Northstowe
A vision refreshed
A new approach to delivering Northstowe which aspires to be the most sustainable new community in Cambridgeshire

Preface

Northstowe is a proposed new town of approximately 10,000 homes to the North West of Cambridge. It aspires to be an exemplar and vibrant 21st century town enabling more sustainable lifestyle choices and patterns of living.

In 2007 Gallagher and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) submitted planning applications for the entire Northstowe site. Extensive public consultation was carried out and the overall response was an encouraging one.

During 2008 and 2009 the economy slipped into recession and following the Government’s Spending Review in October 2010, the A14 road improvement scheme was withdrawn.

Since then all partners have been trying to find a way to reignite the plans and provide homes and facilities in this area.

The joint promoters, the HCA and Gallagher, are developing with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council a ‘phased’ approach to delivering homes and investment based on a revised master plan for the new town. In addition, the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway is now open which provides fast and reliable travel from Huntingdon to Cambridge with key stops alongside Northstowe.

So there is a new set of circumstances to which the project must adapt and which provides an opportunity to reflect on all the work done to date.

This document sets out an up to date vision for Northstowe and approach to development which we hope you will find stimulating and thought provoking.

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GALLAGHER
Delivering Northstowe is a priority

Following a public consultation, the planning application for an initial phase of housing and associated facilities, located at the north of Northstowe will be submitted early in 2012.

Phase one will include:

- A primary school and local centre
- About 1,500 homes
- Sports Hub and Community Facilities
- Household Recycling Centre
- A range of employment uses
- Significant water features (for drainage, ecology and informal recreation)
- Substantial green space for recreation and habitat creation

Phase two will follow and in particular will contain:

- Local centre
- The heritage core
- An important greenway
- Significant water features
- It will also provide access to the town centre and secondary school site

Other phases will follow.
Vision
Northstowe will be an exemplar and vibrant 21st century town with a strong local identity. It will combine the best historic characteristics of local settlements with provision for more sustainable patterns of living and lifestyle choices. Northstowe will be built to high environmental standards.
The vision for Northstowe reflects the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth which promotes the planned growth of sustainable and vibrant new communities in accordance with four themes:

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Community
Sustainable living
Community spirit
Employment and business
Life long learning
Sustainable living
Northstowe will be a community of about 25,000 people. The residential areas will have distinctly designed characteristics, incorporating features meeting the Code for Sustainable Homes and with plenty of opportunity to accommodate both contemporary and traditional tastes.

The new homes will provide much needed housing for many residents from across the region and will help to maintain Cambridgeshire as an attractive place for businesses to grow.

Community spirit
The community will be empowered to take an active interest in creating a strong social fabric. A range of high quality community, leisure and cultural services and facilities will be provided and these will be co-located as appropriate.

The variety of housing will meet many different demands, from executives looking for large and well-designed homes to those people looking to get a first foot on the property ladder.

Employment and business
There will be significant employment opportunities with a choice of jobs available across a range of sectors. Office and high technology research and development firms will be concentrated in a business hub linked to the town centre. A further employment area, located adjacent to the park and ride, could provide a wider range of other job opportunities.

Life long learning
High quality education facilities from nursery care through to adult education will be provided. This will provide a unique opportunity to design for dual purpose, maximising use of public buildings for the community.

The secondary school and six/seven primary schools will be high quality educational facilities enabling high academic standards to be attained.
Climate
Towards low carbon
Green space
Food production
Towards low carbon

A range of initiatives will be promoted so that Northstowe can become a low carbon town. For instance, energy consumption will be minimised through careful design and location of services and land uses. Recycling will be made easier for residents and businesses. Renewable energy generation will be a characteristic of Northstowe and will make a major contribution towards low carbon living.

Green space

Northstowe will be characterised by expansive natural areas providing valuable habitats (meadows, ponds, hedges) in addition to recreational spaces and informal play areas. These will be connected by green routes, providing habitat corridors and cycle and footpath links. These networks will facilitate healthier lifestyles and help to reduce the need for travel by car.

Food production

Local food production could feature in the lifestyle of residents. A mosaic of community gardens and allotments will allow easy access for those aspiring to grow their own crops.
Connectivity
Guided bus
Connected streets
Local facilities
Guided bus
The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB) provides a unique opportunity for significant ‘green travel’ to Huntingdon and Cambridge with key stops at the science park and Addenbrooke’s Hospital.

Connected streets and people
Residents will be well connected via a clear network of streets and spaces that prioritise walking, cycling and public transport. High tech communication networks will facilitate social and economic interaction.

Local facilities
The town centre and two local centres will be conveniently located at key nodal points to create vibrancy and facilitate travel by foot, cycle or bus.
Character
Local identity
Water
Play and recreation
Public art
Local Identity
Strong design features, reflecting characteristics of towns in the locality will pervade Northstowe. For example, there will be a wide mix of architectural styles, building heights and densities, particularly concentrated in town and local centres. Contemporary high quality architecture will be present, and the town centre ‘market space’ will be recognisable by a simple widening of the street creating a space for activity.

Water
Drainage patterns within and adjacent to Northstowe form particularly strong features and will influence design. The water features will be optimised to give Northstowe a unique character.

Play and Recreation
Provision for outdoor activity will characterise the town and provide both a formal and informal environment for children and adults to enjoy the natural environment. Children will have safe places to play close to their homes and there will be a network of green spaces and sports facilities for a range of sport and recreational activities.

Public Art
Public art will foster creativity, facilitate cultural expression and can be incorporated into the design of and use of materials for buildings and public places.