

Southern Expansion Land, Peterborough

WORKING PAPER 08: **DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT UPDATE**

Prepared on behalf of
O&H Properties Ltd

By
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A stylized graphic of a tree with a grid pattern on its leaves, set against a background of a building silhouette. The tree is composed of several overlapping leaf shapes in shades of yellow, green, and white. The building silhouette is a dark green, angular structure with a grid pattern on its facade. The background is a solid dark blue.

Working Paper 8: Development Concept Update

In May 2004 O&H Properties produced a set of Working Papers explaining the context within which the development concept for the strategic southern expansion of Peterborough is being progressed, and explaining the way in which development in this location could be delivered to meet in full the requirements of the government's Sustainable Communities Plan.

Working Paper 4 set out the initial concept for development of the Southern Expansion Land. Since 2004, considerable background work has been undertaken to inform this concept. A Technical Assessment for the Southern Expansion Land was undertaken in response to a request from Peterborough City Council as part of its initial work on the Local Development Framework. Working Paper 7 (January 2006) summarises the conclusions of this technical assessment.

Changes in land ownership and ongoing development in the vicinity of the land in question have also influenced the emerging framework for development, resulting in a revised concept plan for the site. This Working Paper sets out these changes.

Why Update?

There have been several factors which have influenced the emerging development concept for the site:

i. Changes in Government Agenda

Since 2004, changing priorities within the government's agenda have influenced the shape of planning for strategic growth. Of particular relevance to masterplanning for new development of the scale proposed for the Southern Expansion Land is the need to redress housing affordability by delivering more homes and delivering them more quickly¹, and to do so in a sustainable manner which enables communities to contribute effectively to tackling climate change^{2,3}.

The development concept addresses issues of sustainability and delivery on a number of levels. At this stage of masterplanning, the update of the development concept focuses on:

- the ability to create **self-sufficiency** within the new community (through testing the appropriate jobs-homes balance and providing a quantum of development sufficient to support day to day local services and facilities in each phase);
- the ability to deliver real and effective **public transport priority** from an early stage which can serve the new community but which will also offer benefits to the wider population of south Peterborough.

ii. Addressing the Concept of Carbon Neutrality

One key aspect of the changing development agenda is the concept of working towards **carbon neutrality**. In masterplanning terms, this translates into:

- the need to deliver more sustainable homes, both in terms of their construction and operation, but also in terms of shaping the places where people live to ensure the highest levels of resource and energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions on a site-wide basis;
- assessing those parts of the government's Code for Sustainable Homes⁴ which relate to broader locational sustainability (surface water run-off, ecology, health and wellbeing and waste).

Further work will focus on the incorporation of technological innovations into the strategic planning of the development. This is unlikely to result in fundamental changes to the structure of the concept plan but is more likely to be incorporated into the design of individual development blocks and buildings, setting minimum standards for energy and water efficiency, exploring options for dealing with waste and use of materials, and securing high sustainability standards on a site-wide basis⁵.

¹ Barker, Kate (December 2006) Barker Review of Land Use Planning - Final Report, HM Treasury.

² Stern, Nicholas (January 2007) The Economics of Climate Change - The Stern Review, Cambridge University Press.

³ DCLG (December 2006) Building a Greener Future: Towards Zero Carbon Development – Consultation Paper.

Exploration of the different ways in which such detailed measures can contribute to the delivery of a carbon neutral development will be set out in subsequent Working Papers.

iii. Progression of RSS14

Proposed Changes to RSS14 were issued in December 2006. One of the key recommendations is that the housing requirement for the region should be increased by an additional 30,000 dwellings. Peterborough, as one of the key centres in the region, is tasked with allocating land for an additional 3,800 of these dwellings.

The RSS is clear that these figures should be seen as a minimum rather than a maximum target (a "floor" rather than a "ceiling"), and suggests that the RSS undergoes an early review to plan for growth after 2021. Based on current housing figures provided by the City Council, land for approximately 7,000 dwellings needs to be allocated in Peterborough by 2021. These two policy recommendations endorse our approach, which is to plan positively for sustainable long term growth in the district rather than being constrained by stringent limits on housing numbers or by plan periods too short to allow for the lead in times necessary to deliver new communities.

