



ELSENHAM

A Strategic Master Plan Vision

January 2008



THE FAIRFIELD PARTNERSHIP

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TOWN PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

This document has been produced on behalf of The Fairfield Partnership by
DAVID LOCK ASSOCIATES

In partnership with



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INTRODUCTION

Land under the control of The Fairfield Partnership to the north-east of Elsenham offers an unparalleled opportunity to create an attractive and vibrant new community that promotes the highest standards of design and sustainability. A 3,000 home new settlement on this land has been identified as part of the preferred option for meeting the growth requirements of Uttlesford District to 2024 by Uttlesford District Council in their Core Strategy Preferred Options consultation (November 2007). This document affirms the Fairfield Partnership's commitment to delivering the highest standards in sustainable and low carbon development and outlines the Fairfield Partnership's vision for the new settlement and the strategic design objectives that will inform the development of a detailed master plan.

The Fairfield Partnership has assembled a professional team of leading UK consultants to promote this vision including:

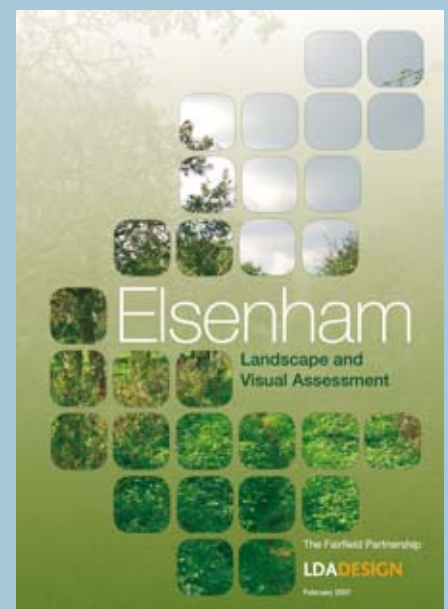
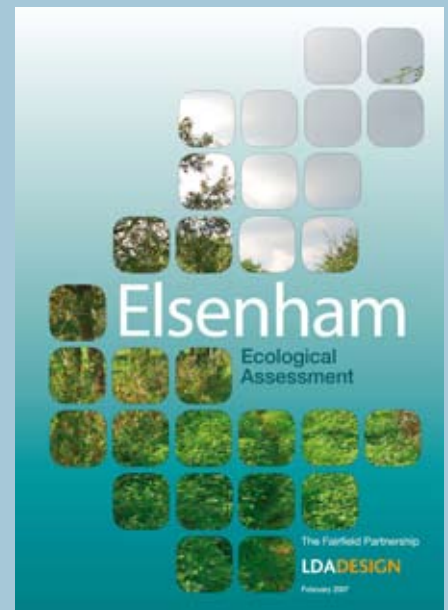
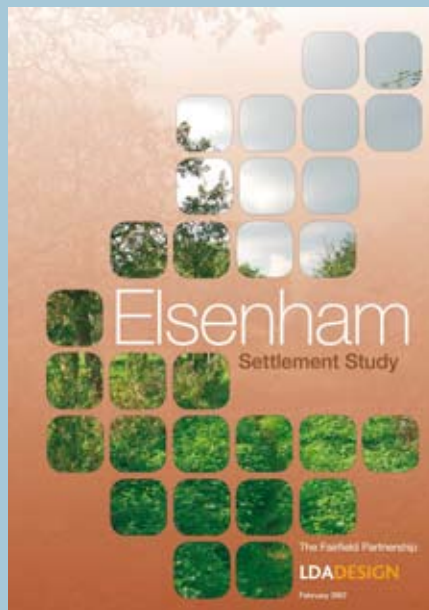
- **David Lock Associates:** Planning and Master Planning;
- **WSP Development and Transportation:** Transport and Infrastructure Engineering;
- **LDA Design:** Landscape, Ecology and Community Asset Management;
- **Fulcrum Consulting:** Energy Specialists; and
- **Camargue:** Communications and Community Engagement.

This document has been prepared on behalf of The Fairfield Partnership by David Lock Associates with LDA Design, WSP Development and Transportation and Fulcrum Consulting.

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The Fairfield Partnership controls over 250 hectares of land north and north-east of Elsenham, broadly set between the villages of Elsenham and Henham to the east of Elsenham railway station on the West Anglia Rail Line.

A range of studies has already been undertaken that analyse The Fairfield Partnership's land control and that inform this strategic master plan vision. Further detailed studies are ongoing. This Strategic Master Plan Vision builds from these studies to set out the Fairfield Partnership's aspirations for meeting the challenge of creating a vibrant new community that promotes low carbon development in a form that responds to its setting and landscape.



Linkages

Elsenham is located 2.5km east of Stansted Mountfitchet, 3.5km north of Stansted Airport, and 7km north-east of Bishop's Stortford, placing it within proximity of population and jobs within this part of Uttlesford District. Elsenham is linked to these centres by bus, rail and road links, offering the opportunity for growth at Elsenham to function as a sustainable linked expanded settlement integrating with existing patterns of activity and higher order facilities.

Elsenham enjoys a strategically important location being served by a station on the West Anglia rail line adjacent to Elsenham Station with services to Bishop's Stortford, Harlow and London Liverpool Street to the south, and Cambridge to the north.

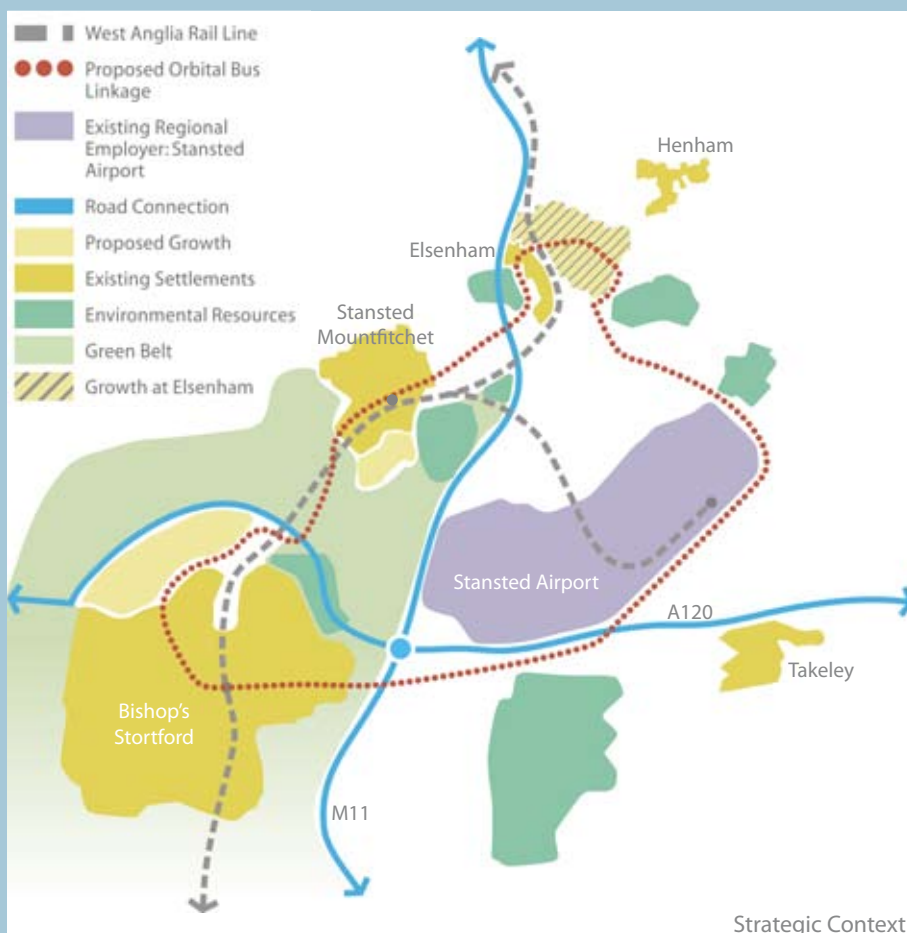
Elsenham is also within easy reach of J8 of the M11 motorway which also offers access to the A120 trunk road. **The surrounding road network in the vicinity of the site is characterised by single carriageway unclassified roads. Existing traffic levels on the adjacent highway network are currently relatively low, even during peak hours.** The village is also served by local bus services linking it to Henham, Stansted Airport, Takeley, Stansted Mountfitchet and Bishop's Stortford.

WSP Development and Transportation has undertaken an Initial Link Road Capacity report which suggested that the link capacity of the local road network would accommodate the additional traffic generated by the proposed development. Further investigations of the local road network and junction capacity are ongoing along with the production of a public transport strategy.

Land Use and Landscape

The land north-east of Elsenham comprises undulating arable land. Presently, land is used for agriculture and consists of a series of large, open fields with little or no enclosure by hedgerows. Historically some areas were used for mineral extraction and for intensive agriculture in the form of a disused poultry unit. The defunct former Elsenham to Thaxted railway line crossed the central part of the land running east-west between Elsenham Station and Mill Road. A network of footpaths and bridleways run across the site and connect it to the surrounding villages and countryside. Existing trees and hedgerows at the edges of the villages of Elsenham and Henham create a green edge to existing development.

Land north-east of Elsenham lies predominantly within the Broxted Farmland Plateau landscape character area as identified in a Review of Landscape Character of Uttlesford District, undertaken by Chris Blandford Associates on behalf of Uttlesford District Council. This character area is identified as being gently undulating farmland on glacial till plateau, with large open landscape. A Landscape and Visual Assessment has been undertaken of land north-east of Elsenham by LDA Design that concludes that there are no overriding constraints to development in respect of landscape. There is limited visibility onto the site from the centres of either the villages of Elsenham or Henham due to existing vegetation and landform. The study concludes that the separate and rural character of Henham should be protected through the retention and protection of the approaches to Henham and the immediate landscape setting. Every effort should be made to respect existing landscape features, such as the former sand pits off Henham Road and new landscape features distinct to the local area should be introduced into the proposed development.



