



Buntingford
PARKSIDE

Sustainability Strategy

3/24/0966/OUT

3/24/1255/OUT

May 2025



PART OF HENRY BOOT



A large, stylized green leaf graphic is positioned on the left side of the page. It features a central vertical stem with several horizontal veins branching out to the left and right. The leaf is elongated and tapers to a point at the top. The entire graphic is rendered in a solid green color.

Document Title: Sustainability Statement

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01 Introduction

This Sustainability Strategy has been prepared by Marrons on behalf of Hallam Land, who are the Applicant for current planning applications 3/24/0966/OUT for residential-led mixed use development of Land North of A507, West of A10, Buntingford and 3/24/1255/OUT for employment development of Land South of A507, West of A10 Buntingford.

The purpose of this Sustainability Strategy is to demonstrate the proposed developments are in a sustainable location having regard to the policy within Paragraph 110 of the Framework, namely that the development location limits the need to travel and offers a genuine choice of modes of travel. Further, the Strategy highlights the benefits of the proposed developments for existing residents of Buntingford in terms of limiting their need to travel and offering them more choice of modes of travel to jobs, services and facilities.

In so doing, it responds to concerns raised by the Planning Policy Team that the residential-led application is unsustainable. In summary, their response to the residential-led application raises concerns as to the lack of employment, comparison-shopping, and sustainable travel opportunities within the town, and thereby resulting in reliance on the private car. Other concerns are raised in relation to the distance of the site from the town centre, segregation from the town by the A10, and lack of detail about cycling and walking provision. In response to the employment-led application, their concerns are regarding the scale of employment proposed as they consider it is strategic in scale and beyond local provision to meet the needs of the town.

The Strategy is structured as follows in response:

- Employment opportunities within Buntingford and how the proposed developments will reduce the propensity for out-commuting from Buntingford for work;
- Retail opportunities within Buntingford and how the proposed local centre, future opportunities for the town centre, and online shopping will lead to a negligible impact on outward trips from the town for shopping;
- Sustainable travel opportunities from Buntingford to nearby centres, and how the proposed developments will improve the opportunities available to residents of the town to use sustainable modes of travel;
- Other services and facilities including extensive sports facilities and a country park within Buntingford, and their capacity to be improved to cater for new and existing residents from the proposed developments and therefore reduce the need to travel out of Buntingford; and,
- Sustainable travel opportunities to and from the site with other parts of Buntingford, and how the proposed developments will provide all residents with genuine choices of transport modes within Buntingford.

A photograph of three people walking away from the camera on a paved path in a park. The person on the left is wearing a dark hoodie and black shorts. The person in the middle is wearing a light green hoodie and khaki shorts. The person on the right is wearing a blue hoodie and dark shorts. They are walking towards a body of water, with trees and foliage in the background. The image has a green overlay on the right side.

This Sustainability Strategy supports the thoughtfully planned development at Buntingford Parkside, demonstrating that the proposed sites are sustainably located to reduce the need to travel and offer genuine transport choices, benefiting both new and existing residents through improved access to jobs, services, a new country park, and a vibrant local community.

02 Employment Opportunities

The Local Plan notes Buntingford is an attractive location for small scale employment allocations, however the Council's latest employment evidence (Buntingford Employment Study 2025) **advises there is no vacant employment floorspace and that provision should be made for a range of unit sizes to support the growth aspirations of local businesses. The evidence also advises there is a need for greater balance between population and employment growth to address the current disparity.**

Indeed, this is further supported by the Employment Land Supply and Demand Report submitted in support of the employment application, which identifies a lack of supply in Buntingford and the wider A10 corridor and a demonstrated demand which means delivery of the site is expected to be well-received by the market and could deliver much-needed space for local and regional businesses and positively impact the economy in East Hertfordshire.

Travel to work Flows

The 2011 Census provides a pre-Covid baseline of travel to work flows of those living within Buntingford. Drawing upon the same study area as referenced in the Council's 2025 Buntingford Employment Land Study Figure 4.1, some 34% of the resident population either worked from home or travelled less than 10km to work (14% WHM plus 20% less than 10km).

The latest 2021 Census was undertaken during the COVID pandemic and as such it is reasonable to assume that travel to work flows recorded through the Census were skewed towards working from home. Nonetheless the 2021 Census shows that a total of 46% of Buntingford residents either worked from home (35%) or travelled less than 10km to work (11%).

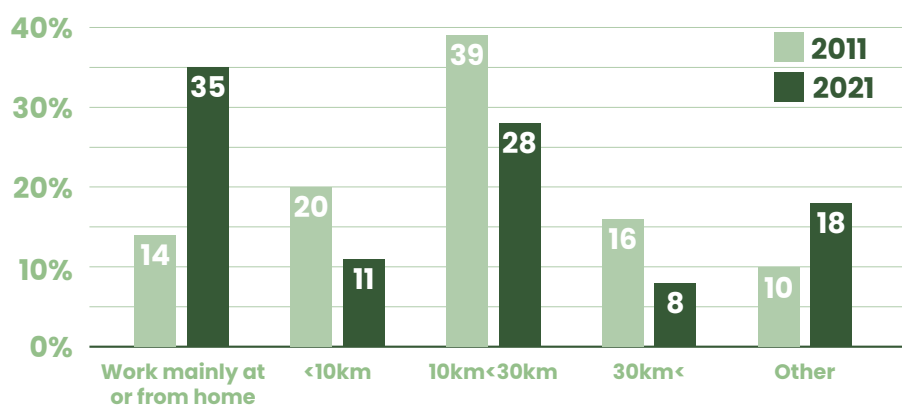
The working environment post Covid has evolved with employees afforded greater flexibility to work from home, either on a full time or hybrid basis. It is therefore likely that those Buntingford residents either working from home or travelling less than 10km amounts to between 34% and 46% of the economically active population.