The proposals for the Southern Expansion Land have always been predicated on the basis that this is an excellent strategic location for growth (see Working Paper 2). Thus, although the increase in housing land necessary to fulfil the requirements of the RSS is helpful, the development concept remains based upon the need for development of sufficient scale to create a sustainable community which provides for its own day to day needs.

iv. Land within Huntingdonshire District

The original development concept for the Southern Expansion Land incorporated a significant area of land south of the A15 within Huntingdonshire District. However, in response to the original concept proposed in 2004, indications from Huntingdonshire District Council are that the Council does not support development of this scale in this location, either through its emerging LDF or as part of a strategic cross-border growth opportunity linked to Peterborough's position as a key location for development in the region.

Thus, the concept plan has been updated to exclude land south of the A15 for development. This does not mean that this area is not considered suitable for development in the long term, but is in recognition of Huntingdonshire District Council's reluctance to consider favourably any proposals which promote strategic development in this location at this time.

v. Changes in Land Ownership and Surrounding Development

Since the 2004 papers were published, O&H has acquired 174 ha of land from Hanson plc. These areas of land – both of which have extant consent for mineral working – are now included within the development area and are not intended to be worked.

The land owned by the Spendelow family is now under option from **Marlborough Developments Ltd**, and the land owned by the Martin family is under option by **David Wilson Homes**. Both are now actively being promoted for development in tandem with O&H, and partnership working is in place to deliver the overarching vision for development.

Land at Alwalton Hill (owned by Milton (Peterborough) Estates Company) now has planning consent for strategic employment development. Although the implementation of this consent is likely to take place in advance of the Southern Expansion Land proposals, the employment opportunities created at Alwalton Hill contribute to the wider objective of securing a balance of houses and jobs in this location.

Details of the land ownership changes are provided in **Working Paper 9**.

⁴ DCLG (December 2006) Code for Sustainable Homes - a step change in sustainable home building practice.

⁵ As part of the commitment to delivering site wide sustainability we are advocating that a minimum Sustainability Code Level of 3 is achieved for residential development.

Development Concept Update

The development principles underpinning the Southern Expansion Land remain as per the original concept set out in Working Paper 4, and encompass the following overarching themes:

- delivering development of an **appropriate scale to secure self-sufficiency** for day to day needs;
- fostering **inter-relationships** between the Southern Expansion Land and other settlements in the vicinity (Hampton, Yaxley) and the city centre, as part of the effective functioning of the district as a whole (see *Walkable Neighbourhoods and Functional Interconnectivity* diagram);
- respecting and enhancing the **environmental setting for development**, building on Peterborough's Environment City status with strategic green infrastructure, such as the City Forest.
- ensuring **multi-level sustainability** by making the best use of existing and planned investment in strategic infrastructure; ensuring an appropriate balance of jobs and homes; providing a mixed use core at the centre of the development to ensure provision of day to day services; and seeking to integrate sustainable energy generation and conservation into new development from the outset (see *Multi-Level Sustainability* diagram).

However, the conclusions of the technical assessment work, coupled with some further thoughts on how to secure a sustainable transportation strategy for the site, have led to some structural changes in the proposed layout of development:

Change 1 – Removal of Development Land South of the A15

The original proposals in 2004 included land south of the A15 as part of the overall development, accommodating in the order of 1500 dwellings plus 20 hectares of employment land and mixed use development. The revised Concept Plan no longer includes any strategic development south of the A15, although the development concept for the Southern Expansion Land does not prejudice the long term development of this land as a later phase of development, should circumstances change in the future.

However, the revised proposals do include the provision of a strategic Park and Ride site on a small area of previously developed land south of the A15, capable of being implemented at an early stage of development in a location which ably serves the centre of the new development and provides direct access to London Road Primary Public Transport Corridor.