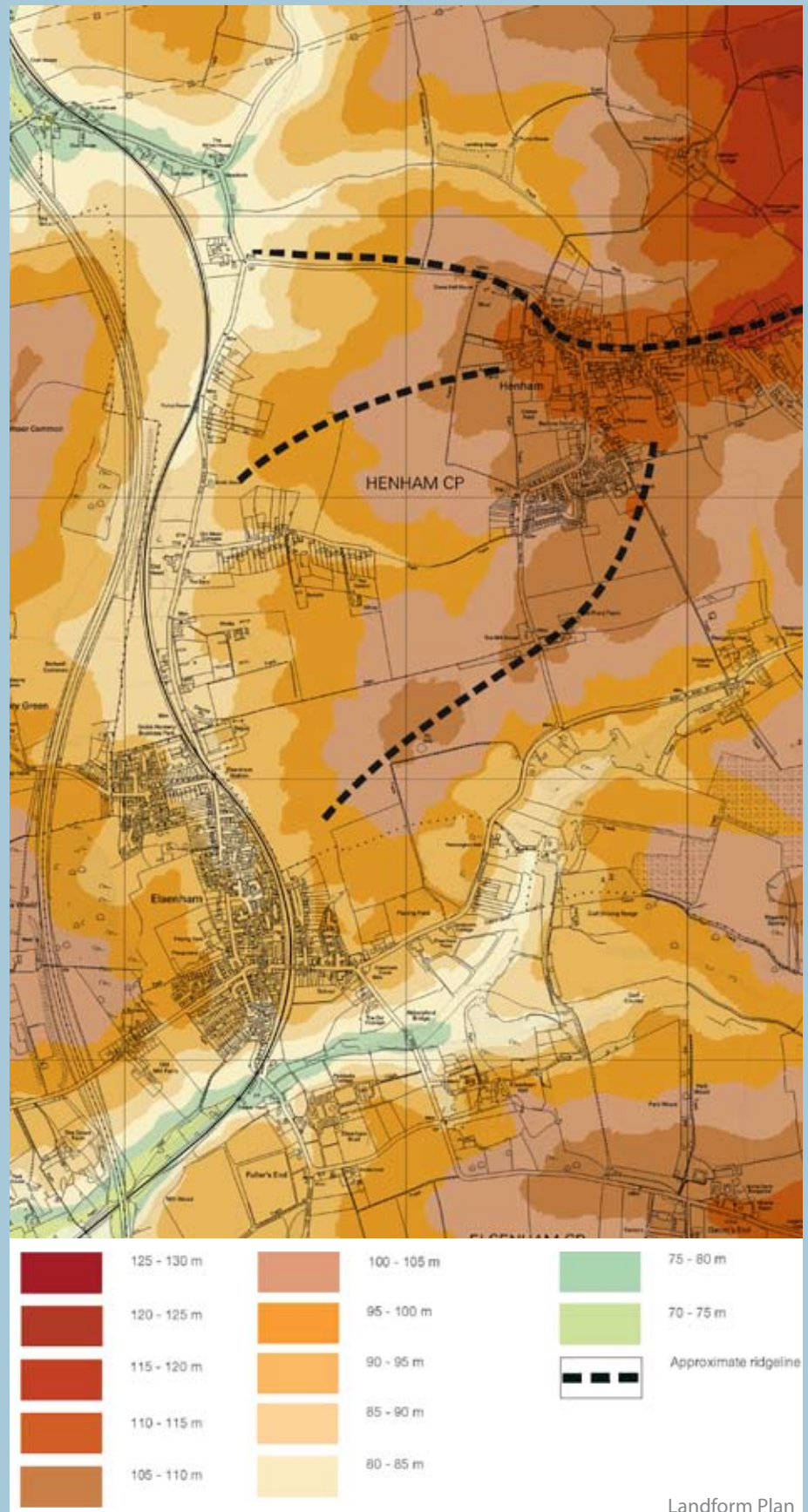
Hydrology

In terms of landform an undulating ridge runs east to west through land north-east of Elsenham with land falling away to the south and west and in some areas to the north. Elsenham is located at the watershed between the River Cam to the north and Stansted Brook and thereafter the River Stort to the south.

Land north-east of Elsenham lies within flood zone 1, which is land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 (<0.1%) year annual probability of river flooding. It is also outside any groundwater source protection zone. An initial Drainage Strategy undertaken by WSP Development and Transportation has identified the potential for a range of drainage options to ensure that run-off from the developed area does not exceed current discharges. These include the potential use of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs) incorporating infiltration techniques such as, swales, basins and ponds. Initial investigations suggest that the underlying geology comprises sands and gravels which could lend it to the use of infiltration techniques. This is subject to further investigation. Foul drainage may be accommodated by either improvement of the existing Stansted Mountfitchet sewage treatment works, or from the provision of a private sewage treatment plant.

Ecology

An Ecological Assessment by LDA Design has concluded that there are no overriding constraints to development of land north-east of Elsenham. Existing ponds, ditches and hedgerows should be retained and managed to promote their nature conservation value wherever possible and new features should be introduced to enhance the habitat potential of the site.



Source: Landscape and Visual Assessment, February 2007, LDA

The existing settlement of Elsenham

Elsenham is a village of just over 2000 people (just over 850 households) located adjacent to the West Anglia rail line and the M11 motorway within Uttlesford District. The village straddles the B1051 and the West Anglia rail line, occupying low land north of Stansted Brook, a branch of the River Stort. The historic mediaeval core of the village lies at Elsenham Cross where B1051 meets Hall Road and a number of listed buildings are present within this area. To the south of this lies Elsenham Hall set within a historic park and garden. Both the Hall and the nearby Church of St. Mary the Virgin are listed buildings.

More recent 20th Century development stretches between this area and along Station Road toward Elsenham station on the west of the West Anglia rail line. The station features a level crossing between its staggered platforms, and a waiting room on the up platform is Grade II listed. Employment development is located around the station at Gold Enterprise Zone (off of New Road/Jenkins Drive) and at Old Mead Road.

Elsenham enjoys a range of amenities including a primary school/nursery, a pub, a doctor's surgery, community rooms, shops, a petrol station and a recreation ground.

Old Mead Road and Old Mead Lane are characterised by large detached properties set within generous gardens. Old Mead is a Grade II listed house on the west side of Old Mead Road.

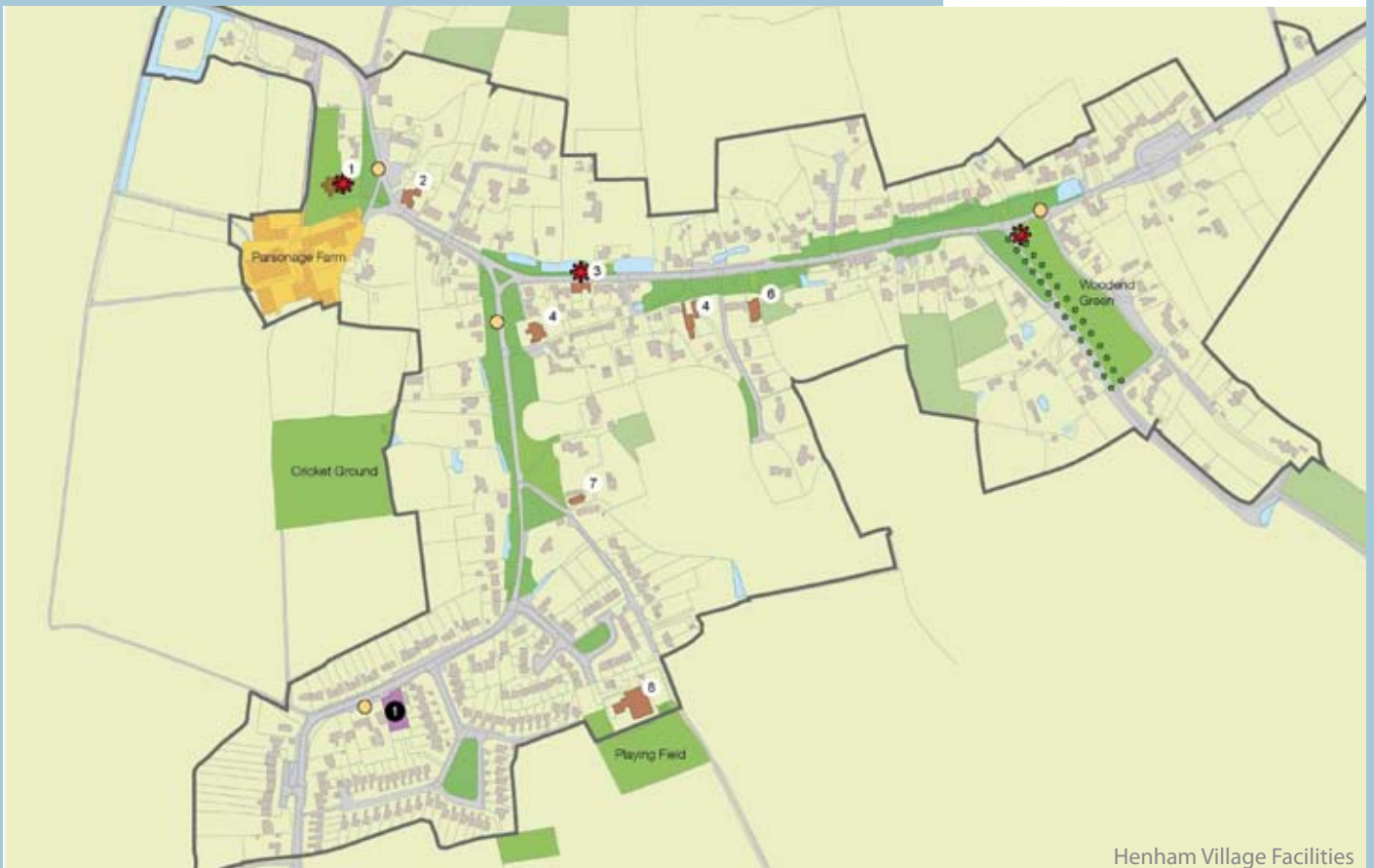
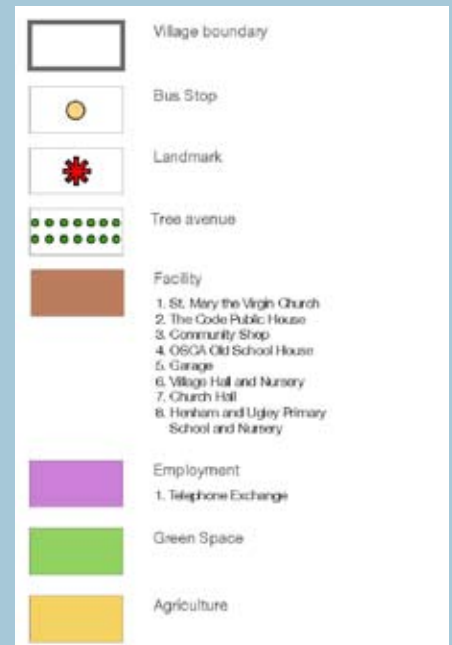


Source: Settlement Study, February 2007, LDA

Henham

Henham is a village of approximately 1200 people occupying higher land to the north-east of Elsenham in the upper reaches of the Stort and Cam watersheds. The village is mediaeval in form and has a distinct historic character, featuring numerous listed buildings, a Conservation Area and a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Henham Hall moated site) located around a village core with distinctive strip greens and village ponds lining main routes. More recent 20th Century development stretches to the south of the village along Crow Street. The village has a quiet residential character. The village enjoys a number of amenities including a primary school, a community shop, community meeting rooms, a tennis club, a pub and a church.