The Buntingford Employment Study 2025 confirms that as of the 2021 Census there were 4,796 economically active residents within Buntingford. The Study confirms there to be 2,095 jobs within Buntingford in 2022. This would suggest a job density within Buntingford of 0.44 (jobs per economically active resident).

The Study also confirms there to be a further 608 homes permitted in the intervening period, which it equates to an additional 706 economically active residents .

Meanwhile, paragraph 8.2.10 of the Study confirms that the development of vacant land at Buntingford Business Park, and land to the east of the A10 (Ref 3/23/1447 OUT) will deliver between 275 and 707 FTE jobs.

Buntingford travel to work flows



The effect of both residential and employment permissions would be to increase the economically active population of Buntingford to 5,502 people, whilst also increasing local job opportunities to between 2,370 and 2,802 jobs. The resultant job density, following the build-out of these permissions would change from the above stated figure of 0.44 to between 0.43 – 0.51.

The proposed development at Land to the North of A507 (3/24/0966/OUT) will bring about both residential and employment opportunities, whilst Land to the South of A507 (3/24/1255/OUT) will deliver significant employment opportunity to Buntingford.

Reference to the Economic Benefit Assessment submitted within the residential planning application demonstrates that the proposed development of 600 homes at Land to the North of A507 will provide for an approximate economically active population totalling 687 , whilst the employment generating uses of the scheme will deliver approximately 122 on-site jobs (plus further indirect jobs through the wider supply chain).

Separately, the Economic Benefit Statement submitted with the employment planning application at Land South of A507 considers that the proposal will deliver in the region of 467 on site jobs (plus additional indirect jobs through the wider supply chain).

As a consequence, the proposed developments (North and South of A507) will provide for 687 economically active residents, and approximately 589 FTE jobs, equating to a job density of 0.86 (jobs per economically active residents), significantly greater than achieved in Buntingford at present.

The effect of this on Buntingford, as summarised the table below, would be to increase the overall job density to between 0.48 and 0.55. As a consequence, it is clear that the proposed development north and south of A507 will improve the economic sustainability of Buntingford to local residents.

Summary of Job Densities within Buntingford

Status	Economically Active Residents	Jobs (FTE)	Job Density
Current	4,796	2,095	0.44
Current plus Permitted Development	5,502	2,370 - 2,802	0.43 - 0.51
Current plus Permitted Development and Land North and South of A507	6,189	2,959 - 3,391	0.48 - 0.55

02 Employment Opportunities

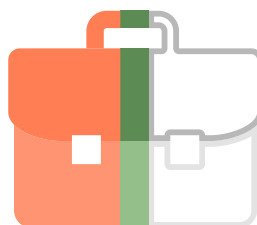
In summary, the proposed developments will improve the likelihood of residents living and working within Buntingford. The number of jobs per economically active resident would increase from 0.44 currently to between 0.48 and 0.55. Furthermore, since Covid, nearly half of the economically active population are now likely to work from home or within the Buntingford area. The proposed developments will not therefore lead to significant levels of out-commuting for work by private car to the extent that Buntingford is an unsustainable location for this scale of development. Moreover, the proposed developments will increase the propensity for residents to live and work within Buntingford.

