



LAND NORTH-EAST OF ELSENHAM ECO-TOWN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST



OCTOBER 2007



THE FAIRFIELD PARTNERSHIP

DAVID LOCK ASSOCIATES
TOWN PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN



CONTACT DETAILS & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. CONTACT NAME

Phil Copsey, Associate, David Lock Associates

2. PROMOTER OR OWNER NAME OF PROMOTER BEING REPRESENTED

Land is under the control of the Fairfield Partnership

3. CONTACT DETAILS

Phil Copsey
David Lock Associates
50 North Thirteenth Street
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3BP

01908 666276

pcopsey@davidlock.com

4. DEVELOPMENT NAME

Land north-east of Elsenham

5. WHO ARE THE OTHER DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AT THIS STAGE?

None

6. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Fairfield Partnership is proposing a new community on land north-east of Elsenham in Uttlesford District in Essex that promotes best practice in low carbon development forms underpinned by the following development principles:

- **Maintaining Rural Character** – the separation and distinct character of Elsenham and Henham will be maintained as a result of a careful landscape appraisal, responsiveness to local character and detailed landscape proposals.
- **Low Carbon Development** – the highest standards of resource and energy efficiency will be promoted throughout the construction and operation of the development, including the use of renewable sources of energy.
- **A Multi-functional Green Space Network** – development will include comprehensive proposals for new green infrastructure to provide formal open space, playing fields, cycleways and footpaths, new wildlife habitats, locally grown food, biomass and integrated sustainable drainage systems. Green infrastructure will offer health and well being benefits close to where people live.
- **Public Transport Oriented Development** – growth will be focussed on Elsenham railway station which will also form a public transport hub served by high quality high frequency local bus services.
- **A Mix of Uses** – proposals will comprise a mix of houses, jobs and community infrastructure to meet the day to day needs of new residents and offer opportunities to existing communities. Uses will be organised within easy walking distance of housing to promote a compact development form that encourages walking and cycling ahead of car use.
- **The new community adjoins and will be carefully planned to integrate with the existing village of Elsenham.** Whilst the new development will be comprehensively planned, there will be sustainability benefits to the existing community through shared infrastructure (transportation improvements, green infrastructure and potentially an extension of sustainable energy networks) and community, employment, retail and other facilities.

The Fairfield Partnership is currently evolving a master plan based on the above principles. The master plan is flexible allowing growth from anywhere between 7/800 dwellings (sufficient to support a new primary school and local shop) and 5000+ dwellings with comprehensive new infrastructure including a secondary school, retail provision and community infrastructure.

7. STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

STATUS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

David Lock Associates on behalf of the Fairfield Partnership is promoting land north-east of Elsenham through the East of England Plan and through the Core Strategy of the Uttlesford Local Development Framework.

Elsenham was promoted through duly made objections to the East of England Plan as a sustainable opportunity for a new settlement of up to 7,000 dwellings. This included additional land outside of the Fairfield Partnership's control.

The Secretary of State's proposed changes to the Draft East of England Plan do not identify Elsenham as a specific regional growth location. However, the Panel Report into the Examination in Public of the Draft East of England Plan in considering the sustainability merits of further growth in the A120 corridor stated:

'We see the merit of arguments put forward by some participants in favour of Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham, on the West Anglia rail line, as locations for some development as an alternative to further additions in the A120 settlements.'

(paragraph 5.107 of the report of the Panel into the Examination in Public of the Draft East of England Plan)

The Fairfield Partnership has promoted land north-east of Elsenham through the Issues and Options stage of the Uttlesford District Core Strategy for a range of growth scenarios from 7/800 dwellings (the minimum to support a primary school) to 3,000+ dwellings (the minimum to effectively support a secondary school as part of proposals).