The character, facilities and settlement pattern of Elsenham and Henham has been analysed in a detailed Settlement Study undertaken by LDA Design which in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Assessment has influenced the landscape approach of the Strategic Master Plan Vision to ensure the identity of existing settlements is taken fully into account.



Henham Village Facilities

Source: Settlement Study, February 2007, LDA



Land North East of Elsenham

A VISION FOR A LINKED NEW SETTLEMENT

In order to guide the evolution of the master plan concept the following Strategic Master Plan Vision will shape the development of a linked new settlement at Elsenham:

By 2024 Elsenham will:

- Be a distinct community which will take its place in the hierarchy of Essex towns and adopt the function of a new market town within Uttlesford.
- Embrace and promote the highest standards of low carbon development in its design, layout and new infrastructure.
- Respect its landscape and ecological setting and will create a multi-functional green space network that will provide a setting to the development, whilst protecting the character and identity of Henham.
- Be of Essex and will promote an identity that is clearly grounded in the distinctive character of traditional Essex country towns and villages.
- Focus development around new and improved public transport services.
- Promote a mix of uses to promote sustainable patterns of activity in close proximity including employment provision.
- Be a vibrant town which can grow and adapt over time.
- Be a high quality and inclusive built environment with a contemporary Essex architectural style.

Elsenham will be a distinct community which will take its place in the hierarchy of Essex towns and adopt the function of a new market town within Uttlesford.

The objective is for Elsenham to expand from a village to a market town that will take its place in the hierarchy of Essex and towns and to adopt the function of a new main settlement within Uttlesford District. As such Elsenham will feature a full range of shops, schools and services to serve the day to day needs of the new population, and to offer new opportunities to access services and facilities to the existing population.

In performing this function Elsenham will act as a linked or networked new settlement taking advantage of existing and enhanced public transport linkages to Stansted Mountfitchet, Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport. While a comprehensive range of facilities will be provided at Elsenham, the growth proposed will promote a larger critical mass of population and a level of inter-dependency that could support the provision of higher order shopping, leisure and sports facilities across this group of linked settlements, as well as broadening access to employment opportunities within close proximity. In this regard, Elsenham is likely to further support the retail function of Bishop's Stortford as a Minor Sub-Regional Town Centre within East Hertfordshire District.

The development of a distinct community is not just about the provision of physical infrastructure. It is proposed to include new forms of community ownership of infrastructure in the form of the Elsenham Community Trust that will promote the management of the new facilities and environment, along with the ongoing social development of the community.



Elsenham will embrace and promote the highest standards of low carbon development in its design, layout and new infrastructure.

Elsenham will be an exemplar in the promotion of sustainable patterns of movement and low carbon forms of development which will meet the aspirations for 21st Century lifestyles while providing a new standard for environmental performance.

An orbital bus route linking Elsenham with Stansted Mountfitchet, Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport will augment existing rail linkages offering viable alternatives to the private car. The mix of uses within the master plan will also serve to minimise the need to travel longer distances to off site destinations by meeting all day to day needs within the development. This internalisation of trips will also encourage sustainable travel and reduce reliance upon the private car.

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 generation of energy from renewables;

- The use of low energy materials and modern methods of construction to minimise carbon emissions from new development;
- The recycling of waste from the construction and operation of the development; and
- The creation of fibre optic networks to promote internet connectivity.
- Low Emission Public Transport Vehicles.

The Code for Sustainable Homes sets out a clear expectation that the environmental performance of new development will increase into the future. The Fairfield Partnership is committed to meeting and where possible exceeding the relevant recognised standards for the design and layout of the development and of individual homes and buildings at the time of construction.



Elsenham will respect its landscape and ecological setting and will create a multi-functional green space network that will provide a setting to the development, whilst protecting the character and identity of Henham.

The landscape and ecology of the area has been assessed and has been a key informant of proposals and of the identification of a robust development envelope.

The Elsenham Green Ring will be a key part of the master plan that provides a multi-functional landscape network that safeguards the physical separation of the proposed development from Henham and preserves the setting and approaches to its historic core, while also promoting:

- An integrated network of formal and informal recreational opportunities;
- The protection of distinctive landscape features;
- The creation of a network of new habitats, increasing the biodiversity value 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 health and well-being of residents will be promoted through the application of the Active Design Principles identified by Sport England. By creating compact, walkable neighbourhoods that integrate with wider footpaths and other recreational opportunities a high quality network of opportunities for physical activity will be created. This could include the creation of a community leisure and sports centre alongside a secondary school.



Elsenham will be of Essex and will promote an identity that is clearly grounded in the distinctive character of traditional Essex country towns and villages.

The expansion of Elsenham to form a new market town should in its concept, design and implementation reflect the character of Essex and in particular of Uttlesford District. The Essex Design Guide and its accompanying Urban Places Supplement provides valuable advice in terms of the character and appearance of development in Essex and the sort of approaches that should be adopted to streets and buildings and the spatial relationships between them. The Master Plan will embrace the historic character of local market towns and villages of the District, to create a legible and distinctive identity for the development.



Elsenham will focus development around new and improved public transport services.

The promotion of viable alternatives to the private car is a fundamental element of Central Government, Regional and local planning policy. Elsenham Station will form a focal point for the development and will form the location for a transport interchange between orbital bus services linking Elsenham with Stansted Mountfitchet, Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport. All new development will be within 400m of a public transport stop on the orbital bus route in order to maximise the convenience and availability of public transport alternatives. Master Plan proposals will seek to remove private car traffic from the level crossing at Elsenham Station.

Within the development a comprehensive network of cycle and pedestrian routes will provide easy and inclusive access to bus stops and to other shops and services making walking and cycling an easy and convenient means of transport.



Elsenham will promote a mix of uses to promote sustainable patterns of activity in close proximity.

Elsenham will provide for all of the day to day needs of all members of the new community, as well as offering the opportunity to serve existing residents. New housing will be provided alongside employment, education, shops, open spaces and comprehensive community infrastructure. All uses will be within convenient walking and cycling distance of each other to reduce reliance on the private car.

As well as the physical provision of uses, detailed proposals will be made for social and community programmes and local governance to promote the viability and vitality of the new settlement.



Elsenham will be a vibrant town which can grow and adapt over time.

The scale of growth proposed at Elsenham requires flexibility to be built in to any Master Plan to allow it to adapt over time to varying needs. Elsenham will promote a vibrant and thriving town centre that can grow and adapt over time to meet the commercial and social needs of the new community and its hinterland. The use of a permeable and accessible street network will allow equality of access to the town centre to all members of society, and flexible built forms will be employed to allow buildings to be adapted to meet a range of needs over time.



While the current focus is on meeting the needs of the current Core Strategy to 2024 of 3,000 new homes, the strategic master plan vision will be future proofed to allow further expansion to the north of Old Mead Lane if future generations decide that this is required in the future.

Likewise, broader access proposals will take account of any proposed expansion of Stansted Airport and associated surface access proposals that may be forthcoming.



Elsenham will provide a high quality and inclusive built environment with a contemporary Essex architectural style.

The aspiration for Elsenham is to create a benchmark development recognised by the quality of its design and layout. A legible strategic development diagram is proposed that will provide a distinct identity and sense of place, with a clear and coherent network of routes and linkages converging on the town centre.

The architectural approach envisaged will be a matter for ongoing discussion with stakeholders, but will draw on the wealth of good practice that already exists within Uttlesford and Essex. This will evolve through detailed Design Guidance and Codes later in the planning process, prepared with full stakeholder involvement.

The Fairfield Partnership is committed to act as a master developer to secure the timely delivery of infrastructure to a consistent and high standard, and to ensure that design quality is maintained in all aspects of detailed development proposals.



THE STRATEGIC DESIGN OF ELSENHAM

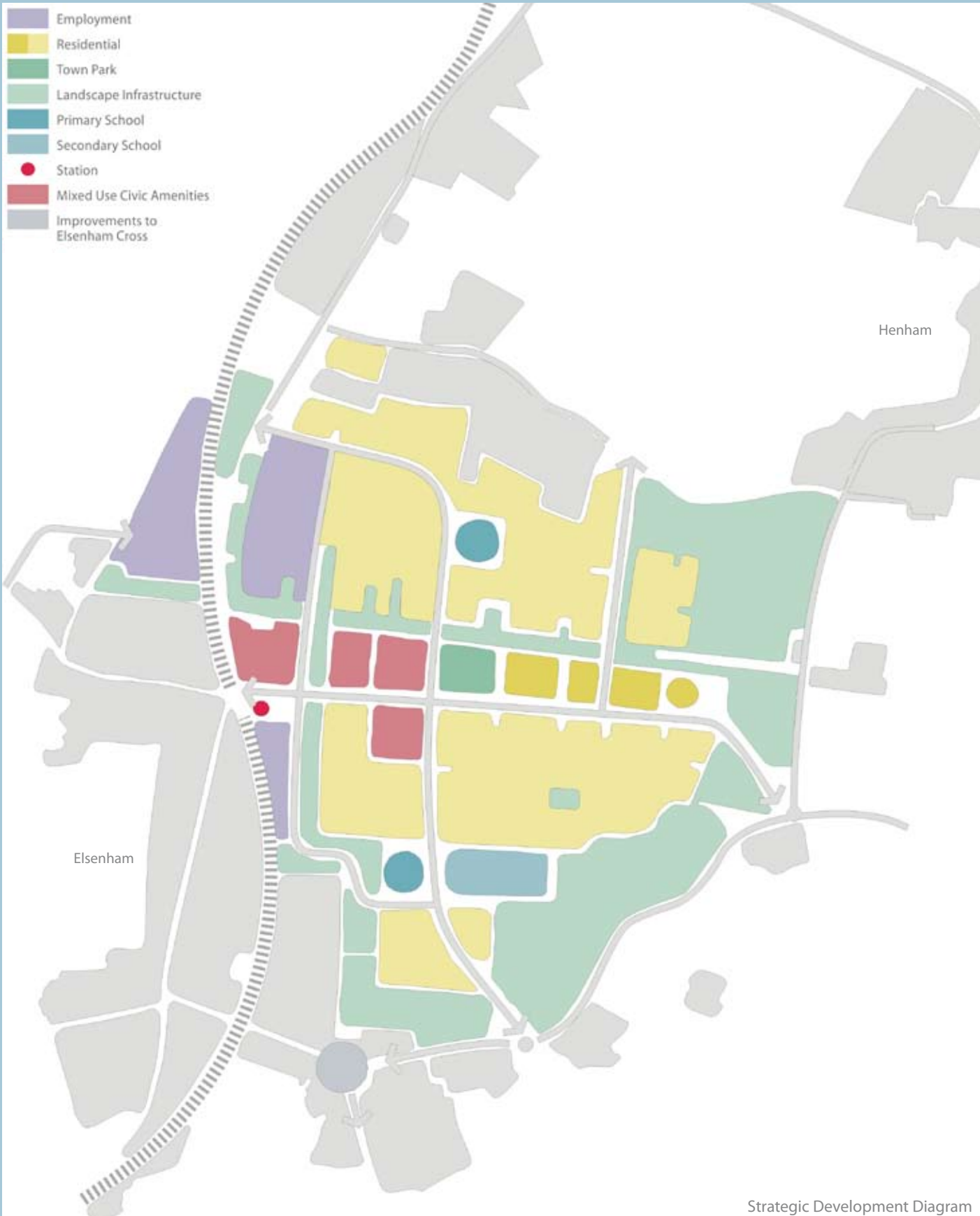
Based on our analysis of the site and the surrounding area the Strategic Master Plan Vision for the development has informed the creation of a Strategic Development Diagram. This sets out the strategic disposition of uses and linkages and forms a broad framework within which a detailed master plan will be developed in due course.

