

# eco-towns

## living a greener future: progress report



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July 2008

Department for Communities and Local Government: London

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July 2008

Product Code: 08 SCG 05465

ISBN 978-1-4098-0345-4

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## Foreword

Since we published the shortlist of potential eco-town locations in April, a tremendous amount of work has been undertaken to progress this programme to take forward proposals for new sustainable communities.

- There has been an initial consultation on the overall eco-town concept and preliminary views on each of the proposed locations.
- We have run a challenge process with each proposed scheme being subject to detailed scrutiny by a panel of experts in sustainable development with developers being challenged to come up with a better offer.
- We are undertaking an objective and detailed appraisal of the financial viability, infrastructure requirements and transport implications of each scheme, working with the local authorities involved.
- We have made significant progress on a sustainability appraisal of all the proposed locations and on the draft Planning Policy Statement. In the shortlisted locations, the sustainability appraisal will consider whether there are reasonable alternatives in terms of other locations for an eco-town. This work will be based on previous plans, policies, and evidence bases at a local and regional level.



Taken together, this represents a significant level of advance consultation and assessment. Iain Wright and I are visiting all of the currently defined locations and meeting local authorities and community groups as well as hearing presentations of the promoters' schemes.

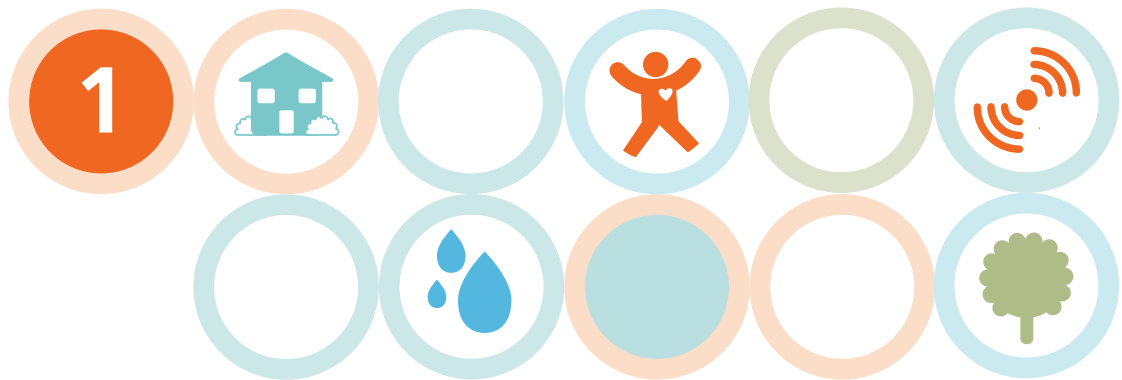
This initial consultation phase that flowed from *Eco-towns – Living a greener future* has generated a significant response of over 5,000 replies and we need to ensure that all these views are taken on board as we go forward. In addition, as part of that consultation process and work on the sustainability appraisal, alternative locations have been put forward at quite a late stage in the appraisal process and these need to be considered alongside the other options. Our current expectation is that this sustainability appraisal will be published for consultation alongside the draft Planning Policy Statement on eco-towns in September.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Caroline Flint'.

**Rt Hon Caroline Flint MP**

Minister for Housing and Planning

# 1. Introduction and summary



1.1 This eco-towns update follows the end of the first stage of the consultation on the eco-towns programme and sets out:

- initial proposed standards and planning process for eco-towns
- an updated list of locations and where to find out more about the proposals
- how the second stage of consultation will work
- the work underway to assess the proposals across Government and with local authorities and other partners

**The Government has announced plans for five eco-towns by 2016 and up to 10 by 2020, as part of plans to build three million homes by 2020**

## Why do we need eco-towns?

Eco-towns are a response to the challenges of climate change, the need for more sustainable living, and an acute housing shortage – including the need for more affordable housing particularly for families and first-time buyers.

## What are eco-towns?

Eco-towns will meet these challenges in an innovative and ground-breaking way and create great places to live. They will be:

- new settlements for between 5,000 and 15,000 families, with good links to existing towns
- affordable – 30 to 50 per cent of the new homes will be affordable housing
- zero carbon – promoting sustainable and healthy living for existing and future generations
- equipped with schools, health services, a medium scale retail centre, business space and leisure facilities
- attractive places – with large amounts of open, green space, and state-of-the-art building design
- developed with the community for the community

## How do eco-towns fit into wider government strategy?

Eco-towns bring together the two concepts of new settlements and environmentally sensitive development to meet the challenges of climate change and housing growth. Eco-towns are not the only answer to these challenges, but as exemplars they can make an important contribution to the development of new technologies and practices. Alongside eco-towns we want to see development in towns, cities, suburbs and urban extensions built to the highest environmental standards. We feel that eco-towns can help inform future development.

## Why new settlements?

The vast majority of housing growth has always been in our towns and cities and will continue to be – with a focus on brownfield land. However, rising housing needs make it necessary to explore options such as new free-standing settlements, as was done with the creation of new towns in the 1960s to address a housing crisis. Eco-towns can exploit various benefits and opportunities as free-standing developments, namely:

- relieving pressure for development in urban areas and consequent effects on green spaces and public services
- providing high quality green space by proximity to the natural environment
- offering families opportunities for space within and around the dwellings
- giving practical and economic viability to the adoption of various environmentally friendly technologies
- providing an opportunity to plan and deliver a locally appropriate mix of housing types
- providing an opportunity to deliver new transport and other infrastructure through economies of scale and increases in land value

## What has happened so far?

The Government published a consultation document *Eco-towns – Living a greener future* on 3 April, inviting views on the way in which the eco-towns concept is being developed, the proposed benefits of eco-towns and the challenges. It also sought initial views on 15 shortlisted potential locations.

Many organisations and individuals responded to that initial phase of consultation, and an assessment summary of responses will be published on the Communities and Local Government website.

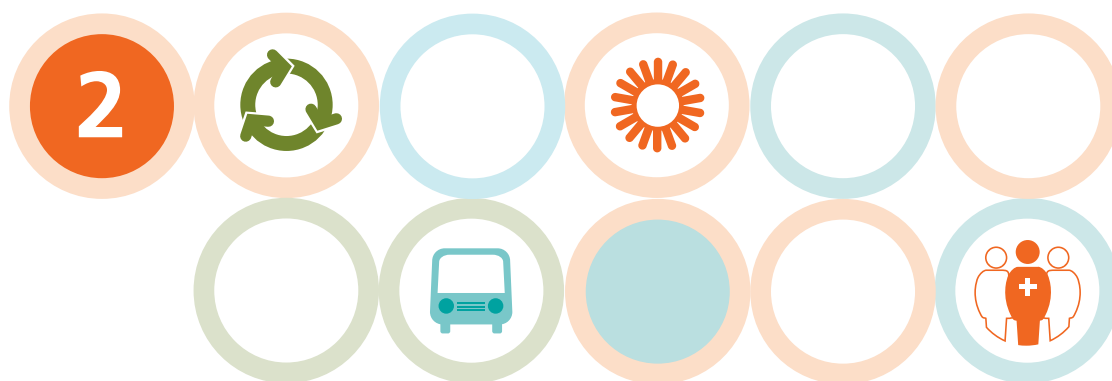
However, we are keen to see continued comment and input from communities. In September we will be publishing the draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) and the Sustainability Assessment, which cover national policy and standards on eco-towns as well as assessments in each proposed location, and these documents will then be subject to a 12-week consultation period. Further details on that process are given at page 13.

