Experience elsewhere in the District in the development of the new village of Cambourne has shown that accommodating this material requires a careful strategy if it is not to have an adverse impact on amenity and the landscape.

- E1.9 It would not be appropriate to transport such spoil over considerable distances as this would be unsustainable and simply transfer the problem to elsewhere and the principle should be for construction spoil to be utilised on site. However, it would not be acceptable to alter the land forms locally by concentrating the spoil into one or more large mounds as this would introduce an alien character into this area of gentle relief. There may be some earth bunding which might be acceptable as part of the landscaping of the access roads where it could act as barriers to road traffic noise. It will be important to ensure that drainage modelling takes account of any proposals for ground level raising on the site of the new town.

#### Development Starting on Site

- E1.10 In the event that development commences at more than one location, all phases of development will be connected from the outset by public transport, cycle and pedestrian routes through the site.
- E1.11 As part of creating an identity for Northstowe and to ensure that all of its residents have access to its services and facilities from the outset of development, all phases of development must be connected to each other and to any of Northstowe's services and facilities without needing to leave the site. This will include providing bus services through the site either on the route of the dedicated busway or on a temporary alignment to access any services and facilities provided in existing buildings.

## **STRATEGIC LANDSCAPING**

### **POLICY NS/27 Strategic Landscaping**

#### **Early delivery of Landscaping**

- a) **Strategic landscaping of the new town site is essential for the early establishment of woodland, tree and hedgerow planting together with an agreed programme of earth moving to deliver the agreed landscape strategy. The planning conditions/ legal agreements covering landscaping should include provisions for the developers to maintain landscaping and replace dead stock for a period of 10 years and details of long term management thereafter.**

#### **Green Separation**

- b) **The whole of the areas of Green Separation for both Longstanton and Oakington as well as the agreed boundary treatment for Rampton Drift will be planted in the first planting season after the grant of outline planning permission for Northstowe.**

### Early delivery of Landscaping

E1.12 Part of the strategy for minimising impacts of the development will involve the landscaping of the new town site as part of the overall development. Landscaping will involve both earth moving and could help with the general management of spoil which will be created from digging footings, land drains, surface water attenuation lakes etc. Woodlands, individual trees and hedgerows will also be planted during the development of Northstowe. The delivery of an agreed landscape strategy will need to be implemented and managed to ensure that strategic landscaping is carried out prior to each phase of development and maintained closely throughout the construction period.

### Green Separation

E1.13 Crucially, it will be important to ensure that the areas of 'green separation' between Northstowe and Longstanton and Oakington are appropriately landscaped at an early stage of the development to ensure that any trees and hedgerows that need to be planted can become established from the outset of the development and will contribute to providing visual separation from an early stage in the development. A similar approach will need to be taken with the countryside edges of the new town site to ensure that the impact on the wider countryside is also limited from the outset.

## **MAKING USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS/RESOURCES ON SITE**

### **POLICY NS/28 Making use of existing buildings/resources on site**

#### **Recycling of Building Materials**

- a) **The preferred approach is that any redundant buildings together with the remainder of the runway and any redundant roads on the airfield are recycled to provide a local source of hardcore or other building materials.**
- b) **The District Council would encourage the recycling of existing building materials by the granting of planning permission for plant to process such materials into hardcore and aggregates which would not be located closer than 200m from any existing domestic property.**

#### **Use of Raw Materials**

- c) **The use of any raw materials currently available on the site will be maximised during the construction of Northstowe.**

### **Re-Using Existing Building**

- d) The use of existing buildings at Oakington Barracks/Oakington Airfield will be encouraged provided that the buildings are:**
- (i) Capable of conversion for the proposed uses;**
  - (ii) Will not have an adverse effect on the amenity of existing residents or businesses;**
  - (iii) Conveniently located for the residents at Northstowe that they are intended to serve;**
  - (iv) Served by public transport services, cycling and pedestrian routes passing through the site;**

### **Recycling of Building Materials**

- E1.14 In addition to measures considered above, further minimisation of the impact of the development on existing communities can be achieved by taking a sustainable approach to construction. In order to be truly sustainable, the use of sustainable materials will be essential. Wherever practicable the use of locally sourced materials will minimise the distance travelled, thus reducing the use of energy. Similarly, wherever possible the materials used in construction should be from environmentally friendly sources; this would include timber from managed forests.
- E1.15 Whilst some of the Ministry of Defence buildings at Oakington Airfield may be capable of use within the development, either temporarily or on a more permanent basis, others will not be required and could be recycled during construction reducing the amounts of material which will have to be imported onto the site.

### **Use of Raw Materials**

- E1.16 Buildings are not the only resources available on all of the site options. Sand and gravel is available in quantities which would not be commercially viable for extraction under normal circumstances but which could be extracted and used for the development of Northstowe. The implications of this for other aspects of the development will need further consideration, e.g. any implications for the achievement of sustainable urban drainage systems.
- E1.17 In addition, the Ministry of Defence has undertaken a significant amount of woodland planting for military training purposes. Much of that planting has been to re-create the landscape of northern Germany and is alien to this Fen Edge landscape. Whilst some of the woodland may be retained as part of the development, it will not all be retained and could provide a supply of untreated wood for use at Northstowe.

