

# A Charter for OTTERPOOL PARK

CONSULTATION DRAFT

**Folkestone**  
Hythe & Romney Marsh  
Shepway District Council



[www.shepway.gov.uk](http://www.shepway.gov.uk)

# Foreword

Shepway District Council has produced this Charter to set out its aspirations for Otterpool Park - a garden town for the future. The Charter takes as its starting point the principles set out in the Expression of Interest submitted to Government in June 2016 and focuses on creating a place that is truly environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

Otterpool Park will be a new growing settlement, planned from the outset on garden city principles that respond to its unique setting in the heart of Kent. The town will enhance the natural environment with carefully designed homes and gardens, generous parks and an abundance of trees, woodlands and natural habitats.

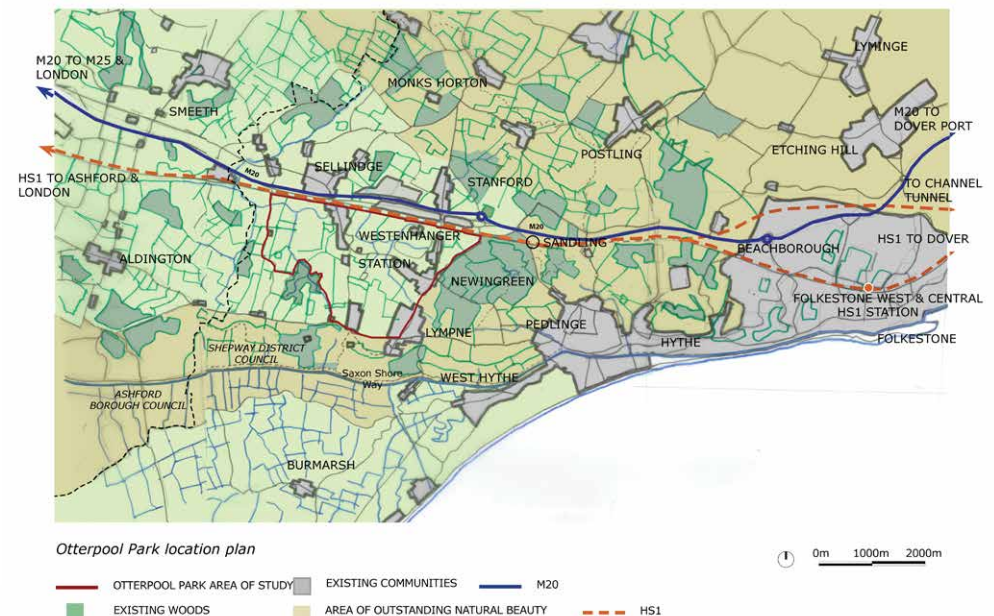
The garden town will have a distinctive townscape, outstanding local landscape, its very own heritage and access to a diverse coastline. There will be an emphasis on quality landscaping, open space and recreation that supports healthy lifestyles and an inclusive community.

It will be a community built on sustainability with a wide range of mixed tenure homes and jobs for all age groups that are within easy walking, cycling and commuting distance.

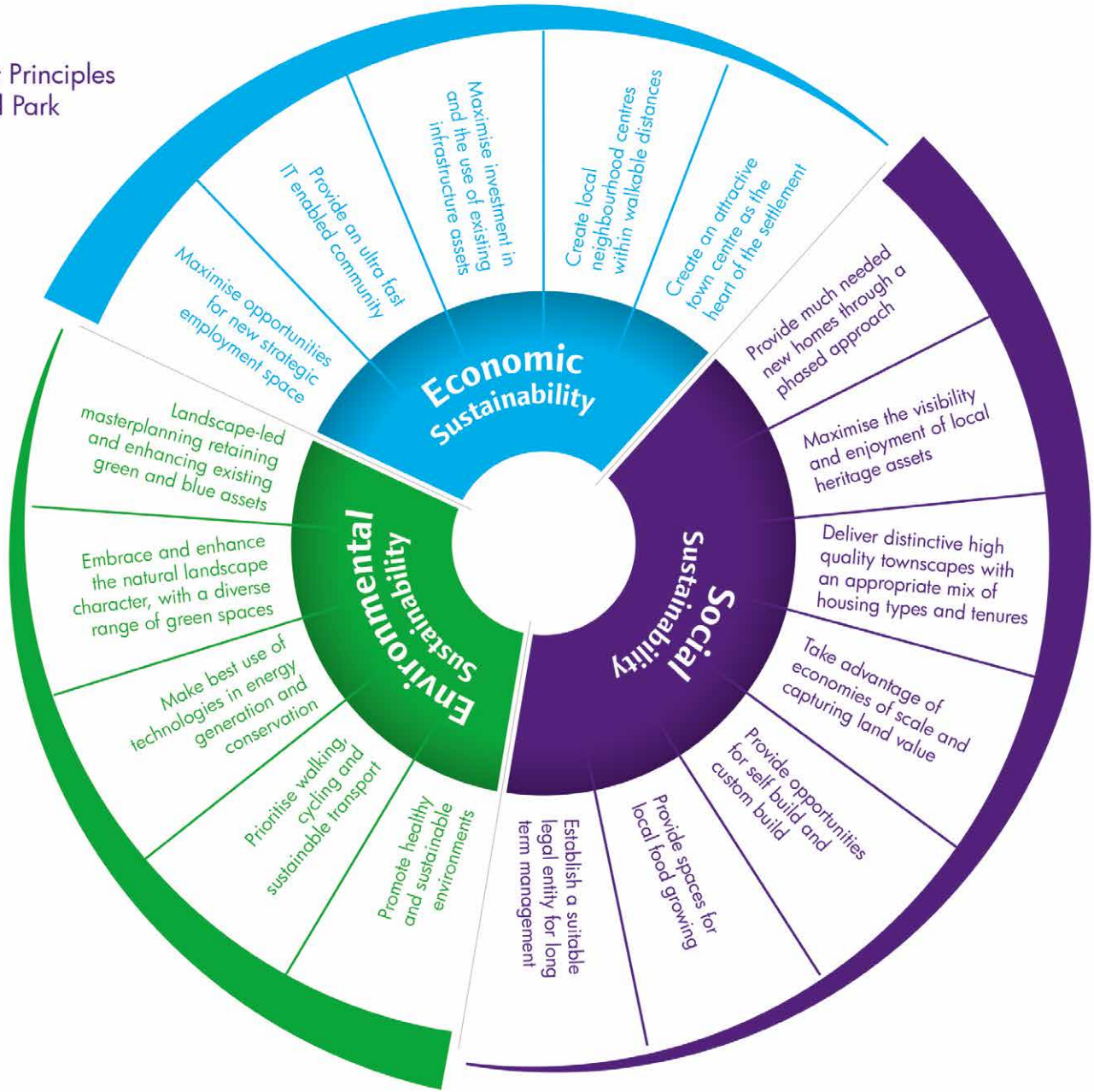
The masterplanning of Otterpool Park will be a beacon of best practice that embraces new technologies and designs to achieve a low carbon, low waste and low water usage environment.