In progressing its Core Strategy Uttlesford District Council is about to publish its Preferred Option for consultation. The following four options are to be published as part of this consultation:

- Option 1 – 1,600 dwellings at Saffron Walden, 2130 dwellings at Great Dunmow and 470 dwellings at Stansted Mountfitchet;
- Option 2 – 1,000 dwellings at Great Dunmow, 1200 dwellings at Saffron Walden, 750 dwellings at Elsenham (to the west), 750 dwellings at Takeley/Priors Green and other locations;
- Option 3 - 1,000 dwellings at Great Dunmow, 1200 dwellings at Saffron Walden, 1440 dwellings at Elsenham (to the north-east) and other locations;
- Option 4 - 3,000 dwellings in a new settlement to the north-east of Elsenham, 750 dwellings in large towns and 250 dwellings in villages.

The Council has identified Option 4 as its preferred option at the Environment Committee of the 4 September 2007. This decision was confirmed at the Environment Committee of the 30 October 2007.

EVOLUTION OF THE DESIGN CONCEPT

In promoting this location through the East of England Plan the Fairfield Partnership has been in touch with the East of England Regional Assembly, the Government Office for the East of England, Essex County Council and Uttlesford District Council.

In promoting the site at LDF level for circa 3,000 dwellings more detailed assessment and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken. The following reports have been prepared and shared with Uttlesford District Council in support of the growth potential of the site:

- [Elsenham Ecological Assessment \(LDA Design\) – February 2007](#)
- [Elsenham Settlement Study \(LDA Design\) – February 2007](#)
- [Elsenham Landscape and Visual Assessment \(LDA Design\) – February 2007](#)
- [Land East of Elsenham – Initial Road Link Capacity Assessment Report \(WSP Development and Transportation\) – July 2006](#)

Copies of these reports are appended to this submission. These reports demonstrate that there is no overriding ecological or landscape constraint that would prevent development, and that link capacity need not constrain the development of the site to the capacities identified in the Local Development Framework.

Further reports are currently in production covering the following areas:

- [A strategic master plan vision;](#)
- [Public transport improvements;](#)
- [A preliminary drainage strategy;](#)
- [Local road network assessment;](#)
- [A preliminary utilities strategy; and](#)
- [A green infrastructure strategy.](#)

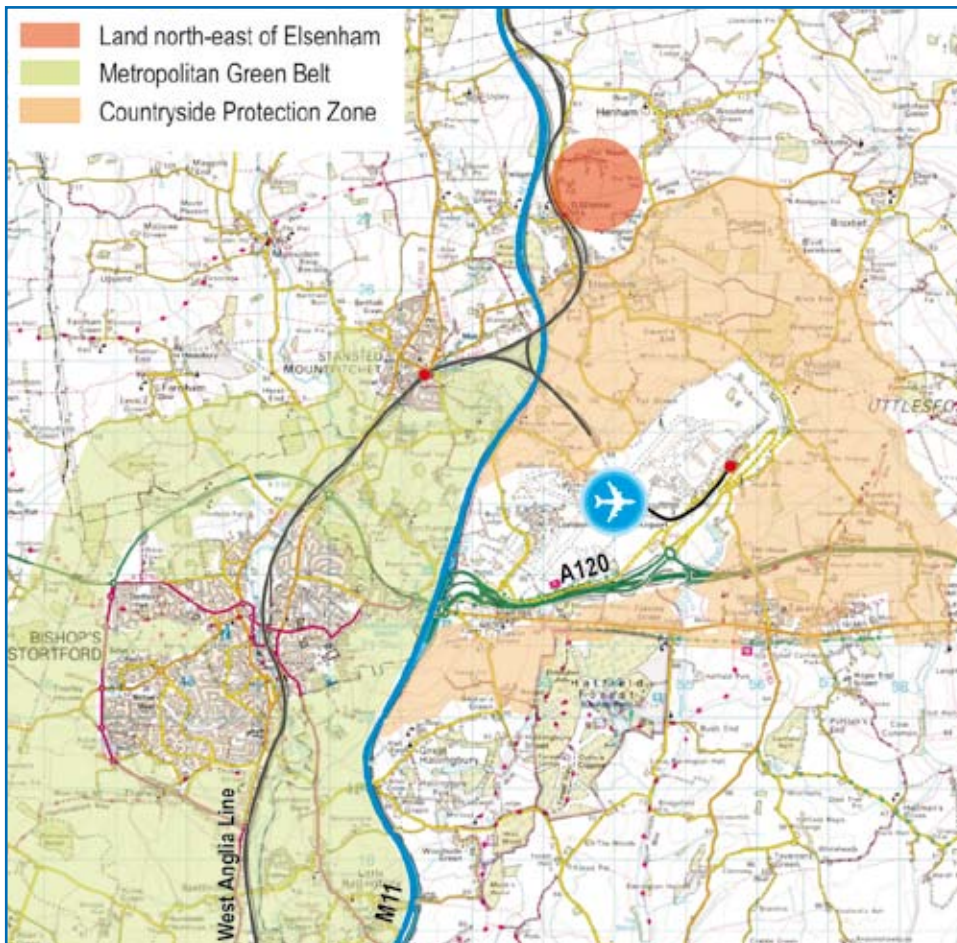
Detailed stakeholder engagement has also taken place with meetings held with:

