

**NORTHSTOWE: PHASE 1 OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION: DRAFT  
CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

*To:* **Cabinet**

*Date:* **22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012**

*From:* **Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment**

*Electoral division(s):* **Papworth and Swavesey, Willingham, Bar Hill, Cottenham, Histon and Impington**

*Forward Plan ref:* **N/a**

*Key decision:* **No**

*Purpose:* **To consider the key issues arising from the consultation on the Northstowe Phase 1 Outline Planning Application.**

**To seek agreement to amend the size of the first primary school in Northstowe from a 2 Form Entry (FE) to a 3 FE (630 pupils) school.**

*Recommendation:* **Cabinet is invited to:**

- a) Consider and approve the County Council's consultation response to the Northstowe Phase 1 Outline Planning Application**
- b) Delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning in consultation with the Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment the authority to make any minor textual changes to the consultation response prior to submission**
- c) Approve the increase in size of the first primary school in Northstowe from 2FE to 3FE.**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2007, Gallagher Estates and English Partnerships (now the Homes and Communities Agency) submitted outline planning applications for a Northstowe development of 9,500 dwellings and associated infrastructure. The expectation was that a revised Northstowe planning application would be submitted at the end of 2008/early 2009. However, during this time the national economy slipped into recession and so the revised application was not made. The Government's Spending Review in October 2010 also led to the withdrawal and subsequent cancellation of the A14 road improvement scheme.
- 1.2 A Development Framework Document (DFD), including a Framework Master Plan, has been prepared and submitted separately to a Phase 1 application. This covers the wider Northstowe site and provides the vision, design rationale and principal themes for the entire development. The DFD therefore provides the context for the Phase 1 application and enables Northstowe to be brought forward in a phased approach.
- 1.3 The DFD revises the previous Northstowe master plan, submitted as part of the 2007 application. The key changes from the 2007 master plan include inclusion of the northern 'strategic reserve land'; relocation of the town centre further north so it is in the geographical centre of the town; relocation of the secondary school further north and east so that it is more central and to facilitate its early delivery; revised density of housing across the site; adoption of a segmented alignment rather than a curved route to the busway spine through the site; fewer but larger local centres; and the northern local centre being moved closer to the B1050.
- 1.4 This work has led to the submission (on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012) of an outline planning application for Phase 1 of Northstowe by Gallagher. The 122 hectare (ha) site is located on the current Longstanton golf course, directly south east of the B1050 and north east of Longstanton. It is accepted that 1,500 homes could proceed in the absence of major improvements to the A14 and would be in accordance with adopted planning policy.
- 1.5 Key elements of the Phase 1 proposal (see Appendix 2 for Phase 1 illustrative master plan) include:
  - Up to 1,500 dwellings (a proportion of which will be affordable housing) in a mixture of tenure types and including residential elderly care
  - Approximately 5ha of employment land, including a Household Recycling Centre (1.25ha) and water pumping station
  - Mixed-use local centre including shops and a community building
  - 3-form of entry (FE) primary school with potential for community facilities
  - Formal and informal public open space, including a sports hub
  - Two flood attenuation ponds on land east of Hatton's Road
  - All new homes to be built to Code for Sustainable Homes level 4, in accordance with the requirements of amended Building Regulations (2013 and 2016)
  - All homes will be within 1,000m of the Longstanton Park and Ride for the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB)
  - Improvements to the existing B1050 between the Longstanton bypass and the Park and Ride access to accommodate access to the Phase 1 development
  - Safeguarding of land for the first length of an internal busway link to the CGB

- Significant water features, including flood attenuation ponds and the creation of a water park.

1.6 The points below highlight the key issues that it is proposed should be raised in the Council's response to the consultation on the Phase 1 planning application. Following Cabinet's consideration of these points, they will be submitted to South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) for consideration by the Northstowe Joint Development Control Committee.

