Part 2 Design & Access

Quantum of Development

The evolution of the masterplan through the assessment of the context, public engagement, and various iterations of the design concepts and proposals, has culminated in a masterplan that responds to its context, the landscape, and the needs and wants of the local community.

The design approach for Buntingford, Parkside is landscape-led, with a strong focus on access to high-quality green space, and providing the much-needed employment space for Buntingford.



Priors Hall, Corby

Green and Blue Infrastructure

Landscape context and design have driven the masterplan evolution to create a proposal that delivers high-quality green spaces for health and well-being, as well as biodiversity and environmental benefits.

The green infrastructure network will retain, respond to, and enhance the existing assets, such as hedgerows, and provide a range of opportunities for leisure, socialising and rest. Proposals will embed this network into the development, through street trees and SuDs, as well as screening development from the open countryside. This approach looks to support local wildlife and strengthen biodiversity, as well as give residents closer contact with nature.

Greenspaces will be accessible to Buntingford via new active travel links, that offer recreational opportunities, as well as informal spaces for the environment to flourish.

The green infrastructure network will have a positive management regime that ensures the long-term establishment and maintenance of the proposals.





Ashridge Meadows, Wokingham





Quantum of Development

Employment

With much of Buntingford's working population commuting out of the town for employment, and the town currently constrained by a lack of employment land, there is a need for new employment opportunities. Buntingford, Parkside is proposing 4.71ha of new employment land, south of the Buntingford Business Park and Baldock Road (A507), which will provide a range of flexible, B2, B8, E(c) and E(g), to meet the identified needs outlined in the Employment Study conducted for Hallam Land Management.

The layout and design of employment proposals should be sensitive to the landscape context, with landscaping within the site, such as through green verges and tree planting, as well as a landscaped buffer along its periphery. The layout should adopt shared servicing courts and landscaped parking to ensure efficient use of space.



Leather Works, Sormonne France (© Gautier Deblonde)



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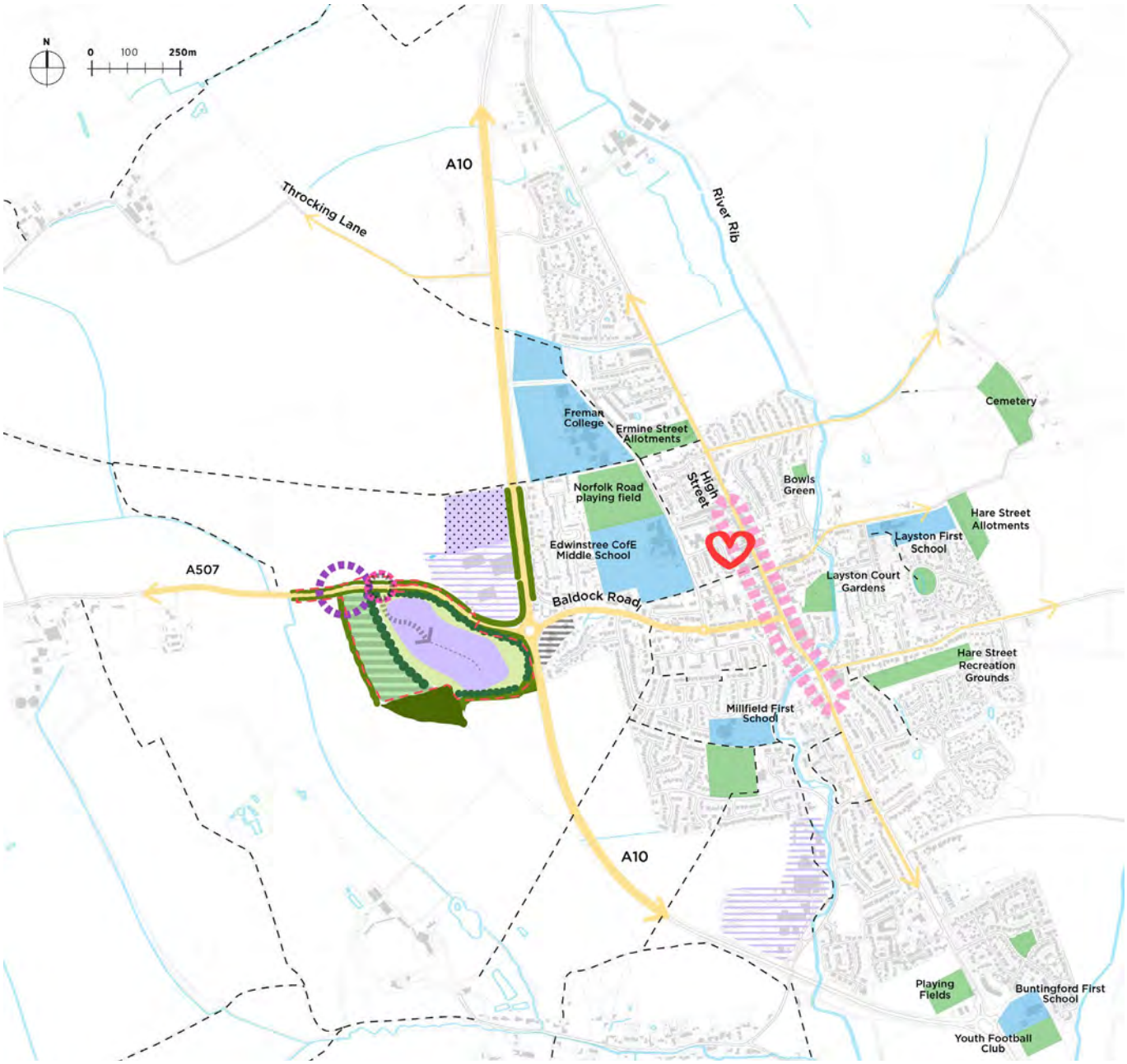