Development Concept Plan 2007



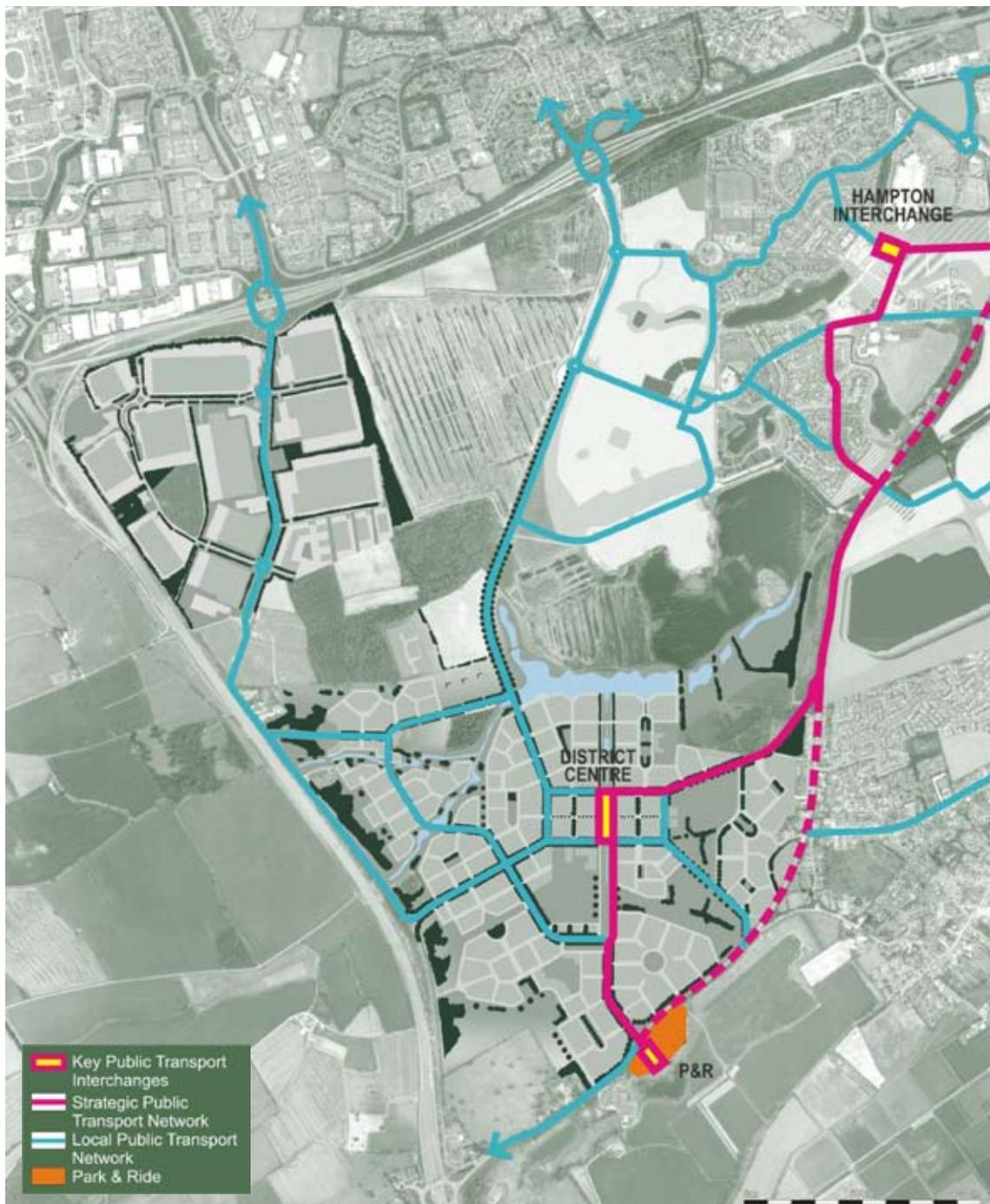
	Strategic Distribution Employment		Woodland		Site Boundary
	Residential		Landscape / Open Space		
	District / Neighbourhood Centre (Including employment)		Lakes / Water bodies		
	Schools		Park & Ride Facility		