- [Uttlesford District Council Planning Officers;](#)
- [Essex County Council \(urban design, education and highways\);](#)
- [The Highways Agency; and](#)
- [British Airports Authority.](#)

DETAILS OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

8. SITE LOCATION, SPATIAL CONTEXT AND TYPE OF LAND

The site location is shown below:



Site Location

The site is located within Uttlesford District.

The site comprises agricultural land in largely arable use. Land in the south-east of the site was formerly used for mineral extraction. Parts of the site were used for intensive agriculture in the form of a disused poultry unit. The alignment of the former Elsenham to Thaxted railway line crosses the site.

Land north-east of Elsenham is beyond the Green Belt and lies outside of Uttlesford District's Countryside Protection Zone which surrounds Stansted Airport.

The site is not subject to any formal landscape designations. A full description of the landscape context of the site can be found in the appended Landscape and Visual Assessment. This concludes that the site is generally unconstrained in landscape terms and has the capacity to accommodate strategic growth whilst maintaining the distinct and separate identities of Elsenham and Henham.

The site does not contain any historic assets, although there are a number of features of note nearby:

- To the south Elsenham Hall is a designated Historic Park and Garden.
- Elements of ancient woodland can be found nearby including Alsia Wood to the south-west of the site.
- Henham to the north-east of the site has a Conservation Area and numerous listed buildings. A Scheduled Ancient Monument (a moated site now comprising Down Hall House) also lies within the village.
- A number of listed buildings are also located within Elsenham, including Elsenham Station which adjoins the site, and Old Mead.

In terms of ecology, a Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been undertaken and concludes that the site does not have any significant constraints, but that further detailed survey work should be undertaken.