The Strategic Development Diagram is underpinned by established principles of good urban design as expressed through national guidance and through the Essex Design Guide with respect to:

- **Character** – a place with its own identity. Planning should promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture.
- **Continuity and enclosure** – a place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished. Planning should promote continuity of street frontages and enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public areas.
- **Quality of the public realm** – a place with attractive and successful outdoor areas. Planning should promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.
- **Ease of movement** – a place that is easy to get to and move through. Planning should promote accessibility and local permeability by making places that connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.
- **Legibility** – a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand. Planning should promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.
- **Adaptability** – a place that can change easily. Planning should promote adaptability through development that can respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.
- **Diversity** – a place with variety and choice. Planning should promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible developments and uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.

This Master Plan Vision is the first in a suite of design guidance and codes that will steer the development of Elsenham. This is discussed further at section 6. These principles will also inform more detailed stages of the master plan process.

The key components of the Strategic Development Diagram are set out in the following sections.



Strategic Development Diagram

Creating Identity

Elsenham will expand to become a market town within the south-west of Uttlesford District that takes advantage of its sustainable location to create a vibrant and viable new community.

The existing villages of Elsenham and Henham have a population of 2,000 and 1,200 people respectively. In scale the new settlement will at 3,000 homes or around 7,000 people be broadly equivalent in terms of population to Great Dunmow and will change the geography of Uttlesford District. It is evident that the scale of growth could not reasonably be conceived in its character as an extension to either of the existing villages given the relative scale of development. As such the strategic master plan objective is to create a new identity and function for Elsenham as a market town that is separate and distinct in form, whilst maintaining the character and identity of Henham.

Development will integrate with the existing village of Elsenham and protect its character: where the new community adjoins Elsenham and Old Mead it will be carefully planned to provide a satisfactory relationship with existing development. 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.

A Distinctive Town Centre

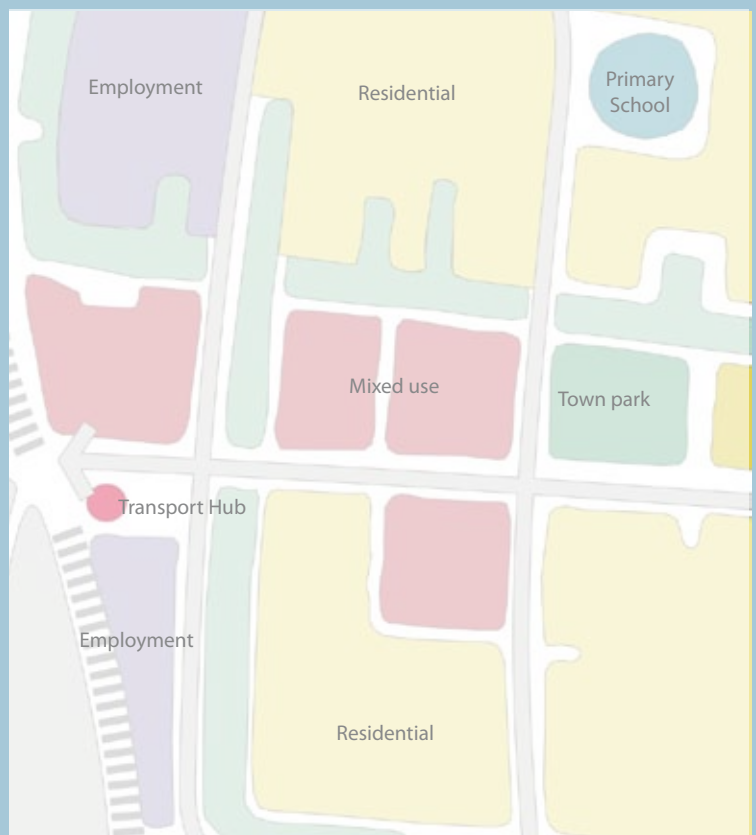
The creation of a new settlement of this scale requires a vibrant and legible town centre to act as a civic focus for development.

Existing market towns within the District have evolved over many centuries and are characterised by their historic cores focussed around key spaces such as Great Dunmow High St and Market Place and Hill Street and the High Street in Saffron Walden. A fine-grain mix of different uses and activities are accommodated within a variety of built forms enjoying direct relationships onto street frontages. Key civic spaces punctuate key routes and nodes within the street network; some bustling with activity such as the Market Street/ King Street in Saffron Walden, and others offering a more tranquil environment such as Doctor's Pond in Great Dunmow.

At Elsenham the strategic objectives for town centre will be to create the same mix of a lively main shopping area that will form the focus for a range of shops, services, food and drink and other community uses alongside open

spaces that provide a setting for the town centre and opportunities for recreation. Retail will also be supported by appropriately scaled food retail to meet the needs of residents of the new and existing community. Other uses will also be included such as a library, hotels, medical facilities, community facilities and appropriate employment and residential uses to support activity across the day and evening to provide a vibrant character. The detailed design and layout of streets, open spaces, key frontages and landmark buildings will reinforce the character and status of the town centre as the civic heart of the development.

The town centre will be centrally placed so that it is within 600m of all of the development area, providing shops and services within easy walking distance of homes. The town centre will also be within easy reach of Elsenham Station and will be a focal point for access.



A range of densities

The density and intensity of development and population will graduate downward from the town centre outwards, providing a logical and legible settlement structure that places lower density uses towards the edges and focuses activity within the town centre. This will provide a number of benefits:

- The use of lower density 'Arcadian' development forms towards the edges offers landscape opportunities to provide soft edges to the development and create a suitable interface with surrounding countryside.
- The use of lower density forms will mirror those existing within the area such as at Old Mead Lane allowing a smooth transition between new and old.
- The use of lower densities around the edges will minimise the potential for adverse impacts on existing dwellings adjacent to the development area.
- A range of densities allows for a range of house types to be provided and for a full range of housing needs to be met.
- A coherent transition between high density development in the town centre and lower density development edge at the edge of the settlement will provide a logical and legible town structure that will reinforce identity.



An Essex architectural style

The character and appearance of the development will reflect the distinctive character of Uttlesford District drawing upon the local vernacular in terms of building height, scale, massing and materials and in terms of the street pattern, layout and form of open spaces. For example, the strip greens and ponds alongside routes as employed in Henham might be employed. This will be a matter for more detailed stages of the master planning process.

A separate detailed analysis of historic town centres including Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow is ongoing to provide a pattern book from which more detailed master plan proposals can be derived for the design of the town centre.

A consistent design approach will be adopted across the streets and open spaces of the development to secure a legible structure that delivers high quality environments at all stages of the development process.



Landscape Framework – The Elsenham Green Ring

Green infrastructure forms a key component of the Strategic Master Plan Vision. The Strategic Master Plan Vision has therefore identified the concept of the Elsenham Green Ring planned to provide an integrated multi-functional green infrastructure network that involves natural and managed green areas in both urban and rural settings and describes a robust development envelope within which growth can take place. The Elsenham Green Ring will have the following attributes:

- **Landscape Setting:** The Elsenham Green Ring will create a beautiful and usable landscape which maintains the open character of land between Elsenham and Henham and prevent the coalescence of existing communities. It will preserve the setting for characteristic buildings and features, such as Pennington Hall and will place the new development into a rich landscape setting of high visual quality and amenity value.
- **Health and Well-being:** the Green Ring will deliver public open space and countryside close to and easily accessible from where people live - bringing quality of life benefits to new and existing residents. It will allow for high-quality public open space, new footpaths and cycleways, access to existing and new Public Rights of Way, accessible countryside, provide visual amenity and new high quality public open spaces.
- **Sport and Recreation:** the Green Ring will provide a range of accessible opportunities for physical activity within easy reach of new and existing homes in a high quality integrated network, reflecting Sport England's Active Design guidance. This will take the form of new and enhanced footpath and cycle routes to promote walking, running and cycling, bridleways, formal playing fields and sports facilities, and children's play areas.
- **Nature Conservation:** The Elsenham Green Ring provides ample opportunities to create richness and diversity in habitat type and location. Existing woodland, hedgerows, field boundaries, ditches and paddocks can be enhanced and new provision made for the creation of wildlife habitat. This can be aimed at supporting priority habitats such as cereal field margins, hedges and freshwater areas as well as protected species such as great crested newts, stag beetles, house sparrows and arable weeds and wildflowers. Areas of new and enhanced wildlife habitat could be used for educating the community of the benefits of biodiversity, and could even be designated as local nature reserves.
- **Water and Drainage:** The Elsenham Green Ring will support a sustainable drainage system to cope with day to day drainage needs as well as surface run-off during major storm events. This part of the country has low rainfall; therefore water conservation, re-use and water management also form an essential part of the Green Ring. Swales and other SUDs techniques shall be used in conjunction with the existing land drainage network and connected to appropriately sized ponds which will be located throughout the development forming an integral part of the open space and recreation network.
- **Locally Grown Food:** The land on which development is planned already provides food. Even after the land is built upon, some of that land can still be used for food production. Small market gardens, orchards and allotments located in the right places could help reduce food miles and set up a local market for produce. Establishing a growers' co-operative would help to pool resources, lower production costs and promote retail through local outlets, such as a farmer's market.
- **Access and Movement:** The Elsenham Green Ring will promote interconnectivity within the proposed development and establish links to the wider landscape and surrounding communities. This will be achieved via a network of green corridors containing new and existing footpaths, bridleways and cycleways.
- **Lifelong Learning:** elements of the Elsenham Green Ring can provide a resource for children and adults to develop an understanding of their environment and local heritage.

