

Appendix 9. North-east Bury St Edmunds Concept Statement

This concept statement has been prepared to provide the parameters and framework for the development of the North-east Bury St Edmunds strategic site as defined in Policy BV6. Its purpose is to inform the preparation of more detailed development proposals for the site within the context of current and emerging national and local planning policies and local environmental and infrastructure constraints.

1.1 The borough Council expects that the issues raised in this concept statement will be given full consideration in the masterplan which will be developed for this site at a later date and prior to any planning applications for this site being determined.

1.2 This concept statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the council's adopted protocol for the preparation of concept statements and the emerging policies relating to the preparation of concept statements and masterplans in the Joint Development Management Policies Submission Document (October 2012). The concept statement will inform the preparation of a masterplan for the area.

1.3 Policy CS11 of the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy (December 2010) identifies the area to the north-east of Bury St Edmunds for development that:

- maintains the identity and segregation of Great Barton and creates a new, high quality entrance to Bury St Edmunds;
- facilitates the provision of an A143 Great Barton bypass;

- contributes to reducing congestion at appropriate junctions on the A14 in Bury St Edmunds;
- provides improved public transport, foot and cycle links to the town centre and south towards the A14 and strategic employment sites;
- delivers around 1250 homes of mixed tenure and size, including affordable homes;
- provides opportunities for B1 use class local employment;
- provides new, high quality strategic public open space and recreation facilities; and
- delivers additional education, community and leisure facilities to meet the needs of this development and is located in a way that can achieve positive integration with the wider area.

1.4 The policy notes that the development is likely to commence in the latter part of the plan period and the actual amount of development will be determined by environmental and infrastructure capacity considerations and the preparation and adoption of a detailed masterplan in which the community and other stakeholders have been fully engaged.

1.5 The Core Strategy neither defined the boundary, nor the extent of the site, which has been achieved in the preparation of this concept statement and the draft Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 local plan document. In doing so, careful regard has been paid especially to:

- a preventing coalescence of development with Great Barton;
- b improving linkages to Moreton

- c Hall and rest of the town;
- c walkable neighbourhoods; and
- d delivery of services and facilities with the development.

Policy context

- 1.6 It is not the purpose of the concept statement to repeat all relevant planning policies published elsewhere. However, in preparing this document, the following local policies are of particular relevance.
- 1.7 Core Strategy (December 2010):
- Policy CS2 – Sustainable Development
 - Policy CS3 – Design and Local Distinctiveness
 - Policy CS5 – Affordable Housing
 - Policy CS7 – Sustainable Transport
 - Policy CS11 – Bury St Edmunds Strategic Growth
 - Policy CS14 – Community Infrastructure Capacity and Tariffs
- 1.8 Replacement St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan (2006):
- Policy DS4 – Masterplans
 - Policy H5 – Mix of Housing
 - Policy L4 – Standards of Open Space and Recreation Provision
 - Policy L7 – Public Rights of Way
 - Policy T2 – Hierarchical Approach to Site Access
 - Policy T5 – Parking Standards
 - Policy T8 – Cycling and Pedestrian Strategies
 - Policy NE2 – Protected Species
 - Policy NE3 – Protection of the Landscape
- 1.9 Submission Draft Joint Development Management Policies Local Plan:
- Policy DM2 – Creating Places –

Development Principles and Local Distinctiveness

- Policy DM3 – Masterplans
- Policy DM6 – Flooding and Sustainable Drainage
- Policy DM7 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy DM8 – Improving Energy Efficiency and Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions
- Policy DM13 – Mitigation, Enhancement, Management and Monitoring of Biodiversity
- Policy DM14 – Landscape Features
- Policy DM21 - Archaeology
- Policy DM23 – Residential
- Policy DM36 – Protection of Local Centres
- Policy DM41 – Community Facilities and Services
- Policy DM45 – Transport Assessments and Travel Plans
- Policy DM46 – Parking Standards

the development.