The high standards required of eco-towns make it challenging for developers and other partners to achieve viable and deliverable sets of proposals. Since the shortlist of 15 locations was published in April, bids for two locations have been withdrawn and we are currently assessing proposals for 13 locations, including three areas of further review.

All bids are being rigorously assessed, and a number of them will be selected as potential eco-town locations by the beginning of 2009.



## 2. Standards for eco-towns



- 2.1 The environmental and other standards for eco-towns will be set out in a Planning Policy Statement (PPS) which will take account of the consultation on *Eco-towns – Living a greener future*, and will be published as a draft in September for consultation. The content of the PPS has already been discussed with many stakeholders over the last few months and we want that conversation and that input to continue as we prepare the draft for wider consultation. The Town and Country Planning Association has worked closely with stakeholders to produce worksheets which set out examples and information on a range of themes relevant to eco-towns. The focus of the PPS will be on firstly, the standard for an eco-town and secondly, the planning process that will lead to decisions on whether particular eco-towns will proceed.
- 2.2 Details of our current thinking on these issues are set out below. This is not a comprehensive list and final decisions will await the outcome of the consultation process starting in September. The standards will be stretching and there are no proposals to bypass the planning system.
- 2.3 The Government already requires development to meet high environmental standards, and, of course, all of this existing policy and legislation will apply to eco-towns. These are supported through a comprehensive framework of planning policies and European and national legislation.
- 2.4 All eco-towns must comply with existing national planning policies, except where we have set a specific standard which is either more specific, or is more stretching, than that set out in wider national planning policy. These include:
- The delivery of overall sustainable development (set out in PPS 1)
  - Requirements to build developments which are resilient to a changing climate, for instance to take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption, including maximising cooling and avoiding solar gain in the summer (set out in the PPS 1 supplement on climate change) – and to take account of the risk of flooding (set out in PPS 25)

- Requirements to deliver renewable energy (PPS 22) and deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (PPS 1 supplement on climate change)
  - The provision of sustainable waste management (PPS 10)
  - The provision of open space, sport and recreation (set out in PPS 17) – which includes green space, space for allotments, children’s play areas etc
  - The protection, conservation and enhancement of our biodiversity and geological conservation (set out in PPS 9)
  - The requirements for the role of planning in controlling pollution (including air and water quality and land affected by contamination) (PPS 23)
  - Requirements relevant to coastal planning (set out in PPS 20)
  - Planning for sustainable development in rural areas (PPS 7)
- 2.5 There are also separate regulatory building standards which require high levels of energy performance for all new buildings (set out in Part L of the building regulations). And the Government will shortly be introducing new regulatory standards for water efficiency in new homes (Part G of the building regulations).
- 2.6 There is also comprehensive national and European legislation for instance on air quality, water quality, waste management, and the conservation of species and habitats.
- 2.7 This summary is not comprehensive, but indicates the high baseline from which we are starting.
- 2.8 Eco-towns provide fresh opportunities to plan and deliver these high standards holistically across a development and we want to push the boundaries much further. In order to achieve this we want to set more challenging and stretching standards in some critical areas than would normally be required for a new development. This is to ensure that eco-towns act as the exemplar of good practice and provide a showcase for sustainable living.
- 2.9 We want exemplary towns, but not identikit ones. Eco-towns should develop unique characteristics by responding to the opportunities and challenges of their location and community aspirations. Eco-towns proposals should meet the following standards, but we will also consider how they should be applied in practice, recognising the unique nature of each site, which may require some appropriate, limited flexibility to reflect local opportunities and interests, while maintaining a minimum set of standards across all locations.
- 2.10 The following description of standards represents work in progress and is not a definitive statement. Our discussions on the standards to be applied to eco-towns will continue with stakeholders, throughout the summer, and the results of this further work will be reflected in the draft PPS when it is published for consultation.

- 2.11 In the Climate Change Bill, the UK Government has set a long-term target for reducing our carbon emissions by at least 60 per cent by 2050. London is working to reach this 60 per cent by 2025. Eco-towns should enable at least this reduction per resident, and quicker – and help establish new technologies and services to support more sustainable lifestyles.

## Standards

- 2.12 All eco-town planning applications should include a detailed master-plan and a sustainability action plan to demonstrate how the high standards required, such as those on transport, jobs and biodiversity will be achieved and sustained.

### Community and governance

- 2.13 Planning applications should be accompanied by long term governance and engagement proposals for the development (including finance, management and legal arrangements) to ensure that: there is engagement and consultation with existing neighbouring communities; sustainability targets are met and maintained; future development continues to meet applicable standards; there is continued community involvement and engagement; and community assets are maintained.

### Zero carbon

- 2.14 Planning applications will be expected to demonstrate that over a year the net carbon dioxide emissions from all energy use within the buildings on the development are zero or below. This excludes embodied carbon and emissions from transport but includes all buildings – not just houses but also commercial and public sector buildings which are built as part of the eco-town development. The calculation of net emissions will take account of:
- emissions associated with the use of locally produced energy
  - emissions associated with the production of energy imported from centralised energy networks
  - emissions displaced by exports of locally produced energy to centralised energy networks.

### Transport

- 2.15 Eco-town transport plans should reflect the very best European examples and demonstrate that more than 50 per cent of trips originating in eco-towns can be by foot, bicycle or public transport. To achieve this, the town should be designed to create more options for travel by reducing residents' reliance on the car, so that homes are within 10 minutes' walk of (a) frequent public transport and (b) neighbourhood services. In addition development should be designed so that access to it and through it gives priority to walking, cycling and public transport.

- 2.16 Eco-towns should be designed in a way that supports primary school children walking or cycling to school safely and easily. We will consider adopting a maximum walking distance of 800m from homes to the nearest primary school, and the implications that this has for a walking and cycling routes and other spatial and housing planning issues.

### **Homes**

- 2.17 As well as being zero carbon, homes in eco-towns should achieve Building for Life Silver Standard and Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes at a minimum (unless higher standards are set elsewhere in the Planning Policy Statement). Code Level 4 contains within it standards to be achieved for: household waste recycling; construction waste; composting facilities; water efficiency measures; surface water management; use of materials; energy and CO<sub>2</sub>; pollution; health and well-being; ecology and on-going management of the development. They should also meet lifetime homes standards, English Partnerships space standards and provide for at least 30 per cent affordable housing (which includes social-rented and intermediate housing such as shared ownership). They should all have real-time energy monitoring systems, real-time public transport information and high-speed broadband access.

### **Employment**

- 2.18 Planning applications should be accompanied by an economic strategy that demonstrates how access to work will be achieved. There must be facilities to support job creation in the town and as a minimum there should be access to one employment opportunity per new dwelling that is easily reached by walking, cycling and/or public transport.