The Elsenham Green Ring features a range of strategic elements which integrate with existing open space and footpaths outside of the master plan area:

- **The Carriageway:** The Carriageway would serve as a major green corridor running through the western boundary of the development. Envisioned as a broad 'boulevard' between a double avenue of lime/chestnut, this corridor would offer a sheltered and shaded route for pedestrians and cyclists to exercise and enjoy their town. Ponds, swales and ditches will be integrated into the Carriageway corridor to accommodate sustainable drainage of the development site. This green corridor would mirror the private carriage drive which Sir Walter Gilbey, the entrepreneur who leased Elsenham Hall from the 1870s until his death in 1914, commissioned to be constructed adjacent to the railway as far as Elsenham Station. The carriageway would serve as a soft green edge between proposed employment development and residential areas, and would protect the setting of the listed Old Mead.
- **Sand Pit Fields:** Mineral extraction has created large 'sand pits' north of Pennington Hall. These sunken fields will provide an enclosed and sheltered location for sports pitches, playing fields and areas for informal recreation. Facilities could serve the adjacent secondary school and be shared with the wider community. Existing woodland and shrub vegetation on the steep banks and higher ground around the fields will be enhanced as wildlife corridors and semi-natural spaces, enhancing the area's nature conservation value and providing opportunities for outdoor education.
- **Little Mill Orchard:** The Elsenham Green Ring provides an opportunity to reintroduce orchards to the area. Orchards established at Little Mill Field would contain local and heritage varieties of apple, pear and plum, reflecting the area's 19C-20C fruit-growing heritage associated with Elsenham Jams, and providing produce for local consumption. The orchards would also support nature conservation with traditionally managed grassland habitat under the fruit trees, supporting local flora and fauna. Orchards will contribute to the goal of allowing the community to grow its own healthy food, reducing the impact of food miles and enhancing the local economy. Little Mill Orchard will also maintain separation from Mill Road, preserving the character of this southerly approach to Henham.
- **Great Hide Common:** Great Hide Common will be a public open space with a multitude of uses. It will include playing fields for football and other sports adjacent to the new development as well as areas for informal recreation. Allotments, small market gardens and further orchards will allow the community to produce their own healthy food. Great Hide Common will establish boundaries for a countryside gap between Henham and the new development, reinforcing the separate identities of both settlements.
- **Old Mead Lane:** Old Mead Lane is a public right of way, and it is anticipated that it will remain virtually unchanged so as to protect the amenity of local residents. As part of the Elsenham Green Ring, it is envisioned that the quiet character of Old Mead Lane will be maintained and enhanced. Subject to consultation with local residents, Old Mead Lane will be extended to connect with Henham as a green country lane lined with trees, hedgerows and small ponds. This will serve as a route for pedestrians, cyclists and horseback riders. Landscape design along Old Mead Lane will have a strong focus on nature conservation and visual interest, making use of plant species ideal for cover and foraging of protected species such as tree sparrows, bats and butterflies.
- **The Farmers Line:** Based on the alignment of the former Elsenham to Thaxted railway line, the Farmer's Line would sub-divide the Green Ring, drawing this environmental asset into and through the town centre. This green corridor would provide a generously proportioned treed pedestrian and cycle route lined by a wide avenue of trees from the railway station and the Carriageway up to Great Hide Common. The corridor would accommodate ponds, ditches and swales etc. as part of a SUDS system, and would broaden out at certain points to provide opportunities for recreation and play provision. This includes the creation of a town park within the town centre which will create an important civic space featuring formal and informal recreational opportunities.



The Elsenham Green Ring

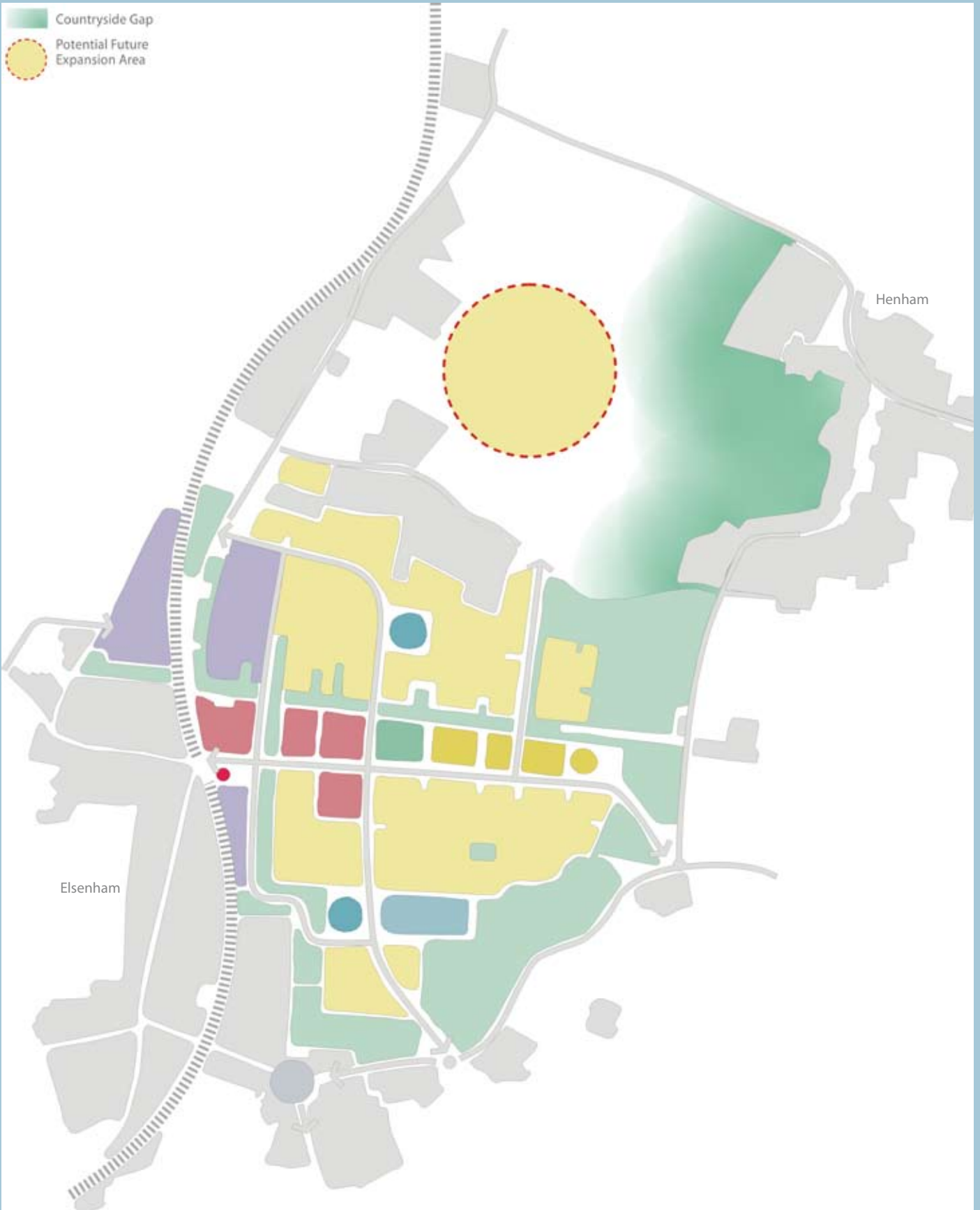


The developed area of the linked new settlement will also contain open spaces to punctuate the urban form and provide opportunities for play and recreation. All open spaces will be created with a clear and positive purpose to create a strong sense of identity and community.

An important element of the Green Ring is its ability to respond to the need for any further future expansion of Elsenham. Were development required to take place on land controlled by The Fairfield Partnership on land north of Old Mead Lane, the separation created at Great Hide Common between the proposed development and existing development at Henham will inform the creation of a countryside gap to prevent coalescence and preserve the separate identity and setting of Henham. This countryside gap would be no narrower than the relationship between Henham and Elsenham created at Great Hide Common. The precise boundaries of the countryside gap north of Old Mead will be fixed through a formal landscape impact assessment.

Were it to be required, land within this countryside gap would be designed to serve the residents of both Elsenham and Henham. New footpaths and bridleways would be proposed marked by new native hedgerows and wide field margins also serving as wildlife corridors. The fields themselves could be turned over to small paddocks for horses or livestock, hay-making/silage, cereal or biomass crops to support local food production and/or sources of renewable energy, and would be surrounded by woodland screening, giving a soft green edge to development.





Movement Framework

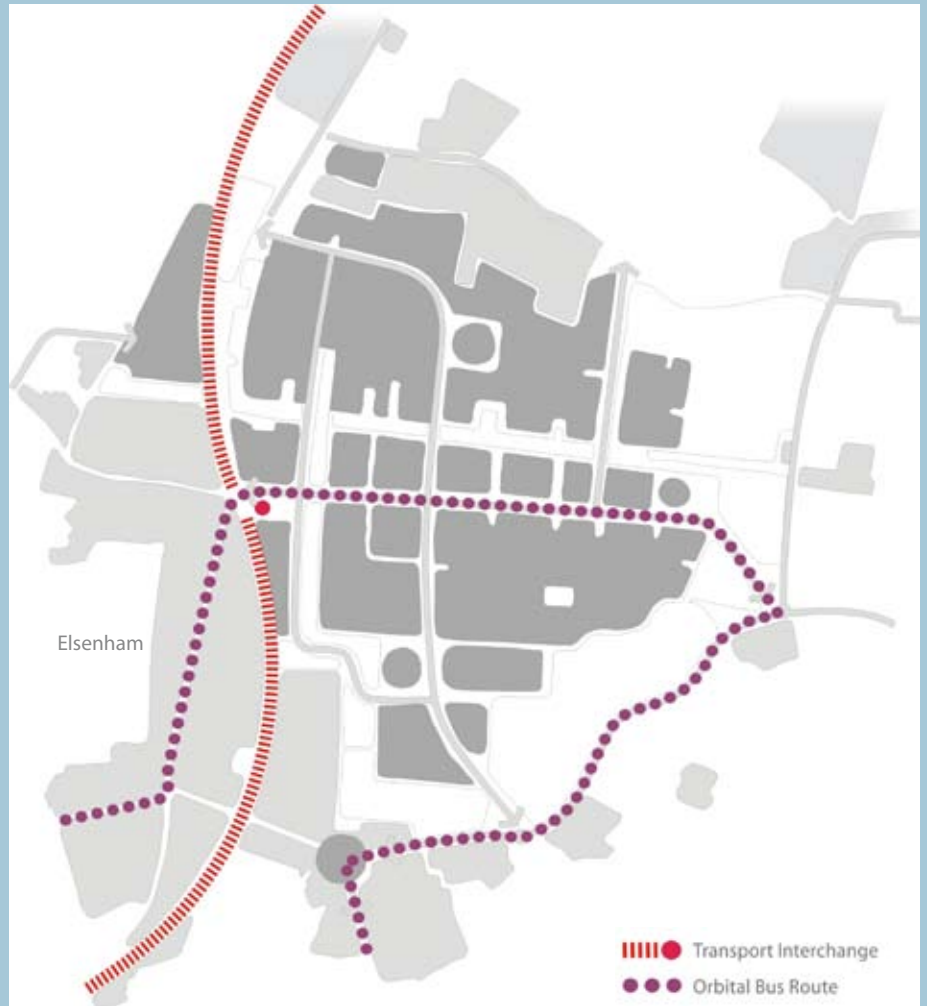
The new settlement will promote comprehensive new infrastructure and enhancements to existing networks to provide a robust transport network, and to enhance public transport linkages with other nearby centres of population and activity.