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Petersfield Green, Milton Keynes

Land Uses Plan



- Site Boundary
- Existing Settlements
- Main Roads
- Proposed vehicular access
- Public Rights of Way
- Existing Education Facilities
- Employment Land
- Local Plan Employment Allocation
- Out of Town Retail uses
- Existing Key Open Spaces
- Proposed Strategic Green Infrastructure
- Existing hedgerows/trees
- Indicative Proposed Planting
- Buntingford Town Centre
- Proposed Buntingford Gateway
- Proposed Development Gateway
- Proposed Employment Area

Green and Blue Infrastructure

Buntingford, Parkside will deliver a series of environmental benefits, through a long-term approach to boosting biodiversity and ensuring sustainability across all aspects of the vision.

A green buffer to the west of the employment parcel will offer a variety of experiences, including leisure and sensory experiences, with opportunities to rest and socialise. The park will have a distinct character, defined by its natural landscape, with a focus on biodiversity and wildlife enhancements, but usable elements such as natural play trails and walking and cycling routes. The landscape and spaces are all tied together through a greenway, that loops around the site, linking its various experiences through to Buntingford, as an accessible and attractive route through nature.

The green spaces will make use of the existing green assets, preserving and enhancing existing vegetation, and weaving green space into the development with street trees and swales that support local wildlife and create a scheme that is resilient to climate change.

Water will also play a role in the green infrastructure network, enhancing biodiversity and sustainably managing water flows. The proposal is designed to capture and transport rainfall, and slow surface water run-off from impermeable areas of the site, through a series of sustainable drainage features, including attenuation ponds that can hold water from 1 in 100yr, plus an allowance for climate change, flood events. A Water Management Strategy has been produced separately and elaborates on this in more detail.

Buntingford, Parkside creates opportunities for new habitat creation, consisting of structural planting, new hedgerows and boundary planting, and wetlands. Ecological niches, such as bat boxes and bee bricks, will be integrated into the design of the scheme. Further details on the ecological proposals are elaborated in the Ecological Impact Assessment submitted as a part of the planning application.

The following plan highlights the existing green assets on site, and the immediate context, as well as illustrating the proposed landscape.