### **Local services**

- 2.19 Building sustainable communities is about providing facilities which contribute to the wellbeing, enjoyment and health of people. Communities will therefore require access to an appropriate mix of facilities and services, and planning applications should reflect this. These services provide opportunities for people to come together, be active and cohesive, for example in cultural and sporting activities, and also support communities with health, education, social care and library services.

### **Water**

- 2.20 Eco-towns should be exemplars in terms of water efficiency, particularly in water-stressed areas. The Government also continues to be interested in the potential to promote water neutrality in these locations. Eco-towns should have sustainable drainage systems (known as SUDS) and, except where this is not a viable option, avoid connection of surface water run-off into foul or combined sewers. There is a strong expectation that all of the built-up areas (including housing, other public buildings and critical infrastructure) will be fully within Flood Zone 1 – the lowest risk. Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) should, as far as possible, be used for open spaces and informal recreational areas that can serve as multi-functional spaces, for example to be used for flood storages. There should be no built-up development in Flood Zone 3.

## **Green infrastructure and biodiversity**

- 2.21 Forty per cent of the eco-town's total area should be allocated to green space of which at least half should be public and consist of a network of well managed, high quality green/open spaces which are linked to the wider countryside. We expect there to be a range of types of green space, for example community forests, wetland areas and town squares and that it should be multifunctional (eg provide for play, recreation, wildlife, urban cooling and flood management).
- 2.22 Particular attention should be given to the allocation of land to allow the local production of food, for example, from community, allotment and/or commercial gardens. There should be a strategy for enhancing local biodiversity which should include proposals for the management of the local ecosystem, including where appropriate, the creation and restoration of degraded habitats. Planning permission may not be granted for any proposals which are likely to have a significant effect on internationally designated nature conservation sites.

## **Waste**

- 2.23 Eco-towns are expected to be exemplars in sustainable waste management and recycling at the community level. As all new homes will be expected to meet Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, this will ensure that there are suitable waste management facilities provided for all.
- 2.24 This is not the last word on standards for eco-towns, and we will continue to discuss these and possible further standards with stakeholders. In particular we need to make sure we have taken full account of the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.
- 2.25 We want to ensure that we have standards that are both stretching enough, but deliverable, to ensure that eco-towns are the exemplary developments we all want to see.

### 3. The planning process



- 3.1 The draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) consultation will also be seeking views on how the planning process will be applied. We have always made it clear that eco-towns should be the subject of planning applications to the local authority. We are committed to the plan-led system, and our preference remains that the options for how best to meet housing need are explored in regional and local plans. As with the standards, the process issues below represent our current thinking and any final decisions will be subject to the consultation process later this year.

#### Regional and local plans

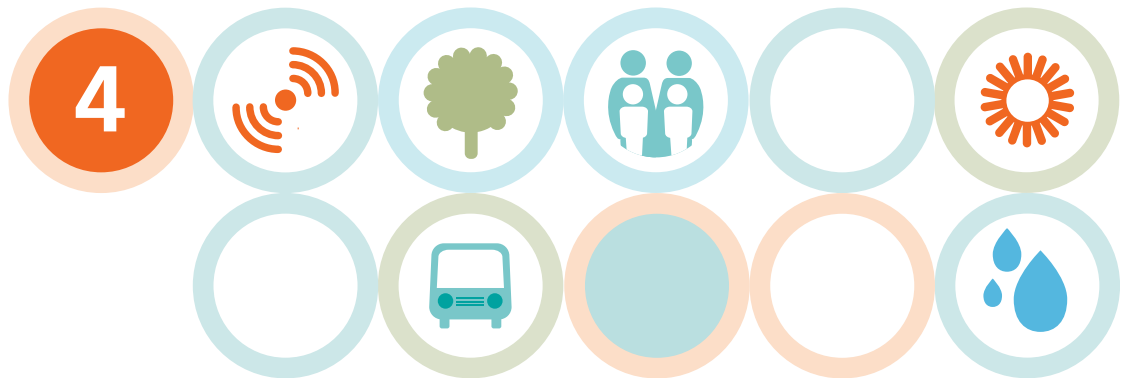
- 3.2 As regional plans or Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) are reviewed we will expect them to consider how eco-towns can help deliver housing. Where an eco-town has already been identified in local plans, or is already proceeding, they should reflect the location and consider the longer-term growth options.
- 3.3 For local plans or Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) eco-towns are one of a range of options local planning authorities should consider when determining how to meet their current or emerging housing requirements. Where the LDF Core Strategy is in preparation, local authorities should include proposed eco-towns as an option for consideration. However, there is no requirement to adopt the eco-town if a better way of meeting future needs exists. The adopted plan should include the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives.

#### Determining planning applications

- 3.4 Like any other development proposal an application for an eco-town can be submitted at any time. The draft PPS will set out how they should be considered under different circumstances.

- 3.5 The statutory development plan (ie the RSS and adopted LDF Development Plan Documents) is the starting point for the consideration of all planning applications and applications will be determined in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. When deciding whether to grant permission, the local authority must decide each case on its merits and take into account all material considerations. This includes the pros and cons of the individual application and national planning policy considerations (ie the guidance contained in all planning policy statements ranging from housing to flooding, biodiversity, transport etc).
- 3.6 The draft eco-town PPS and the list of locations emerging from the sustainability appraisal process will be national policy and therefore a significant material consideration in the decision, but will need to be considered alongside all other national policies.
- 3.7 The treatment of applications for eco-towns will vary depending on the circumstances. Where the LDF has made provision for an eco-town in the location the application should be treated favourably as long as it meets the eco-town standards set out in the draft PPS.
- 3.8 Where the LDF has not made provision for an eco-town and the plan is up to date, the local authority may refuse the application on the grounds that it had already provided for all the housing that is needed in a plan that has been found 'sound' by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 3.9 Where the LDF has not made provision for an eco-town and where the plan is out-of-date (ie it does not provide for five years' worth of deliverable sites for housing, or where the emerging RSS suggests a higher level of provision is necessary), then the local authority should consider the application on its merits and against the following criteria before making a decision:
- a. That on balance the development meets the eco-towns standards set out in the PPS.
  - b. That the proposed location has been identified in the eco-towns programme as suitable and the principle of an eco-town in this location has already been tested through a Sustainability Appraisal. Local authorities are not required to approve an application simply because it has been identified as a suitable location, but the fact that it has been identified should be given material weight.
  - c. That the developer has shown that this location was a good place to build an eco-town compared with other alternative locations.
  - d. That the eco-town does not have an adverse impact on other preferred locations for housing development or otherwise have an adverse impact on the ability of the local authority to meet its wider housing objectives (for example to manage market renewal elsewhere in the sub-region).

## 4. What happens next?



**4.1 Stage 1** covered the initial consultation to 30 June 2008 for preliminary views on the eco-towns vision and potential locations. The remainder of the process is as follows:

**Stage 2** – further consultation from September 2008 on more detailed assessments of the 13 potential locations and a draft eco-towns Planning Policy Statement.

**Stage 3** – publication in early 2009 of the final Planning Policy Statement and a final list of locations with the potential to be an eco-town.

**Stage 4** – individual schemes will then need to submit planning applications, which will be decided on the merits of worked-up proposals.

### Consultation and engagement

**4.2** During Stage 2 of the programme the Government will be seeking to consult members of the public about the eco-towns programme, and are particularly keen to hear from potential first time buyers, key workers and young families.