Rail Access

Rail access will naturally focus on the existing station. The emphasis will be on the enhancement of existing facilities, whilst taking account of the character of the station. The potential to increase platform lengths to accommodate 12 car trains will be fully investigated with Network Rail, along with the potential for improvements to services.

The railway station will also form the focal point for public transport through the creation of a transport interchange. This will integrate bus and train services, while also providing for extensive cycle parking and a high standard of pedestrian access. Car parking and taxi access will also form an important element to ensure that all travel modes can access the range of transport opportunities from this point.

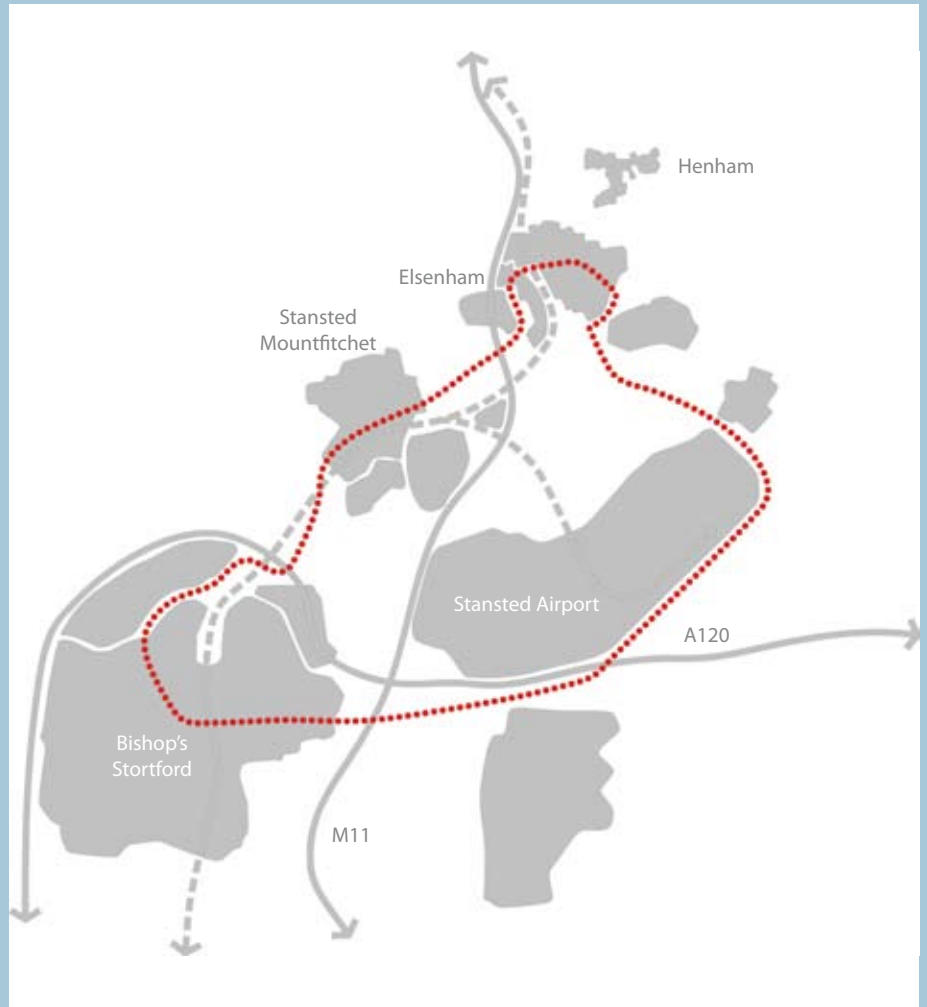
The use of the level crossing is proposed to be limited to public transport vehicles only, with the potential for continuing cycle use. This will allow public transport services to integrate with the existing village, whilst removing private vehicular traffic which will be redirected through the new settlement. It is expected that this will reduce traffic levels on Station Road. The provision of car parking at the transport interchange may also help reduce on-street car parking in Station Road.



Orbital Bus Routes

The rail links to nearby settlements are proposed to be enhanced by an orbital bus service linking Elsenham with Stansted Mountfitchet, Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport. A 20 minute frequency service to Bishops Stortford can be supported in either direction around this route 6 days a week with a reduced service on a Sunday which, with appropriate timetabling, could create up to a 10 minute service frequency. The route has the potential if required to be extended to include Henham. This is a significant improvement on the existing hourly, convoluted service connecting Elsenham to Stansted Airport and Bishops Stortford.

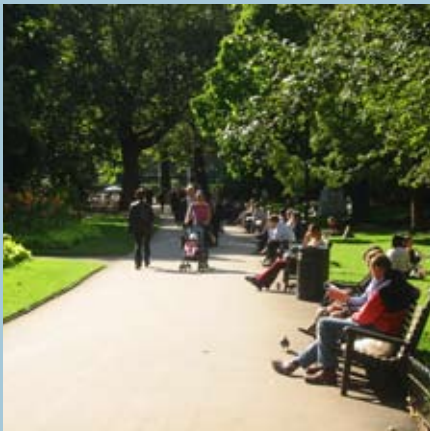
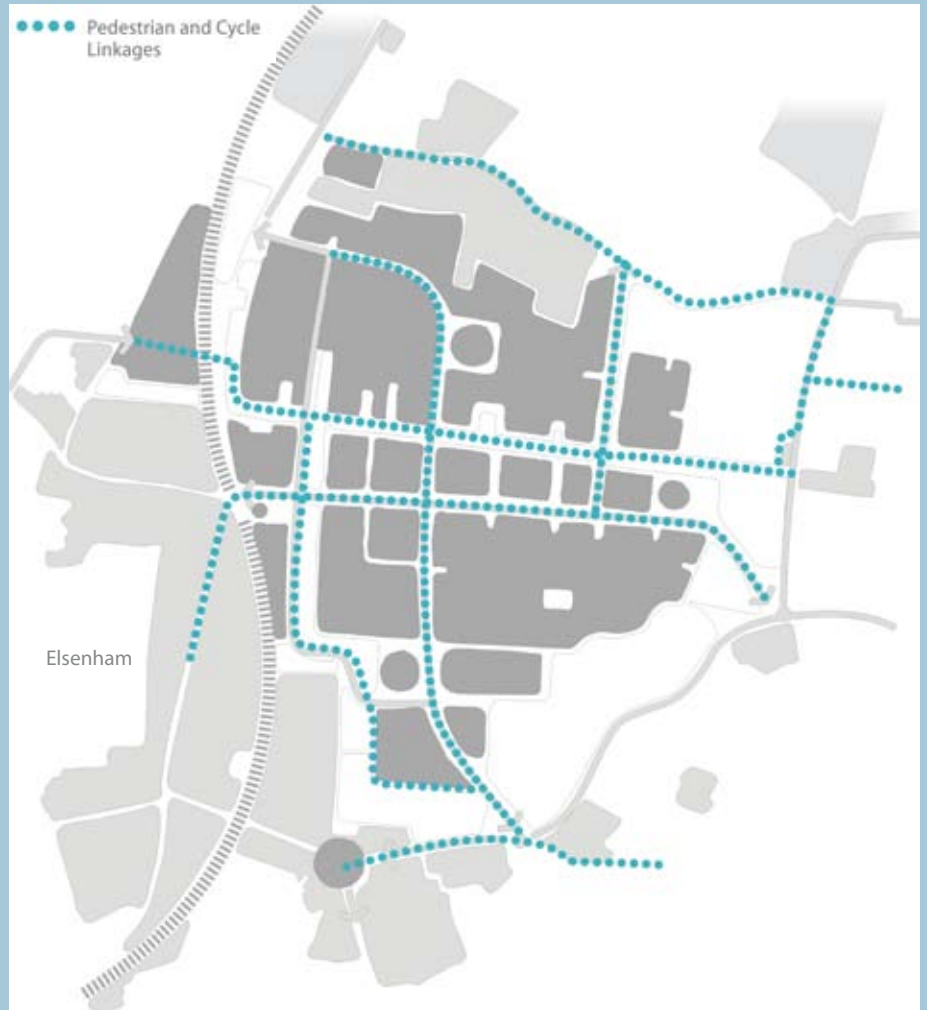
Modern specification high profile low emission buses would be employed on the route, along with high quality bus infrastructure to provide superior waiting and interchange facilities. All development would be within approximately 400m of bus routes. Real time passenger information would be employed both within bus stops and on information networks serving dwellings and potentially mobile phones to provide up to date information on services.



Pedestrian and Cycle Linkages

A permeable integrated network of pedestrian and cycle links will be promoted as part of development linking with the surrounding road and footpath network via the Elsenham Green Ring. This network will promote links to all parts of the proposed development, offering the opportunity to meet day-to-day needs without the need for motorised transport. The network will also offer a range of recreational opportunities to residents.

Particular attention will be paid to promoting safe routes to schools from residential areas. This also includes the investigation of the need to improve off-site pedestrian linkages where necessary.