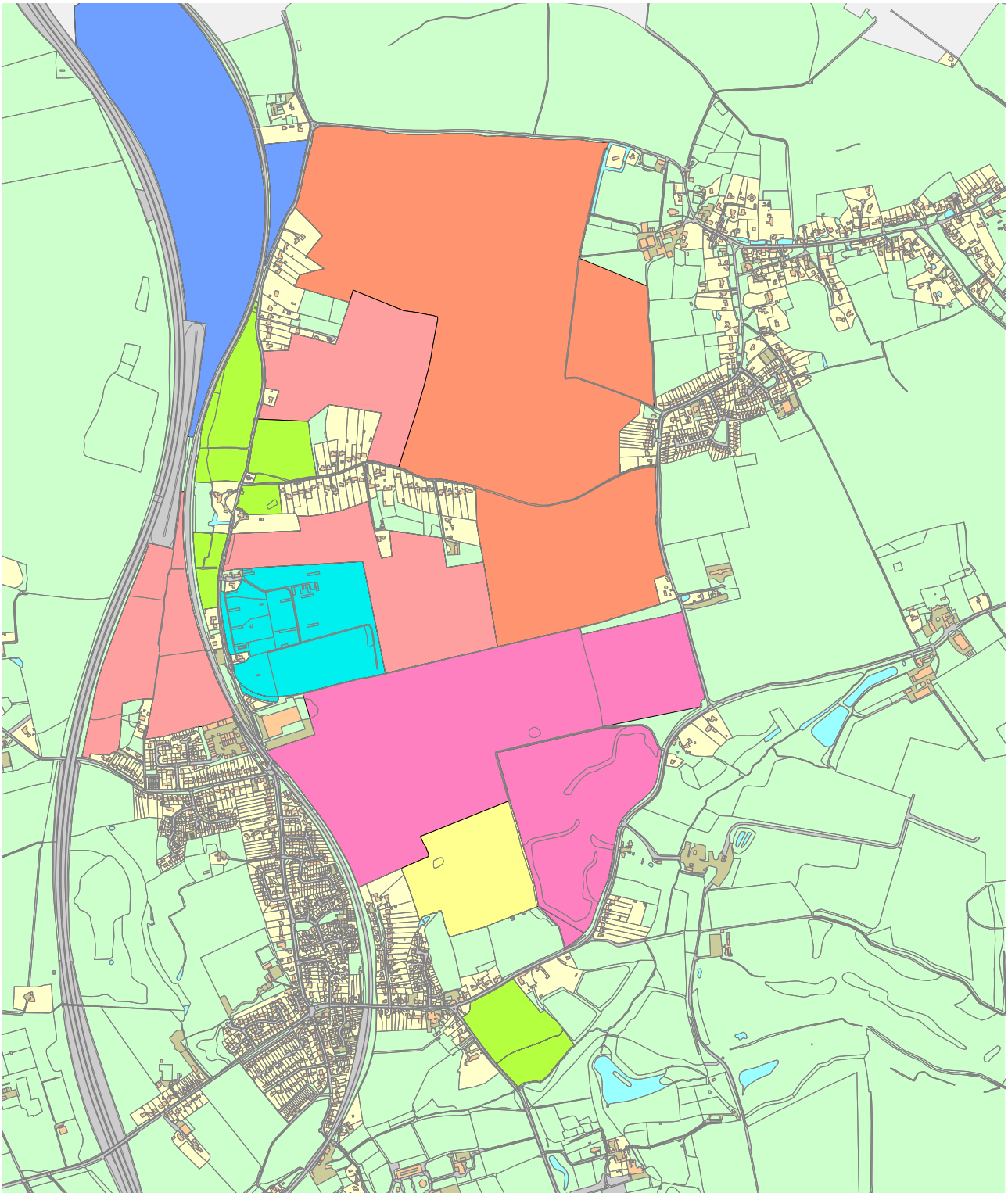
The site enjoys a sustainable location immediately adjacent to Elsenham railway station providing links to London and Harlow to the south and Cambridge to the north.

The strategic road network is nearby at junction 8 of the M11 which also provides access to the A120. Hall Road to the south of Elsenham will provide the main vehicular access route to the site. This will provide linkages through to junction 8 of the M11 via Takeley and the B1256.

9. SITE SIZE (IN HECTARES)

The site area comprises around 265 hectares of land. This will include strategic landscape and infrastructure as well as developed areas.