4.71ha

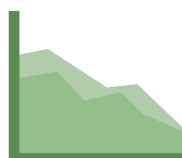
provision for employment land

687 new jobs

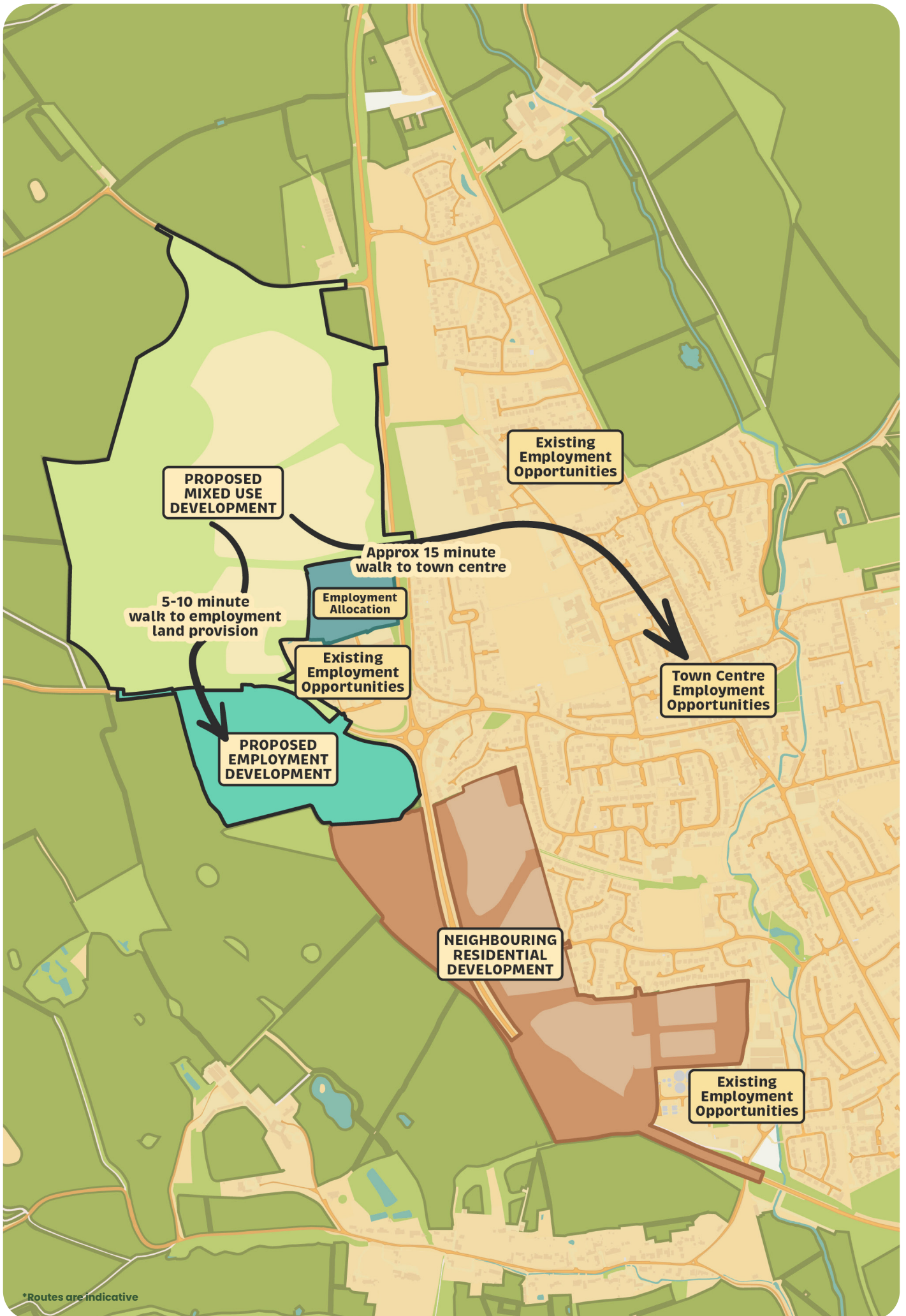
created on the doorstep



Increase of up to 0.11 jobs per economically active resident within Buntingford



Reduction of residents travelling outside of town for work



03 Retail Opportunities

The proposed residential development responds positively to the day-to-day shopping needs of new residents with the inclusion of the proposed Local Centre which can incorporate a small format convenience store. This is in addition to existing convenience foodstore provision within Buntingford town centre, which the Local Plan notes plays a vital role for the residents of the town and rural hinterland.

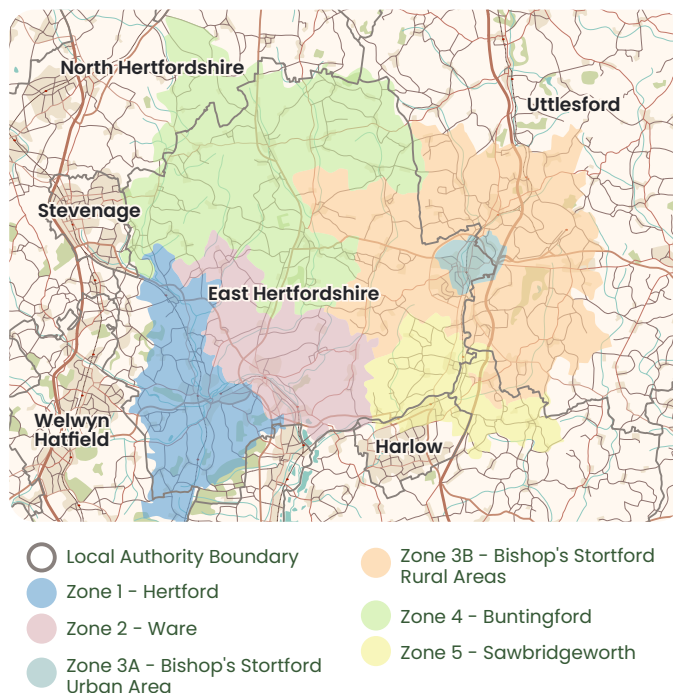
Proposed Local Centre

The residential application includes the provision of a Local Centre. The exact composition has yet to be agreed, but it will encompass an area of 0.4 ha. On this basis, the Economic Benefit Statement accompanying the residential application calculated that it could accommodate approximately 2,000 sq. m of retail floorspace. This is likely to include a mix of convenience (food) and comparison (non-food) retailers as well as other services typical of a local centre. In so doing, the Local Centre will provide for the day-to-day shopping needs of residents, including top-up food shopping which typically be undertaken in a small format convenience store (such as a Tesco Express or similar).

This, along with convenience foodstore provision within Buntingford town centre (Co-op and Sainsbury's) will provide for residents convenience shopping needs, recognising that main food shopping trips may well be undertaken either on-line or in larger centres.

For those working at the employment area, the proposed new local centre or the existing Londis or Greggs at the A10 roundabout would satisfy any needs to buy lunch or similar requirements.

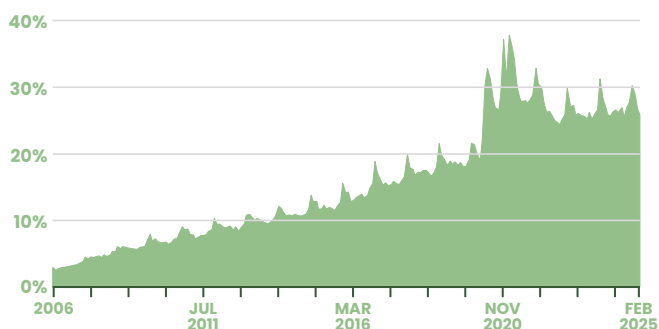
The Council's Retail Study is now some 12 years old and dated. The study areas used are large, and Buntingford is encompassed within Zone 4, as show in the map adjacent.