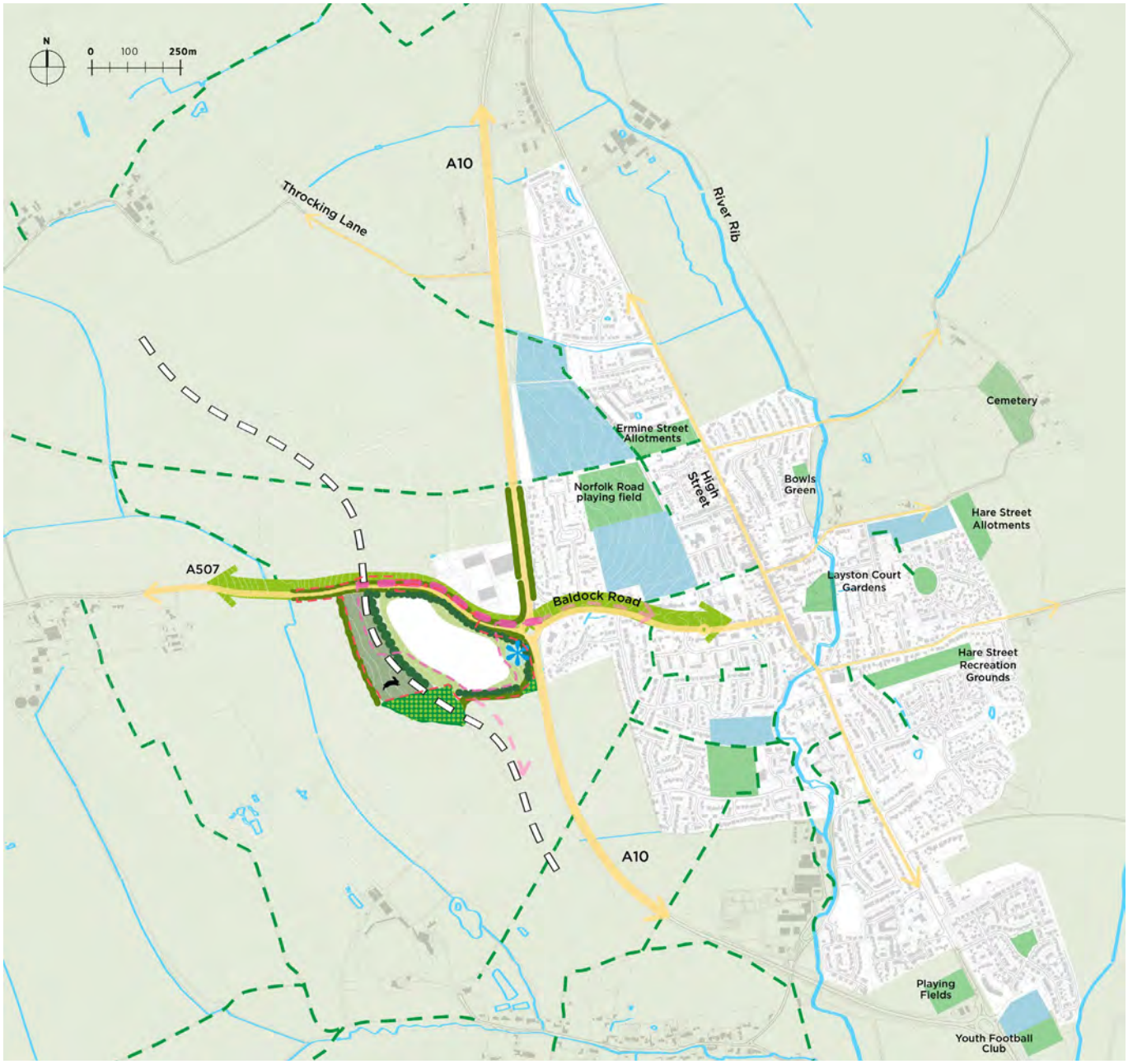








Green Infrastructure Plan



- Site Boundary
- Existing Settlements
- Main Roads
- Existing Education and Playing Fields
- Existing Key Open Spaces
- 1m contour lines
- Ridgeline
- Public Rights of Way
- Green Links
- Proposed Buntingford Greenway
- Future Opportunity to extend Buntingford Greenway
- Key Pedestrian and/or cycle routes
- Strategic Sustainable Drainage System Feature
- Existing hedgerows
- Existing woodland
- New Planting/ Buffers
- Key Green Spaces - Rural Parkland

Access and Movement

Buntingford, Parkside will be a new community that is cohesively integrated with the town, achieved not only through the green infrastructure, layout and scale of development but also the proposed access and movement network.

Sustainable travel takes precedence at Buntingford, Parkside with a network of new pedestrian and cycle connections throughout the development and beyond into the town. Primary access for the site will be along Baldock Road (A507), which will be transformed into a sustainable transport corridor that prioritises active travel movement. This corridor will feature segregated footways and cycleways set along a green route that preserves the existing green infrastructure and creates an attractive corridor towards the employment proposal and western buffer

A roundabout, with cyclist priority, serves as access to the site from the A507, and creates a new gateway for Buntingford, with formal landscaping, and traffic calming measures. The extent of the sustainable transport corridor along Baldock Road extends east into Buntingford, with the extension of shared footways/cycleways to encourage active travel into the town.