**4.3** A range of exhibition and consultation events will be taking place in venues close to the sites of the potential eco-towns. We want local communities to have the opportunity to express their views and help shape the eco-towns concept, and to know and understand more about the potential eco-towns proposed in their area. The events, which will take place in September and October 2008, will also be aimed at informing members of the public about the purpose of the national programme for eco-towns, in the context of housing pressures and the need to tackle climate change. In addition, stakeholder events will be taking place, along with newspaper adverts and publications. Enhanced information will be available online for members of the public and stakeholders interested in the eco-towns programme, including opportunities for users to provide feedback.



- 4.4 Details of the public exhibitions will be advertised in advance in the local press, and will be available on the Communities and Local Government website at [www.communities.gov.uk/ecotowns](http://www.communities.gov.uk/ecotowns)
- 4.5 Developers of individual eco-town proposals will be undertaking activity to inform and consult with the public on the specifics of their proposals; further information will be provided on their websites (see Section 5 for website addresses).

## Assessment of schemes and locations

- 4.6 The *Sustainability Appraisal* (SA) process will provide greater detail on environmental sustainability and other issues for each location and test them against reasonable alternatives, and we expect to publish the SA report shortly alongside the draft Planning Policy Statement on eco-towns. This will incorporate the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Ahead of this we have today published a scoping report. The final text of the PPS will take into account the SA and the views of consultees and be published at the beginning of next year. While an individual planning decision is decided on individual merits, this PPS and the evidence that underpins it will act as a material consideration in those decisions.
- 4.7 *Financial Assessment.* PricewaterhouseCoopers has been appointed by the Government to help assess the feasibility and viability of the individual eco-town schemes being proposed, including an appraisal of the financial model for the scheme, infrastructure requirements, their cost, and the potential for these to be paid for by development. Through the joint local authority/government/promoter technical groups, consultants will be asked to take on board the views of other interested parties, in particular the relevant local planning authority on their expectations for any Section 106 agreements (through which developers fund local improvements made essential by any new development). The main aim of this work, starting with promoters' current submissions, is to test the robustness of the overall model for the site and provide a framework for any Section 106 negotiations at the planning stage. It will also enable government, local authorities and other public bodies to be satisfied that appropriate and good value for money infrastructure options are being pursued and that the proposed development is affordable.
- 4.8 *Transport Assessment.* This is a key planning requirement for major residential developments, which must normally be submitted at the planning application stage. It will not be possible to complete a full transport assessment before Government gives its view on eco-town locations, but we will expect sufficient high level outputs from the process to be reassured that any transport issues can be resolved satisfactorily.

4.9 *Transport Assessments*. Will be multi-modal, and will set out to understand:

- the impacts of the development on existing transport networks (strategic road, rail and local road)
- what effect the transport measures proposed by the developer will have in reducing those impacts
- what further transport measures (including a variety of sustainable travel options and demand management measures) may be needed to mitigate the impacts of the development.

Headline environmental issues should also be identified.

4.10 *Other Assessments*. A number of other assessments may ultimately be required to support any planning application, for example relating to flood risk, water, land contamination and biodiversity.

## 5. Locations currently undergoing assessment



**5.1** The high standards required of eco-towns make it challenging for developers and other partners to achieve viable and deliverable sets of proposals. Since the shortlist of 15 locations was published in April, certain schemes have been withdrawn from the process. We are currently assessing proposals for 13 locations.

**5.2** For three of these locations, discussions are continuing between Government and local authority partners on the potential for an appropriate scheme within a broad geographical area. These are:

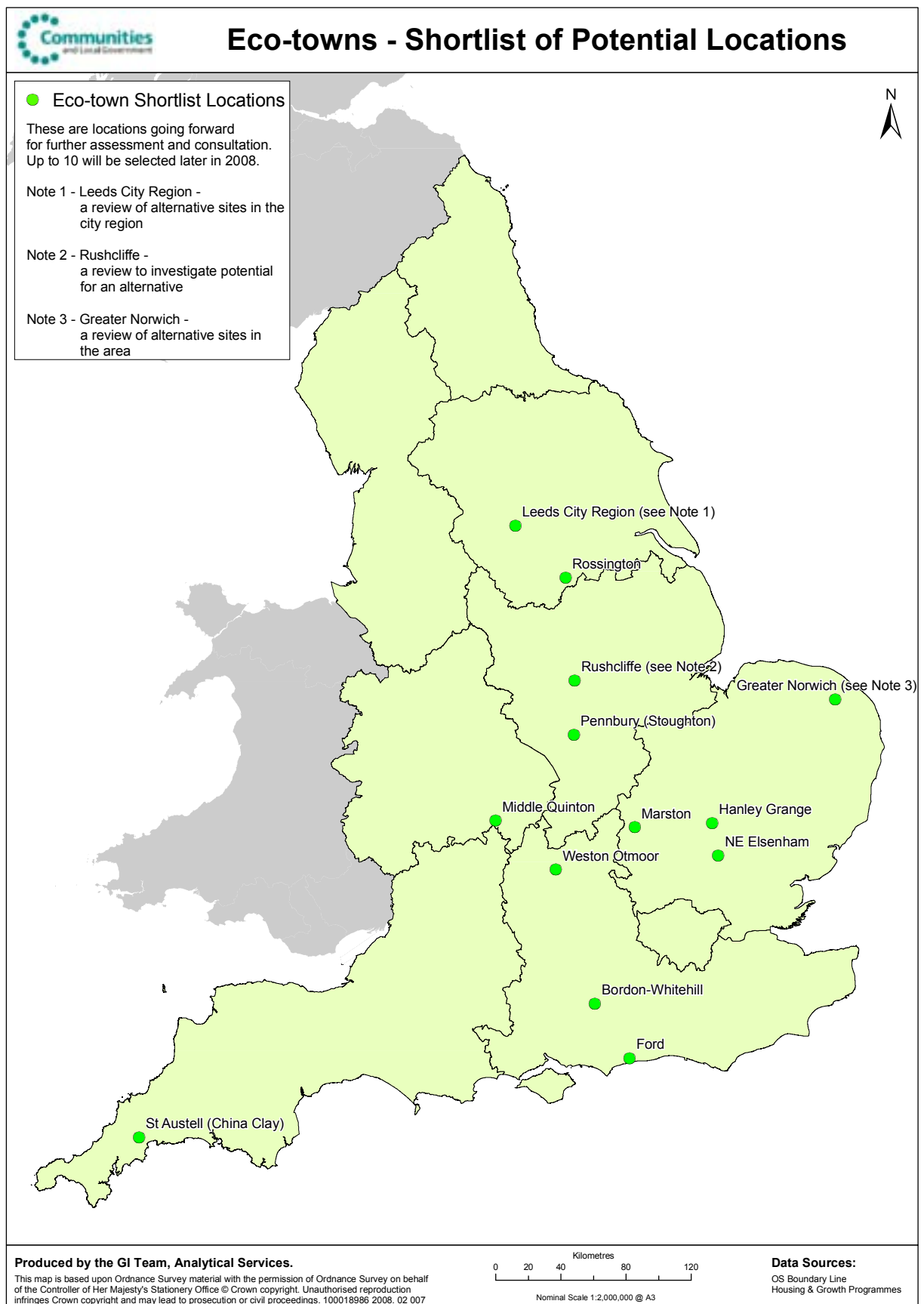
- Rushcliffe (Nottinghamshire)
- the Leeds City Region
- the Greater Norwich area

Proposals have been submitted for these areas and in some cases are being assessed as part of the Sustainability Appraisal. If a scheme is judged appropriate for further consultation and assessment it will be included in the draft Sustainability Appraisal to be published in September.

