

East of Luton, North Hertfordshire

Statement of Community Engagement



31 October 2024

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1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The land east of Luton has been allocated in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan for a residential-led development.
- 1.2. Bloor Homes and The Crown Estate and the Oliver Family, which control the East of Luton site, have entered into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with North Herts Council (NHDC) and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in relation to the preparation of a Strategic Masterplan for the allocated site.
- 1.3. The PPA includes a commitment to (para. 4.2) "... prepare an Engagement Strategy to guide engagement, including with NHDC Members and the public, during the preparation of the Strategic Masterplan." In line with this, the project team developed and agreed an Engagement Strategy, and carried out a compliant consultation on the basis of this strategy.
- 1.4. Public consultation and community engagement is reflected in policy that recognises the valuable contribution local people and other interested parties can make in helping to plan integrated and sustainable communities.
- 1.5. A comprehensive public consultation was held in early 2024 to inform the drafting of the Strategic Masterplan. This included a dedicated consultation website (www.eastofluton.co.uk), online engagement tool, and three in-person public events, as well as engagement and meetings with key stakeholders such as representatives from North Herts District Council, Luton Borough Council, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, and Offley Parish Council.
- 1.6. The in-person events were held in accessible locations close to the site. Two events took place at Cockernhoe Memorial Hall and the third at Hilton Garden Inn Luton North. The events were attended by 482 people across the three days, including members of the local community, ward councillors, parish councillors, and representatives from local organisations. During the consultation period there were also approximately 2,800 individual visitors to the website.
- 1.7. Overall, 218 separate individuals provided written or telephone feedback as part of the public consultation.
- 1.8. Further engagement was held with key stakeholders following the main consultation period, including:
 - Meetings with key stakeholders such as Sport England and National Highways
 - A series of meetings and workshops with Offley Parish Council, focused on discussing the best way to deliver a corridor of green space between new and existing development
 - An in-person drop-in event held on 11 July at Cockernhoe Memorial Hall to update stakeholders on the changes made to the Strategic Masterplan following consultation. 130 people attended the event.
 - Meetings with the head and governors of Cockernhoe Endowed Church of England Primary School and other parties on 22 and 23 July to discuss education provision in the area in detail and how best to bring forward the schools on the site.
- 1.9. Project communications such as the website, contact email address and phonenumber, were maintained throughout the consultation and afterwards, up to and including the time of writing. The project team is committed to maintaining ongoing engagement with stakeholders.

1.10. There was a wide range of feedback provided, and all the comments were recorded and considered by the team. In some instances, comments received did not relate to the content of the draft Strategic Masterplan, for example some feedback gave statements of general opposition to the development, and some raised points on elements that will be determined at future, more detailed stages of development. These comments were still recorded so they can help to inform later states of the application process.

1.11. The most frequent responses received as part of the consultation include:

- A strong preference for the provision of new GP services at the site
- The preference from residents of the local villages for 'green corridors' of green space to be built into the plans
- The importance of ensuring connectivity through the site and to wider existing networks into Luton and the countryside
- The need to manage demand and traffic on the local road network
- The desire for any new development to enhance biodiversity on site including protecting existing green spaces and developing new ones
- The need to carefully manage drainage and flooding risks

A summary of feedback is included in section five, and a more detailed record and analysis of feedback is included in section six.

1.12. The promoters have considered all feedback raised as part of finalising the Strategic Masterplan for the site known as 'East of Luton' and, where possible and appropriate, have made changes to the scheme to respond to that feedback.

1.13. A number of design changes were made following the consultation and in response to feedback:

- The introduction of a new multifunctional green corridor between the new development and the existing edges of Cockernhoe and Mangrove Green.
- The need to accommodate this new corridor required revisiting the location of the new primary school and of the new village green, which is now proposed to be adjacent to existing woodland at Slipe Spring.
- The proposed primary street on The Crown Estate land has been moved and now runs between the two existing woodland areas at Slipe Spring.
- The outdoor areas of the primary school on The Crown Estate's land will now form part of the green corridor and create additional green space in the form of playing fields and further landscape.
- On the section of the site owned by Bloor Homes, changes have been made to the green spaces to improve and expand the facilities available, and Bloor Homes has agreed arrangements with individual households.
- The layout of the new playing fields on land controlled by Bloor Homes has been revised based on consultation with Sport England.

1.14. The consultation feedback has also had influence on the development in other ways beyond the design of the Strategic Masterplan. For example, in response to the clear preference for new GP services, Bloor Homes and The Crown Estate co-signed a letter with the local MP at the time, Bim Afolami, to the local Integrated Care Board about providing GP services at the site.

1.15. We have had regard to the PPA, NHDC's Statement of Community Involvement and Luton Borough Council's Statement of Community Involvement, as well as relevant national policy and guidance to bring forward a compliant and effective consultation.

- 1.16. We are grateful for the contributions made to the consultation, which have helped us finalise the Strategic Masterplan.
- 1.17. The promoters intend to keep local residents, businesses and elected representatives updated during the next stages of development.
- 1.18. We consider that our consultation has been engaging, meaningful and effective.

2. Introduction

- 2.1. The Crown Estate and Bloor Homes submitted applications for Outline Planning Permission for their respective parts of the site in 2016 and 2017, following a period of pre-application consultation. These applications were intended to support the emerging allocation, and have not been determined by North Herts District Council (NHDC), with the Local Plan examination taking place between 2017 and 2022.
- 2.2. The Local Plan allocating the site was adopted in 2022, and the parties have subsequently worked with NHDC to progress a Strategic Masterplan. It is expected that revisions to the planning applications for their respective parts of the site will be made following the approval of the Strategic Masterplan.
- 2.3. Applications for full planning permission were also submitted by The Crown Estate and Bloor Homes in late 2022 for a proposed joint access on Luton Road and Darley Road. These applications remain undetermined and will be the subject of revision in due course.
- 2.4. This Statement of Community Engagement (SCE) supports the emerging Strategic Masterplan which covers the entire site allocation.
- 2.5. The SCE sets out the approach to, and outcomes of, the promoters' pre-application consultation and engagement with the local community on its plans.
- 2.6. This activity was separate from, and in addition to, the dialogue and workshops entered into by the applicants with NHDC, its planning consultants Hyas, and Luton Borough Council, among others.

The allocation

- 2.7. The site is located to the east of Luton. It lies entirely within North Hertfordshire, adjacent to the eastern border of Luton, near the villages of Cockernhoe, Mangrove Green and Tea Green.
- 2.8. The site is allocated for **2,100 homes** in the approved NHDC Local Plan (see Policy SP19). The policy specifies that the site should also include:
 - The preparation and agreement of a **comprehensive and deliverable Strategic Masterplan for the entire allocation**
 - **A new mixed-use local centre** to provide for a range of day-to-day local needs including additional neighbourhood-level provision of around 250m² (net) convenience retail provision and 850 m² of comparison retail and food and beverage floorspace and other necessary social infrastructure
 - **New connections:**
 - Principal access to be taken from Luton Road and integrated into Luton's existing highway network via Crawley Green Road
 - Provision for sustainable modes of transport
 - Comprehensive integration into the existing pedestrian and cycle, public transport and road networks
 - Appropriate transport mitigation measures secured to address impacts on Luton
 - Integration of existing public rights of way

- **Green infrastructure** – structural planting to create a sense of place, integration into the surrounding landscape and to reinforce the Green Belt boundary to the east and mitigate landscape impacts. To also include appropriate mitigation, compensation and / or enhancement of key features of biodiversity.
- **Blue infrastructure** – a detailed drainage strategy and plans to address existing any surface water flood risk issues, particularly along the south-western perimeter of the site, through SUDs or other appropriate solutions
- **Education facilities** – four forms of primary-age entry and four forms of secondary-age entry with associated infrastructure and sports facilities
- **New sports pitches** to the north-west of the site outside the ‘red line’ of the scheme
- **Appropriate noise mitigation measures**, to potentially include insulation and appropriate orientation of living spaces
- **Sensitive integration of existing settlements** and heritage assets

Further detail is available in the adopted Local Plan.

3. Methodology and approach

- 3.1. The promoters recognise the importance and value of involving local communities in the planning and development process and are committed to consulting communities in a way that is relevant to the location, nature and scale of their proposals.
- 3.2. Their approach to pre-application consultation and community engagement for East of Luton was informed by guidance at both a national and local level. This guidance encourages proactive communication between applicants, local planning authorities and local communities to help facilitate better planning decisions and outcomes.