The shopper survey encompassed within the Retail Study identified that, excluding online sales, approximately 25% of convenience goods expenditure from residents of Zone 4 were spent in Buntingford, with 31% spent in Stevenage, with the remainder spent in surrounding centres. There are two points to note in this respect: 1) the Zone 4 catchment incorporated a wide geographical area which included areas of the District abutting Stevenage, as well as areas of North Hertfordshire. It is not therefore reasonable to assume that the flows reported for Zone 4 are reflective of Buntingford residents; and 2) the survey was undertaken prior to Sainsbury's opening within Buntingford (March 2014 as reported by CoStar), and as such levels of retention will no doubt have increased since.

Furthermore, as the graph on the following page from the ONS shows, online retail sales have grown significantly in recent years, with the Covid Pandemic providing a significant catalyst for their growth. At the time of the Council's Retail Study publication online sales amounted to around 10%, they have since increased to around 26%.

Internet sales as a percentage of total retail sales



Additionally, the increase in local population is likely to make Buntingford a more attractive location to main foodstore operators who may wish to locate within Buntingford town centre. By way of example Lidl has included Buntingford within its list of town requirements, and it will be for the local authority to work with Lidl in determining a suitable site location.

It is important to note that the proposed Local Centre will provide for the needs of residents more frequent top-up shopping needs. Main food shops are undertaken less frequently, tending to be on a weekly basis.

In respect of comparison goods (non-food) shopping patterns these will inevitably be geared towards larger centre / out of centre locations, as well as an increasing reliance on online retail. Importantly, such purchases are less frequent than those associated with convenience goods and therefore generate less vehicle movements.

In summary, the proposed residential development will increase the retail floorspace within Buntingford, support the viability of existing services within the town centre, and support the demand for an improved retail offer such as Lidl. The proposed Local Centre will meet the day-to-day needs of new residents and workers within the proposed developments. In addition, online retail now accounts for some 26% of sales such that the residual demand to travel outside of Buntingford for a weekly main food shop or comparison retailing will be limited and negligible in the context of private car use from the proposed residential development. In this context, the proposed development will not result in any material increase in private car movements from Buntingford.

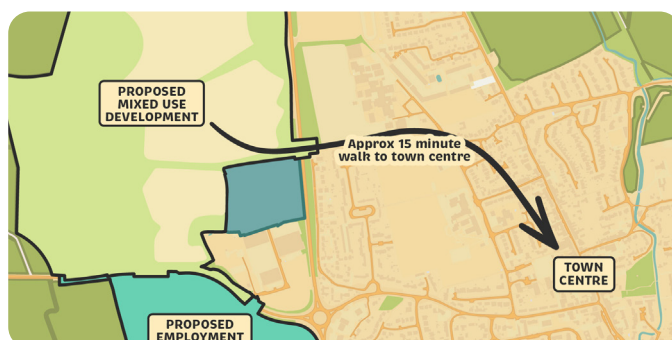
●●●●○○○○○○○○ 1ha
**approx. 0.4ha provision
 for a new local centre**

up to
**2000sq.m
 of retail floor space**

Could include
 + **Convenience Store**
 + **Health and Beauty**
 + **Takeaway**
 + **Cafe**



View down the existing Buntingford High Street, showing some of the retail locations in the town



04 Public Transport Frequency

Buntingford currently has a number of bus services which connect it to nearby towns, and **the frequency of these services are to be improved with investment arising from contributions from existing committed developments. Contributions of at least £1.6m will be received** from committed developments around Buntingford as they come forward over the coming years to increase the frequency of services.

Furthermore, discussions have taken place with Hertfordshire County Council Public Transport Unit as to how services can be further improved.

A contribution of £1.5m has been agreed from Buntingford Parkside which will allow the 331 service to increase its frequency from hourly to every 30 minutes to Hertford, and divert services through the residential site. A similar amount has been requested from the employment scheme too which would be used towards further improvements to local services. There will also be the delivery of bus stops on the A507 to help access to the employment development. The residents of Buntingford will therefore have more frequent services and genuine choices of transport modes following the development. This is a benefit to which moderate positive weight should be attached.

The enhanced public transport offer would be served by the proposed Mobility Hub, located within the local centre, which will offer a range of services including bus stops with appropriate shelters with real time bus information boards, electronic information boards specifying real time transport timetable information and associated community events, cycle parking to allow residents to cycle to the hub and park their bikes, provision of electric charging facilities for electric share bikes and for private users, electric scooter hubs, electric vehicle charging points, and car club spaces.

There is also a proposal for **each household in the development to be provided with a travel voucher, which can be used towards bus passes or purchasing a bike.** This incentive will further aid residents with easy movement around the site, connecting to the mobility hub, and the wider town.