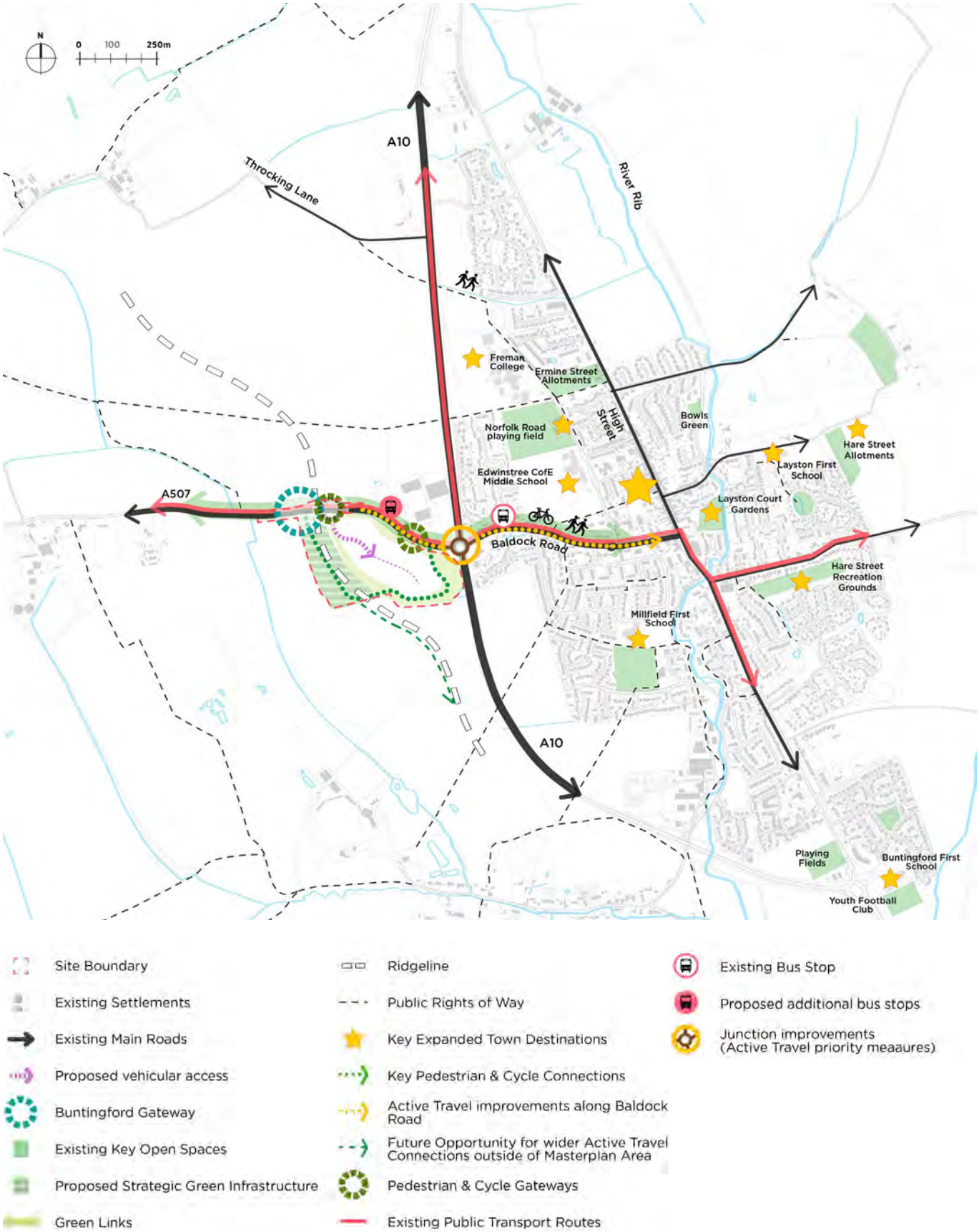
A bus route will be extended along the A507, providing access to the employment development and green spaces by public transport, increasing opportunities for sustainable travel and supporting the viability of the public transport service as a transport generator for the town.

These links will provide high-quality connections for sustainable modes both within the proposals and offsite to connect with Buntingford.