**5.3** The 10 locations for which we have full proposals are detailed in the following pages. Certain aspects of individual schemes have changed since the publication of *Living a greener future* and these have been reflected in alterations to the text provided on schemes in comparison with that document.

**5.4** The summaries of each potential scheme provide information on some of the potential benefits and specific challenges in each location. Also included is information on **housing affordability** and a housing affordability pressure indicator (ratio of lower quartile home prices to lower quartile earnings). The number of affordable housing units proposed for each location is listed, and it should be noted that this incorporates homes available for social rent as well as intermediate housing such as shared ownership. Further specifics of proposals are available from individual scheme bidders, and their website addresses are given at the end of each summary. A detailed assessment of each location will be provided in the Sustainability Appraisal alongside consideration of alternatives.

- 5.5 The Sustainability Appraisal will take individual bidder's proposals into account, but the assessment is of the locations rather than specific proposals.



## East Midlands – PENNBURY (STOUGHTON)

Harborough District Council, Oadby & Wigston Borough Council, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council



<b>Description</b>	The proposed eco-town of 12,000-15,000 homes would amount to a site of 750ha on a land-holding totalling 1720ha, four miles to the south-east of the centre of Leicester. The land is a mix of greenfield, brownfield and surplus public sector land. The proposed eco-town would be surrounded by farmland.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>The eco-town proposal would create a largely freestanding community, but linked to Leicester, on the basis of very ambitious environmental and sustainability standards and environmental innovation. Built on 40% of the available land, the homes, businesses, schools and healthcare would be designed to complement the surrounding settlements. The scheme pioneers innovative transport and energy solutions and new methods of community participation.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – High.</i> The scheme would deliver 4,000 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of 210 annually in relevant LA areas. Current households on waiting list – 1,570 in Harborough, 1,600 in Oadby and Wigston Borough and 10,450 in Leicester.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> The scheme will need to address the impact on water issues in urban Leicester and since water resources in the area are in deficit, a sustainable approach to meeting demand would need to be identified. Adequate capacity of sewage treatment works in the area will have to be demonstrated. Surface water runoff must be carefully controlled. Land contamination from previous uses such as airfield and fuel depots must be remedied sustainably. Impacts on the local landscape and biodiversity especially fish populations would need to be considered.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> The scheme will need to accommodate the development with an enhanced local public transport infrastructure, within constraints of existing housing and street layout on edge of urban area and severe road congestion into this part of Leicester along the A6 and A47. Rail services are distant from the site.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> Further work will be needed on the economic and retail hierarchy aspects of a scheme in this location. It would need to complement work to regenerate Leicester and the wider urban area, including initiatives on training and linking adult education to employment.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> Small parts of the site have green wedge status and the eastern part of the site has attractive countryside. There is one scheduled ancient monument, and some other monuments of significant archaeological importance. Some of the surrounding villages are designated conservation areas.</p>
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.ecotownforleicestershire.coop">www.ecotownforleicestershire.coop</a></b>

## West Midlands – MIDDLE QUINTON

Stratford-on-Avon District Council,  
Warwickshire County Council and Wychavon  
District Council, Worcestershire County Council.  
Other authorities with a strategic  
interest: Cotswold District Council,  
Gloucestershire County Council



<b>Description</b>	The eco-town proposal comprises a 240ha brownfield site 6 miles to the SW of Stratford upon Avon between Long Marston and Lower Quinton. It is a former MoD Engineers depot with extensive warehousing, a rail system and a rail (freight use) connection to the main Worcester-Oxford-London line.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>A scheme of at least 6,000 zero carbon homes on previously developed land, with substantial employment opportunities, affordable housing and community infrastructure, including up to four schools, health care and retail facilities and high quality public transport links to surrounding towns and villages, all supported by leading edge environmental technology.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Very High.</i> The scheme would deliver 2,000 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of 170 annually and 2,980 households on waiting list. Stratford experiences very high levels of demand for rented accommodation in relation to its role as an international destination – an issue recognised in the Stratford World Class vision initiative.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> The scheme will need to be developed with design sensitivity to its setting close to Cotswolds AONB and suitable mitigation measures. Would look for an SFRA to make sure there is no flood risk on site. Capacity of existing sewage network unlikely to be able to cope. The scheme will need to include a contaminated land survey and to carry out remediation sustainably.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> No major issues regarding the strategic transport network but the scheme would need to develop and support a substantial improvement to public transport links to surrounding centres and particularly Stratford upon Avon.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> The site is already a significant employment centre with scope for expansion around proposed eco-town technologies including recycling and sustainable construction.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> Historic settlements, listed buildings and landscape issues would need to be safeguarded and enhanced as the scheme is developed.</p>
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.middlequintonecotown.co.uk">www.middlequintonecotown.co.uk</a></b>

## South East – BORDON-WHITEHILL

East Hants District Council  
Hampshire County Council



<b>Description</b>	This is a large brown-field site in East Hampshire, adjoining Whitehill-Bordon to the west, on land vacated by the MoD, which will commence its withdrawal in 2012, leaving a significant amount of ex-MoD housing and other land. The local authority has a longstanding commitment to regeneration and renewal of the area and particularly to improve existing facilities. A wide range of stakeholders is involved in the scheme which is led by the local authority, the voluntary and community sector, and environmental bodies in partnership.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>A modern sustainable community of up to 5,500 homes with a new town centre, employment opportunities and improved public transport.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Very High.</i> The increase in housing supply in this location would provide around 2,000 additional affordable homes. Recent average completions of affordable housing in this LA have been 130 annually over the last 3 years and the number of households on the waiting list – 2,760.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	The location will need an innovative approach to create a cost effective high quality public transport service given the lack of rail access and a diffuse local development pattern and highway constraints. The capacity of the location to attract additional employment will be an important consideration. Environmental constraints include the need to ensure additional water resources can be provided given that the Water Resource Zone may not have the necessary headroom and ensure that local sewage treatment capacity is adequate. Flood management issues must be addressed. Remediation of contaminated land must be carried out sustainably. Appropriate mitigation measures must be implemented to protect important lowland heathland SPA sites and Shortheath Common SSSI which borders the location.
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.easthants.gov.uk/">www.easthants.gov.uk/</a></b>



## South East – WESTON OTMOOR

Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council  
Other authority with a strategic interest: Oxford City Council