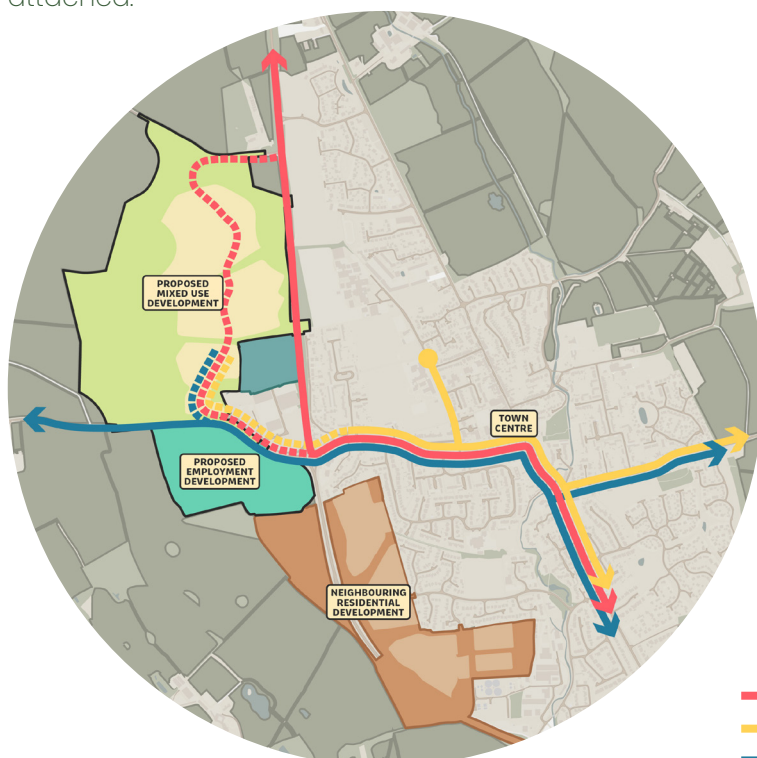
A total of up to £3 million investment into local bus route improvements by Buntingford Parkside



331 Bus Services to increase frequency from hourly to every 30 minutes to Hertford



- | | |
|--|---|
| — Existing Service 18 Route | - - - Bus Diversion - Service 18 |
| — Existing Service 331 Route | - - - Bus Diversion - Service 331 |
| — Existing Service 386 Route | - - - Bus Diversion - Service 386 |





05 Education, Health and Other Opportunities

The Local Plan notes the range of existing schools within Buntingford, and their planned enhancement and extension to cater for planned developments. **Contributions have been agreed from the proposed residential development towards further expansion of Freman College and Edwinstree Middle school.**

A site for the delivery of a new 2FE First School is provided within the residential development.

This is supported by the Education Authority and a benefit of the proposed development to which positive weight should be attached. **Education needs arising from the proposed residential development will be met within Buntingford, and be easily accessible from the development through active travel, using safe and inviting routes following the improvements to bridge crossings and improvements to the neighbouring PRoWs.**

The Integrated Care Board has supported the provision of a new surgery within Buntingford to cater for existing and new residents from the proposed development. It has land available that has a resolution to grant planning permission.

A contribution of over £1m has been agreed from the proposed residential development to facilitate the delivery of the new surgery to land North of Hare Street Road, Buntingford.

This is a benefit of the proposed development to which positive weight should be attached and primary care health needs arising from the proposed development can therefore be met within Buntingford thus **reducing the need to travel outside of the town.**

A further £300,000 financial contribution is sought from the proposed residential development towards the Buntingford Community Transport Scheme operated by the Buntingford Community Area Transport Trust, and / or other community transport services as used by the residents of Buntingford. This will assist those unable to get to the new surgery site by active modes. **Hallam Land have also confirmed their commitment to make this contribution.**

The Council has supported the **expansion of Buntingford Library and Youth Club to meet needs arising from the proposed development, and contributions of over £350,000 from the proposed residential development are agreed** which will benefit existing and new residents of the town.