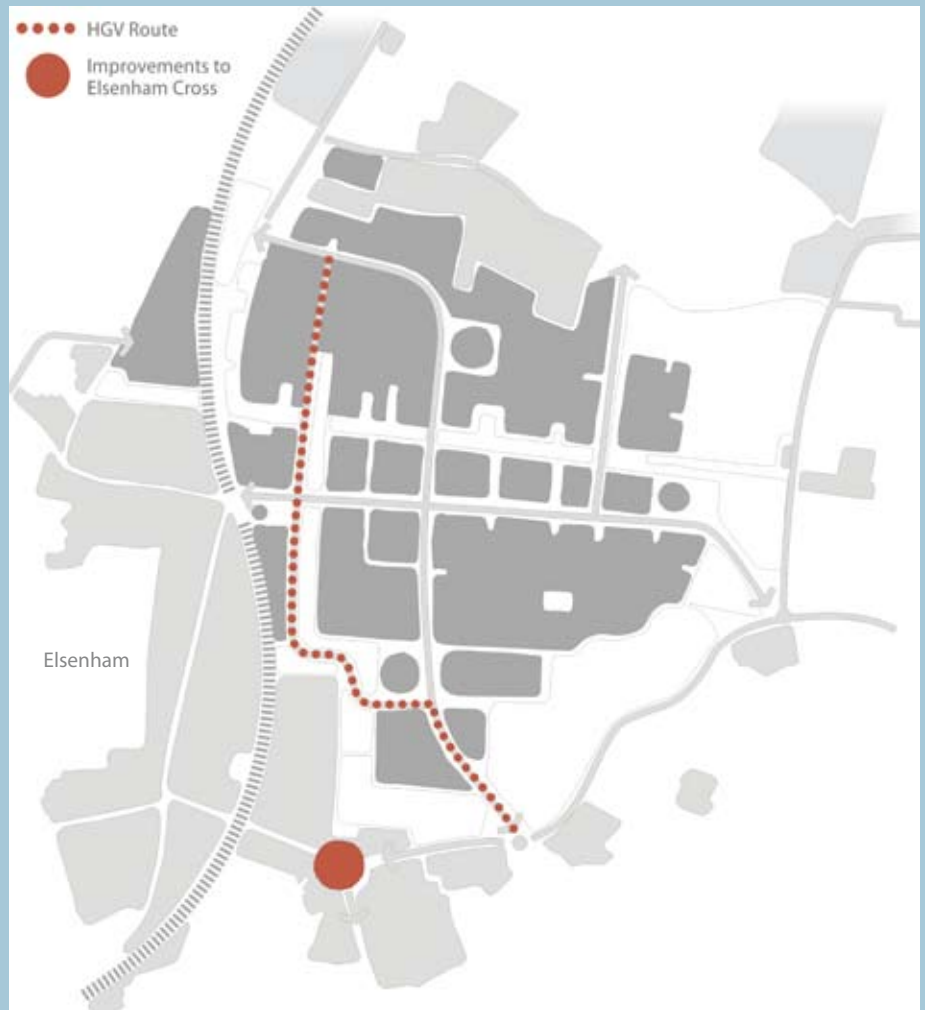
Road Access

Road access will be focussed upon the use of Hall Road/Parsonage Road to access Junction 8 of the M11 via Takeley and the B1256. The need for improvements to this route is currently under investigation, along with the need for improvements to the Elsenham Cross junction of Hall Road and Henham Road.

Improvements will also be investigated to other routes linking to Elsenham, including the potential provision of signals on North Hall Road where it passes beneath the West Anglia Railway Line. In addition, Stansted Road is being investigated with a view to discourage longer distance private car journeys via this route.

Within the development, vehicular traffic will be diverted away from the level crossing at Elsenham Station through the provision of a new road linking Old Mead Road to Henham Road. A permeable and legible street network will be provided converging on the town centre. The specification and design speed of roads within the development will be designed in accordance with advice in the Essex Design Guide.

Access to employment areas will direct Heavy Goods Vehicles via a special route keeping such traffic outside of the town centre and away from schools through signage. The employment area to the west of the railway line will be served by existing roads within the village. This employment area is envisaged as an extension to Gold Enterprise Zone and will provide a new road access to remove employment traffic from Jenkins Drive. The quantity of employment development in this area will be dependent on the capacity of the local road network.



A Sustainable Mix of Uses

Creating walkable neighbourhoods

Elsenham will provide for all of the day to day needs of all members of the new community within easy walking distance (generally recognised as between 400 and 800 metres) promoting the concept of walkable neighbourhoods. Shops, schools, public transport and open space will all be within easy walking distance of homes, reducing reliance on motorised transport and promoting active streets and a sense of place. The activity promoted will also provide natural surveillance that will assist in promoting community safety. The central location of the town centre will place all of its facilities within easy access of residents, and will also offer the opportunity to serve residents of existing communities.

A Vibrant Town Centre

A town centre will be created accommodating a full range of shops and facilities which is envisaged to include:

- A main shopping area featuring a range of retail facilities including convenience and comparison stores and an anchor food store to serve the needs of the new community. Restaurants, pubs, hotels and cafes would also be present to promote activity across the day.
- A community hub including a library and multi-purpose community buildings.
- Places of worship; and
- A Primary Care Trust health clinic.

The town centre will also incorporate residential and employment uses to stimulate a broad range of activity. The content of the town centre will be phased alongside the rest of the development to ensure the timely provision of facilities.

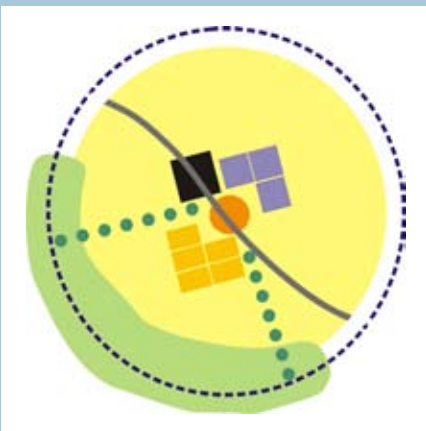
Adaptable building forms will be employed in the town centre where possible to allow different uses to be undertaken within the same building over time. This will offer flexibility to allow the town centre to grow and evolve with the new community to ensure its needs continue to be met into the future.

Meeting Housing Needs

Elsenham will include 3,000 new homes, with the potential to accommodate additional growth in the future if required to the north of Old Mead Lane.

New housing will incorporate a range of house types and tenures including affordable housing and extra care accommodation. The intention will be to provide a full and comprehensive response to the market and housing needs of the District, in line with Central, Regional and Local planning policy.

In keeping in character with the District the predominant housing type will be for family housing, although an element of apartment provision will be made, especially within the town centre.



Creating New Jobs

New employment will also be incorporated with the overall aim being to create a sustainable balance of employment opportunities with new homes. It is hoped that sufficient jobs might be provided in order that 50% of the economically active population of working age in the new community might have the opportunity to live and work at Elsenham. Current thinking is to make provision for in the region of 40,000 sq m of employment floorspace that might provide jobs in the following sectors:

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

Education

School provision will also be made on site including the opportunity for a seven form of entry Secondary School to be accommodated within the Master Plan. The Strategic Development Diagram makes provision for around 8 hectares of land for a secondary school on the site in an easily accessible location close to Henham Road. This is proposed to make dual use of playing fields provided at Sand Pit Fields such that outside of school hours the playing field elements might be employed by sports clubs. The detailed provision of secondary schooling within the District is a matter for Essex County Council as the Local Education Authority. One option that could be considered is for Stansted Mountfitchet Mathematics and Computing College to relocate onto the site in new premises. This would only take place with the full consent of the Local Education Authority and the Board of Governors of that school.

As well as the Secondary School it is envisaged that a community leisure and sports centre be provided alongside the secondary school, for use by the community outside of school hours. Opportunities for use of the school premises for adult education and other extra curricular activities are also envisaged.

Initial discussions with the Local Education Authority suggest that two new primary schools would be sufficient to meet the primary school needs of the development. Primary education will be provided on the site to ensure that all new homes are within 600m of primary schools. The school parcels will be sufficiently sized to allow pre-school provision to be made on the same site.



Town Park and Play Areas

A town park is proposed to form a focal point within the town centre and to form an integral part of the Farmers Line green corridor. Located at the heart of the town centre the town park will provide opportunities for recreation and relaxation as well as providing a distinctive setting to the town centre.

Children's play areas will be integrated within the Elsenham Green Ring and also elsewhere within other open spaces within the developed area. The objective will be to promote easily accessible and safe play opportunities close to all new homes.

Health

Health and wellbeing will be promoted through a number of measures:

- The Town Centre will include a health clinic to provide access to GP services for the new community. Opportunities will be explored for integrating this with community facilities to allow health promotion programmes and other social and lifestyle initiatives to be integrated with the clinic.
- A comprehensive range of sports and recreational facilities along with the emphasis on walking and cycling will promote opportunities for physical activity among the new community.
- The Elsenham Green Ring will promote access to a range of leisure opportunities allowing for relaxation and contemplation.

Community Facilities

A range of community facilities will be created to meet the needs of the new community including places of worship and community rooms within the town centre. Opportunities for the co-location of community facilities with schools or sports facilities will be investigated to promote the efficient use of facilities and land.



Low Carbon Development

It is government policy to produce new settlements that are built and constructed in a sustainable manner that will help provide zero-carbon developments. The Elsenham development will use an energy strategy that promotes the principles of sustainability by considering demand reduction techniques, energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies, the possible use of district heating schemes, and the advantages of establishing a community Energy Services Company (ESCO), where feasible.

Development at Elsenham will:

- Provide an overall energy system that is cost-effective and energy-efficient in its delivery, adaptable to phasing and technology changes, and is able to be delivered and maintained for the long-term.
- Build quality houses that are energy efficient and where feasible exceed regulations.
- Promote onsite renewable and low-carbon energy technologies to help reduce the overall carbon emissions of the community, in line with, or where feasible ahead of, the Government's timetable of providing zero-carbon homes.
- Consider the practicality of aligning the development along the One Planet Living principles with regards to whole-life sustainability.

- Make use of the Code for Sustainable Homes and to propose using BREEAM, or the proposed Code for Non-Domestic Buildings, as an assessment method.
- Apply innovative and forward-thinking strategies in a well-considered way as part of creating an exemplary legacy for Elsenham and Essex.

Code for Sustainable Homes

The Code is intended as a single national standard to promote continuous improvement in the design and construction of sustainable homes. There are six levels to the Code that are described by star ratings. The code relates to the following areas:

- Carbon Dioxide Emissions (Ene1)
- Internal Potable Water Use (Wat1)
- Embodied Impacts of Construction Materials (Mat1)
- Surface Water Runoff (Sur1)
- Household Waste Storage Space and Facilities (Was1)
- Construction Site Waste Management (Was2)

The Fairfield Partnership is committed to meeting and if practical exceeding the relevant codes in force at the time of construction.

Waste Minimisation

A key principle will be to minimise waste from the construction process, through to the end product and operation of the development. Domestic waste and recycling is considered a primary resource that offers opportunities for composting and energy generation. Modern Methods of Construction will be explored as a means of reducing resource consumption during the delivery process. Waste recycling will be promoted through the provision of adequate space within new development for storing and separating commercial and domestic waste, and through the provision of information and promotion activities.

Integrated Energy Strategy Approach

Traditionally, each utility, such as electricity, gas, water, and waste removal, is provided separately to individual consumers. However, significant environmental, social and cost savings can be achieved when a more coherent approach is applied. The provision of heating and hot water to developments via centralised community-based plant is a well-established way of achieving increased life-cycle efficiencies compared to individual boiler systems. This model can be expanded to include other services.



Energy Demand Reduction and Energy Efficiency

Energy demand reduction and energy efficiency will be applied as a principle throughout the Elsenham development, with the homes, businesses and community services buildings designed with energy reduction in mind. Energy efficiency measures and standards for reduction will be set along with the consideration and incorporation of energy supply sources and renewable energy technologies.

Reducing the demand for energy has benefits not only in terms of the embodied energy of the equipment and infrastructure, but also enabling greater cost efficiency for the energy infrastructure. It is generally more cost effective to apply to buildings than renewable energy technologies.