Paragraph 39: *“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.”*

Paragraph 40: *“Local planning authorities should...encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law, to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.”*

Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2023

Paragraph 5.4 (with regards to masterplans): *“We strongly encourage landowners / developers to produce and agree masterplans before they apply for planning permission. Where this is the case, good quality public consultation will be a critical element of the project.”*

Paragraph 5.6: *“The Council anticipates that key stakeholders will normally be engaged through at least one focused workshop event (or equivalent) as proposals are developed. The nature and timing of that engagement will be agreed on a project by-project basis to respond to the individual project needs. The Council will assist landowners to undertake a stakeholder mapping exercise to ensure that all relevant groups are consulted... which might include:*

- *District Councillors*
- *Hertfordshire County Councillors*
- *Adjoining local authorities (where appropriate)*
- *Local and adjoining Parish Councils*
- *Neighbourhood planning groups (where appropriate)*
- *Natural England*
- *Environment Agency*
- *Historic England*
- *Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust*
- *Local residents and community groups”*

Paragraph 5.7: *“At draft masterplan stage, a wider public consultation event should take place. This will normally be arranged and run by the landowner / developer and supported by the Council.”*

Paragraph 5.8: *“The public engagement event could take the form of an exhibition or drop-in or workshops supported by a dedicated website...The landowner will be responsible for the production of materials, staffing costs and venue hire.”*

Paragraph 5.10: *“A feedback report from the consultation will be required to feed into the final Strategic Masterplan. This will clearly set out how consultation helped to positively shape and influence the proposals.”*

North Herts Council Statement of Community Involvement – September 2023

Paragraph 68: *“Luton Borough Council will encourage all applicants, whether for large developments or small developments, to inform neighbours and all affected parties of their proposed development (including householder applicants). Early public consultation on proposals is beneficial to both the public and the developer.”*

**Luton Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement –
June 2012**

Approach

- 3.3. We have had regard to this guidance and advice when formulating an appropriate strategy for pre-application consultation and engagement on its draft Strategic Masterplan for East of Luton.
- 3.4. The Engagement Strategy and list of political and community stakeholders to be contacted directly during the consultation were prepared in advance of the consultation period. Both of these documents were shared in draft form for input and review by officers at NHDC and Luton Borough Council. They fed back on the plans and suggested we add some additional community stakeholders. The Strategy and the list were then agreed and finalised.
- 3.5. The Engagement Strategy was designed to:
- **Raise awareness of the draft proposals** and give the local community, local authorities, and other stakeholders opportunities to comment on the draft site-wide Strategic Masterplan, based on consultation **information that is clear, accessible and appropriately detailed.**
 - Provide stakeholders with an **opportunity to influence aspects of the proposals** that are under development and to **understand which elements of the proposals are fixed**, and the reasons why.
 - Provide **a range of different opportunities for people to engage with the project and comment on proposals.** This included online methods (website and interactive consultation map), in-person events and briefings, and written forms (feedback form, letters).
 - Clearly **signpost the different ways in which consultees can comment** on the proposals.
 - **Show how the promoters have taken account of consultation and feedback in finalising the draft Strategic Masterplan.** The final agreed Strategic Masterplan will inform future planning applications.
- 3.6. To achieve these objectives, the promoters were committed to maximising awareness by publicising the consultation through a range of channels and encouraging participation by making it accessible on a range of platforms.
- 3.7. **The formal consultation period was held between 30 January and 29 February 2024.**
- 3.8. After the consultation closed, the online feedback function was switched off, but all other aspects of the website remained live, with the consultation telephone line, email address and

postal address all open for the public to contact the project team. Feedback received during March was still considered.

4. How we consulted

- 4.1. In advance of and during the consultation period, the promoters sought to build awareness of the proposals for the draft Strategic Masterplan and opportunities to provide feedback as part of the consultation.
- 4.2. The promoters used a mix of engagement methods to ensure that a genuinely meaningful engagement programme is undertaken and that the opportunities for people to access information about the project and share their views are maximised.
- 4.3. The draft plans and public consultation were publicised through:
 - A dedicated **project website** (<https://www.eastofluton.co.uk/>) – hosting information and documents about the proposals together with a feedback form and an interactive feedback map function.
 - **Direct mailing** via Royal Mail of an introduction to the proposals **leaflet** to neighbouring addresses in a defined consultation zone including **11,662 addresses**.
 - Written communications to **political stakeholders and elected representatives** including:
 - NHDC and Luton Borough councillors and officers
 - District councillors from Hertfordshire County Council
 - Site MP Bim Afolami and neighbouring MP Rachel Hopkins
 - Offley Parish Council
 - Other neighbouring parish councils including Lilley, Kings Walden, Hexton, Shillington, and Preston.
 - Written communications to **local community groups, educational bodies, sports groups and charities**.
 - Written communications to **other consultees** including North Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, National Highways, Historic England, Sport England, and the NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board.
 - Issuing a **press release** to local media outlets – notifying local media and providing information so as to support editorial coverage of the proposals and pre-application consultation.
 - **Advertising the consultation** via an advert in local press titles *The Comet* and *Luton News*.
 - **Digital content** shared with NHDC, Luton Borough Council and Offley Parish Council for use on their channels including their websites and social media.
 - **Telephone information line** – for enquiries and access to the consultation team (staffed Monday-Friday, 9am-5:30pm).
 - Project **email address** – for providing feedback as well as asking any questions or contacting the consultation team for other business.
 - **Freepost postal address** (c/o Camargue) – for anyone wanting to write and not wishing to use email or the website in order to provide their comments/ feedback.
 - **A poster** advertising details of the consultation, shared with local Parish Councils to put up on noticeboards and available on request to other stakeholders. Offley, Lilley, Shillington, Kings Walden, Hexton and Preston Parish Councils were all sent the poster, as well as Hitchin Swimming Centre and Cockernhoe Primary School.

Targeting hard to reach groups

- 4.4. The promoters have tried to ensure anyone with an interest in the project has had the opportunity to take part in the consultation.
- 4.5. To help ensure a broad demographic were able to participate in our consultation, our programme included both in-person and digital elements, and the promoters reached out to youth organisations and educational institutions.
- 4.6. The project team shared with NHDC officers the list of stakeholders we planned to contact to gain their input and local insight to ensure as many relevant groups and individuals as possible were covered.
- 4.7. For those without access to or unable to use the internet, or those who could not attend an event, printed materials of the consultation materials were made available on request – and during the consultation the team posted out printed materials to several people.
- 4.8. The consultation materials were designed to meet accessibility requirements, and the promoters offered material on request to be provided in accessible formats such as large copy print, Braille, audio format or alternative languages.
- 4.9. The consultation events were held at venues with disabled access arrangements.

Identification of the consultation zone

- 4.10. For any development proposal, a critical audience is the immediate site neighbours. Given the scale and significance of the site, the promoters established two consultation zones.
- 4.11. **Zone A** was the immediate consultation zone consisting of the local community around the site and included 11,662 addresses (available in **Appendix 1**). Addresses within this zone received notification of the public consultation via direct leafleting and posters as well as through media and digital advertising.
- 4.12. **Zone B (Appendix 2)** spanned Luton and North Hertfordshire across which the public consultation was promoted via local media and digital advertising, as well as consultation invitations sent to the stakeholders detailed in point 4.3.
- 4.13. Consultation activity was structured to engage with people across these areas to raise awareness and stimulate dialogue through the communications channels outlined above.

Contact with political and key stakeholders

- 4.14. A range of channels were used to raise awareness of the consultation and invite key political and local stakeholders to participate.
- 4.15. Initial engagement took place with NHDC, Luton Borough Council and Offley Parish Council ahead of presenting our proposals for the draft Strategic Masterplan to the public.
- 4.16. Following our presentation to the North Hertfordshire Project Board on 22 January 2024, emails were sent to key political and local stakeholders on 24 January 2024. This introduced our proposals, shared information about our public consultation and offered the opportunity to meet to discuss our draft Strategic Masterplan. An example of this contact is in **Appendix 3**.

4.17. The political stakeholders contacted included:

- Bim Afolami, site MP for Hitchin and Harpenden
- Rachel Hopkins, MP for Luton South, the constituency neighbouring the site
- North Herts Council
 - Cllr Elizabeth Dennis, leader
 - Cllr Sean Prendergast, Executive Member for Housing & Environmental Health
 - Cllr Dave Winstanley, Deputy Executive Member for Housing & Environmental Health
 - Cllr Val Bryant, Chair of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Tom Tyson, Vice-Chair of the planning control committee
 - Cllr David Levett, Member of the planning control committee, Leader of the Conservative Group
 - Cllr Ian Moody, Member of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Daniel Allen, Member of the planning control committee, Chair of the council
 - Cllr Simon Bloxham, Member of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Mick Debenham, Member of the planning control committee, Deputy Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Green Spaces
 - Cllr Sean Nolan, Member of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Terry Tyler, Member of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Phil Weeder, Member of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Nigel Mason, Member of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Louise Peace, Member of the planning control committee
 - Cllr Ian Mantle, Deputy Executive Member for Planning & Transport
 - Cllr Ruth Brown, Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Planning & Transport
 - Cllr Steve Jarvis, Executive Member for Environment, Leisure and Green Spaces
 - Cllr David Barnard, District Councillor for Hitchwood, Offa & Hoo ward
 - Cllr Faye Frost, District Councillor for Hitchwood, Offa & Hoo ward
 - Cllr Claire Strong, District Councillor for Hitchwood, Offa & Hoo ward
 - Anthony Roche, Managing Director
 - Ian Fullstone, Service Director - Regulatory
- Luton Borough Council
 - Cllr Hazel Simmons, Leader of the council
 - Cllr Nigel John Marshall, Stopsley Ward Member
 - Cllr Richard Underwood, Stopsley Ward Member
 - Cllr David Wynn, Stopsley Ward Member
 - Cllr Claire Gallagher, Wigmore Ward Member
 - Cllr Alan Skepelhorn, Wigmore Ward Member
 - Cllr Zanib Raja, Deputy Mayor
 - Cllr Mohammed Yaqub Hanif, Mayor
 - Robin Porter, CEO
 - Colin Moone, Housing Director
 - Roger Kirk, Infrastructure and Property Director
 - Vicky Hawkes, Neighbourhood Services Interim director
 - Sue Frost, Sustainable Development Director
- Hertfordshire County Council
 - Cllr Richard Roberts, Leader of the Council
 - Cllr Terry Douris, Chair
 - Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Portfolio holder: Environment
 - Cllr Phil Bibby, Portfolio holder: Highways and Transport

- Offley Parish Council
 - David Sample, clerk
 - Cllr Neil Jay, chair
 - Cllr Caroline Gallagher, ward member for Cockernhoe
 - Cllr Steve Patmore, ward member for Cockernhoe
 - Cllr Jennifer Willis, ward member for Cockernhoe
- Lilley Parish Council clerk
- Kings Walden Parish Council clerk
- Preston Parish Council clerk
- Hexton Parish Council clerk
- Shillington Parish Council clerk

4.18. At the start of the formal consultation period, the promoters and members of the project team attended a public meeting of Offley Parish Council on 30 January 2024. This meeting was used to present on the proposals and answer questions from the council and members of the public.