<b>Description</b>	The site adjoins the M40 Motorway and the Oxford-Bicester railway around 3 miles SW of Bicester and 7 miles from Oxford. The total area is over 800ha of which around 130 are currently in use as a grass airstrip. The southern edge of the site includes 174ha within the Oxford green belt. 6.5% of this is proposed by the bidder for development. Green belt will not be used for residential development.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>The eco-town proposal is for a major scheme of 10-15,000 homes which would achieve exceptional standards of sustainability, particularly in relation to transport, while also relieving housing pressures in a sub-region with one of the most highly stressed housing markets in the south east and creating significant new business space. The proposal is based on a major package of investment in rail (including restoring services on the Oxford to Milton Keynes line) and other public transport (proposed tram system and bus links), developed on the basis of being fast, free and frequent. It would incorporate a major rail-based park and ride facility adjoining the M40, combined with improvements to the A34/M40 junction and significant demand management to reduce car usage.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Extreme.</i> Scheme would deliver 3-5,000 affordable housing units in comparison with current new build of affordable housing of 100 and 230 annually in relevant LA areas. Current households on housing waiting lists are around 3,420 in Cherwell and 3,970 in Oxford.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> The scheme will need to ensure adequate protection for the Wendleby Meads and Mansmoor grassland SSSI on the southern boundary of the site, which is a nationally important unaltered lowland hay meadow and will need to be safeguarded against potential impacts for example, from increased use of the site for recreational purposes. Development must go ahead in a way that does not exacerbate flood risk. The main water issue is lack of local sewerage infrastructure – the scheme will need to provide for a major increase in current capacity. There is also a need to ensure that water resources can be provided sustainably given that the development is an area of “serious water stress”. Possible need for remediation of former landfill sites within the site boundary.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> The scheme will need to demonstrate a robust, deliverable and viable set of transport options for this site. The options of major investment in Oxford to Milton Keynes East—West Rail Link (and new station), park and ride, tram system and free transport for residents on site and to Oxford will require major investment commitments and ongoing subsidy as well as strong controls on car use in and around the site.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> The site will generate significant new employment but it will be critical to ensure that the project directly benefits Bicester and the need for a better balance between jobs/services and homes in the existing community.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> The site is in an area with historic landscape (Otmoor) and historic settlements – potential impacts would need to be managed.</p>
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.westonotmoor.co.uk">www.westonotmoor.co.uk</a></b>



## South East – FORD

Arun District Council  
West Sussex County Council



<b>Description</b>	The 369ha site includes 108ha of brownfield (30% of the total area) centred on a former airfield site close to Ford open prison. It lies west of the River Arun, a location identified for strategic development in the West Sussex Structure Plan. It is served by rail to London and the Sussex coast route.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>The proposals for this site involve a strategic development area delivering 5,000 homes; 30-40ha of employment land; a major contribution towards the provision of necessary local infrastructure; site specific energy solutions utilising local resources (including a major recycling facility); and relocated railway station and improved services to assist the regeneration of the Sussex coast.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Very High.</i> Scheme would deliver around 2,000 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of 46 and 15 annually in 2005/06 and 2006/07 respectively in Arun. Current households on housing waiting list – 3,880.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> – The site includes areas in all 3 flood zones so built development will need to focus on Zone 1 and there will be a requirement for Flood Risk Assessment and application of the sequential test. The existing water abstraction point is currently 'over-licensed'. Development phasing would be important. Potential impacts on local watercourses would need to be considered. Land contamination and possible impacts on groundwater would need to be assessed. Associated road infrastructure could impact on biodiversity action plan habitats.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> The site would need to make good use of rail but the major issue is the relationship of the site to pressures on nearby trunk roads and particularly the A27. A robust programme of sustainable transport solutions will be required to minimise the impact of the development on both local and strategic road networks.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> The site could generate significant employment through a science and technology park alongside existing uses including Ford open prison.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> The site masterplan and approach to design will need to take account of major conservation features in the surrounding area including the River Arun, the South Downs, listed buildings and historic settlements nearby.</p>
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.fordairfieldecotown.co.uk">www.fordairfieldecotown.co.uk</a></b>

## South West – ST AUSTELL (CHINA CLAY COMMUNITY)

Restormel Borough Council  
Cornwall County Council



<b>Description</b>	The site comprises a cluster of former china clay workings and related former industrial sites around St Austell in Cornwall providing 6 sites of around 750ha. China clay area – disused mining pits and flat industrialised processing sites, which has had some impact on the landscape. The Eden Project is nearby.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>The proposed eco-town (5,000) is related to a major regeneration programme in this area which is being taken forward between IMERYs and local stakeholders. The scheme proposes creation of a national centre of innovation in sustainable living with employment-led regeneration at the core of the strategy. Diversity of the 6 sites will provide housing, employment and education, green infrastructure, tourism and recreation.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Extreme.</i> Scheme would deliver 1,500-2,000 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of about 110 year in 2006 and 2007 in Restormel Borough. Current households on waiting list – 5,120.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> Drainage and groundwater management is an area where careful monitoring would be needed. Opportunities to build on existing programmes to recreate heathland and wooden landscapes on clay waste tips, and on Eden Project experience of restoration. Need to ensure that the eco-town does not negatively impact on SSSI and SACs in the area or on the new heath and woodland that are being created locally.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> Transport Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken. Issues include impact on the A30 routes to upgrade A391 link. A key issue for proposals is how the settlement would be served by enhanced public transport. The transport study commissioned in conjunction with Restormel Borough Council, will provide more information on likely transport scheme costs/funding options.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> The eco-town would need to contribute significantly to the programme of training and improved access to employment which is part of the wider regeneration programme.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> China clay area – disused mining pits and flat industrialised processing sites, has had some impact on the landscape.</p>
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.claycountryvision.imerys.com">www.claycountryvision.imerys.com</a></b>

## Yorks and Humberside – ROSSINGTON

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council



<b>Description</b>	<p>The site, will deliver 5,000 homes on approximately 120ha of brownfield land mainly at the former colliery site at Rossington 3 miles south of Doncaster. It would be based on strong strategic links to Doncaster's borough-wide sustainability and environmental agenda. There is an existing large village with some regeneration needs that will be included in the package. The scheme is intended to act as stage one of a wider 'eco-borough' concept that would see several eco housing settlements across the borough connected by an integrated sustainable transport infrastructure in order to maximise community regeneration benefits across Doncaster.</p>
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>The eco-town proposal would be a genuinely mixed-use development, with new neighbourhood centres with local services and community facilities within walking distance of every new home. It is planned to deliver a net increase of up to 2,300 jobs and act as a catalyst for regeneration of the existing settlement at Rossington.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Moderate.</i> A first phase of the scheme (of around 5,000 homes) would deliver c.1,500 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of 50 annually in Doncaster. Current households on waiting list – 10,750.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> The scheme would need to address highly significant water quality and water resource issues and possible hydrological impacts on SSSIs. Upgrades needed for sewage and drainage infrastructure as existing capacity is insufficient. There are potential impacts of increased discharges on water quality of local watercourses which will require assessment. The scheme would need to ensure protection of aquifer from pollution and unsustainable level of abstraction. Land contamination on the former colliery/landfill site must be sustainably remediated.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> Rossington currently has poor access to the strategic road network. This needs to be addressed if the eco-town is not to cause significant congestion on the existing highway network. A transport strategy is currently being prepared which aims to deliver sustainable transport solutions, such as the Quality Bus Corridor, and which does require a commitment to build a new road scheme, such as the Finningley and Rossington Route Regeneration Scheme (FARRS).</p> <p><i>Employment</i> The eco-town proposal includes proposals for a rail-connected, inland port. Airport growth and the adjoining business park is also a source of employment growth which would benefit from reduced travel to work.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> The new development would need to enhance and safeguard the existing settlements of Old and New Rossington. Potential hydrological impacts on Potteric Carr SSSI will need to be mitigated.</p>
	<p><b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.rossingtonecotown.co.uk">www.rossingtonecotown.co.uk</a></b></p>