## **2. MAIN ISSUES**

### **A14 and Wider Transport Issues:**

- 2.1 Despite the Government's 2010 Spending Review leading to the withdrawal of the A14 road improvement scheme, the Government's subsequent autumn 2011 Budget Statement has given a clear commitment to both a long-term solution for the problems on the A14 (through the A14 Challenge work which CCC is centrally involved with) and for short-term alleviation (through the allocation of £20 million for interim measures).
- 2.2 Through this process, it is expected that a package of measures to enhance capacity and performance of the A14 will be announced by ministers by Summer 2012. Given the importance of this announcement and how specific details of the approved measures may impact on the development, transport comments relating to Phase 1 will be considered separately in late summer 2012 and reported to Cabinet at that time.

### **Need for Inclusion of a Secondary School in Phase 1**

- 2.3 It has been jointly agreed between the County Council and SCDC that initial secondary educational provision for Northstowe secondary pupils will be provided in the first community hub, sited at the first primary school. However, for a number of reasons this will only be able to accommodate them for the first three years. Forecasts indicate that the secondary school will therefore need to be available for occupation in year 4 of the Phase 1 development.
- 2.4 However, the current Phase 1 application does not include a long-term secondary education solution for the residents and pupils of Northstowe. Instead the secondary school site is identified in the Development Framework Document in a subsequent phase. This does not provide the required certainty that secondary provision will be available to meet need arising from Phase 1 of the development.
- 2.5 The nearest secondary school, Swavesey Village College, is under significant pressure from its catchment population and is expected to exceed capacity in September 2014. In addition, for the sake of community cohesion, and the viability of the development, it is important that secondary pupils from Northstowe can be educated on site and not have to be bussed to alternative school locations.
- 2.6 The County Council require commitment from the applicants that a dedicated secondary school site, which is fully accessible and serviced, is available alongside Phase 1 of the development. This is in order to ensure that the secondary school is available for occupation by pupils within the Phase 1 build out of the development.

## **Need for Inclusion of Post-16 Education in Phase 1**

- 2.7 Post-16 education will be provided for 400 students, as part of integrated 11-19 education facility on the secondary school site. No land has so far been identified for the post-16 element of the provision. The County Council therefore require additional land to be identified close to or within the secondary school site to accommodate post-16 education provision.

## **Size of First Primary School**

- 2.8 In October 2008, Cabinet agreed that the first primary school to be built at Northstowe would be a 2FE school with provision for up to 240 pupils aged 4-11 years. This was based on forecast pupil numbers for a 9,500 dwelling settlement.
- 2.9 Since then, the joint promoters have put forward a planning application for a Phase 1 development of 1,500 homes. Pupil forecasts now indicate that an initial development of this size could yield between 375 and 525 primary age pupils (1.8FE to 2.5FE) requiring a 3FE school. The planning application also reflects the need for a 3 FE primary school to support Phase 1.
- 2.10 South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet (on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2011) and the County Council Cabinet (on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2011) approved a model of public services delivery in Northstowe whereby education (initially including secondary school pupils in Key Stage 3 ), children's, health and library services would be co-located in a community hub on the site of the first primary school.
- 2.11 Delivery of a 3FE building in a single phase, available for use from the first release of housing in Northstowe, will provide a full range of public services required by the new community for its first 5 years, co-located on one site. If no further development were to take place after the end of Phase 1 or subsequent phases were significantly delayed, a primary school of this size would be large enough to continue to provide sufficient primary education provision as the Phase 1 community matures. This would not be possible if the first primary school were only built to cater for 2FE.

## **Phase 1 Primary School Site and Phasing**

- 2.12 Although the application correctly states that a 3FE primary school will be required to meet the primary school needs of the population within Phase 1, there are a number of concerns in regard to the site characteristics as presented in the application. For a 3FE primary school a 3ha unencumbered site is required. Clarification is requested from the applicants that in the application, the County Council requires a site which is uninhibited to development and can accommodate the full demands of the curriculum and that the site is useable in terms of shape and topography.
- 2.13 In addition, the early delivery of the primary school is essential to help the community establish itself, especially given the wider role the school will play as a community hub. The Design and Access Statement shows the primary school being provided after a large area of residential development will already have been completed. Confirmation is required that access to a fully serviced site will be available to ensure the primary school will be available in time for the first residents, bearing in mind that it takes two years to design and build a school.