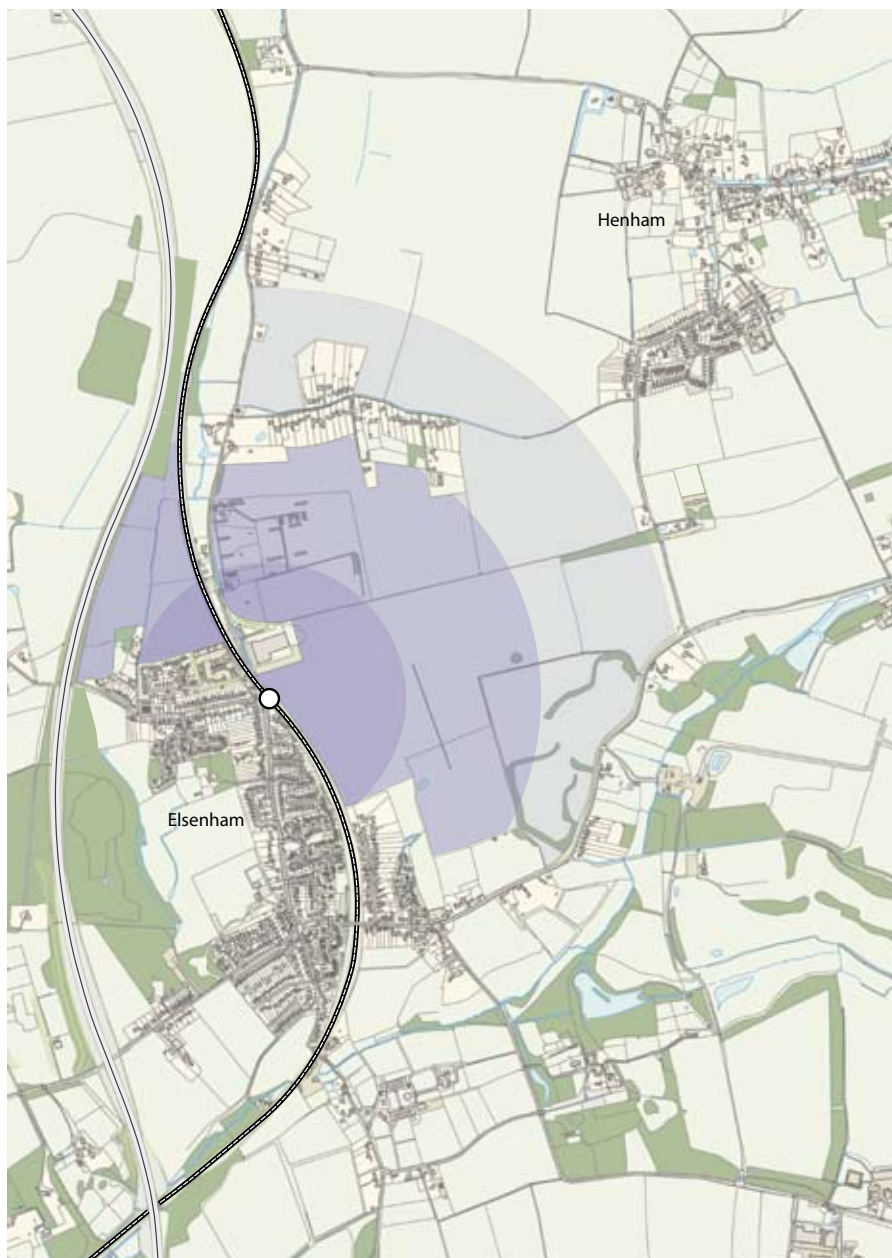
10. LANDOWNER OR LANDOWNERS



Land Ownership

The Fairfield Partnership has long term development options of up to 30 years on the site with eight different private landowners. A map of the land ownerships is shown above.

11. LIKELY NUMBER OF DWELLINGS



The Proposals

Land north-east of Elsenham has been promoted for a variety of scales of development from 7-800 dwellings (the minimum to support a new primary school) to 5,000+ dwellings.

The Fairfield Partnership is currently progressing proposals based on the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy context of 3,000 dwellings at land north-east of Elsenham for the period 2009-2024. On this basis it is envisaged that the site will deliver around 300 dwellings per annum from 2012 onwards, giving 1200 dwellings by 2016, and 1800 dwellings from 2016–2022.