Change 2 – Enhancing Sustainable Patterns of Movement

The original concept envisaged a realigned Western Peripheral Route running through the centre of the development, providing a single strategic connection between the Parkway and the A15 for all traffic, but adopting the character of a boulevard through the central area. Although this was an effective structuring element for the development, it did not provide a choice of routes for strategic movements, and did not maximise opportunities for public transport priority.

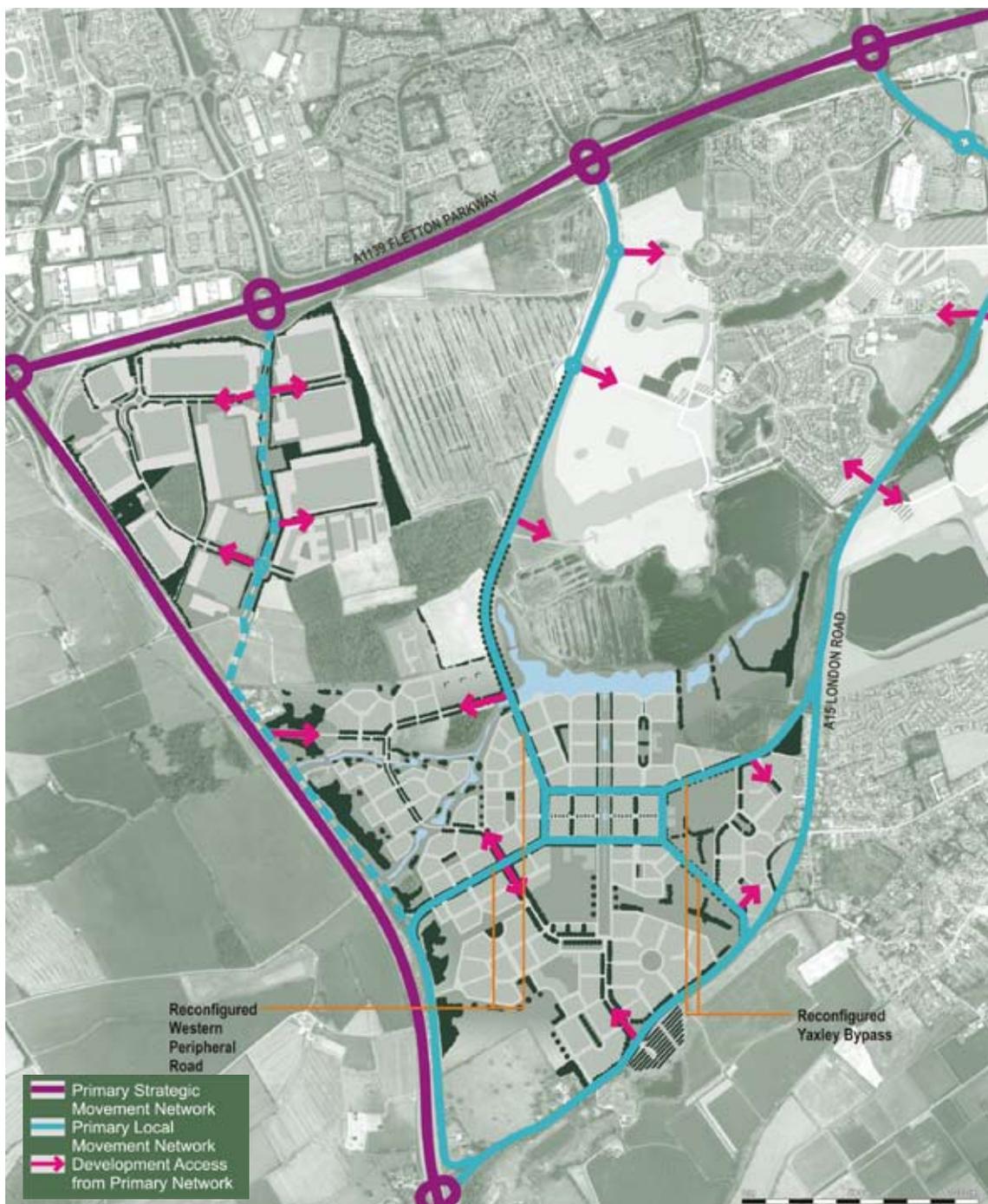
The concept plan has been revised to allow a greater choice of routes through the site for different modes, with greater priority being placed on strategic public transport links. Key features include:

- A new **Park & Ride facility (P&R)** on previously developed land in O&H ownership south of the A15 (the only development proposed south of the A15);



Integrating Public Transport

- A **strategic public transport link** from the P&R site to an interchange at the district centre, connecting back to London Road to provide a fast link to Hampton and the city centre;
- Reconfiguration of the **Western Peripheral Route/Yaxley Bypass arrangement** (which channelled strategic movements through the centre of the site) with a choice of two separate routes, spreading movements across the site to achieve a choice of routes between the A15 and the Parkway. The convergence of these two routes fixes the location of the public transport interchange and the district centre in the centre of the site;
- A re-focusing of the **district centre** to provide a core of mixed use higher density development on an east-west alignment, linking the two strategic routes with the public transport link to create a central hub of activity.



Primary Structuring Movement Network

Change 3 – Stanground Lode Corridor and Habitat Links

Ecological and landscape assessment work has examined in detail the characteristics of the landscape and habitats within and surrounding the site. A number of changes are proposed as a result of these findings:

- Replacement of the more formal landscape response previously proposed for the western section of the Stanground Lode corridor with a buffer zone either side of the watercourse with naturalistic grassy fringes and woodland vegetation along its entire length;
- Retention of a number of additional hedgerows in the east of the site for their habitat value;
- Creation of an additional habitat link from the northern part of the core development area to Jones' Covert and adjacent woodland.

Change 4 - Boundary of SSSI/SAC

Now that the western boundary of the Orton Pit SSSI/Special Area for Conservation is more clearly defined, an opportunity exists to define the boundary treatment through the Southern Expansion Land proposals. The concept plan proposes employment rather than housing is developed adjacent to the western boundary of the SSSI/SAC land, which will help limit intrusion into the sensitive habitat and will also create a robust landscaped boundary to the SSSI/SAC itself. The advice of Natural England will be sought on how this can be achieved most effectively.