Over £16 million contribution towards education expansion in Buntingford

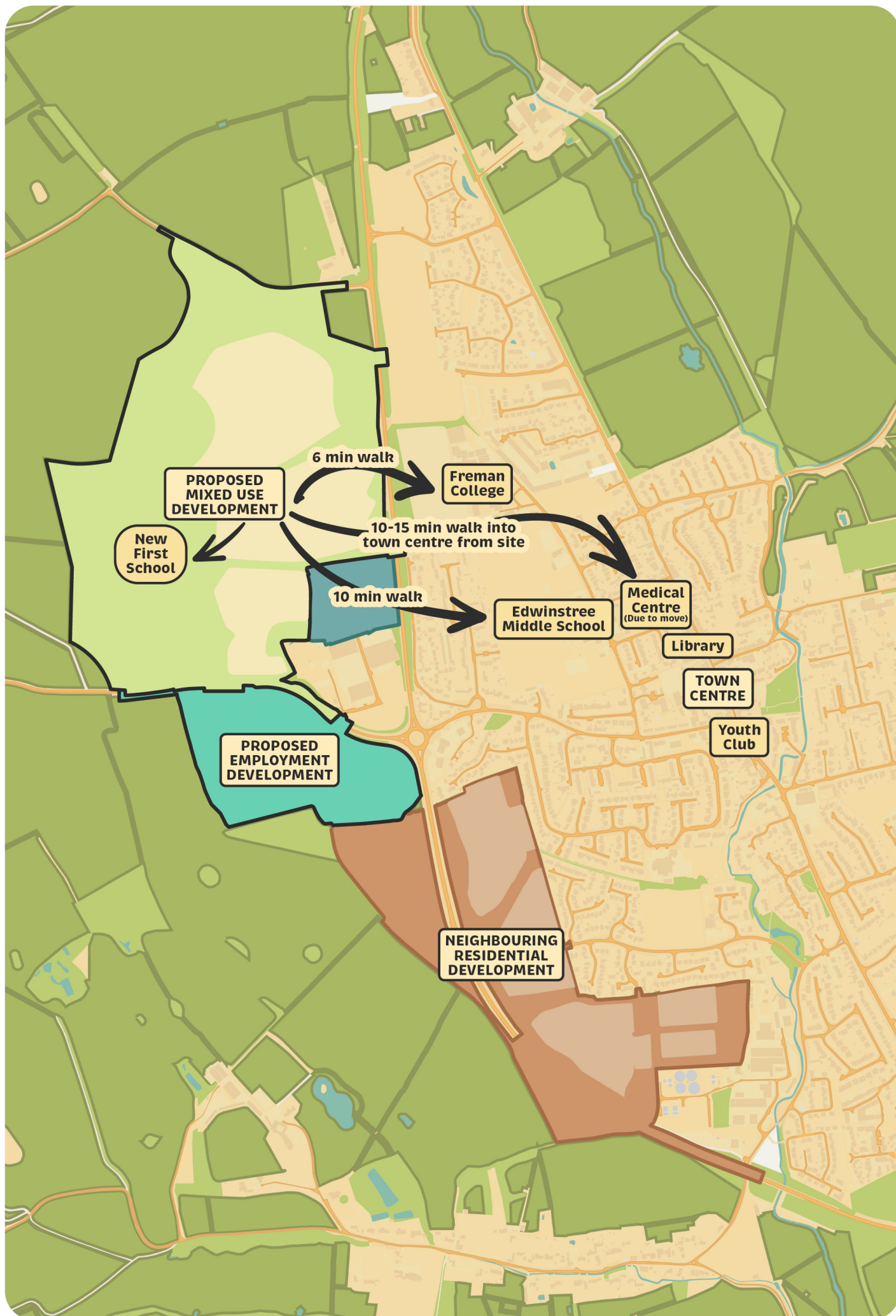


A new First School in the development

£1 million

contribution to facilitate delivery of new surgery in Buntingford

£350,000 towards the expansion of Buntingford Library and Youth Club



06 Open Space & Sports Facilities

The Council's Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study – Open Spaces Assessment (2017) states that in Buntingford there are significant deficiencies in provision for parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green space, and children's play and teenage provision.

For the residential development proposal, the Council have requested on-site provision for allotments, provision for parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green space, and children's play and teenage provision.

A combined total of almost 25 hectares of Open Space is proposed (excluding formal sports pitches) **on the residential proposal. This is a surplus of almost 18 hectares**, with the most generous provision in the Natural and Semi-Natural typology.

Provision of Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space would be sufficient to address the outstanding shortfall, resulting in an overall surplus in Buntingford Parish. Additionally, more than 6 hectares of Green Infrastructure is proposed in the employment scheme.

Buntingford, Parkside proposes a hierarchy of open spaces that can support and encourage access to nature and activity for both new and existing residents of Buntingford. This hierarchy spans private, semi-private, semi-public, and public spaces, offering a mix of spaces that support different uses.

New planting in the north-west of Buntingford Park **will introduce seasonal variety with a mix of deciduous and evergreen species, framing the cricket green and creating a layered edge between Buntingford, Parkside, and the countryside.** Along Baldock Road (A507), revised landscaping responds to infrastructure needs, replacing cleared vegetation with **new planting to enhance the gateway to Buntingford.**

Proposed Residential Development Open Space Provision

Children's Play and provision for young people



Town-wide deficit – 0.12ha

Required – 0.35ha

Proposed – 0.42ha



Amenity Green Space, Parks and Gardens

Required – 1.95ha

Proposed – 2.1ha

Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space



Town-wide deficit – 12.73ha

Required – 4.45ha

Proposed – 21.73ha

Deficit replaced with surplus of 4.55ha

Allotments & Community Growing



Required – 0.28ha

Proposed – 0.6ha

Sports Facilities

The Council's Open Spaces and Sports Facilities Assessment Technical Study – Playing Pitch Strategy (2017) states that there is a need for additional football, cricket and rugby pitches in Buntingford to meet demand as well as improved facilities.

Building on the playing strategy, a series of sports pitches are proposed on the residential site providing a range of play opportunities for all ages.

The playing field area can support the potential inclusion of a cricket pitch and adult football pitches, on the flattest area of the site.

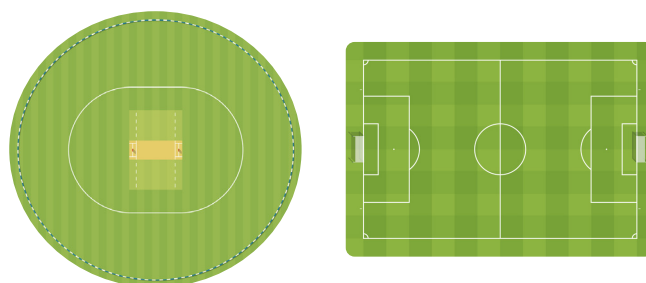
The playing pitches are accessible via direct footpaths from the development and along green corridors, and are supported by changing facilities. They sit just a short walk from the local centre and First School, are a key feature in Buntingford Park.

The Council **supports the expansion of outdoor sports facilities in Buntingford** to meet the needs of the proposed development.

The Council has supported **the expansion of indoor sports facilities in Bishops Stortford** to meet the needs arising from surrounding towns and villages, such as Buntingford, and also within Buntingford at **Seth Ward Community Centre and Norfolk Road Sports Pavilion** to meet the needs from the proposed development. Requests for financial contributions to support indoor sports have been made for the residential development proposal.

This is a benefit of the proposed development to which positive weight should be attached, and **sports needs arising from the proposed residential development can therefore be met within Buntingford thus reducing the need to travel or at Bishops Stortford as part of the Council's preferred strategy for indoor sport.**

On-site provision cricket and football pitches, helping to form a hub for sport and play



Sketch perspective showing the extent of open space within the development

07 Sustainable Travel Opportunities from the Site

There has been extended engagement with Hertfordshire County Council as Local Highway Authority on the connectivity of the Site, for which both development proposals will deliver significant enhancements.