4.19. A meeting (over Teams) was held with MP at the time Bim Afolami's special adviser Matthew Cowley on 1 February 2024. The promoters provided an overview of the draft Strategic Masterplan and answered any questions. The team also engaged further with the MP following the consultation and detail on this is included in section 4.49.

4.20. During the consultation, on 14 February 2024, MP for Luton South Rachel Hopkins emailed the promoters (see **Appendix 4**) to express the views of a constituent relating to healthcare provision and connectivity in the Strategic Masterplan. This feedback was considered, and a reply was issued on 15 February (**Appendix 5**).

4.21. The promoters offered a private stakeholder session for councillors and officers immediately ahead of the main public events – but officers did not deem this necessary or appropriate, so one was not held.

4.22. Relevant local groups and consultees were also notified of the consultation via email and/or phone between 24 and 26 January 2024, and were offered briefings. These stakeholders included:

- Statutory consultees:
 - Natural England
 - The Environment Agency
 - National Highways
 - Historic England
 - Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Local schools and educational authorities:
 - Offley Endowed Primary School and Nursery
 - Breachwood Green Junior Mixed and Infant School
 - Cockernhoe Endowed Church of England Primary School
 - The Priory School
 - u3a Luton
 - Little Buttons Day Nursery
 - Putteridge High School
- Local organisations and other stakeholder groups:
 - Luton Airport
 - Sport England
 - King William IV Inn

- The Barn, Tea Green
- Arriva – which runs the local bus network
- Putteridge Bury conference centre
- Larkside NHS practice
- Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce
- Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce
- SEMLEP
- Cockernhoe Village News
- The Co-op Club
- Luton Ramblers
- Centre for Youth and Community Development
- Luton Scouts
- Girl Guiding Luton
- Bedfordshire African Community Centre
- Wigmore Valley Park Community Centre & Pavilion
- North Hertfordshire Ramblers
- Cockernhoe (St Hugh) Church
- Wigmore Church
- NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Herts and Middlesex Badger Group
- Herts and Middlesex Bat Group
- Chilterns Conservation Board
- Breachwood Green Society
- CPRE Hertfordshire
- Hertfordshire Community Foundation
- Hertfordshire Local Nature Partnership
- Community Voluntary Service Bedfordshire
- Keech Hospice
- Luton Foodbank
- Love Luton
- Luton FC
- Inspire: Luton Sports Village
- Hightown Community Sports & Arts Centre
- Lewsey Sports Park
- Hitchin Swimming Centre

4.23. The promoters arranged a virtual meeting with representatives from Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) on 28 February 2024. At the meeting, the promoters provided an overview of the proposals and the opportunity for questions around biodiversity net gain and stewardship.

Dedicated consultation contact details

4.24. A project telephone phoneline (0800 9152 494), email address (eastofluton@camargue.uk) and freepost address (Freepost RTBU-HAYY-LCUX 7 Bayley Street, London WC1B 3HB) were put in place from the outset of consultation. Details of these contact methods were included on all materials and project correspondence, so individuals and organisations could contact the team directly with any requests for information or questions relating to the proposals or the consultation.

- 4.25. The project phonenumber, email and postal address have remained in place between the consultation and Project Board to enable local residents to contact the consultation team. The project inbox and phonenumber have been staffed 9am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday.

Consultation leaflet

- 4.26. A consultation leaflet, in the form of an **A4 2-sided colour leaflet**, was issued to the local community. The leaflet included an overview of the proposals, a high-level map of the site location, details on how people could find out more (i.e. the project website), contact details for the team and how people could take part and submit feedback. A copy of the consultation leaflet can be found in **Appendix 6**.
- 4.27. Consultation leaflets were sent to 11,662 addresses within the identified Zone A consultation area (see **Appendix 1**), having been dispatched via Royal Mail on 19 January 2024 to provide adequate advance notification of the consultation before it started on 30 January.
- 4.28. It was evident from telephone calls and emails received in late January that the leaflets had arrived with local residents as planned.

Media and social media advertising

- 4.29. A press advert was placed in local media titles *The Comet* and *Luton News/Luton Today* to raise awareness of the consultation beyond the local area and to the wider Luton and North Hertfordshire populations. A copy of the press adverts can be found in **Appendix 7**.
- 4.30. The advert appeared in print in *The Comet* on 25 January, alongside an event listing on its website, and a series of adverts ran on the website and through *The Comet's* Facebook advertising presence from 26 January, targeting those within 15km of Cockernhoe.
- 4.31. The advert in *Luton News* appeared in print on 24 January.

Other media and social media promotion

- 4.32. A press release announcing the launch of the public consultation on the draft Strategic Masterplan was issued to local media titles, including *Luton Today*, *Hitchin Nub News*, *BBC News* and *The Comet*, on 29 January under embargo until 30 January 2024. A copy of the press release can be found in **Appendix 8**.
- 4.33. Five separate articles of the story and coverage of the proposals were published in *Luton Today*, *Hitchin Nub News*, *BBC News* and *The Comet* between 30 January and 13 February 2024 (see **Appendix 9**).
- 4.34. The consultation was also publicised on the websites of Bim Afolami MP and Offley Parish Council, as well as across local social media groups including the *Cockernhoe Village News* Facebook page.

Consultation website

- 4.35. The consultation included a dedicated project website – www.eastofluton.co.uk/ – which was launched on 29 January and invited feedback between Tuesday 30 January and Thursday 29 February. The website presented key information about the emerging proposals and provided

multiple ways to give feedback. It was updated through the consultation in line with the hosting of the public events.

- 4.36. People could provide feedback using an online feedback form function, with eight questions across five separate themes (homes; the community i.e. facilities, amenities and education provision; connectivity; landscaping and biodiversity; engagement).
- 4.37. The second option for providing online feedback was to pin comments onto an online interactive consultation map, which showed the site in the context of its surroundings and showed the components of the Strategic Masterplan.
- 4.38. The website also provided details of all the different methods people could use to contact the project team – including the project email, telephone and postal address – with any requests for information or questions they might have relating to the proposals.
- 4.39. Across the 32 days from the launch of the website (29 January) until the closing of the consultation (29 February), the website was accessed by over 2,600 unique visitors which demonstrates that our methods to raise awareness of the consultation and project website were successful. Website analytics are available in **Appendix 10**.

Public consultation events

- 4.40. The consultation involved three in-person drop-in events – giving the local community the opportunity to meet the promoters and their consultant team including the planners and communications team.
- 4.41. The information presented at the events included display panels with details on the draft Strategic Masterplan, proposed maps and plans, and illustrative drawings. These panels were also available to view digitally and download on the project website. A copy of the display panels presented at the events can be found at **Appendix 11**.
- 4.42. During the consultation, members of the project team, including representatives from both Bloor Homes and The Crown Estate, and experts on the relevant specialist areas (eg. transport, planning, and sustainability) were on hand throughout to answer questions, provide further information and help facilitate the event.
- 4.43. A hard copy feedback form (replicating the online version) was made available to all attendees to provide written feedback. A copy of the feedback form can be found at **Appendix 12**.
- 4.44. The three events were held across two accessible locations close to the site. The 16 hours of events were scheduled for different times of the day across both a weekday and the weekend to accommodate a variety of work patterns and other commitments. This helped to enable a wide range of people to attend, as demonstrated by the turnout. The dates and locations of the events were:
- Friday 2nd February 2024: 1pm-7pm, Cockernhoe Memorial Hall, Mangrove Road, Cockernhoe LU2 8QD
 - Saturday 3rd February 2024: 11am-5pm, Cockernhoe Memorial Hall, Mangrove Road, Cockernhoe LU2 8QD
 - Sunday 4th February 2024: 11am-3pm, Hilton Garden Inn Luton North, Hitchin Road, LU2 8DL

- 4.45. The public events were very well attended, with a total of **approximately 482 people** across the three days.
- 4.46. A selection of photos from the consultation events are in **Appendix 13**.

Further engagement following the main consultation

- 4.47. Since the formal consultation period ended, the project team has continued to receive queries and feedback from the local community and stakeholders, which were responded to and considered as appropriate.
- 4.48. Representatives from Bloor Homes and The Crown Estate arranged separate in-person meetings with several local households following the public exhibitions. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the impact of the development on their respective properties in more detail. Agreements have been made with individual households to meet specific requests such as improving their access to their properties and infrastructure such as plumbing.
- 4.49. Further MP engagement took place following the consultation, including a site visit with Bim Afolami MP on Friday 15 March. The promoters and the MP at the time signed a joint letter to the NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) to initiate talks on including new GP services at the East of Luton scheme (**Appendix 14**). This news was also shared with local media through a jointly agreed press release (**Appendix 15**) and was included in Mr Afolami's local bulletin to his constituents (**Appendix 16**).
- 4.50. One of the most common themes of feedback from the consultation was a desire from the local villages to establish 'corridors' of green space between existing communities and the new development. This topic was raised in particular by Offley Parish Council on behalf of its local residents, and the council established a 'buffer sub-committee' to consider ways the Strategic Masterplan could be amended to include these green spaces. Based on these conversations, the promoters held a post-consultation workshop with the sub-committee on 19 March to discuss potential options and what would be preferable to the local community.
- 4.51. A meeting was also held with representatives from Sport England on 23 April. The promoters presented the plans and discussed potential impacts of the scheme on existing local sports facilities, the type of new facilities being proposed, and the layout of the proposed sports pitches.
- 4.52. Following email engagement during the consultation, a meeting was held on 3 May between Philip Porter at National Highways and the project's technical transport and planning teams to brief him on the draft Strategic Masterplan, to answer questions and receive feedback.
- 4.53. On 14 May, a further meeting was held with Offley Parish Council and members of its buffer sub-committee to discuss the draft changes made to the Strategic Masterplan in response to the workshop on 19 March, as well as updating the group on the analysis of feedback and comments from the February consultation. Further amends to the Strategic Masterplan were made on the basis of this meeting and additional points raised by the Parish Council.
- 4.54. A meeting was held with the head and governors of Cockernhoe Endowed Church of England Primary School on 22 July to follow up on conversations had during previous consultation. This was to discuss in greater detail the needs and preferences of the school, education provision in the local area, and how best to bring forward the new schools on the site in a way that will benefit existing local schools. A further meeting with school representatives joined by Offley Parish Council on 23 July also contributed to these discussions.