Buntingford Parkside Gateway Visualisation

Movement and Transport Plan



Layout, Massing and Scale

The proposal will be a legible and walkable environment, with a logical arrangement and layout that makes efficient use of space for businesses, such as shared service spaces, and parking squares.

The scheme responds to the site context, working with the topography and respecting the existing green infrastructure assets on site and screening development with structural planting. The density and arrangement of buildings will reflect the local employment character, with a finer grainer of development at the gateway to the site.

The scale and massing of the employment proposals are characteristic to the area, supporting a range of employment types that will offer flexibility and adaptability to the occupant and the employment offering in the town.



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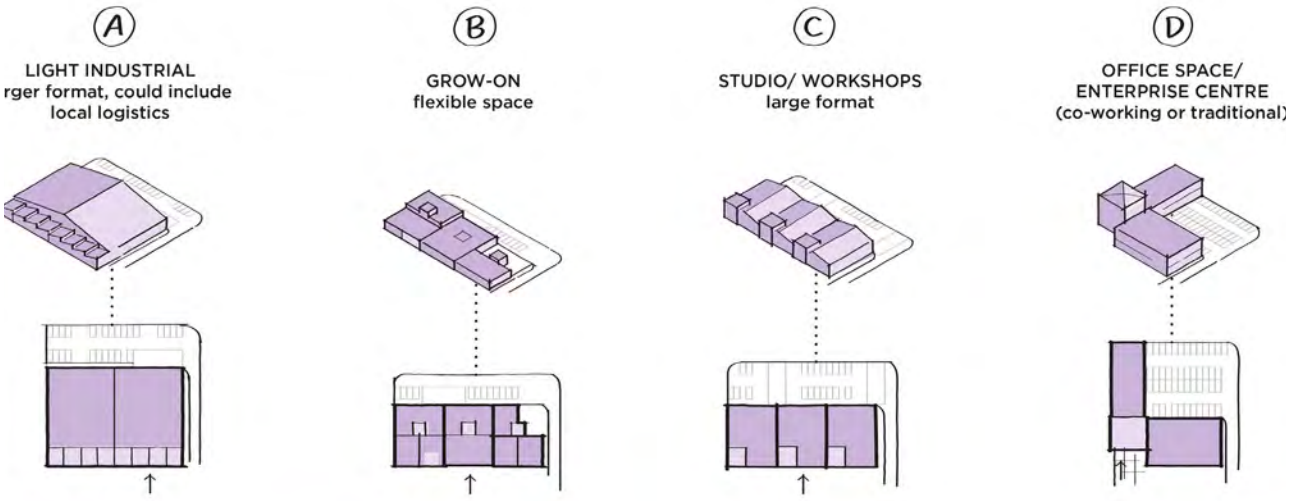
Tapton Park, Woodville

Employment Typologies

A range of employment typologies are being proposed, where the key is to create facilities which are flexible and can respond to the changing needs of the occupiers while creating the desired economic benefits for the local community.

The Neighbourhood Plan expresses a desire for small business units to meet the needs of the self-employed and new startups, and the provision of further employment typologies could address the current out-commuting desire.

Given these assumptions, an average Floor Area Ratio (ratio between a building's total floor area and the size of the land upon which it is built) of 0.5:1 is considered to be appropriate.

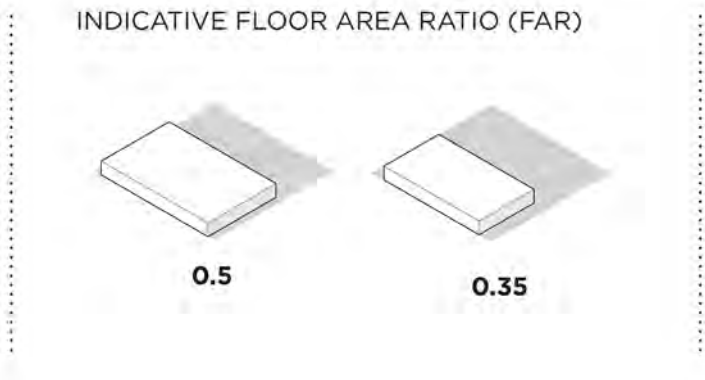




EMPLOYMENT TYPOLOGY A: LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (could include local logistics)

Key Characteristics:

- opportunity for office components to create active frontage
- service access + parking behind/ between buildings to create parking courts
- allow for landscape buffer
- break-up roof massing





