



## Northstowe – a sustainable and exemplar new town in Cambridgeshire, UK

### Project Summary:

605 hectares. 9,500 new homes. 24,000 residents. 9,000 job opportunities. 7 schools and other education facilities. Community and health facilities, 151 hectares of play, sport, recreation and open space. And 16+ years of development. This is Northstowe - a proposed new town in Cambridgeshire.

### The Client's Challenge:

The challenge for development partners Gallagher Estates and English Partnerships is to ensure that a scheme of this scale pays respect to its location and environment.

And the brief? Northstowe should achieve a balance between the built and ecological environment. The challenge for the design team was to design a town which attained the lowest possible volume of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions whilst meeting the objectives for a sustainable, integrated functioning community environment.

### Our Work:

Formerly an airfield and barracks (last active as such during World War II), this site has more recently been used as an immigration reception centre, farmland and a golf course. Rich in wildlife, the diversity and distinctiveness of the existing landscape around Northstowe will be maintained. During the early stages of this project, WSP provided masterplanning advice and support to the client team relating to representation on planning policy documents, environmental constraints and opportunities analysis, option/scenario testing and environmental design advice.

More recently planning applications have required more detailed assistance. This saw our experts busy with the provision of advice on biodiversity, archaeology and built heritage, flood risk, utilities, transportation, landscape design, demolition and remediation waste strategies, technical input to a Design and Access Statement and a comprehensive and robust Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Radiological, geotechnical and contaminated land investigations were also required on site. Prior to and during these investigations, WSP instructed ordnance clearance specialists to clear all exploratory hole locations and archaeological trial

trenches. Buried ordnance was encountered and WSP evacuated the site. An RAF Bomb Disposal unit carried out a controlled detonation upon our instruction.

### The Outcome:

Our ongoing environmental, ecological, archaeological and ground monitoring will indicate the success of the strategies for remediation and mitigating damage. The community and stakeholder engagement days/activities that WSP participated in provided significant level of feedback which has helped to shape the masterplan around the principles established in planning policy.

Northstowe will contribute to the alleviation of climate change through the efforts of the design team. The measures designed into the project will combine to reduce the volume of the town's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by two-thirds more than the reductions required by policy targets would achieve.

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