Reporting on the outcomes of the consultation

- 4.55. This document, to be read alongside the final Strategic Masterplan itself, is the main record of the changes made as a result of this consultation process. This SCE and the final Strategic Masterplan will be published on The Crown Estate's project website for East of Luton (<https://www.eastofluton.co.uk/>) following their consideration at NHDC's Strategic Planning Project Board. This means it will be accessible for members of the public to download, and printed copies will also be made available on request.
- 4.56. The project team arranged an opportunity to directly update stakeholders on the final Strategic Masterplan by holding a public drop-in event on 11 July from 3pm to 8pm at Cockernhoe Memorial Hall, attended by 130 people. The event was promoted by email invitation (**Appendix 17**) to consultees who shared their contact information, as well as all the key political and local stakeholders (as listed in 4.17 and 4.22). A poster with the details of the event (**Appendix 18**) was also provided to Offley Parish Council for publication in its newsletter, the *Village Voice*, on its social media channels, and on local news outlet *Cockernhoe Village News*.
- 4.57. The information and updated Strategic Masterplan were also presented to Offley Parish Council and members of its East of Luton sub-committee in a dedicated private meeting on 8 July at Cockernhoe Memorial Hall to give them additional time to scrutinise the information and ask questions to the project team.
- 4.58. The information boards shown at the event on 11 July (**Appendix 19**) were also published as a downloadable asset to the project website to maximise accessibility, and the content was used to update the website information itself.

5. Feedback overview

- 5.1. In total, **218 people provided feedback on the consultation**. The majority of feedback was provided using either the online interactive consultation map or feedback form. Responses were also received via Freepost, submissions to the project email and by phone.
- 5.2. In total, **71 feedback forms** were received in hard copy or in digital format, as well as **59 sets of feedback via email**, and **4 by phone**. **84 people** left comments on the **interactive consultation map** on the website.
- 5.3. All feedback provided has been reviewed and considered as part of the consultation. Responses to the most common themes and sub-themes that arose from feedback and engagement with stakeholders and the public can be found in section six.
- 5.4. **Over 250 points** came out of the more than 900 individual feedback comments. The three most common responses were a preference for a new GP surgery in the development, scepticism that the promised Biodiversity Net Gain will be delivered, and a concern that the existing road network could struggle to manage with increased traffic from the development.
- 5.5. Approximately **130 comments were made** regarding **housing**. The most common points that were raised about housing were as follows:
- Opposition to the principle of new housing.
 - Scepticism of there being a housing need locally.
 - Preference for a mix of housing typology on the site.
- 5.6. Approximately **140 comments were made** regarding **amenities**. The most common points raised were:
- Preference for a new GP service.
 - Concern that local healthcare facilities would be overwhelmed.
 - Preference for a new dentist surgery.
- 5.7. Approximately **70 comments were made** regarding **education facilities**. The most common points raised were:
- Interest in building new schools at an early stage of the development to accommodate families moving into the new community.
 - Preference to consider that if schools are not built early in the development process, existing schools will be oversubscribed.
 - Preference for no new schools – given general opposition to the principle of development.
- 5.8. Approximately **230 comments were made** regarding **transport and connectivity**. The most common points raised were:
- General concern for the number of cars likely to be needed by residents of the new development.
 - Concern that the existing road network could struggle to manage with increased traffic from the development.
 - Concern about potential air pollution from increased traffic.
- 5.9. Approximately **220 comments were made** regarding the **landscape and biodiversity**. The most common points raised were:
- Scepticism that the promised Biodiversity Net Gain will be delivered.
 - Preference for a green corridors between the new development and Cockernhoe village
 - Concern that these proposals will negatively impact the existing wildlife.

- 5.10. Other more frequent comments emerging from the consultation included concerns around how the new development would affect **local flooding and drainage**, and the potential impact of the scheme on the **character and views in the area**.
- 5.11. There were a further **75 responses** regarding the consultation and engagement process, and **30 responses** on miscellaneous topics. Further detail on this is included in the full table below.

6. Detailed responses to feedback points

Feedback points and questions	Response and/or change made to the draft Strategic Masterplan
Homes	
1. How will you ensure that the housing is affordable?	1. North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) policy for larger strategic sites, such as East of Luton, seeks the provision of 40% affordable housing. The provision will be secured by a planning obligation (Section 106 Agreement).
2. What is classed as affordable housing?	2. Affordable housing includes homes for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market. The costs of buying or renting an affordable home are set out in national policy. In general, affordable rent is classed as homes let at least 20% below local market rents, and affordable homes are sold at least 20% below market value.
3. 40 per cent affordable housing is too much	3. Please refer to point 1.
4. Are you intending to put all the affordable houses in one block or disperse them throughout the development?	4. The affordable housing is expected to be dispersed throughout the development. The specific mix will be developed during the planning application stage.
5. Preference for new homes	5. Thank you for your comments. These have been noted by the team.
6. Opposition to the principle of new housing	6. This site is allocated for development by NHDC in its Local Plan. The Local Plan sets out that proposals for this site must deliver approximately 2,100 new homes, including affordable dwellings (see points 1, 2 and 3).
7. Opposition to the development of housing on non-brownfield land	7. Please refer to point 6.
8. Do not believe that there is a housing need in Luton	8. Please refer to point 6.
9. Concern for the impact on the value of the existing homes with the new development	9. The concepts shown in the Strategic Masterplan will be set out in more detail in the planning applications at a later date. This will allow the impacts on existing houses to be considered. The construction impacts on local residents will be controlled in a variety of ways including through the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) that is expected to be required by condition as part of the planning application process.
10. Concern that the unmet housing claim was made using out of date data	10. Please refer to point 6.
11. Preference for the land to be used for farming instead	11. Please refer to point 6.
12. Will the proposed Luton airport expansion impact the marketability of the proposed new houses?	12. The evidence provided to the inquiry relating to the airport expansion does not cause the development team any concerns on marketability.

13. Concern that new housing will cause a population density issue	13. <i>The Strategic Masterplan has been developed in conjunction with North Herts District Council and with input from local residents and stakeholders. It prioritises good placemaking and the development will provide many of the services its new residents will need to mitigate the risk of overstressing existing amenities in the area. The plans will bring amenities from shops and schools to new green space and new healthcare provision to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development.</i>
14. Concern about the number of proposed new houses	14. <i>Please refer to point 6.</i>
15. Preference for a mix of housing	15. <i>A mix of housing types is expected. The Strategic Masterplan can provide a framework that would accommodate a mix of housing styles, sizes and typologies across the site. The updated planning applications will provide further details.</i>
16. Preference for no flats	16. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
17. Preference for 1-2 bed houses	17. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
18. Preference for 2-3 bed homes	18. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
19. Preference for 3-4 bed homes	19. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
20. Preference for no 4 bed homes	20. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
21. Preference for 3 bed homes	21. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
22. Preference for 5 bed homes	22. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
23. Preference for houses for first time buyers	23. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
24. Preference for no terrace housing	24. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
25. Preference for no flats	25. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
26. Preference for houses for older people	26. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
27. Preference for large houses that can accommodate multi-generational families	27. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
28. Preference for single-occupant homes	28. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
29. Preference for semi-detached houses	29. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
30. Preference for terraced housing	30. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
31. Preference for cottages	31. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
32. Preference for detached houses	32. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
33. Preference for bungalows	33. <i>Please refer to point 15.</i>
34. Preference for house style to remain in keeping with the existing properties/rural setting	34. <i>The Strategic Masterplan sets out a framework for a mix of housing styles across the site, determined in part by the 'character areas', which also indicate the type of architecture being considered.</i>

	<p><i>These character areas will help to give the scheme interest and identity, while meaning the design better reflects local character and natural variations in the selection of materials, architectural styles, and landscape design of each area. Factors considered in the development of each character area included the landscape, topographical features, and neighbouring uses, together with the overall approach to the layout and structure of the development.</i></p> <p><i>The planning applications and reserved matters submissions will illustrate those concepts in greater details.</i></p>
35. To not have painted houses as they need to be maintained but use brick instead	35. Please refer to point 34.
36. Preference for the height of new buildings to be lower to preserve the view of outside	36. Please refer to point 34.
37. Concern that the local character of the villages will be negatively impacted	37. Please refer to point 34.
38. Concern that new housing will create anti-social behaviour	38. The Strategic Masterplan prioritises good placemaking and part of this is designing spaces and neighbourhoods which are active, well overlooked and designed with safety in mind. As part of the planning application process the promoters will also consult with the local police.
39. How many homes will be allocated for social housing?	39. 40% of the homes on site will be designated 'affordable', of which a proportion will be for rent.
Amenities	
40. Interest in a new supermarket	40. Thank you for your comments and this will be considered as the detailed plans are developed. The proposals provide many of the services its new residents will need, from shops to healthcare and schools. The Strategic Masterplan includes a 'local centre' which will be a hub of shops as well as other amenities.
41. Interest in new local shops	41. Please refer to point 40.
42. Concern for existing overwhelmed supermarkets	42. Please refer to point 40.
43. Concern that the new houses will have Luton postcodes and new residents may use Luton's amenities rather than those in North Herts.	43. Please refer to point 40.
44. Interest in new library	44. Please refer to point 40.
45. Interest in multipurpose community centres	45. Please refer to point 40.