Design principles that will be adopted to ensure that the energy demand reduction and efficiency in the Elsenham development is achieved are likely to include:

- Application of passive design principles to avoid solar overheating in summer and avoid heat loss in winter.
- Using smart metering and renewables to change occupant behaviour in energy use.
- Using high performance fabrics and windows throughout the development.
- Achievement of air-tight construction with carefully planned ventilation.
- Inclusion of effective thermal mass in construction, with environmental strategies to make use of thermal mass for internal comfort through the year.
- Use of high-efficiency heat recovery where mechanical ventilation is applied.

- Specification of energy efficient light fittings.
- Installation of energy efficient domestic appliances.

In addition to providing energy efficient buildings that use a small amount of energy, the energy strategy will seek to supply energy in the most efficient manner through delivery systems that are sized to meet demand; for example, if feasible, making use of a district scheme in areas where the energy demand allows it.

The overall efficiency for the Elsenham development will be the result of building performance standards and energy generating technologies that are appropriately sized to meet the demand. The effect of using energy within the development on the local and global environment can be minimized through the use of low-carbon and renewable fuels.

Energy Supply Technologies

Renewable and low-carbon energy supply technologies will if possible be incorporated into the Elsenham development as part of the strategies working towards achievement of net-zero carbon emissions.

Combined heat and power (CHP), also known as cogeneration, is the name applied to the processes from which a single stream of fuel is used to simultaneously generate heat and power (usually electrical). The heat can either be used in local processes, such as driving a turbine to create electricity, or for district domestic hot water for heating and consumption. The fuels used in these units could be a bio-fuel, which would provide a low or zero-carbon energy.

The use of CHP units can be applied to larger multi-unit dwelling or commercial developments, or as a part of a community energy system within the Elsenham development.

Solar energy systems work best when they are planned for, or introduced early within the development design. This limits issues of overshadowing, inappropriate surface space, and adhoc orientation and placement. The Elsenham development will seek to balance solar design and urban design requirements and will be considered wherever feasible with thoughtful planning to ensure ease of integration and their fit within the surrounding area. Onsite solar energy technologies would possibly include solar thermal panels for hot water, photovoltaic panels, and passive solar heating.

The use of wind energy generators is an excellent method of providing renewable energy at a site-wide scale, if useful wind speeds are available. However, any proposals for taking advantage of the ability to generate electricity from wind would need to be of an appropriate scale and take full account of the visual amenity considerations and local character in order to ensure positive response and fit within the area.

The feasibility of geo-thermal energy in the form of direct acting ground-source heat pumps, aquifer and borehole thermal energy storage systems will be considered as a part of the energy options appraisal within the Elsenham development. The onsite commercial floorspace suggested for the Elsenham development will require both heating and cooling energy and may provide an opportunity to introduce some advanced thermal infrastructure systems. The system can be designed for a single building or can be a part of a local district scheme that serves multiple buildings.

District Energy Schemes

The creation of a community, or district, energy scheme that could provide heating and power is one of the most effective ways of delivering site wide low-carbon and renewable energy and the feasibility of such a scheme will be fully considered for the Elsenham development. A community energy scheme would likely incorporate community boilers and CHP units, with thermal storage providing heat to individual or multi-unit buildings. Power could also be provided by CHP units and/or other on-site electricity-generating technologies. A district energy scheme could be set up to provide service to the whole site or part of the site. A site-wide energy scheme system could make use of technologies that would allow it to be sized along with the development phases, meeting the demand as required.

Water Efficiency and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems

A review of geological mapping and historical bore hole logs indicate that infiltration techniques will be viable on this site, allowing run-off to feed back into aquifers. The use of SUDs will be promoted with drainage corridors running down to the southern and western parts of the site following the landform and subject to an assessment of permeability across the site.

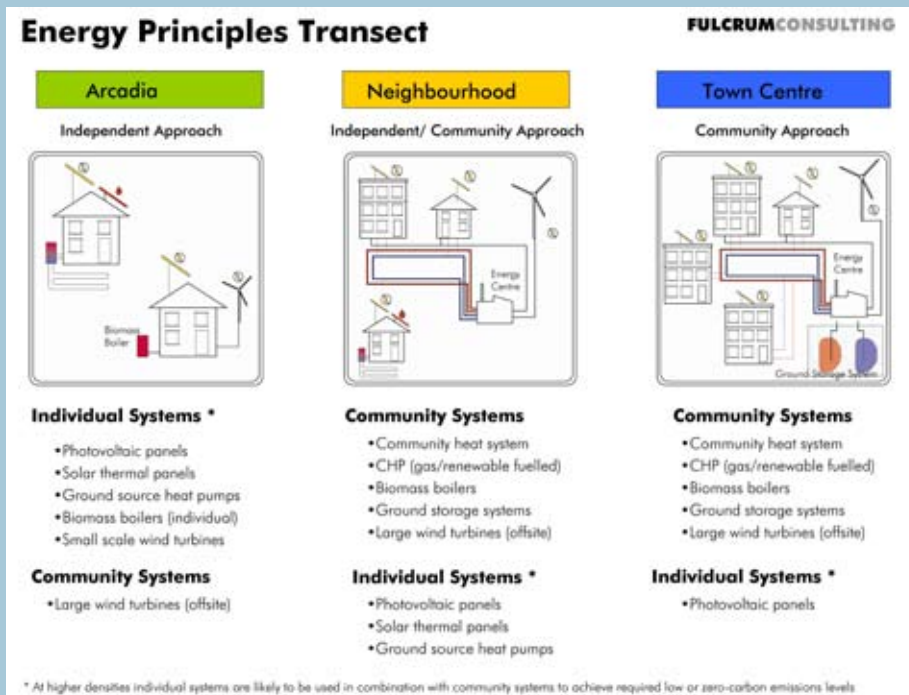
The implementation of water efficiency measures will form a key element of sustainable construction methods in all buildings including the consideration of rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling.

Esco's and Musco's

Energy Services Companies (ESCO's) are companies that, rather than just supplying unit electricity and/or gas to their customers, provide an energy services package which includes the supply of energy, maintenance, a guaranteed availability of services, and the implementation of energy efficiency measures. ESCOs can also offer a capital investment to the development.

There is also the potential for development at Elsenham to incorporate some form of Multi-Utility Service Company (MUSCO) to provide operation, billing, maintenance and ongoing management of the community-based utility services. A MUSCO would operate in a similar way to an ESCO, only with incorporation of additional services beyond energy. The benefits of a MUSCO arrangement accrue to the consumer, the developer, and the environment, by enabling the effective use of integrated community infrastructure.

The approach to promoting low carbon development will be explored further in a separate energy and sustainability strategy to be produced at a later stage as the master plan evolves.



CREATING A NEW COMMUNITY

As well as providing the 'hard' infrastructure of a new community, it is also important to promote appropriate governance structures to maintain and deliver the environmental and social infrastructure. In this regard it is proposed that a new 'Elsenham Community Trust' be established.

Elsenham Community Trust (ECT) would be a community-owned organisation set up and funded initially by the Fairfield Partnership to own and manage the new facilities provided. It is envisaged that ECT would take on responsibility for the following:

1. The Green Ring & Public Realm - the ECT could adopt all open spaces, public realm and non-adopted highway land from The Fairfield Partnership. Its ownership and management by the community should mean that these assets are well cared for and residents are motivated to participate in land management activities.
2. Transport Promotions - the ECT could deliver and co-ordinate the Travel Plans to promote a reduction in car use. These might include measures such as resident welcome packs and other methods of access to public transport information, timetables, links to online real time public transport information for bus and rail services, incentives for travel by sustainable modes, personalised journey planning, a car club; and public transport, cycling and walking promotions. Its community ownership and social entrepreneurship skills should enable the ECT to tailor and promote the use of its services to the community effectively.
3. Social and Community Development - the ECT could operate community facilities and promote community development through events and services in and around the development for the duration of the build out and beyond. It could provide information on a range of initiatives including waste recycling, adult education, health promotion etc for the benefit of the community. Its community ownership should enable it to relate to local residents both as members and as interested citizens, thereby encouraging new residents to feel a part of the new community and to participate in community life.
4. Renewable Energy - the ECT could finance, deliver, govern and manage renewable energy generation and supply and fibre-to-the-premises infrastructure and could retail these services to customers via a Multi-utility Service Company (MUSCO) model. Its community ownership and entrepreneurial skills should enable it to achieve very high customer take-up so its tariffs can promote energy efficiency and its ICT network can support home working and community broadcasting.
5. Sports Facilities - the ECT could manage the sports facilities once the buildings and land have been completed and transferred by The Fairfield Partnership. Its community ownership and entrepreneurial skills should enable it to offer bespoke sports and leisure services to meet the needs of the local community.

The essence of the ECT is that facilities and services will be owned and managed by the new community, giving the new community a direct stake in and control over their own environment and local services. In setting up the ECT, The Fairfield Partnership may choose from a number of legal forms that offer clear accountability to the local community (including the scheme's neighbours) as well as encouraging an entrepreneurial approach. It is likely that the local authority and other local community organisations may be invited to be represented on the ECT Board, with local residents being offered this opportunity as occupation of the development increases over time.

It is expected that The Fairfield Partnership would set up the ECT before the development commences in order to properly establish its first activities, i.e. MUSCO, Transport and Community Development. The function of the ECT in adopting elements of the Green Ring and other public realm activities will grow with the transfer of land during the build-out of the scheme.

An Estate Charge is likely to be levied on all residential and commercial properties as an ongoing income stream for the ECT to offset the costs of managing the Green Ring & Public Realm and delivering community development services.



DELIVERING THE VISION

Delivery of the Master Plan

This strategic master plan vision represents the first of many stages in creating a master plan to guide the development at Elsenham. The Fairfield Partnership is committed to engaging fully with stakeholders as this vision moves forward to produce a detailed master plan. This is likely to involve both formal consultation undertaken by Uttlesford District Council on further stages of their Local Development Framework, but also local consultation and engagement undertaken directly by The Fairfield Partnership. The table below shows the various stages envisaged in creating a master plan for Elsenham.



Each of these subsequent stages will be undertaken with full stakeholder involvement.

Delivering Development

Development is proposed to commence by early 2012, with the first occupations of homes taking place thereafter. The detailed phasing of growth will be a matter for more detailed stages of the master planning. In broad terms the phasing of growth is likely to run from west to east, in order that drainage and highway infrastructure can be delivered early in the process.

The Fairfield Partnership is committed to delivering an exemplar of low carbon development in the linked new settlement at Elsenham. In order to ensure the delivery of a consistent and high standard of design, The Fairfield Partnership will act as master developer. This role involves The Fairfield Partnership undertaking the development of advance strategic infrastructure such as drains, utilities and roads, but also in overseeing the delivery of any planning obligations and community facilities. The Fairfield Partnership will also assess and oversee content of all planning applications submitted to ensure that housebuilders implement fully the high development standards envisaged.

The Fairfield Partnership is also committed to the early inception of the Elsenham Community Trust to establish early in the development process the governance and management structures which will endure.