## **Economic Growth**

- 2.14 The application makes provision for 5ha of employment land. This is located on the northern edge of the site, adjacent to the B1050, Longstanton Park and Ride and Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (CGB) stop. The area will provide a mix of employment within use classes B1 (offices – 50%), B2 (general industrial – 40%) and B8 (storage and distribution – 10%). It is envisaged that this area could provide employment for approximately 500 people.
- 2.15 However, there is concern that the employment land will only be provided as serviced land with no indication that the applicant will seek to encourage the provision of speculative units in order to encourage the widest interest from businesses who might want to locate in Northstowe (i.e. those who want to rent premises, not just buy a plot to build their own facility) and the opportunity to provide for local employment at an early stage in the town's development. The County Council therefore require the applicant to consider how this can be achieved, in association with other organisations.

## **Local Transport Issues**

- 2.16 The Phase 1 application is generally compliant with the transport policies contained within the Northstowe Area Action Plan and the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, but there are a number of concerns over the site transport strategy that is set out within the Transport Assessment (TA). These will need to be addressed to make the application acceptable to the County Council in transportation terms.
- 2.17 The impact of the development upon the A14 has already been covered, and the site transport strategy will need to be reviewed later in the summer once the Highways Agency report on the A14 interim measures has been published. These comments are therefore based on the existing conditions on the A14 and the local road network without any A14 improvements and are to enable any early amendments to the application pending the outcome of the A14 study.

## ***Guided Busway***

- 2.18 The Busway provides the strategic public transport link to the Phase 1 site, which is well located in relation to the Park and Ride facility at Longstanton. The Transport Assessment underplays the role of the Busway which provides access to services for residents to a wide range of employment, education and health facilities in Cambridge, Huntingdon. Busway issues for consideration include;
- The requirement for a financial contribution to CGB construction and operational costs, as without the investment in CGB the site would clearly be unsustainable
  - The need to provide increased passenger capacity on the CGB at peak periods
  - The section of Busway proposed within the Phase 1 site should be brought into use by the planned bus service, rather than simply safeguarded. This would establish usage of the route by buses, and avoid future problems arising from Phase 1 residents getting used to the safeguarded route being a green space.

## ***Walking and Cycling***

- 2.19 Priority will be given within the site to walking, cycling and bus services, and high quality walking and cycle routes are proposed to the Park and Ride site and to

Longstanton village. The County Council seek further information on the following issues:

- Proposals for wider cycle connections to other communities are currently omitted in the Phase 1 transport strategy, despite the poor quality of existing routes being identified in the Transport Assessment (TA). A particular concern is the lack of a cycleway between Longstanton and Bar Hill. Bar Hill will provide early employment opportunities and the main local retail centre for residents on the Phase 1 development, and it is considered that a shared use path should be provided along the B1050 to provide a cycle route from the site to Bar Hill.
- Details in respect of diversion to existing Public Rights of Way across the site. Details of the proposed recreational path network will also need to be developed at reserved matters stage.

### ***B1050***

2.20 In relation to the local road network, the following comments are made:

- The re-modelling of the A14/B1050 Bar Hill North Roundabout. The TA identifies capacity problems at this junction, and the Phase 1 development will increase traffic flows by 19% based on the modelling evidence. The existing left-turn slip roads are sub-standard and remain unused, but there is sufficient highway land available to permit this junction to be improved.
- Further detail on traffic management measures on other local roads. The developer makes a commitment in the TA to introduce traffic management measures on other local roads, but is not specific as to what these measures should be. This needs to be clarified.
- It is recommended that a robust monitoring strategy be implemented (starting prior to development construction commencement to establish a baseline), and that the resulting data be used, with local community participation, to identify the precise impact of the development, and develop and implement a traffic management strategy that will mitigate identified problems. This would be developer-funded.
- The Phase 1 proposals include four new site access junctions on the B1050 between the Longstanton bypass roundabout and the Park and Ride signals. This is too many junctions for this section of road, and therefore the site access arrangements should be revised with the aim of consolidating the number of junctions
- The developer proposes the construction of 80 dwellings to the west of the B1050. These properties will be separated from the main local centre, primary school and other facilities by the B1050 itself. This proposal creates unnecessary severance which could lead to future safety problems. It is recommended that this aspect of the development be opposed, and that the B1050 be retained as the natural western boundary for this first phase of the Northstowe development.