46. Interest in a new Cadet building for young people	46. <i>Please refer to point 40.</i>
47. Interest in outdoor spaces for the community	47. <i>Please refer to point 40.</i>
48. Interest in building new religious centres	48. <i>Please refer to point 40.</i>
49. Preference for a new fire station	49. <i>Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service have responsibility for assessing when and where new police stations are required.</i>
50. Preference for a new police station	50. <i>Hertfordshire County Council and Hertfordshire Constabulary have responsibility for assessing when and where new police stations are required.</i>
51. Preference for open water swimming lake	51. <i>As the details plans are developed and the planning applications are updated, we will consider if any of the blue infrastructure (ponds etc.) will be suitable for swimming.</i>
52. Concern for water amenities in the area that are already faulty (e.g. water pressure)	52. <i>As the proposals are developed, the promoters will coordinate with the local water supplier Affinity Water to ensure proper services is provided to homes.</i>
53. General concern for the strain on local resources with population increase	53. <i>Please refer to point 40.</i>
54. Concern for the building quality of the new facilities that are being proposed	54. <i>The design and architecture of the housing will be set out at a later stage in relation to the planning applications and at reserved matters stage. .</i>
55. Request for the developers to consider other comparable developments where there are a lack of facilities.	55. <i>Thank you for your comments. These have been noted by the team.</i>
56. Request to install better broadband in the local area	56. <i>The scheme will incorporate appropriate digital infrastructure.</i>
57. Why would we need more schools when the ones we have now are sufficient?	57. <i>The Local Plan requires that this site provides for four forms of primary school entry and four forms of entry for secondary schools, and this is appropriate to cater for the additional families expected to move into the new development. The proposals show two primary schools each of two forms on entry and a suitable secondary school site.</i>
58. Opposition to any new amenities	58. <i>Thank you for your comments. It is important to provide the services that new and existing residents will need in the area, from shops to healthcare and schools. The Strategic Masterplan includes a 'local centre' which will be a hub of shops as well as other amenities.</i>
59. Preference for new GP services	59. <i>The local centre within the proposals will be designed to enable uses such as a GP surgery and a dentist. The exact details of what will be included will be set out at a later stage of proposals, but already from local feedback it is clear that a new GP is a priority for the community. Bloor Homes and The Crown Estate have co-signed a letter with local MP Bim Afolami to open discussions with the local NHS authority to provide GP services at the site.</i>
60. Will there be a medical centre?	60. <i>Please refer to point 59.</i>
61. Preference for new dentist surgeries	61. <i>Please refer to point 59.</i>

62. Concern for existing lack of/ overwhelmed healthcare facilities	62. <i>Please refer to point 59.</i>
63. Who will staff the new healthcare centres?	63. <i>Please refer to point 59.</i>
64. How will the waste collectors cope with the new housing?	64. <i>The land has been allocated by North Herts District Council for 2,100 new homes, and the council is also responsible for managing the waste collection for these new homes.</i>
65. Suggestion to put the amenities at the north of the site away from Luton housing	65. <i>The location of the local centre and other amenities has been carefully considered and aims to maximise easy access to facilities for residents and the principles of good placemaking.</i>
66. Concern that there is no room for green playing fields	66. <i>New public playing fields are being provided as part of the proposals. They will be located to the north of the site..</i>
67. Fear of the impact of new amenities negatively impacting the natural environment	67. <i>The promoters have a target to delivery at least 10% biodiversity net gain across the scheme, and as the plans progress to the detailed design stage it is the promoters' ambition to go beyond this, if achievable. The promoters will look at this once the Strategic Masterplan is finalised to properly assess the opportunities to create a higher level of BNG.</i>
68. Request to install these new amenities early on in the development process due to the strain on existing services	68. <i>Detailed construction plans will be brought forward at a later stage, and this will specify the phasing of development. This phasing will deliver housing and community amenities together in step over time.</i>
69. At what point of the development will new amenities be built?	69. <i>Please refer to point 68.</i>
Education	
70. Request for the developers to engage with Cockernhoe school to understand the current demand and educational needs of the area	70. <i>The promoters have engaged with Cockernhoe Primary School (please see section 4.54), as well as other schools in the local area and will continue to do so through the development of the proposals.</i>
71. Concern that the developers will not know the capacity they need to make for educational facilities until families move in	71. <i>The North Hertfordshire Local Plan requires that this site provides for four forms of primary school entry and four forms of entry for secondary schools, and this is appropriate to cater for the additional families expected to move into the new development. The proposals show two primary schools each of two forms on entry and a suitable secondary school site.</i>
72. Concern that existing school in Stopsley is at full capacity and could not take any new residents	72. <i>Thank you for your comments. This has been noted by the team.</i>
73. Preference to consider that if schools are not built early in the development process, that existing schools will be oversubscribed. i.e. There will be pressure on local Luton schools	73. <i>Detailed construction plans will be brought forward at a later stage, and this will specify the phasing of development. Your preference for schools to be built early has been noted.</i>

74. Preference for the developers to liaise with the correct educational authorities.	74. <i>The promoters are engaging with the appropriate education authorities as well as local schools.</i>
75. Preference for Cockernhoe school to retain its character	75. <i>The promoters are conscious of the impact any development will have on the existing villages and landmarks such as Cockernhoe School. The consultation has shown a clear preference from the residents of the local villages for green corridors to be built into the plans, including around Cockernhoe school. In response to this, we have updated the Strategic Masterplan to include a multifunctional green corridor creating separation between the existing and new development while also offering high quality new green space with amenities like allotments for the community to use.</i>
76. Do not believe another secondary school is needed as Queen Elizabeth High School (then Ashcroft High School) has had extensive renovation works to allow for an increased student population as a housing estate in this same area was anticipated	76. <i>Please refer to point 71.</i>
77. Preference for only one primary school to be built as Wigmore Primary School, Someries Primary School, Putteridge Primary School and Cockernhoe Primary School are all in close proximity	77. <i>Please refer to point 71.</i>
78. Preference for no new schools as part of not having the East of Luton development	78. <i>Please refer to point 71.</i>
79. Preference to keep schools away from residential areas	79. <i>Your comments have been noted. The location of the schools is decided based on a number of factors .</i>
80. Why is Cockernhoe school being mentioned if this is a Luton project? Cockernhoe school is in North Herts.	80. <i>This proposed development is in North Hertfordshire and the site is allocated in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.</i>
81. Interest in new schools being built	81. <i>Thank you for your comments. The Strategic Masterplan proposes two new primary schools and one new secondary school, in line with the requirements of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan.</i>
82. Will these new schools replace the existing ones?	82. <i>No. The new schools as part of the Strategic Masterplan are intended to cater for children from the development and not replace existing schools.</i>
83. Interest in building new schools at an early stage of the development to accommodate families moving into the new community	83. <i>Please refer to point 73.</i>
84. How would you ensure that the new schools wouldn't negatively impact the existing schools popularity?	84. <i>Please refer to point 71.</i>
85. Preference to consider the need for schools alongside other local amenities e.g. GP surgeries	85. <i>The development plans include many of the services its new residents will need, from shops and schools to space for new healthcare provision.</i>

86. To consider how the secondary school is likely to take students from Whitwell, Preston, Kimpton, Breachwood Green.	86. <i>Thank you for your comment. The new schools as part of the development are intended to cater for children from the development and not replace existing schools.</i>
87. Who will go to these schools - people from North Herts or Luton?	87. <i>The schools on the site are predominantly there to cater for children of families living on the site.</i>
88. Request to make school spaces available to Breachwood Green children.	88. <i>Please refer to point 87.</i>
89. Preference schools for children with special needs	89. <i>Thank you for your comments.</i>
90. Preference for nurseries	90. <i>Please refer to point 71.</i>
91. Preference for schools for students post age 16	91. <i>Please refer to point 71.</i>
92. Concern that the proposed primary school is opposite proposed drainage ponds which isn't safe	92. <i>The landscaping of all the green and blue infrastructure, such as drainage ponds, will be done in line with best practice and will be safe for people to live around.</i>
93. Concern that where the schools are currently located on the plans means that they will be hard to access due to single track roads	93. <i>The Local Education Authority (i.e. County Council) will require suitable access arrangements to be provided prior to the opening of the school(s).</i>
Transport and connectivity	
94. Preference for bus services to operate regularly and with high capacity if people are going to rely on it rather than using their cars	94. <i>The Strategic Masterplan sets out routes for a new, high-frequency, bus service serving the local area which puts all homes on site within comfortable walking distance of public transport. Exact details on the capacity and frequency of the service would be determined at a later stage in coordination with the bus operator and the relevant authorities.</i>
95. Concern that because of traffic, bus services won't be efficient	95. <i>The provision for active travel and public transport options is made with the aim of making these options appealing compared to private car use, and benefiting local traffic. Detailed Transport Assessments which will include modelled forecasts of the future traffic impact will be submitted with the planning applications.</i>
96. Preference for bus services	96. <i>Thank you for your comment. Please refer to point 94.</i>
97. How can you prove that people will use the bus services? People may continue to use Crawley Green Road and Vauxhall Way.	97. <i>Please refer to point 95.</i>
98. Preference for better bus connectivity to Luton Airport Parkway and the town centre	98. <i>Please refer to point 94.</i>
99. Hayling Drive was mentioned at the public exhibition as the bus access point. However I was also advised that cars would not access this way. How will this be managed?	99. <i>Private car access to the new development via Hayling Drive will not be possible. Specific traffic management measures will be detailed at the later design stages.</i>