## East of England – HANLEY GRANGE

South Cambridgeshire District Council,  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
Other authorities with a strategic interest:  
Cambridge City Council, Uttlesford District  
Council, Essex County Council



<b>Description</b>	The site would accommodate 6,500 homes on 264ha of land close to Cambridge high technology employment cluster, and the villages of Hinxton, Duxford and Pampisford. There is potential for a further 3,000+ dwellings on land to the north of the main site, but still within the boundaries set by the A11, A505 and A1301.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>An eco-town scheme in this location would respond to the severe homes/jobs imbalance in and around Cambridge and locate new development close to employment. Hanley Grange would also provide existing employees in the adjacent high technology cluster with the opportunity to live closer to where they work. The town would have the potential for links with science and engineering and become a focus for emerging 'eco-industries'.</p> <p>A Town Trust is planned to be established at the start of the development, endowed with a dowry by developers and land assets. It would be tasked with running a range of facilities and influencing change towards a low carbon lifestyle.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Extreme.</i> The scheme would deliver between 1,950 and 2,600 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of 240 and 150 annually in relevant LA areas. Current households on waiting list in South Cambridgeshire – 4,660 and Cambridge City – 5,210.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> The scheme will need to address water issues around water supply, water quality impacts, drainage and infrastructure which is likely to need additional capacity; studies will be required. Scheme will need to safeguard several protected/notable species issues as site is adjacent to the River Cam, a county wildlife site and important chalk river for biodiversity, and the arable land supports diverse flora and fauna. Potential impacts on groundwater and spring flows to nearby wetland SSSI would need further investigation, as would surface run-off and pollution into the River Cam which could impact on water quality.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> Scheme would need new bus network to link Hanley Grange internally and to stations/Cambridge. This site is adjacent to the A11, the A505 and A1301. Impact on these and adjoining routes will need to be fully assessed. There are two existing rail stations at Whittlesford and Great Chesterton on the Cambridge Liverpool Street route and increases in capacity on the route are planned. Assessment would be needed to see if rail patronage from the town could be accommodated.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> This is a high growth location in employment terms – having housing nearby will make it more sustainable and improve its growth potential. It would be important to have a good prospect that the development could achieve homes/jobs balance rather than long distance commuting.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> Historic settlements and listed buildings would need to be safeguarded.</p>
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.hanleygrange.co.uk">www.hanleygrange.co.uk</a></b>

## East of England – MARSTON VALE

Bedford Borough Council (and Bedfordshire County Council until April 2009), Mid Bedfordshire District Council (becoming Central Bedfordshire Council from April 2009)



<b>Description</b>	<p>An eco-town comprising up to 15,400 homes, with jobs, community infrastructure and significant open space based on developing a series of sites stretching from the existing development south of Bedford through the Marston Vale, along the Bedford-Bletchley rail line and adjacent to the Midland Mainline. Not a compact new settlement but a linkage of several settlements with use made of facilities on adjacent sites. Area broadly identified in structure plan and RSS/emerging LDF for development. Marston Vale is identified as a priority for regeneration in the Sub-Regional Strategy. Current work on the Renaissance Bedford Long Term Growth Prospectus is pointing towards Marston Vale as the preferred direction for long term growth. This is acknowledged by the LA partners.</p>
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>An eco-town proposal for this area would draw on existing delivery expertise and make good use of former industrial sites (brickworks etc).</p> <p>The eco-town will augment existing settlements and they will be supported to enhance their eco-credentials and will have access to a variety of infrastructure to enable them to live more sustainably.</p> <p>Substantial new green infrastructure would build on the excellent greenspace delivery in the area by the Marston Vale Trust. Discussions with the Marston Vale Trust are already well advanced In respect of the greenspace strategy.</p> <p>There is potential to deliver sections of the Bedford – Milton Keynes Waterway Park which is identified in the East of England Plan as a strategically significant Green Infrastructure Project. The potential for an Energy from Waste Plant has already been identified in this area. The proposal could also facilitate a Bus Rapid Transit route through the Marston Vale, connecting local communities to Bedford and Milton Keynes.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – High.</i> A scheme would deliver at least 5,000 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of 160 and 85 annually in relevant LA areas. Current households on waiting list – 2,600 in Bedford and 2,940 in mid Beds.</p>



<p><b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b></p>	<p><i>Environment</i> Land is available for development in this location in line with PPS25 (Flooding). Requires a water cycle strategy and revisited SFRA. Surface water issues group has been set up to assess developments in the area. Water resources investigation needed and possible contamination issues from location's waste management history.</p> <p>There are a number of designated sites, and SSSIs. Protected species, risks associated with cumulative development, although not insurmountable with good management, and there is a good track record in this area.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> The location benefits from good rail access, with Bedford-Bletchley local service and Midland Mainline, and committed investment in dualling the A421 and improving J13. The Bedford-Bletchley line is part of the proposed East – West rail project but the scheme will need to consider how it could contribute to that. The Midland Mainline upgrade is part of the Thameslink 2000 project. Further work will be needed on local public transport including scope to upgrade the local rail service. Road network traffic generation and access issues will need to be assessed and the site would need to ensure from the outset a wide range of sustainable travel options for residents to reduce car dependency.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> The site would exploit a strategic location to the east of the M1 between Oxford and Cambridgeshire. Technology and new industries include MMC and Waste.</p> <p>The embryonic Nirah Project at Stewartby will provide a major employment opportunity and bring circa 1m visitors p.a. to the area.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> Listed buildings and industrial archaeology and strengthening the existing green infrastructure strategies – eg. The Forest of Marston Vale.</p> <p>Stewartby is a Model Village developed by the local brick industry.</p> <p><i>Spatial constraints</i> With the proposed southeast expansion of Milton Keynes to the M1 at J13 consideration does need to be given to maintaining a significant strategic gap and perhaps limiting the westward extent of the eco-town. On this basis it should be Bedford centric rather Milton Keynes focused. Marston Vale would benefit from an overall framework to help guide development making best use of brownfield opportunities and safeguarding green assets.</p>
	<p><b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.marstonvale.com">www.marstonvale.com</a></b></p>