### ***Construction Traffic***

2.21 The Construction Management Strategy (CMS) contains details of the access arrangements for vehicles, plant and personnel including the location of construction traffic routes, details of their signing, monitoring and enhancement measures. Mitigation measures to minimise the impact on surrounding villages are also to be secured.

- 2.22 It is recognised that construction traffic is a temporary feature of a new development, and the trips generated will not have a permanent impact of the transport network. However, the CMS needs to take account of the movement of construction workers to and from the site as well as heavy goods vehicles. A Travel Plan for construction workers, identifying measures such as encouraging use of the CGB by workers to access the site and transporting workers by minibus from remote bases is therefore required as part of the CMS .

### **Energy Proposals**

- 2.23 An Energy Statement has been submitted as part of the Phase 1 application.
- 2.24 An independent review of the proposed energy strategy for Phase 1 has recently been undertaken for the Councils by Camco. This considered how Northstowe's sustainability credentials could be enhanced and concluded the following:
- 1) Maximise the carbon savings being achieved on-site at Masterplan level, and deliver the zero-carbon target on site. Application proposals currently show how this would be done for the whole site, and how Phase 1 contributes to the target. However, previous analysis by Camco has shown that it is possible to achieve zero-carbon for Northstowe using biomass Combined Heat and Power Plant to high density areas and micro-renewables to low density areas.
  - 2) Alternatively, maximise the carbon savings being achieved on site with all allowable solutions delivered locally (i.e. near site). This could include, for instance, energy efficiency upgrades to existing homes or community owned renewables outside the master plan boundary.
  - 3) Deliver a proportion of the homes (in particular, those not connected to a district heating system) to advanced energy efficiency standards, such as PassivHaus.
  - 4) Comply with Code level 6 for all domestic properties and Building Research Establishment Building Assessment Method (BREEAM) 'excellent' for non-domestic accommodation.
  - 5) Deliver a proportion of the non-domestic accommodation on site to BREEAM 'outstanding'.
- 2.25 Points 4 and 5 may have implications for the County Council in terms of County buildings (such as schools) being constructed to particular BREEAM standards.
- 2.26 As they currently stand the energy proposals for Northstowe are not considered to be ambitious enough. The Council therefore requires that the proposals are refined and improved. This work will need to take in account a number of factors including the existing policy framework and financial viability implications.

### **Water Conservation**

- 2.27 A water conservation strategy has been submitted as part of the Phase 1 outline planning application. This sets out the potential opportunities, constraints and benefits of different water conservation strategies for the development. For domestic properties the principles include:
- To reduce water demand by 33% or more. Based on a base demand of 150 litres/per person/per day (l/p/day), this would equate to 99 l/p/day and satisfies Northstowe Area Action Plan Policy NS/21. This level can be achieved using minimisation alone, however, where viable; rainwater harvesting should be considered

- Dwellings are to include rainwater collection butt in the garden to reduce demand for external uses where viable.

2.28 The strategy states that grey water reuse within domestic dwellings may not be necessary in order to meet local policy requirements and on a household scale may not be cost efficient or sustainable in the long term. However, the Council considers that grey water recycling could be an important aspect of water conservation and expect the applicant to consider and address these issues with partners.

### **Elderly Care**

2.29 The elderly population is forecast to increase in Cambridgeshire, particularly South Cambridgeshire. It is therefore important that the County Council has confidence that Northstowe will address the longer-term issues arising from an ageing population.