100. Preference for cycle routes	100. Thank you for your comment. As part of the plans, new pedestrian and cycle routes would be introduced throughout and across the site, connecting key facilities and linking to the wider existing networks into Luton and the countryside.
101. Request to ensure that cycle routes have preventative measures against joy riders and quad bikes as this is an existing issue in the local area	101. Thank you for your comments. Measures to prevent vehicles accessing the pedestrian routes will be detailed at the later design stages.
102. Concern that the current cycle paths will be negatively impacted by the development	102. The Strategic Masterplan sets out the plans to improve the existing cycling infrastructure with new onsite routes and connections.
103. Request to not give a huge priority to cycle routes	103. Thank you for your comments. This has been noted by the team.
104. Concern about potential noise pollution	104. Noise analysis will be carried out in more detail at the later planning application stages.
105. Concern about potential air pollution	105. The provision for active travel and public transport options is made with the aim of making these options appealing compared to private car use – which would help to tackle pollution from vehicles. A detailed air quality analysis will be carried out as part of the later planning application stages.
106. Request for charging points for electric cars	106. Electric vehicle charging infrastructure will be included across the site.
107. Request for areas to store bikes	107. Cycle parking will be provided in accordance with guidance from North Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council. As such, there will be adequate storage at the development in line with the relevant guidance and policy.
108. Request for provisions to be made for future increase in electric modes of transport	108. Thank you for your comments. The development is designed with the future in mind, and electric vehicle charging infrastructure will be introduced across the site.
109. How will the plans for roads be amended to consider the areas that flood	109. The Strategic Masterplan sets out the principles for how the existing roads will be addressed including suitable drainage. Detailed flood risk assessments and drainage strategies will be developed when the planning applications are updated.
110. The current roads are not wide enough to cope with the traffic and bus routes that the development will create	110. The narrow section of Luton Road just within the Hertfordshire boundary will be widened and the new roads will allow vehicles to pass safely.
111. Request to improve existing roads before development begins e.g. Eaton Green Road, Airport Way, Crawley Green Road, Chalk Hill Road and Lilly Bottom Road	111. Please refer to point 110.
112. The existing road infrastructure can not cope with the traffic and the new development would worsen this	112. The proposals aim to prioritise and improve opportunities for safe, direct, easy active travel and public transport options. This includes introducing a new high-frequency bus service, which will link the site and the local area to Luton town centre and train station. Improvements will also be made to the road at Chalk Hill. New pedestrian and cycle routes will be introduced throughout and across the site, connecting all key facilities and linking to the wider existing networks into Luton and the countryside.

	<i>Detailed Transport Assessments which will include modelled forecasts of the future traffic impact will be submitted with the planning applications. This will take into account all committed local development schemes including the consented expansion of the airport.</i>
113. Concern that there are no plans for improving Herts roads	113. Please see point 112.
114. The whole of the surrounding area consists of single track country lanes that are already being damaged by HGV vehicles travelling in and around Breachwood Green, Kings Walden, Ley Green, Offley, Tea Green and Preston.	114. Please refer to point 110.
115. Concern for how people will access the new schools with the current road infrastructure	115. Please refer to point 110. Creating safe road, pedestrian and cycle access to the schools and other facilities has been a key part of the Strategic Masterplan development.
116. Less than 5% of the traffic generated by this scheme will use Hertfordshire roads so will there be a contribution made to improve the road infrastructure in Bedfordshire?	116. Detailed Transport Assessments which will include modelled forecasts of the future traffic impact and a transport strategy for the site will be submitted with the planning applications.
117. Who will fund the bus routes?	117. Improved bus services will be funded by the developers via a Section 106 agreement as part of the planning application process.
118. People will not use the proposed public transport facilities	118. Please refer to point 95.
119. Belief that the current bus services, footpaths and cycle lanes are adequate	119. Thank you for your comments. This has been noted by the team.
120. New transport routes would not increase local popularity of this development	120. Thank you for your comments. This has been noted by the team.
121. Concern for who will maintain the new road infrastructure	121. The highways will be designed and built to adoptable standards. It is expected that Hertfordshire County Council will adopt and thereafter maintain the new road infrastructure.
122. Will Luton taxpayers pay for the upkeep of the new infrastructure?	122. Please refer to point 121.
123. Preference for the houses to have garages that can fit cars in	123. Thank you for your comments. This has been noted by the team and will be considered as more detailed designs are developed.
124. Preference for new parking spaces with the new housing	124. Parking will be provided in accordance with guidance from North Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council. As such, there will be appropriate parking at the development in line with the relevant guidance and policy.
125. How will the existing parking issues be resolved?	125. Please refer to point 124.

126. Request to make parking provisions as people will not use the public transport systems	126. Please refer to points 95 and 124.
127. Preference for pedestrian routes	127. Please refer to point 100.
128. Will children be able to walk to school on new pavements? Will it be considered that this may be dangerous	128. Please refer to point 100. Safety is being carefully considered in the design of all active travel routes.
129. Preference for footpaths to be widened.	129. Thank you for your comments. The footpaths across the site will be made accessible – and widths will vary depending on the part of the site and the demand and purpose of the footpaths and shared cycleways.
130. Concern for connectivity routes out of the housing development.	130. Please refer to point 110.
131. Concerns that the development will create a 'rat run' through Lilley Bottom Road.	131. Please refer to point 95.
132. Preference for a third access point out of the development	132. Please refer to point 110.
133. Concern that Eaton Green Rd is unsuitable for access without considerable improvement, the corner is narrow & sharp and already prone to accidents	133. Detailed Transport Assessments which will include modelled forecasts of the future traffic impact and a transport strategy for the site will be submitted with the planning applications.
134. How can Luton Road through Wigmore be classed as an adequate feeder road for a development of this size? It will need to pass along Crawley Green Road which currently serves as local access into the north of the Wigmore estate and out into the villages.	134. Please refer to point 110.
135. How will the roads cope with both the Luton Airport expansion and this new development? i.e. especially with its impact on Wigmore, Lea and Elm Green Road?	135. The section of Luton Road just within the Hertfordshire boundary will be widened and the new roads will allow vehicles to pass safely. Detailed transport assessments which will include modelled forecasts of the future traffic impact and a transport strategy for the site will be developed at later stages of the proposals.
136. Eaton Green Road and Crawley Green Road are already very busy and will be getting a lot worse if this development goes ahead.	136. Please refer to point 110.
137. Have you considered cutting a small corner off the South Western tip of the LBC owned New Wandon Park, and routing an access road through there?	137. That location is not part of the allocated land for development so has not been considered as part of this Strategic Masterplan. Detailed Transport Assessments which will include modelled forecasts of the future traffic impact and a transport strategy for the site will be submitted with the planning applications.

<p>138. The A505 is already gridlocked</p>	<p>138. Please refer to point 110.</p>
<p>139. Suggestion for a road from the A505 to the site and not through Luton</p>	<p>139. Given the proximity of the site to Luton, the significant majority of site journeys are expected to be Luton-facing whether to employment or facilities in or around the town itself or to rail stations for journeys further afield. This informs the transport strategy, framed within the allocation policy, focusing on sustainable modes of transport, and not prioritising journeys by car. Enhancing road connections to the A505 contradicts this strategy and transport policy.</p>
<p>140. Suggestion to not assume that people will always want to travel into Luton from the site but Hitchin too and thus transport provisions should be made for this</p>	<p>140. Thank you for your comments. This has been considered in the development of the layout and road network.</p>
<p>141. Concern that as the scheme stands, there are just two access points from Luton: Darley Road, and Luton Road into Crawley Green Road, which the majority of traffic will use, causing excessive volumes here.</p>	<p>141. Please refer to point 110.</p>
<p>142. Preference for new access routes for the new green areas</p>	<p>142. Please refer to point 95.</p>
<p>143. Suggestion to develop the Lower Lilley Road to lead directly into the new build area and develop the access to the A505 at the Lilley Bridge to be able to access it in both directions. This would prevent every new driver having to use the already congested Luton roads to get anywhere and it would allow direct access to the A505, A1, M25, etc without new residents in the development having to travel through Luton.</p>	<p>143. Thank you for your comments. Please see the response to point 139.</p>
<p>144. Suggestion that as this development is in Hertfordshire, the residents of this development will be paying council tax to Hertfordshire so their essential services (refuse collection, police etc) will be coming from Hertfordshire so it's imperative that these services can access the development easily from the Hertfordshire direction.</p>	<p>144. Thank you for your comments. Proper access to emergency services and council services has been considered within the plans and will be further consulted on in later planning application stages. There will be improved connectivity both into Luton and out to Hertfordshire through the new active travel and public transport links.</p>

145. How will the development be accessed from M1 and A1? If Luton is in need of additional housing it should be around Caddington/Slip End with easy access to M1.	145. <i>The M1 will be accessed via the road network within Luton, and the A1 will be accessed via the A505 (via rural links). Detailed transport assessments which will include modelled forecasts of the future traffic impact and a transport strategy for the site will be developed at later stages of the proposals.</i>
146. It is important to ensure emergency services access.	146. <i>Thank you for your comments. Proper access for emergency services has been considered within the plans and will be further consulted on in later planning application stages.</i>
147. The new development will only have one main entrance and exit road - Crawley Green Road. How will you manage the traffic of this?	147. <i>Please refer to point 110.</i>
148. The main access road is proposed to run alongside the bridlepath. The bridlepath is currently a safe area where many children play with limited or no supervision.	148. <i>Thank you for your comment. The main access road will not run along the Chiltern Way bridlepath, so will not conflict with it.</i>
149. Preference for 20mph zones	149. <i>Detailed Transport Assessments will be developed and submitted with the planning applications.</i>
150. Concerns for Ashcroft road that has a high density of traffic	150. <i>Please refer to point 110.</i>
151. Concern that the development will lead to congestion past the two existing schools and preschool (where many cars are parked at school start/finish, which makes it worse as cars park close to the roundabout), also past Queen Elizabeth school and at the roundabout at Vauxhall Way which sometimes already has delays.	151. <i>Please refer to point 110.</i>
152. Concern that if the homes are built before the schools, people will travel from the west of Luton to the new schools causing traffic problems.	152. <i>Detailed construction plans will be brought forward at a later stage, and this will specify the phasing of development. This phasing will deliver housing and community amenities together in step over time.</i>
153. General concern of increased traffic.	153. <i>Please refer to point 95.</i>
154. How will the existing traffic issues in Luton be resolved?	154. <i>Please refer to point 110.</i>
155. Concern for how the amount of new houses and thus amount of extra cars will impact road networks	155. <i>Please refer to point 110.</i>
156. Preference for less motorised vehicles	156. <i>Please refer to point 95. Encouraging active travel use is a key reason for the improvement of cycling and walking infrastructure.</i>
157. Request to consider peak times of travel on local roads	157. <i>Please refer to point 110.</i>