### **Re-Using Existing Buildings**

E1.18 The former ministry of defence buildings at Oakington Barracks/Oakington Airfield may be suitable for temporary or even permanent use as part of the development of Northstowe. Provided that they are accessible to the population of Northstowe that they are intended to serve, these buildings could play a useful role in helping with the early establishment of the community of Northstowe. However, they are not in the right location for a number of uses for Northstowe as a whole. In particular, any temporary use must not delay development of the town centre.

## **MANAGEMENT OF SERVICES, FACILITIES, LANDSCAPE AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **POLICY NS/29 Management of Services, Facilities, Landscape and Infrastructure**

**Management strategies for services, facilities, landscape and infrastructure will be submitted to the local planning authority for adoption prior to the granting of outline planning permission to ensure high quality, robust and effective implementation, adoption and maintenance. Landownership for these uses should be as simple as possible, preferably in a single ownership to avoid fragmentation. In particular, there should be a single agreed management strategy covering recreation, landscape and biodiversity. The inclusion of water and drainage features within open spaces would have significant advantages and should therefore be investigated. Management strategies should cover:**

- (i) The method of funding of implementation, management and maintenance;**
- (ii) The body or trust that will be responsible;**
- (iii) Monitoring and review requirements.**

**Management strategies will need to demonstrate that it receives the full support of the local communities who must be involved in the development of services, facilities, landscape and infrastructure.**

E1.19 It is important that not only are the services, facilities, landscape and infrastructure needed by the town provided to a high quality, but that they are properly and effectively implemented, managed and maintained if they are to meet the needs of the community in the long term. There would be advantages in single landownership to avoid fragmentation and assist in effective management. This particularly applies to the open areas for recreation, landscape and biodiversity.

E1.20 The Area Action Plan is not specific about the number of management strategies. However, there should be a single agreed management strategy covering recreation, landscape and biodiversity. The inclusion of water and

drainage features within open spaces would have significant advantages to ensuring a holistic approach to the management of open spaces where the respective needs of the various land uses and functions within those spaces can be addressed and should therefore be investigated

## **ACHIEVING THE BUILD RATE**

### **POLICY NS/30 Achieving the Build Rate**

**In order to ensure that a build-rate of 650 dwellings per year is achieved, the master developer/consortium of builders for Northstowe will submit a method statement alongside the outline planning application for the new town stating the measures that they will take to secure this build-rate, including the provision of affordable housing. The method statement will be approved and enforced by the District Council.**

- E1.21 Achieving a build rate of 650 dwellings per year at Northstowe will be very challenging. Evidence presented to the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan examination in public in 2002 from the developing communities of Cambourne and Hampton (Peterborough) suggested that this rate is achievable and is influenced by such factors as the number of house-builders active on a site. The rate of development at Northstowe will govern the rate at which services, facilities and infrastructure are provided which will be fundamental to achieving a high quality of town at an early stage. It will have a bearing on the length of the development process and the duration of any disruption to the locality. It will also be fundamental to achieving the Sub-Regional target of 2,800 dwellings per year set in the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan.
- E1.22 The rate of development will be influenced by a range of issues, not least the state of the economy and the housing market which will not be constant over the lifetime of the development of Northstowe. There are measures that the developers can themselves take, for example by ensuring that sufficient house-builders are represented at Northstowe. In addition, funding for the affordable housing element is uncertain in respect of the timeframe for this development. Currently there is a presumption by central government that affordable housing on Section 46 (previously known as Section 106) sites such as at Northstowe will be funded by planning obligations on the development rather than a combination of serviced land and social housing grant.

## **TIMING / ORDER OF SERVICE PROVISION**

### **POLICY NS/31 Timing / Order of Service Provision**

**The master outline planning permission and legal agreement will include a schedule of services, facilities and infrastructure to be funded by the master developer/consortium of builders at Northstowe together**

**with a timetable for their provision during the development of the new town. The guiding principle is that services, facilities and infrastructure will be provided at stages in the development process when the need for them is forecast to arise which will be delivered according to a set of trigger points tied to numbers of dwellings completed or such other stage of the development as advised by the service/facility/infrastructure providers.**

E1.23 The services, facilities and infrastructure at Northstowe which will be provided by the development are those which are required only and entirely to serve the new town. The principle that development will fund in full the services, facilities and infrastructure that are required to enable the development to proceed and to meet the needs of its residents and other users is enshrined in planning law and government policy. The Area Action Plan will therefore include a list of services, facilities and infrastructure which will be needed for the development of a sustainable new town at Northstowe and which will be funded by the developers. It will also include a timetable for their provision which will ensure that the services, facilities and infrastructure needed at every stage of the development of Northstowe are available. The providers of services, facilities and infrastructure at Northstowe have not yet determined in full what and how they will make provision.