Change 5 - Setting of the Scheduled Ancient Monument

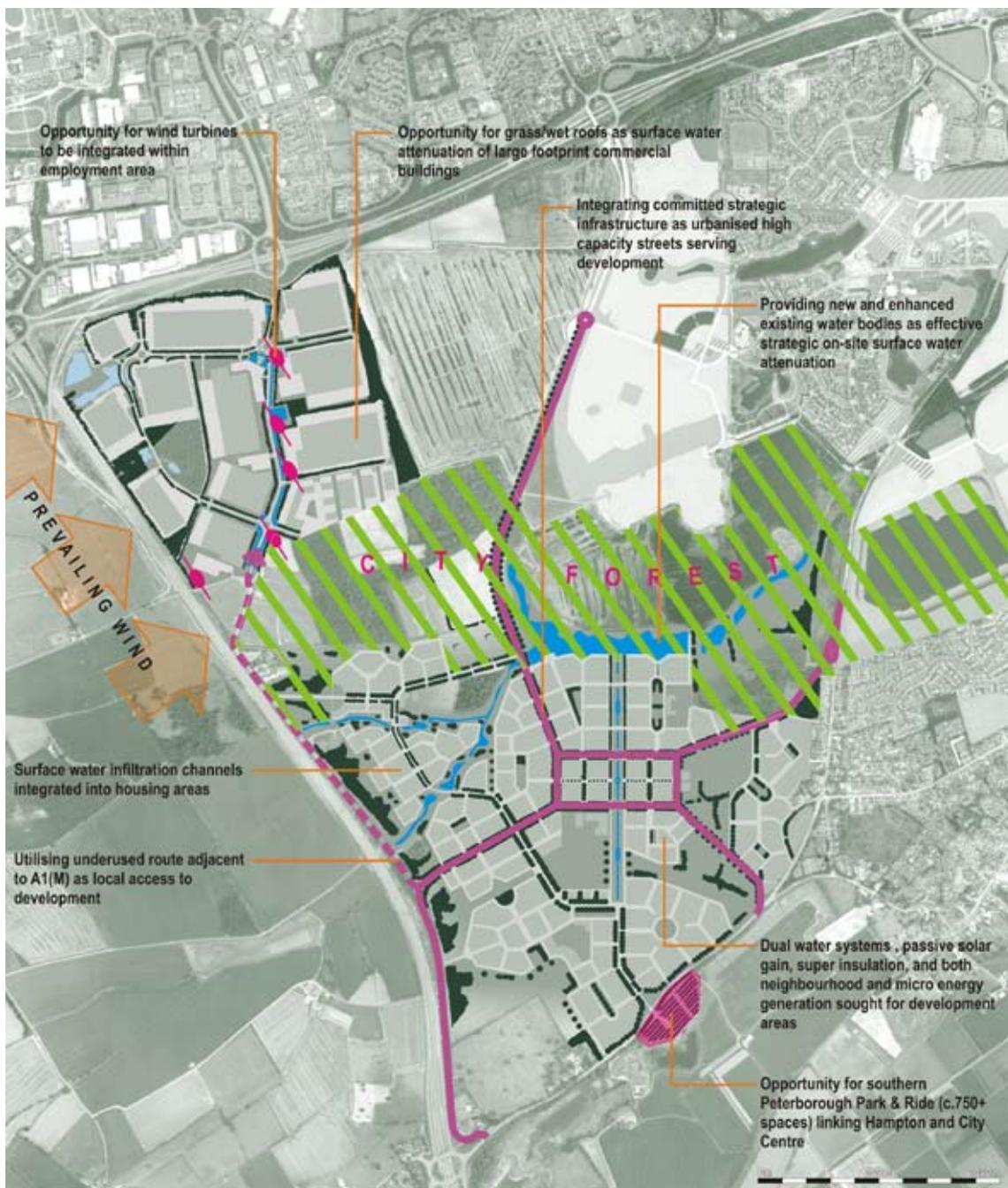
As part of the technical assessment work, discussions with the local authority have taken place on the most appropriate way in which to address the interface between the Norman Cross Prisoner of War Camp SAM and the surrounding land. Rather than introducing heavy planting around the northern and eastern boundary of the SAM as proposed in the original development concept, initial advice from the city archaeologist is that the openness of the site should be preserved, with an appropriate buffer to preserve the site's context and to ensure that the massing of new buildings does not dwarf the monument. This advice has been incorporated into the design response for this part of the site.