Gateway 4 Doncaster (© Corstorphine & Wright)



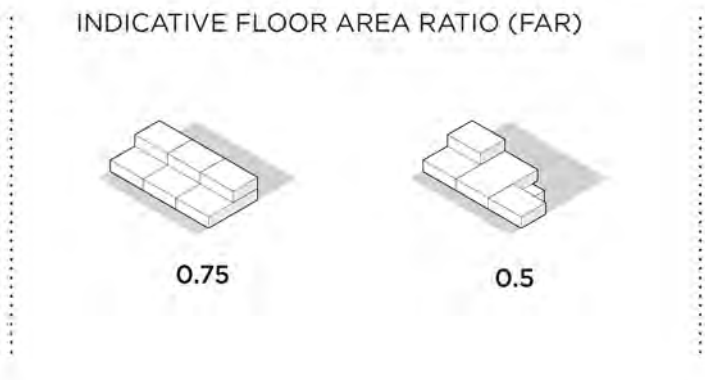


Edinburgh Drinking Water (© David Barbour)

EMPLOYMENT TYPOLOGY B: GROW ON/ FLEXIBLE SPACE

Key Characteristics:

- service access + parking behind/ between buildings to create parking courts
- no need for service access from heavy vehicles
- customisable space
- finer grain
- sharing of amenities





Wildspace, Rainham (© Alison Brooks Architects)



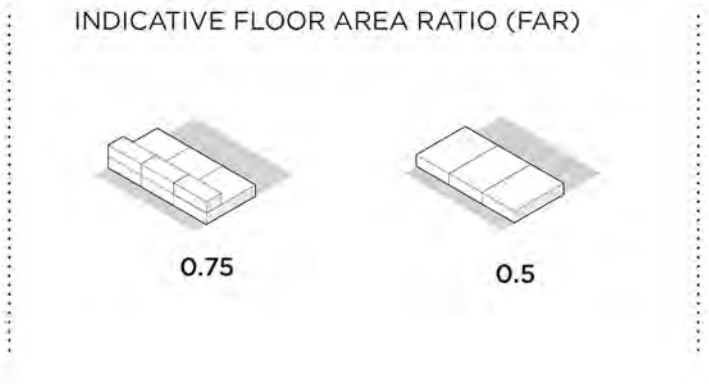


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EMPLOYMENT TYPOLOGY C: GROW ON/ FLEXIBLE SPACE

Key Characteristics:

- service access + parking behind/ between buildings to create parking courts
- no need for service access from heavy vehicles
- more flexible layout
- finer grain
- sharing of amenities





Clydebank East (© Cadzow Pelosi, Elder & Cannon Architects)



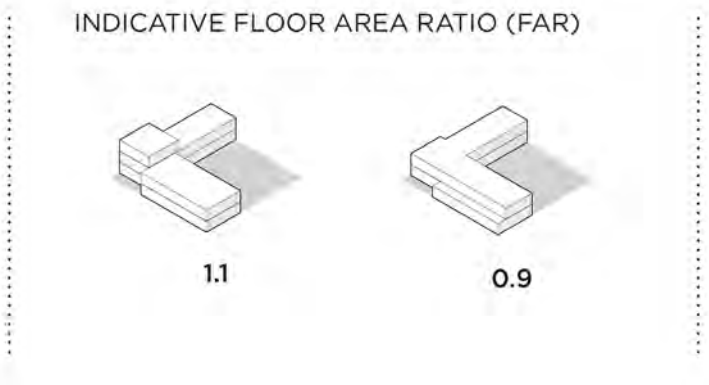


Highgate Bowl (© Simone Bossi, HASA)

EMPLOYMENT TYPOLOGY D OFFICE SPACE/ ENTERPRISE CENTRE (co-working or traditional)

Key Characteristics:

- suitable for gateway building
- break-up massing in different volumes
- shared entrance/ core
- open plan or traditional offices
- shared facilities
- dedicated delivery bay





EPFL Innovation Park, Lausanne (© EPFL)





Big data institute, Oxford

Part 3 Masterplanning & Placemaking

The illustrative masterplan sets out an indicative representation of the development framework plan at a detailed level. It demonstrates the vision and design principles in a detailed design, exploring aspects of the green spaces, street design, and plot arrangements, for example. This gives a clearer picture of how the proposal is envisaged and will be used by East Herts District Council to guide the detailed design, which comes at a later planning stage.