- and
- clustered villages with a scattering of farmsteads around them.

1.12 Although located within an area characterised as flat landscape, the site is gently rolling in character, falling from north east to south-west. A green lane crosses through the site and divides it between north and south. The southern part is largely open in character with remnants of former field boundaries, a tree belt, small tree clumps and a hedge at its eastern end which forms the edge of the former Cattishall Green. The northern part of the site retains its rectilinear field pattern, hedges and coverts and includes views of Holy Innocents Church to the north-east. This part of the site is the most prominent from distant views.

1.15 The site is separated from the existing urban edge of Bury St Edmunds by the railway line, which provides a physical barrier. This could present difficulties in achieving integration of the new development with the existing, with opportunities for footpath and cycle connection limited. The existing level crossing point at Cattishall and footpath tunnel should be utilised.

1.16 The physical separation created by the railway offers opportunities for the development to create its own independent character and identity.

1.17 The setting and identity of the village of Great Barton and the hamlet of Cattishall need to be protected to avoid coalescence with the town. This can be provided through the creation of effective green buffers, although the nature of those buffers will require careful treatment to ensure a balance between protecting the identity and integrity of the village and hamlet and establishing a new neighbourhood for the town.

1.18 Development of the site will have an impact upon Junction 43 of the A14 which is operating at capacity and routes into the town centre. Mitigation will be required to address these.

1.19 The development must be capable of accommodating a route for any bypass proposed for Great Barton.

Landscape context

- 1.10 The site, which is roughly triangular in shape, is located on the north-east side of Bury St Edmunds bound to the north west by Bury Road (A143) and to the south by the Ipswich to Cambridge railway line, with the modern development at Moreton Hall beyond. To the east is the small hamlet of Cattishall.
- 1.11 The site lies within the plateau estate farmlands as defined in the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment. Characteristics of these areas which are evident in the locality are:
- large scale rectilinear field pattern;
 - flat landscape of light loams and sandy soils;
 - network of tree belts and coverts;

Constraints and opportunities

- 1.13 The varying topography, historic and natural landscape features, provide a strong framework to assist in guiding the form of development. This will assist in providing a strong visual structure as well as adding benefit through providing the site with green infrastructure opportunities.
- 1.14 The site has attractive long distance views over arable farmland, with views of key landmarks both within the town and in surrounding villages. However, long views out from the site mean that the site itself, is visible from a wide area, with potential to have a significant impact upon the surrounding landscape unless compensatory measures are put in place as part of

Community engagement

- 1.20 The community consultation carried out by the developer included three separate well attended drop-in exhibitions and a workshop, designed to test and develop the outcomes of the exhibition/open days. The key ideas and visioning raised from the consultation are as follows:
- traffic relief to Great Barton, for example, through a bypass or diversion of traffic to other routes;
 - additional, complementary and accessible facilities such as schooling, childcare, shopping and leisure opportunities;
 - improved pedestrian and cycle routes;
 - improved bus services, for example, through the development of a shuttle bus service;
 - improvements to bottlenecks with the local highway system such as the Orttewell Road – Barton Road A143 area;
 - the development of a rail halt at Cattishall – potentially linked to a park and ride service; and
 - a mix of house type including sheltered housing for the elderly as well as starter homes for young families.

Place making

- 1.21 The vision for the growth area is to deliver a new community with a village character that is its own identifiable place and yet is well connected to its hinterland.
- 1.22 It will provide a modern, high quality, sustainable, energy efficient community where development will be informed by the shape of the landscape and the urban form of Bury St Edmunds and surrounding villages, to create a sensitive transition between urban, semi-rural and rural.