Were Eco-town status achieved along with the higher capacity of 5,000 dwellings, these could still be delivered between 2012 and 2024 with an average annual rate of 4-500 dwellings per annum taking place. This would deliver 1,600-2,000 dwellings by 2016.

12. DWELLING MIX AND TENURE

The precise detail of the dwelling mix has not yet been established and will respond to housing needs as identified in Housing Market Assessments. The development will however provide a full range of housing types with a predominance of family housing with private gardens.

A full range of housing tenures will also be provided meeting the 40% affordable housing identified within Policy H9 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted January 2005).

13. DETAILS OF NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

The master plan will make full provision for a range of non-residential development to promote walkable neighbourhoods and create sustainable patterns of development.

Employment provision will aim to provide jobs for at least 50% of the population of the economically active population of working age within the development and adjoining communities. This will include jobs in the following sectors:

- Research and Development
- Education;
- Health;
- Shops and services;
- Offices;
- General Industry.

The site is also well located with regard to Stansted Airport, a major employer of regional significance.

Retail, education and community facilities will be focussed in four neighbourhood centres distributed to create walkable neighbourhood hubs. The hub nearest the railway station will form the town centre where higher order retail and community provision will be made. The following provision is envisaged:

- Four primary schools;
- One secondary school;
- A range of retail facilities including convenience and comparison stores and an anchor food store within the town centre to serve the needs of the new community;
- Multi-purpose community buildings in neighbourhoods;
- A community leisure and sports centre alongside the secondary school;
- A learning resource centre alongside the secondary school;
- Places of worship; and
- A Primary Care Trust health clinic.

New facilities will benefit the existing community as well as meeting the needs of the new community.

14. PROPOSED TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

The site is well located adjacent to Elsenham Station and which provides good rail linkages to London, Cambridge and Harlow. In due course linkages might also be investigated into Stansted Airport by rail.

A key element of proposals is the creation of an orbital bus route linking land north-east of Elsenham with Stansted Mountfitchet, Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport. Operating in two directions this will give a 10 minute frequency between the site and Bishop's Stortford.

Cycle and pedestrian access will be via the existing road network with relevant enhancements and safety measures incorporated as required.

Vehicular access will be primarily from the south via Hall Road. The need for improvements within the limits of the highway is currently being reviewed on this route. A key element of proposals is to reduce the levels of vehicular traffic using the level crossing at Elsenham Station, whilst maintaining bus access. This will prioritise public transport access above car access. A further measure under consideration is the creation of a car club to allow the short term hire of vehicles.

Transport proposals will be delivered through direct provision on land under the control of the Fairfield Partnership with the Fairfield Partnership acting as master developer. In terms of service provision the Fairfield Partnership would make initial contributions via legal agreements. Over the longer term the management and support of new infrastructure and services would be a function of the Elsenham Community Trust as outlined below.

The proximity of land north-east of Elsenham to Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Mountfitchet and their strong linkages will allow the creation of 'linked' settlements that might support the sharing of higher order facilities where appropriate.

15. EXPECTED ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE:

The Fairfield Partnership is committed to meeting and where possible exceeding the relevant recognised standards for the design of individual homes and buildings.

In terms of the performance of the development as a whole comprehensive new infrastructure would be incorporated to ensure the highest standards of environmental performance including:

- A combined heat and power network;
- Sustainable urban drainage systems and water efficiency measures;
- The use of low energy materials and modern methods of construction to minimise carbon emissions from new development;
- The creation of fibre optic networks to promote internet connectivity.

A central part of the environmental performance of the development is the creation of the Elsenham Green Ring to promote a multi-functional green infrastructure network to promote:

- A range of formal and informal recreational opportunities;
- The creation of new habitats increasing the biodiversity of the site;
- The opportunity for local food production including community orchards and market gardens;
- The accommodation of renewable energy uses; and
- The accommodation of SUDs and CHP infrastructure.