In addition to active travel improvements to the A507 Baldock Road west of the A10 providing a designated route to the Site, significant improvements are also proposed to Baldock Road east of the A10 including provision of a 3m shared use path on Baldock Road into the town centre, associated raised crossings to calm traffic speed and improve permeability across the link. This will provide an ideal gateway to the proposed improvements on Buntingford High Street currently being undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council. These proposed improvements are illustrated in the plan below.

The proposed residential development will deliver improved connections over the A10, including the provision of a parallel active travel bridge next to the existing pedestrian bridge over the A10 linking PRoW 36 and PRoW 40. Furthermore, a pedestrian footbridge is proposed to the north of the site linking PRoW 35 and 41. This will enable safer crossing of the A10, given the existing at-grade crossing requires users to cross the A10 directly.

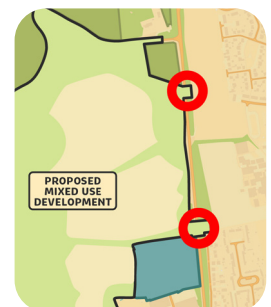
These new bridge crossings will be combined with **enhancement to the PRoWs to improve lighting, surfacing and available width to make these routes attractive to users.** Combined, these improvements will provide a **direct and safe route to Edwinstree Middle School, Freman College and the town centre beyond.**

A high quality active travel corridor on Baldock Road connecting with the proposed developments.



Enhanced crossing of the A10 at the Baldock roundabout and provision of a combined footway / cycleway connection into Buntingford

2 New Bridges on the A10
between PRoW 40 & 36, and PRoW 41 & 35, with further enhancements to the PRoW, including lighting, widening and surfacing