158. Concern for access to the playing fields	158. Suitable car and pedestrian access will be provided to the new playing fields through the new roads and active travel routes developed on the site.
159. Concern for the construction timescale of the new roads and transport routes	159. Please refer to point 152.
Biodiversity	
160. Concern that the BNG promises will not be delivered.	160. The statutory target is at least 10% BNG across the scheme, and as the detailed design of the scheme progresses it is the promoters ambition to go beyond this, if achievable. The promoters will look at this once the Strategic Masterplan is finalised and to properly assess the opportunities to create a higher level of BNG.
161. Preference for the plans to go further than 10 per cent BNG	161. Please refer to point 160.
162. Preference to consider using swift nesting bricks in the development	162. Thank you for your comment. This level of detail will be set out in the later planning applications stages, and the team will take your comment into consideration.
163. Concern that rare species of flowers that have recently grown in the area will be destroyed e.g. orchids	163. All the woodland on the site will be retained, and the design of the proposals has been carefully developed to be sensitive to the natural character of the area. All the green spaces and woodland within the site will be managed and maintained in perpetuity. Exact detail on this will be developed at a later stage after the Strategic Masterplan is finalised.
164. Concern that these proposals will negatively impact existing flower beds, particularly bluebells	164. Please refer to point 163.
165. Concern that these proposals will negatively impact the existing wildlife e.g. deer, bats, badgers, brown hares	165. The assessments supporting the planning applications include impacts on existing wildlife and species.
166. Preference for the new green areas to be made wildlife friendly	166. The proposals include connected green corridors and spaces radiating from Brickkiln Wood and Slipe Spring, biodiversity enhancements across the site, as well as new parks of rich grassland, new shrub planting and trees.
167. Preference for routes that wildlife can use to get access out of the development	167. Please refer to point 165.
168. Concern for the timescale of newly planted wildlife	168. Detailed construction plans will be brought forward at a later stage, and this will specify the phasing of development.
169. Preference for a buffer between the new development and Cockernhoe village	169. The consultation has shown a clear preference from the residents of the local villages for green corridors to be built into the plans, including around Cockernhoe school. In response to this, we have updated the Strategic Masterplan to include a multifunctional green corridor creating separation between the existing and new development while also offering high quality new green space with amenities like allotments for the community to use.

170. Concern that the original proposal in 2017 left a larger buffer area than what is currently proposed	170. Please refer to point 169.
171. Preference for woodland/ponds/greenery as a buffer for the development and Luton	171. Please refer to point 169.
172. Preference to add woodlands around the proposed blue corridor to screen the development from Wigmore	172. Please refer to point 169. This green corridor will include tree planting, and will help to act as a visual screen between existing and new development.
173. Preference for a noise pollution barrier from the site to surrounding areas	173. Please refer to point 169. The planted green corridor will help screen noise and views for local residents.
174. Concern that the "avenue" of trees that is proposed along the road will not sufficiently screen nor will it act as a noise barrier	174. Please refer to point 173.
175. Preference for the buffer to be used as also a flood management system	175. The Strategic Masterplan sets out the principles for how the promoters plan to manage water and drainage on site sustainably – and the green corridors do incorporate draining and sustainable flood management solutions. New ponds, wetlands and runoffs will improve the current flooding situation and benefit the surrounding area. Detailed flood risk assessments and drainage strategies will be developed at later stages of the proposals.
176. Concerns about sewage disposal	176. The new homes are allocated for in the adopted North Herts District Council Local Plan, and the sewage network will be able to accommodate the new homes and facilities.
177. How will all the water be drained?	177. Please refer to point 175.
178. Concern for drainage ponds overflowing	178. Please refer to point 175.
179. Concern that the ponds intended to be drainage are in close proximity to the existing line of trees which already have stability issues and trees have been removed in the past to prevent them from falling on houses. Adding the drainage will increase the moisture around the trees and further destabilise the trees and risk them falling on houses.	179. Thank you for your comments, any risk of destabilisation of existing trees will be taken into account during the detailed landscape design at a later stage of the proposals. The promoters are treating existing woodland as if it were ancient, and are prioritising maintaining existing trees and greenery wherever possible.
180. Preference for the new houses to be powered by solar farms	180. The source of electricity for households on the new development will not be in the control of the promoters, but homes will be designed to high sustainability standards, and in line with the Future Homes Standard, which encourages the use of solar panels on new homes.
181. Preference for heat pumps	181. The new homes will feature heat pumps.
182. Concern that the groundwater survey commissioned by the developers was carried out in a dry period	182. Further detailed assessments and surveys will be carried out as the planning applications for the site are updated.

183. The public path along the Herts / Luton Boundary has seen frequent flooding during the last two winters. This has also impacted the Luton Road. How will this be mitigated in the new development?	183. Please refer to point 175.
184. Concern for how the developers will mitigate the flooding in the local area.	184. Please refer to point 175.
185. Suggestion for water accumulation on Chalk Hill to be resolved.	185. Please refer to point 175.
186. Concern for the volume of runoff coming down the hill from Brick Kiln woods and the surrounding land.	186. Please refer to point 175.
187. Preference for funding to be placed on alternative amenities rather than biodiversity.	187. New shops, community facilities, public transport services and a new healthcare provision will be provided alongside green infrastructure.
188. Concern that the new housing will have a negative impact on the natural environment.	188. This site was removed from the Green Belt by the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, and was allocated for development. Within this context the promoters remain committed to delivering a green and sustainable proposal with at least a 10% improvement in biodiversity across the site.
189. Concern that the proposed Luton airport expansion will add to a negative environmental impact of this development.	189. Thank you for your comment.
190. Why has this land been taken off of the green belt?	190. Please refer to point 188.
191. Concern that none of the measures will replace what already exists.	191. Please refer to point 188.
192. Request to consider the heritage of listed buildings on the site.	192. The promoters have received consultation feedback from Historic England, and this feedback has been considered in developing the final Strategic Masterplan.
193. Who will be maintaining these new green spaces?	193. The promoters commit that all the green spaces and woodland within the site will be managed and maintained in perpetuity. Exact detail on this will be developed at a later stage.
194. Preference for provisions to be made against littering.	194. The detail of the day-to-day management of the site will be developed at a later stage of the proposals – but the promoters are keen to make the community as desirable and appealing as possible for both existing and new residents.
195. Request for the Chiltern Way to have safeguards and permanent access requirements for all users including people with disabilities.	195. Health and safety is a key consideration of the Strategic Masterplan. The objective is to make the whole development as safe and accessible as possible for everyone in the community.
196. Concern that the proposed primary school is opposite proposed drainage ponds which isn't safe.	196. Please refer to point 195.
197. Concern that the new green landscapes will be vandalised.	197. The Strategic Masterplan prioritises good placemaking and part of this is designing spaces and neighbourhoods which are active, well overlooked and designed

	<i>with safety in mind. The police will be consulted as part of the planning application process.</i>
198. Preference for the new green landscape to promote the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.	198. <i>Thank you for your comments. These have been noted by the team.</i>
199. Preference for the new green areas and blue corridor to have safety measures installed.	199. <i>Please refer to point 195.</i>
200. Preference for the proposed green spaces.	200. <i>Thank you for your comments.</i>
201. Preference for the land to be used for farming	201. <i>Please refer to point 188.</i>
202. Preference for the new green spaces to be appealing for visitors e.g. dog walkers	202. <i>Thank you for your comments.</i>
203. Preference for no trees to be planted which could disperse fruits on the side of the roads	203. <i>The new trees planted on site will be native UK species, but the exact mix will be decided at a later stage. Your comments have been noted and will be considered.</i>
204. Preference for the area to be classed as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	204. <i>Please refer to point 188.</i>
205. Opposition to sports pitches	205. <i>Thank you for your comments.</i>
206. Concern that the development is a loss of greenbelt land	206. <i>Please refer to point 188.</i>
207. Concern that the new development will negatively impact the light and views current properties have	207. <i>Please refer to point 169. The planted green corridors will help screen noise and views for local residents.</i>
208. Request for mature trees to be planted	208. <i>Please refer to point 163.</i>
209. Preference for new trees to be planted	209. <i>Please refer to point 163.</i>
210. Concern that the new housing will destroy Brick Kiln wood	210. <i>Please refer to point 163.</i>
211. Concern for the heritage of the woodland areas	211. <i>Please refer to point 163.</i>
Engagement	
212. Request to spread awareness further about consultation events	212. <i>Your comments have been noted. There will then be further consultation on the more detailed planning applications at a later stage and this will be publicised appropriately. The exact nature of this consultation has not yet been decided, but will be compliant with local guidance and will take into account the feedback in this report.</i>
213. General request for more communication with residents	213. <i>Please refer to point 212.</i>
214. Request for further details of the plans	214. <i>Please refer to point 212.</i>