- 1.23 Within St Edmundsbury borough there are several nature conservation sites of international importance, one of which is the Breckland Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area for Conservation (SAC). The Brecks area supports the Stone Curlew, Woodlark and Nightjar species and as an area this has been given additional protection from the potential impact of future development through Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy. Although the SPA does not fall within the area covered by the Bury St Edmunds Vision document, impact on the SPA, in terms of increased recreational pressure resulting from the strategic growth, will need to be carefully considered in appraising the proposals for development on the site. A Habitat Regulations (Screening) Assessment of the strategic site, as part of the Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 document process, has concluded that a small increase in visitors to Breckland SPA is likely to be concentrated in areas closer to Bury St Edmunds, although not in sufficient extra numbers to cause any harm to the SPA.

- 1.24 Mature trees and tree belts, hedges and the green lane will be retained and provide the opportunity for linear parks, public open space, and allotments, informing the layout and creating place making features and movement connections, together with the creation of interconnected habitats to encourage both flora and fauna within the built development. These areas will also provide opportunities for informal play shaping throughout the site.

- 1.25 Consideration will need to be given to the incorporation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) from

the outset. This can incorporate features such as rainwater capture and integrated attenuation systems.

- 1.26 In accordance with the principle of walkable communities identified in Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031, a community hub is identified. This should provide a focus for the new community and activities such as shops, community facilities, primary school and healthcare facilities. It would also provide the location for any employment uses. The design of the community hub should allow flexibility of use and help engender community interaction and strong sense of place.

- 1.27 In addition to the community hub identified above, the south eastern part of the site falls within walking distance of the proposed community hub for Moreton Hall identified in the Moreton Hall Concept Statement. Opportunities should be fully exploited to provide pedestrian and cycle links to that proposed facility.

- 1.28 The masterplan should address how opportunities will be created to achieve the establishment of local community governance groups and other community run initiatives, so that individuals feel able to get involved in managing the community they live in.

- 1.29 In order to achieve a balanced community, the new neighbourhoods will provide a mix of housing types and sizes, including affordable housing (30%), general market housing and executive housing. Provision also needs to be made to meet the accommodation needs of the older generation. The masterplan should make provision for self build properties and opportunities for community build projects should be explored.

- 1.30 Successful neighbourhoods have a sense of place that helps residents feel a sense of identity. The separation of this site from the existing urban edge of Bury St Edmunds by the railway line and the size of the site, provides an opportunity for the creation of a variety of distinctive character areas to be created making it possible for people to recognise different parts of the development and know where they are. This can be assisted through high quality urban design, the use of public art and the creation of high quality public realm. However, there is a need to balance the variety of different parts with a coherence of character for the place as a whole, particularly where the development will be built out in phases.
- 1.31 The overall density of the site will vary, with lower density development towards the margins of the site, particularly to the east. The areas at the extreme margins of the site to the north adjoining the buffer zone and to the east closest to Cattishall provide an opportunity to construct homes within a landscape setting. Existing landscape features including field boundaries, the green lane, and coverts will be retained and utilised to inform the shape of the development and develop a sense of place.
- 1.32 Opportunities to reduce short trips by car will be an important factor in measuring the environmental sustainability of the development. Movement through the site will be facilitated by a network of footpaths and cycleways which will connect through to the proposed secondary school at Moreton Hall and connect with the footpath and cycle network including national Cycle Network routes 13 and 51 to the town centre. Development of the site also presents opportunities to improve footpath and cycle links to Great Barton. The layout of the site should facilitate bus movement and accessibility. The focus will be on encouraging the use of public transport, cycleways and footpaths within the town and reducing the dependence on cars.
- 1.33 All vehicular access points will be from the A143 connected via a spine road which will allow circulatory access for cars and buses. This spine road will provide access to the community hub and a connected network of streets.
- 1.34 The green buffer between the development area, the village of Great Barton and the hamlet of Cattishall will serve a dual role, being the separation between the urban edge of Bury St Edmunds and the village/hamlet, but also providing a new and important area of open space. The masterplan will need to address how this dual role will be best achieved and provide details of its delivery at an early stage.