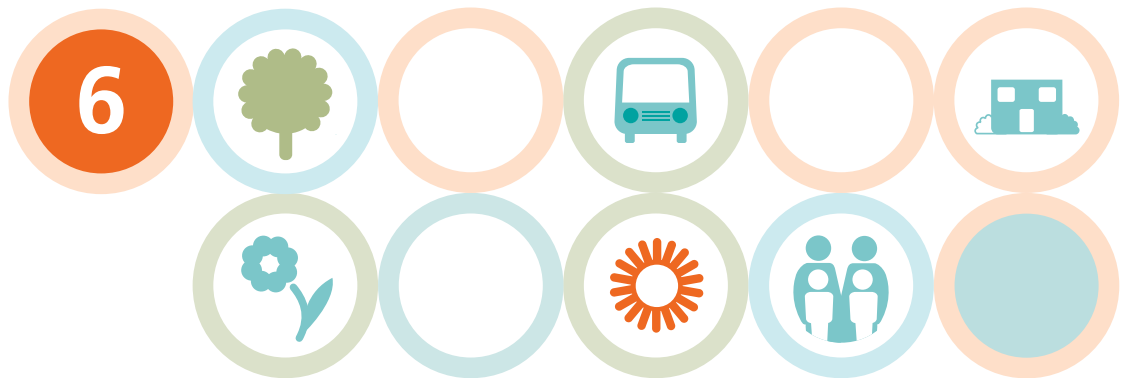
## East of England – NORTH EAST ELSENHAM

Uttlesford District Council, Essex County Council  
Other authorities with a strategic interest:  
South Cambridgeshire District Council,  
Cambridgeshire County



<b>Description</b>	The 265ha site is to the north east of the existing Elsenham village and railway station. A new settlement at this location is the preferred option in Uttlesford District Council's core strategy (for around 3,000 homes) and is supported by studies on transport, environment, settlement. The eco-town proposal is for a minimum of 5,000 homes and possibly more in the longer term.
<b>Proposed benefits</b>	<p>An eco-town proposal in this location would make good use of existing transport infrastructure (rail – London to Cambridge) and road links to M11 and provide additional housing in one of the most stressed housing markets in the region. The scheme would build on existing local eco initiatives, and comprehensive low carbon and renewable energy plans.</p> <p><i>Housing Affordability Pressure – Extreme.</i> The scheme could deliver 1,500 affordable housing units in comparison with average delivery of 54 units per annum which has been achieved in Uttlesford over the last 6 years. The scheme would deliver 1,500 affordable housing units in comparison with current delivery of 90 annually in LA areas. Current households on waiting list in Uttlesford – 1,210.</p>
<b>Initial summary of challenges and constraints</b>	<p><i>Environment</i> Waste water issues, site is at the head of 2 catchments (Thames/ Anglian) small size of the watercourses means that there is a limited capacity to discharge additional waste water. Impacts of the River Cam and the designated salmonoid fishery will need to be avoided. The development is in an area of high water stress; sustainable approaches to meeting demand will need to be demonstrated.</p> <p>Potential impact on sites/species, subject to site study. In particular, increased recreation around Hatfield Forest and on the SSSI and National nature reserve is an issue that could be resolved through the adequate mitigation measures.</p> <p><i>Transport</i> Link road capacity study carried out. The scheme makes use of Elsenham station, orbital bus route linking Stansted M and Stortford, Airport. With 10 min frequency proposed. Enhancement of road for cycling/walking. Car club. Need to resolve issue of access and capacity of local road network if up to 8,000 homes are proposed in this area particularly in relation to access to Hall Road. Connections with the strategic network also need to be considered, as does the relationship with any decisions that might be made about the expansion of Stansted Airport.</p> <p><i>Employment</i> The scheme will include a range of new business sites with the aim of achieving 50% employment within the development. Stansted Airport is already a major employer.</p> <p><i>Conservation and historic constraints</i> Nearby settlements include a number of listed buildings and other historic features including Elsenham and its railway station.</p>
	<b>For more information (including precise location details) visit <a href="http://www.elsenham-info.co.uk">www.elsenham-info.co.uk</a></b>

## 6. Frequently Asked Questions



**Q What is the role of Government in relation to these proposed eco-towns?**

**A** The Government has promoted the idea for eco-towns and is running the programme which sought specific proposals from developers and local authorities. We are assessing those proposals and those that make it through to the final shortlist will be eligible for support through the public sector to help address the inevitably complex issues they will face, particularly to ensure they have the necessary transport and other infrastructure. Government is not responsible for promoting individual schemes which is the responsibility of the developer.

In parallel, the Government is assessing the sustainability of the locations being put forward for eco-towns, publishing that assessment alongside a Planning Policy Statement on eco-towns. This will set out the standards that an eco-town should meet and how a proposal that meets those standards should be treated in the planning system. Specific proposals for eco-towns should be subject to the local planning process.

**Q Is there really such a need for housing, given we are in an economic slowdown?**

**A** There remains a long-term need for more housing in the UK. People are living longer, more people are choosing to live alone, and, over the last 30 years, fewer houses have been built for people who want to rent. At the beginning of April 2007, there were nearly 1.7 million households on local authority housing waiting lists in England. The vast majority of new homes required will still be built in existing towns and cities, however eco-towns are part of the solution.

**Q Is local authority support necessary for taking the schemes forward?**

**A** We have been consulting local authorities and will continue to do so with regard to individual proposals. We want to work in partnership with local authorities in taking forward the eco-town schemes and are keen to offer assistance to them to help get necessary local plans (Local Development Frameworks) in place. Any shortlisted schemes (or any other eco-town proposal) will normally be subject to an application to the local planning authority for decision. All such decisions are required to be taken on the individual merits of the proposal.



**Q Will communities be given a proper say in these proposals?**

- A Locally, any schemes which come forward will be subject to a local consultation on the details of the proposal as part of the planning application. We are also encouraging local authorities to consult on the potential locations as they develop their local plans (Local Development Frameworks). On a wider basis we are also consulting widely. Many organisations and individuals have already responded to our initial phase of consultation, but we would like to see continued comment and input from communities. We will shortly be embarking on a second 12-week period of consultation on the draft Planning Policy Statement and the Sustainability Assessment, which covers each proposed location.

**Q Some of the proposals have changed since your consultation document. Does that undermine the process?**

- A The nature of the process is such that bidders will continually review their proposals and make changes where appropriate, whether as a consequence of the Challenge Panel process, feedback from local residents or other factors that need to be taken into consideration. We want the proposals for eco-town schemes to be of the very highest quality so we are encouraging such changes.

While there have been some changes to some proposals since publication of the April consultation document, the process towards the shortlisting of locations will be based upon the particular proposals (as at July 2008) that are subject to our Sustainability Assessments. Our assessment of locations is based on whether these are good places to put an eco-town so it is informed by, but not ultimately based on, specific proposals from bidders.

**Q I'm worried that additional housing in my area will put greater stress on our transport and infrastructure; it's under pressure as it is.**

- A Eco-towns are intended to break the mould by reducing levels of car dependency and by making it easier for people to live, work and access education in the same town. They will be designed to reduce car dependency, and give people better opportunities to use other, more sustainable, transport options. Services such as health centres, shops and entertainment, and lots of green space, will all be provided within the eco-towns. High quality public transport will be required within the eco-towns themselves, with new transport links to and from them providing a benefit to people in the surrounding area.

**Q How will you ensure that pledges made by developers (eg on sustainability, or transport provision) are adhered to?**

- A Potential schemes will not be supported by the Government unless they can demonstrate the highest possible environmental standards and are clearly affordable and deliverable. In the planning process itself, local authorities have the power to require delivery of specified infrastructure enhancements as a condition of successful planning application through Section 106 agreements, and by linking future phases to the delivery of specific infrastructure and/or targets.

ISBN 978-1409803454



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