2.30 It is noted that reference is made in the Design and Access Statement to the possible inclusion of residential care homes for the elderly. The County Council and the NHS are developing a Strategy for Older People's Services and assessing the type and capacity of provision needed in the future. This may not necessarily be for residential homes but may instead be more for nursing homes or extra care facilities. This document needs be considered within the Northstowe proposals and further discussions undertaken with the County Council and the NHS in regard to the precise nature of elderly care provision required for Northstowe.

2.31 Enabling people to stay in their homes as their physical needs change and increase will become increasingly important in the future. The provision of Lifetime Homes along with appropriate and necessary nursing and care facilities will therefore be critical to meeting the housing needs of older people in the future. It is therefore important that this development provides an appropriate proportion of Lifetime Homes.

### **Archaeology**

2.32 The County Council supports the archaeological mitigation proposals as detailed in the application, including the proposals for excavation, recording, analysis and publication. In addition, the plan to develop a Construction Environment Management Plan and innovative approach to using technology to broaden community involvement and engagement are welcomed.

2.33 However, there is concern over archaeological Site 19 (see Appendix 2 for map showing location of Site 19), the southern portion of which extends beyond the boundary of the Phase 1 development area. The application advocates detailed excavation of the northern part of this site as part of Phase 1, with the southern portion to be excavated under a future phase of development. The concern with this approach is the partial excavation of an important settlement complex with the loss of cohesion and understanding. The Council is also concerned that they have no guarantees over when or even if the second part of this site would come forward for development.

2.34 Ideally this site should be excavated in its entirety, although in practical terms this is not possible. Therefore it is requested that appropriate conditions and mitigation are included within the application.



## **Household Recycling Centre**

- 2.35 The County Council welcomes the fact that Phase 1 includes a serviced site (of 1.25ha) and a contribution towards capital funding for a Household Recycling Centre. This will be located in the employment area to the north of the Phase 1 site, adjacent to the Park and Ride site. However, officers are concerned as to whether the precise boundary area set aside will be of a shape to ensure the proposal is useable. More information on the layout would be welcomed as early as possible to ensure the chosen location can not only accommodate the footprint of the building, but also ensure the orientation; movement of vehicles and landscaping etc. can all be delivered.

### **3. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING**

#### **3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- The development of Phase 1 of Northstowe will increase the ability for people to both live and work in the local area, thus enhancing economic growth. Phase 1 of Northstowe includes provision for 5ha of employment land, comprising of use-classes B1 (offices), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution). This will provide approximately 500 jobs. In addition, further employment opportunities will be provided within the mixed-use local centre and the three-form entry primary school.
- Phase 1 of Northstowe also strengthens the relationship between jobs and houses within Cambridge and its surrounding hinterland. In particular given that Phase 1 is located adjacent to the Longstanton Park and Ride and CGB stop, this allows residents of Northstowe the opportunity to easily, quickly and sustainably access jobs in Cambridge (particularly the Science Park) as well as assisting employees travelling to the Northstowe employment site from the surrounding area. Northstowe through the Guided Bus offers a regular and direct route to the Addenbrooke's Bio medical Campus.

#### **3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives**

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Providing a full range of public services, such as education, early in the development will assist in meeting this priority.
- The design of the Phase 1 development will be required to build in routes and networks of footpaths and cycle paths that will assist movement in and around Northstowe and into the surrounding area by modes of transport that can help deliver this objective.

#### **3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:

- An important element of Northstowe will be the provision of affordable housing on site, which will help to assist those in housing need and who cannot afford to buy a property in the local area. Affordable housing will include social rented housing as well as intermediate housing (including provision for key workers). The Phase 1

application proposes *up to a maximum of 35% provision* (paragraph 4.16 of the Planning Supporting Statement). However, the precise proportion and tenure mix will be subject to negotiation during the planning application determination process.