Placemaking

Creating a place that adopts best practices for urban design and placemaking has driven the masterplanning process. The following are key placemaking principles that have informed the design of the Development Framework Plan and Illustrative Masterplan, and will be adopted at later planning stages –

- Create a highly accessible place, that makes sustainable travel the desirable option for all prospective users.
- Accommodate and support a range of businesses, with spaces that are flexible and adaptable to changing needs over time.
- Deliver a mix of public spaces that create opportunities for activity, socialising, and rest, that are enjoyable and attractive places to be that foster health and well-being.
- Achieve a legible layout, supported by street design and plot arrangements.
- Create a place that offers richness and variety in daily experiences. This can be through the massing and skyline, views and vistas, and architectural detail, as well as sensory and acoustic experiences.



Illustrative Landscape Plan

Green Spaces

Landscape Strategy

An extensive western buffer will provide a diverse mix of opportunities, both for Buntingford, and for the environment.

The green spaces will provide play opportunities, including a natural play trail and a greenway that loops around the site, and links Buntingford to the new green spaces. The buffer will create opportunities for environmental enhancements, supporting and boosting biodiversity and encouraging wildlife to thrive, through the retention and creation of habitats. The landscape strategy transforms agricultural land with little biodiversity value, into a green oasis.



Walking, cycling and public transport

Buntingford, Parkside is designed to prioritise sustainable travel modes. Key to this inclusive approach is a variety of routes that look to encourage and enable walking, cycling, and bus travel, within the site, and into Buntingford.

Active Travel Corridor

The A507 will be upgraded into an Active Travel Corridor, designed to provide direct and accessible access to employment, through segregated footways and cycleways, and bus stops, along a green route. This corridor provides safe, accessible, and enjoyable active travel links along the A507, and across the A10, linking businesses to the existing communities in Buntingford.

The existing shared footway/ cycleway along a section of the A507 will be upgraded into an attractive route with segregated cycleways and formal crossings, that will integrated into the wider movement network.



Minimising impact on the local road network







Highway Design

The design and layout of Buntingford, Parkside places a focus on sustainable travel modes. The streets will be designed to create a safe and attractive environment that fosters walking and cycling movements, and supports the movements required by businesses.

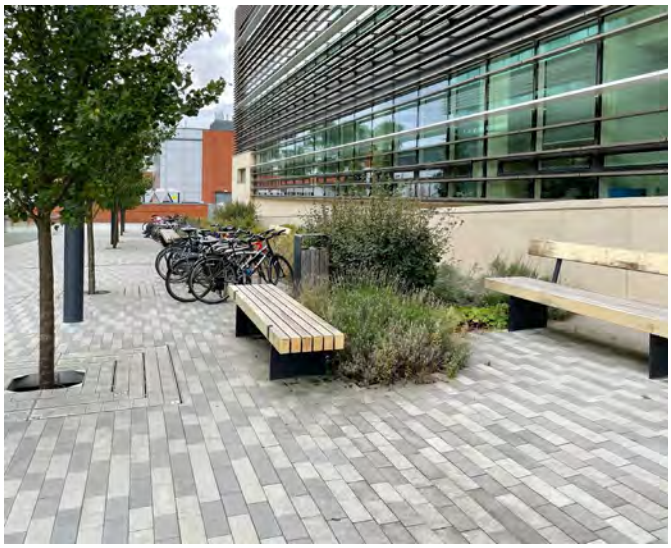
The detailed street design is to follow in the later planning stages. The following design influences could be adopted:

- Street trees, landscaping and furniture.
- Alignment of the street and visibility splays.
- Footways and cycleways that take direct routes.
- Change in surface treatment.
- Shared service yards and parking squares.



Milton Park, Oxfordshire


Pebble Mill Medical Campus


Big Data Insitute, Oxford


Oxford Science Park

Parking

Cycle parking should be provided at all employment buildings to support active travel movements to work. A mix of cycle parking types should be provided, including short- and long-term cycle parking, such as cycle lockers and shelters, that are well-overlooked and sheltered. Additional cycle facilities will also be beneficial to encouraging active travel.

A range of car parking solutions, such as parking squares, will be adopted to meet the parking standards set by the Local Planning Authority. Vehicle parking should be well-designed to not dominate the public space but integrated into the built form with landscaping to reduce its visual impact.

Detailed design of cycle and vehicle parking will be undertaken at the later planning stages.