The Fairfield Partnership would act as master developer to secure the delivery of infrastructure.

The health and well-being of residents would be promoted through the application of the Active Design Principles identified by Sport England. By creating compact, walkable neighbourhoods that integrate with wider recreation provision a high quality network of opportunities for physical activity will be created. This will include the creation of a community leisure and sports centre alongside the secondary school and extensive provision for relaxation, sport and recreation within the Elsenham Green Ring.

The development of land north-east of Elsenham for 3,000 dwellings will be subject to sustainability appraisal in terms of its status as the Preferred Option within the Uttlesford Core Strategy.

16. ANY OTHER QUALITY STANDARDS RELATING TO BROADER SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY?

The Fairfield Partnership is investigating the quality standards that might be relevant to promoting the broader social sustainability of the development including the Lifetime Homes and Building for Life Standards.

17. HOW WILL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BE PROMOTED?

The Elsenham Community Trust is proposed as a vehicle funded by the developer to promote the holistic management of the development from its landscape and built environment, transport measures such as a car club, to the use of local facilities and energy and food networks and the management of waste. This would include social and cultural programmes in terms of promoting access to health and educational resources.

The master planning of the development is at an early stage and the current focus is on securing an appropriate planning context for development. Once this has been established the Fairfield Partnership will enter into detailed dialogue with local communities in master planning the new development. This is like to involve the creation of a local forum to influence the implementation of the development.

DELIVERY AND ONGOING MANAGEMENT

18. PROPOSED TIMESCALE FOR DEVELOPMENT

The following timescale for development is envisaged:

- 2009 – Adoption of Core Strategy
- 2011 – Adoption of Area Action Plan for land north-east of Elsenham
- 2012 – Commencement of development at circa 4/500 dwellings per annum
- 2024 – Completion of development

19. WHAT ARE THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE ECO-TOWN AND ITS ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES?

Detailed proposals for Community Asset Management are being developed, based on research being carried out by the consultancy team in association with the Academy of Sustainable Communities. The initial proposal is that a MUSCO (Multi-Utility Supply Company) will be established to develop and manage a multi-utility network incorporating the proposed CHP and other utility provision. The MUSCO is likely to be formed in partnership with an established specialist provider of renewable energy and other networks, but will have a strong element of community ownership and management which will enable residents to benefit from community owned and locally produced power.

It is also proposed that a Community Trust (the Elsenham Community Trust) is set up to oversee the long-term management and maintenance of the development to ensure that the benefits envisaged materialise and continue into the future. The trust would be community owned and led including representatives from the existing communities of Elsenham and Henham, with the Fairfield Partnership providing initial start-up funding and support. The full remit of the Elsenham Community Trust will be evolved in due course, but may include a car-sharing club, sports facilities, management of the Elsenham Green Ring (including local food production, farmer's market, sports facilities, etc.) and various social facilities such as community halls.

20. HAS THOUGHT BEEN GIVEN TO GOVERNANCE OF THE ECO-TOWN OR PARTICULAR ELEMENTS OF THE ECO TOWN?

Work is on-going regarding the establishment of a Community Trust and MUSCO as noted above. There will be opportunities for the existing communities of Elsenham and Henham to be part of and benefit from these proposals if they wish, and subject to public consultation and political support.

21. PLEASE INCLUDE ANY OTHER INFORMATION THAT YOU THINK WOULD BE HELPFUL.

Fairfield Partnership have assembled a professional team of leading UK consultants including:

- David Lock Associates : Planning and Masterplanning
- WSP : Transportation and Infrastructure Engineering
- LDA Design : Landscape, Ecology and Community Asset Management
- Camargue : Public Relations
- Fulcrum Consulting : Energy Specialists



Designed and produced by David Lock Associates Limited for
the Fairfield Partnership