### **3.4 Ways of working**

The following bullet points set out implications identified by officers for leadership:

- The County Council has worked closely with partners on the development Phase 1, including South Cambridgeshire District Council and a range of service providers. This has particularly been the case in regard to the delivery of public services.
- Given the pressing need for new housing in the area, there is a clear need to move the Northstowe project through the formal planning process and towards delivery, should planning permission be granted, as quickly as possible. In order to ensure the planning stages and community involvement are completed efficiently and effectively a Northstowe joint officer team has recently been established between SCDC and CCC, which includes transport, planning and education officers.

The following bullet point sets out implications identified by officers for working locally:

- The proposals for Phase 1 of Northstowe have been subject to a robust consultation process. This has included consultation with statutory consultees, the Northstowe Parish Forum and the local community (including local public exhibition events). A Statement of Consultation is included within the outline application and provides further details of this.

The following bullet points set out implications identified by officers for investing in growth:

- The development of Phase 1 of Northstowe will increase the ability for people to both live and work in the local area, thus enhancing economic growth. Phase 1 of Northstowe includes provision for 5ha of employment land, comprising of use-classes B1 (offices), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution). This will provide approximately 500 jobs. In addition, further employment opportunities will be provided within the mixed-use local centre and the three-form entry primary school.
- Northstowe strengthens the relationship between jobs and houses within Cambridge and its surrounding hinterland. In particular the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway will allow residents of Northstowe the opportunity to easily, quickly and sustainably access jobs in Cambridge (particularly the Science Park) as well as assisting employees travelling to the Northstowe employment sites from the surrounding area. Northstowe through the Guided Bus offers a regular and direct route to the Addenbrooke's Biomedical Campus.

## **4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Resource and Performance Implications**

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Although Northstowe is an important part of the development strategy for the area, the various costs of bringing forward Phase 1 must be carefully assessed and managed to ensure the County Council's objectives are fully met. Viability of the scheme will be an important consideration in order to ensure the development is deliverable but also contains all the important services and facilities.
- Innovative approaches to service provision at Northstowe could bring financial benefits in terms of capital and revenue savings and will assist the overall viability of the scheme. These savings could be secured by spending less capital in providing new facilities through a much more flexible approach to service provision, such as the co-location of community facilities and services.

#### **4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

There are no significant implications for statutory, risk and legal.

#### **4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no significant implications for equality and diversity.

#### **4.4 Engagement and Consultation**

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The proposals for Phase 1 of Northstowe have been subject to a robust consultation process. This has included consultation with statutory consultees, the Northstowe Parish Forum and the local community (including local public exhibition events). A Statement of Consultation is included within the outline application and provides further details of this.