Key Spaces

The site layout is designed to create a series of public spaces, different in size, use and character. Many of these will be incidental spaces along the street, that create distinctive and memorable places within the site, both aiding wayfinding and creating visual interest.

The design of the public realm makes these spaces visually distinguishable, with distinctive street furniture, surface treatments and priority for pedestrians.



Big data institute, Oxford



Oxford Science Park



Priors Hall Enterprise Centre, Corby

Plot Arrangements and Frontages

The layout of plots will be arranged in a sustainable and efficient arrangement, that provides flexibility for businesses, and contributes to the quality of the place. Plots will be set back from the street, orientated to overlook shared service yards, with special treatments for corner plots to overlook the main street.

Units will be serviced via shared yards, via the front of the building, and accessed along the main street. The shared service yards will have sufficient room for vehicular movements, to support the needs of the businesses.

Team Valley, Gateshead



Sustainability

Sustainability has been a key driver across all aspects of the vision. The masterplan incorporates numerous sustainability elements, such as renewable energy generation, active travel and ecological enhancements.

Buntingford, Parkside is designed to encourage sustainable transport internally and to the town, through several active travel routes that make sustainable travel an attractive option. Electric vehicle charging points will be provided in parking squares, supporting the transition to electrified transport and improving air quality.

The provision of a mix of employment units will create local jobs for residents, in a highly accessible location along the Active Travel Corridor, reducing out-commuting and encouraging travel to work by sustainable means.

Regarding green infrastructure and water, the inclusion of SuDS, designed to account for 1 in 100-year events plus an allowance for climate change, ensures water is sustainably managed in the scheme. Buntingford, Parkside will also protect and enhance biodiversity, with climate-tolerant species where possible, and introduce new greenspaces and habitats to contribute to improved biodiversity.



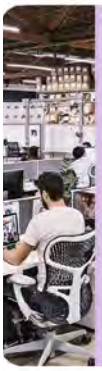






ENERGY

- A resilient, adaptable, and highly sustainable energy and carbon strategy
- Highly efficient building fabric to reduce energy bills
- Extensive use of renewable energy generating technologies across the site such as in the form of Air Source Heat Pumps and/or Solar PV



EMPLOYMENT

- Supporting the local economy through the provision of flexible business spaces well connected to sustainable transport
- Provide a diverse range of flexible business spaces that meet local needs
- Employment opportunities for residents
- Employment well-connected and easily accessed by walking/cycling



ACTIVE & SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

- Create strong, comprehensive, network of active travel routes to Buntingford
- Convenient access to public transport that integrates with existing routes
- Potential new pedestrian/ cycling connections across the A507
- Access to the wider countryside
- Relationship to landform
- Access to local green infrastructure and wider countryside infrastructure



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- New "Buntingford Park" and potential accessible green loop
- Access to wider countryside
- Open space features/ Interconnected "Viewing Points"
- Outdoor leisure & sports provision
- Some areas to be "wildlife havens"
- Encourage active lifestyles
- Green infrastructure as a placemaking tool



PLACE-MAKING

- Create a distinct new place shaped by its context
- Adaptable/locally informed placemaking
- Safe, secure and inclusive design
- Spaces to adapt over time
- Design with emphasis on management not maintenance
- Design with landscape and micro-climate



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- New Buntingford Park to serve the all Town
- Accessible, safe and convenient for all
- Prioritise sustainable travel
- Provision of flexible spaces
- Provide opportunity for social interaction





BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

- A network of sustainable drainage designed with the topography and landscape
- Integration of blue infrastructure in the habitat network
- Use of water in strategic habitats



BIODIVERSITY

- Working with site topography and natural features, including existing woodland, hedgerows and watercourses
- Early implementation of on-site initiatives to support Biodiversity Net Gain
- Create a network of varied and connected habitats
- Integration of nature with development

Sustainability elements



Illustrative Masterplan

Illustrative Masterplan and Vision

The illustrative masterplan sets out an indicative representation of the development framework plan at a detailed level. It demonstrates the vision and design principles in a detailed design, exploring aspects of the green spaces, street design, and plot arrangements, for example. This gives a clearer picture of how the proposal is envisaged and will be used by East Herts District Council to guide the detailed design, which comes at a later planning stage.

Key

- Employment
- Greenspace
- SuDS
- Structural Planting
- Vegetation
- Existing Woodland