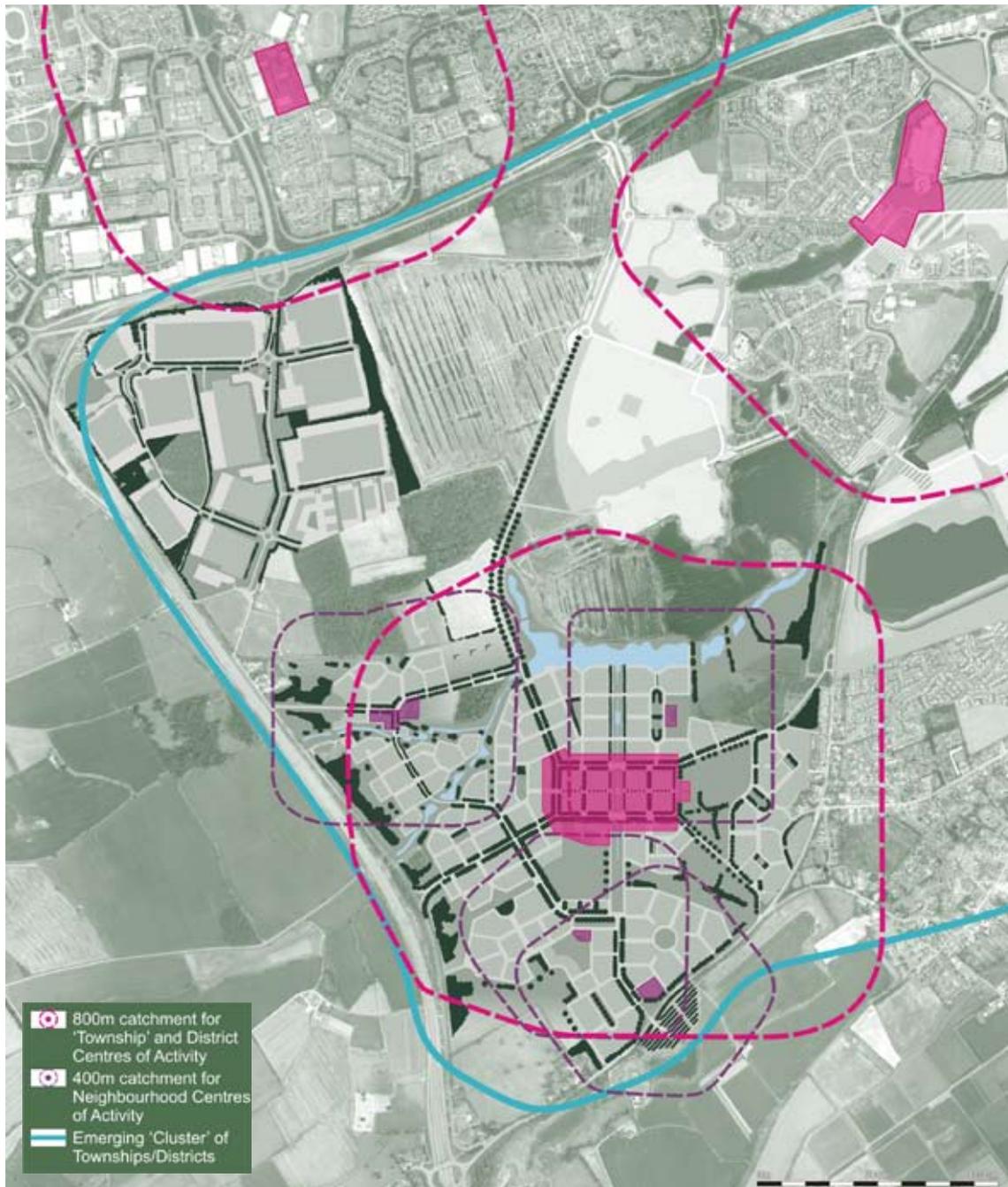
Respecting and Enhancing the Environmental Setting

Notwithstanding the changes proposed, the revised Development Concept retains the following principles, the details of which are set out in **Working Paper 4**:

- Basing the internal development form on the principle of 'walkable neighbourhoods';
- Creating a new 'district' with its own centrally-located centre of activity which serves its own population and yet is also capable of operating co-operatively (rather than competitively) with surrounding centres;
- Delivering physical and functional integration (a) within the new district itself, (b) between the new development and its surroundings, and (c) between the new development and the city centre.
- Incorporating sustainability benefits from the outset which are explicit, deliverable, quantifiable and effective.



Multi Level Sustainability



Walkable Neighbourhoods and Functional Interconnectivity

Working Paper 9 in this series provides details of the development capacity, revised in line with the changes to the concept plan outlined above. Although this will continue to be refined over time, it provides a useful indication of the quantum of development which could be delivered on the Southern Expansion Land.