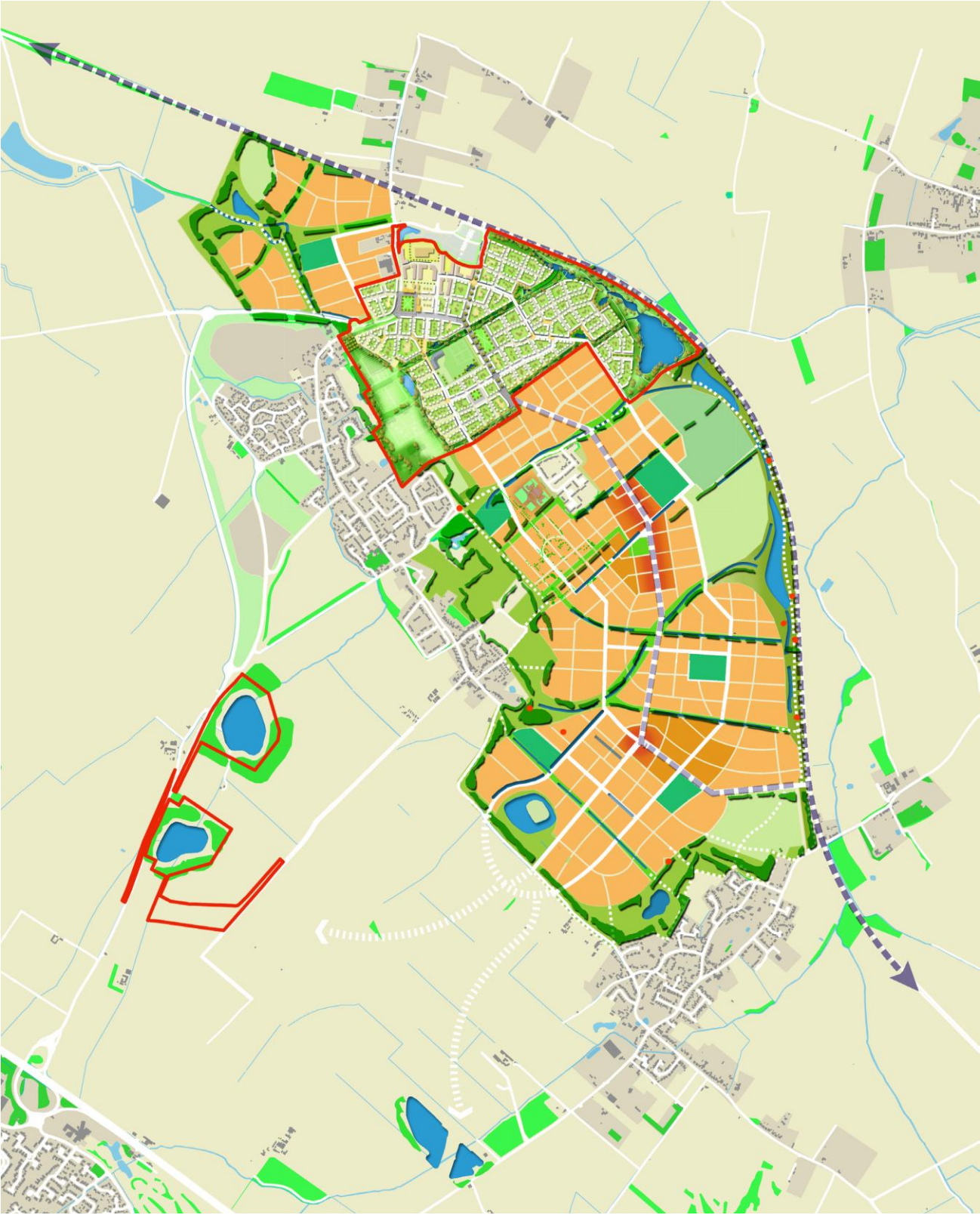
### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Cabinet is invited to:**


- a) Consider and approve the County Council's consultation response to the Northstowe Phase 1 Outline Planning Application
- b) Delegate to the Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning in consultation with the Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment the authority to make any minor textual changes to the consultation response prior to submission
- c) Approve the increase in size of the first primary school in Northstowe from 2FE to 3FE.

Source Documents	Location
<p>Northstowe Phase 1 Planning Application</p> <p>Northstowe Development Framework Document</p> <p>Review of low carbon and renewable energy solutions for Northstowe (Camco, April 2012)</p>	<p>Second floor A-Wing, Shire Hall, Cambridge</p> <p>and</p> <p><a href="http://www.scambs.gov.uk/communityandliving/newcommunities/majordevelopments/northstowe/">http://www.scambs.gov.uk/communityandliving/newcommunities/majordevelopments/northstowe/</a></p>

**APPENDIX 1: Location of Northstowe Phase 1 and Wider Development Framework  
Document Master Plan**



## Key

-  Phase 1 application boundary
-  Phase 1 development area
-  Development areas
-  Movement network of primary and secondary streets
-  Town centre & local centres
-  Secondary school site
-  Primary school sites
-  Sports hubs
-  Existing settlements
-  Green infrastructure existing and proposed key vegetation, green ways, green buffer & linear park
-  Strategic footpath/cycle links to neighbourhoods
-  Attenuation ponds
-  Potentially retained buildings in old barracks area
-  Listed pillbox
-  not to scale



APPENDIX 2: Archaeological Sites within Northstowe (Site 19 in blue)