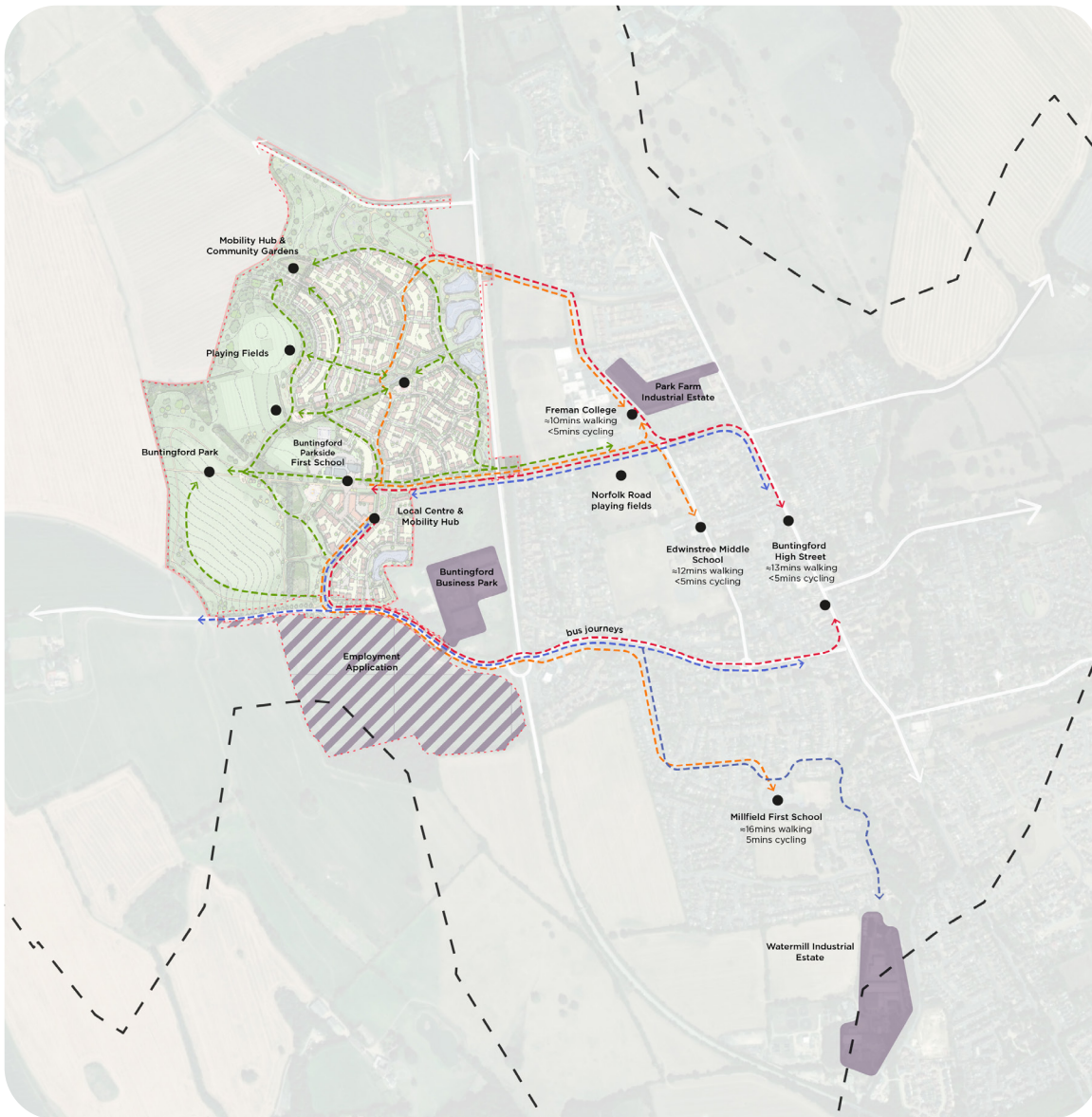


Location of bridges



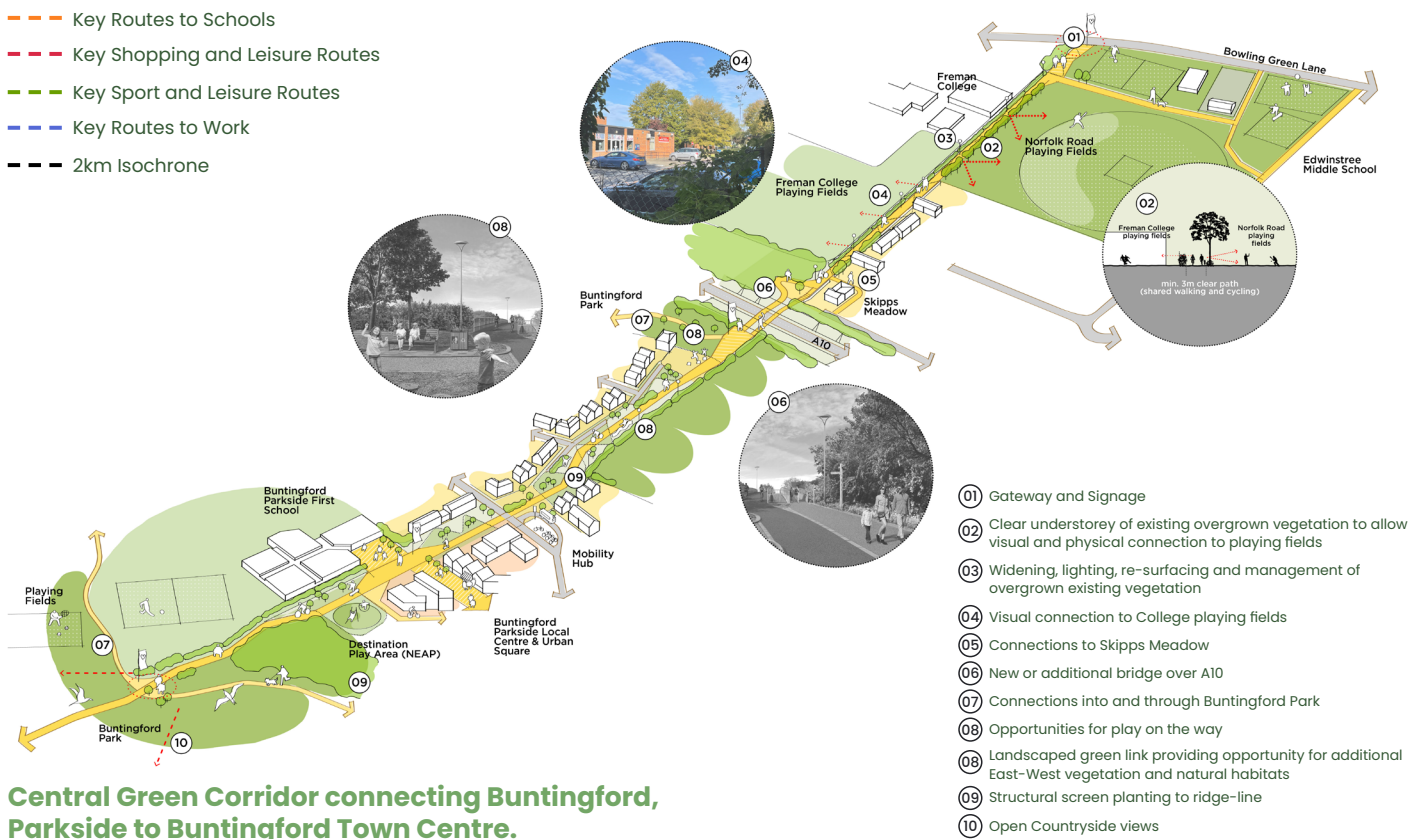
A507 / Baldock road Improvements

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 01 Landscaped gateway feature & speed reduction measures 02 Leisure routes connecting to Buntingford Park 03 New access roundabout 04 New bus stops for employment uses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 05 Existing vegetation retained as far as possible 06 New cycle/pedestrian link 07 Connections to Buntingford Parkside Greenway 08 Toucan Crossing features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 09 Gateway feature (with dragon teeth marking) 10 Widening pedestrian/cycle path 11 Proposed raised crossing 12 Proposed traffic calming priority narrowing |
|--|--|--|



Buntingford Connectivity Plan

- Key Routes to Schools
- Key Shopping and Leisure Routes
- Key Sport and Leisure Routes
- Key Routes to Work
- - - 2km Isochrone



Central Green Corridor connecting Buntingford, Parkside to Buntingford Town Centre.

08 Summary

This Sustainability Strategy has been prepared by Marrons on behalf of Hallam Land, who are the Applicant for planning applications 3/24/0966/OUT for residential-led mixed use development of Land North of A507 and West of A10 Buntingford, and 3/24/1255/OUT for employment development of Land South of A507 and West of A10 Buntingford.

The Strategy demonstrates the proposed developments are in a sustainable location having regard to the policy within Paragraph 110 of the Framework, namely that the chosen location limits the need to travel for jobs, services and facilities and that there is a genuine choice of modes of travel from the site within and from Buntingford.

As explained in this Strategy, the proximity of the proposed residential development to existing and proposed jobs, retail opportunities, schools, health, recreation and social facilities within Buntingford limits the need for residents to travel outside of Buntingford. Moreover, the proposed active and sustainable travel improvements illustrated in this Strategy ensure that residents will have a genuine choice of modes of travel.

The proposed developments are therefore sustainably located and consistent with national policy.





Buntingford
PARKSIDE

Sustainability Strategy

3/24/0966/OUT

Land North of A507,
West of A10

May 2025



PART OF HENRY BOOT