215. Consider more eco-friendly methods of contacting residents	215. <i>Thank you for your comments. These have been noted by the team.</i>
216. Preference for more in-person consultation events	216. <i>Ahead of submitting the updated Strategic Masterplan to the Project Board, the team has arranged for a further in-person engagement event on 11 July (please see section 4.55). There will then be further consultation on the more detailed planning applications at a later stage and this will be publicised appropriately.</i>
217. Request for longer notice periods of the in-person consultation events	217. <i>Thank you for your comments. Invites for the public drop-in event in July were sent out just under three weeks in advance of the event, and the team will ensure that consultation events at the later stages of the development will also be publicised appropriately.</i>
218. Request for better time flexibility for drop in events	218. <i>The team aimed to provide a good variety of times and dates for drop in events during the main consultation period, .</i>
219. Concern that the answers given to questions from residents at events were not consistent	219. <i>Members of the project team may have answered similar questions in different ways depending on the specific nature of the questions, but the detail of the Strategic Masterplan these answers were based on is consistent and the information consulted on was available to view in writing in digital and hard copy formats.</i>
220. Request for smaller focus group consultations with residents	220. <i>The team has been engaging with smaller groups and individuals on specific matters. This included a workshop on 19 March on the 'green corridors' of green space between existing communities and the new development.</i>
221. View that consultation will not change the popularity of the proposal	221. <i>Your comments have been noted. There will then be further consultation on the more detailed planning applications at a later stage.</i>
222. Concern that the feelings and opinions of residents won't be taken into account.	222. <i>All public comments have been considered by the project team to finalise the Strategic Masterplan. More detailed planning applications will be brought forward in due course, along with further public consultation.</i>
223. General lack of trust in the developers.	223. <i>Please refer to point 222.</i>
224. Concern that the development has already been approved.	224. <i>The development has not yet been approved. If the final Strategic Masterplan is approved by NHDC's Project Board, then there will still be further engagement and work to progress the detailed planning applications. Those applications will then be considered and ruled on by NHDC.</i>
225. Request for the developers to be as open with the public as possible with the planning process.	225. <i>Thank you for your comments. These have been noted by the team.</i>
226. Suggestion for the developers to engage with sustainability schemes such as BREEAM.	226. <i>Please refer to point 212.</i>
227. Request for developers to engage with local walking and cycling groups.	227. <i>Thank you for your comment. As set out in this document, the promoters have engaged with local groups including those with a focus on walking and cycling, such as Luton Ramblers, local sports centres, and the local representatives of Sport England.</i>

<p>228. Request to consult existing educational facilities in the area.</p>	<p>228. <i>Thank you for your comment. As set out in this document, the promoters have engaged with local schools and educational authorities such as Cockernhoe Primary School.</i></p>
<p>Miscellaneous</p>	
<p>229. Fear of growing anti-social behaviour with the development</p>	<p>229. <i>The Strategic Masterplan prioritises good placemaking and part of this is designing spaces and neighbourhoods which are active, well overlooked and designed with safety in mind. The police will be consulted as part of the planning application process.</i></p>
<p>230. Concern as to how the new development will integrate with the existing population</p>	<p>230. <i>Integration into existing communities has been a key consideration of the development of the Strategic Masterplan. New active travel routes, public green spaces, and conveniently located new amenities will consider this.</i></p>
<p>231. Request for the redevelopment of Luton town centre instead of new developments</p>	<p>231. <i>Thank you for your comments. These have been noted by the team. This site has been allocated for development by NHDC in its adopted Local Plan.</i></p>
<p>232. Concern that the development urbanises rural areas</p>	<p>232. <i>The woodland on the site will be retained, and the design of the proposals has been carefully developed to be sensitive to the natural character of the area. All of the proposed green spaces and woodland within the site will be managed and maintained for the community in perpetuity. Exact detail on how this will be achieved will be developed at a later stage after the Strategic Masterplan is finalised.</i></p>
<p>233. Opposition to any further development due to the Luton Airport expansion</p>	<p>233. <i>Please refer to point 231.</i></p>
<p>234. Concern for the long time scale for the construction for the development</p>	<p>234. <i>Detailed construction plans will be brought forward at a later stage, and this will specify the phasing of development.</i></p>
<p>235. Concern that the development will benefit North Herts but not Luton</p>	<p>235. <i>The Strategic Masterplan aims to provide amenities and facilities that will benefit both the site's residents and its neighbours.</i></p>
<p>236. Concern that the smaller villages e.g. Cockernhoe will lose their identity</p>	<p>236. <i>The Strategic Masterplan sets out the 'character areas', which aim to give the scheme interest and identity, while meaning local character is better reflected in the choice of materials, architectural styles, and landscape design of each area. Factors that were considered in developing the character areas included the landscape, topographical features, and neighbouring uses, together with the overall approach to the layout and structure of the development. Detailed designs will be established in detail later, with a further opportunity for consultation.</i></p>

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The promoters have demonstrated their commitment to community engagement in bringing forward the Strategic Masterplan for the East of Luton.
- 7.2. The objectives for the consultation were to raise awareness of the draft Strategic Masterplan; to help people understand more about them; and to provide an opportunity for people to provide feedback for the promoters to take into account.
- 7.3. Through the methods outlined in this report, these objectives have been achieved.
- 7.4. The consultation was tailored to the nature and scale of the proposals and ensured key stakeholders and the local community were engaged with and given access to key information through a range of channels.
- 7.5. Our programme of consultation has been compliant and consistent with the approach agreed via the PPA and with NHDC. It has also been engaging and inclusive, with a mix of digital channels (ie website) and more traditional methods of engagement (ie public events, meetings).
- 7.6. The consultation provided appropriate opportunities to comment on and raise questions about the plans, as well as opportunities to engage with the promoters and their consultant team. Many stakeholders and residents took up the opportunities provided which gave a clear insight into the key themes, comments and concerns about the proposed development.
- 7.7. The feedback revealed a range of comments, opinions, questions and suggestions, which were considered by the promoters as they developed their plans. The promoters have reviewed and responded to this feedback, ensuring that the issues and concerns raised have been considered in the updated Strategic Masterplan. Where the feedback related to a level of detail too advanced for this Strategic Masterplan stage, it has been recorded so that it can be considered at a later stage in the application process.
- 7.8. The promoters have made a series of changes to the scheme in direct response to feedback raised. The key design changes made following the consultation include:
 - The introduction of a new multifunctional green corridor between the new development and the existing edges of Cockernhoe and Mangrove Green.
 - This has been designed in line with masterplanning best practice as well as the conversations with Offley Parish Council's buffers sub-committee and the local feedback.
 - The width of the green corridor on The Crown Estate Land will be 45 metres, including 40 metres between existing property boundaries and new roads, and at least a further five metres to the first new properties.
 - The need to accommodate this deep planted corridor along the edges of the existing villages on The Crown Estate Land required revisiting the location of the new primary school and of the new village green, which is now proposed to be adjacent to existing woodland at Slipe Spring.
 - To maintain optimal access through the site in light of these revisions, the proposed primary street on The Crown Estate land has been moved and now cuts between the two existing woodland areas at Slipe Spring.
 - The outdoor areas of the primary school on The Crown Estate's land will now form part of the green corridor and create additional green space in the form of playing fields and further landscape.

- On the section of the site owned by Bloor Homes, changes have been made to the green spaces to improve and expand the facilities available, and Bloor Homes has agreed arrangements with individual households.
- The layout of the new playing fields on land owned by Bloor Homes will also have been changed and improved based on consultation with Sports England.

7.9. The promoters intend to keep stakeholders updated as the proposals progress, and demonstrated this by arranging both the public update drop-in event on 11 July and the presentation of the updated Strategic Masterplan to Offley Parish Council on 8 July. Communications channels including the project email and phonenumber will remain open and live through this stage of the process for any incoming contact.

7.10. In summary, we consider that the consultation undertaken with the local community and stakeholders in relation to the draft Strategic Masterplan has been compliant, meaningful and effective.

8. Appendices

Included in this section:

- Appendix 1.** Distribution zone A - for the February consultation flyer
- Appendix 2.** Distribution zone B - for the February consultation advertisement online and in local media
- Appendix 3.** Example of an invitation to local stakeholders to the February consultation – 26 January 2024
- Appendix 4.** Communication from Rachel Hopkins MP – 14 February 2024
- Appendix 5.** Response to Rachel Hopkins MP – 15 February 2024
- Appendix 6.** Copy of the East of Luton February consultation leaflet
- Appendix 7.** Copy of the local media advert for the February public consultation
- Appendix 8.** Copy of the press release announcing the launch of the February public consultation from *Luton Today*, *Hitchin Nub News*, *BBC News* and *The Comet*
- Appendix 9.** Media coverage of the launch of the February public consultation
- Appendix 10.** Website analytics of the East of Luton consultation website from its launch on 29 January until the close of the consultation on 29 February
- Appendix 11.** Copy of the display panels presented at the February consultation events
- Appendix 12.** Copy of the February consultation feedback form
- Appendix 13.** Selected photographs of the February public consultation
- Appendix 14.** Copy of the co-signed letter from the promoters and site MP at the time Bim Afolami to the NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) to initiate talks on including new GP services at the East of Luton scheme
- Appendix 15.** Copy of the press release sharing the news of the letter to the NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB
- Appendix 16.** MP at the time Bim Afolami's local bulletin to his constituents about the joint letter to the NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex ICB
- Appendix 17.** Invite to the July drop-in session to consultee mailing list – 21 June 2024
- Appendix 18.** Invite to the July drop-in session to key stakeholders – 21 June 2024
- Appendix 19.** Copy of the display panels presented at the July update drop-in event