Community involvement and participation in the planning of Otterpool Park has been encouraged from the outset. Land value will be captured so as to provide long term funding for the stewardship of community assets.

The Charter expands on the “Development Principles for Otterpool Park” first published in the Expression of Interest and reproduced on the following page. It expands these principles to provide more detailed guidance and advice on how the new settlement should be planned, built out and delivered so as to create the foundations for a truly sustainable new community.



Development Principles for Otterpool Park



# Landscape-led masterplanning retaining and enhancing existing green and blue assets

**The Masterplan for Otterpool Park shall demonstrate a landscape led approach that respects topography, views and the potential for the enhancement of all green and blue assets**

- i.** Significant areas of the new settlement shall provide high quality open space which shall be a characteristic of Otterpool Park.
- ii.** A new signature country park shall be provided which is easily accessible from the town centre and supported by and linked to other areas of strategic open space.
- iii.** Tree lined streets, cycle ways, pedestrian paths and open spaces shall be a feature of Otterpool Park.
- iv.** Positioning and orientation of street trees and landscape features shall support climate change resilience while allowing natural light into new homes.
- v.** Structured areas of landscape shall be integrated into housing development with space for trees to mature, supplemented by native garden hedges and trees in gardens.
- vi.** A design code drawn up with the participation of the local community will establish the parameters for achieving excellence and continuity in townscape, architecture, built form and landscaping materials.
- vii.** The landscape strategy shall deliver a clear net biodiversity gain with an emphasis on native species planting, meadows, ponds and the enhancement of other natural features.
- viii.** An access strategy that balances public access with ecological and landscape preservation will be established, taking into account recreational

impacts of the new population on the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Folkestone to Etchinghill Escarpment Special Area of Conservation and other protected areas.

- ix.** The unique character and biodiversity of the East Stour River shall be enhanced with measures put in place to for its long term management.
- x.** Water storage areas shall be designed to maximise landscape and biodiversity value. Surface water shall be cleaned and reused and challenging standards adopted for minimising water usage.
- xi.** A surface water attenuation system that is based on sustainable urban drainage principles shall be provided to prevent downstream flooding of the East Stour River.



Kirk View, Singleton Hill, Ashford © KCC 2012

# Embracing and enhancing the natural landscape character, with a diverse range of green spaces

An open space, landscape and ecological habitat strategy shall be prepared that supports the masterplan for Otterpool Park and incorporates the key features set out below.

- i. The safeguarding and enhancement of natural features, landmarks and views, particularly those that are visible from the AONB.
- ii. A new publicly accessible strategic park that enhances the historic landscape setting of Westenhanger Castle.
- iii. Additional green space that enhances the setting of Otterpool Manor, Upper Otterpool and provides connectivity with other heritage assets.

iv. Landscaped open space that prevents the coalescence of Otterpool Park and Lympe and separates neighbourhoods within the new settlement.

v. Advanced woodland block planting in strategic locations that enhances the views to and from key viewing points on the North Downs ridge.

vi. Playing fields, adventure space, play areas and informal open spaces shall be located for maximum use and meet the sporting and recreational needs of the new garden town.

vii. Space for outdoor performance and festivals shall be provided.

viii. A network of existing and proposed landscaped paths and footways that link areas of open space, neighbourhoods and adjoining settlements.

ix. Protection and creation of 'wild' havens to provide enhanced ecological habitats and biodiversity opportunity areas.

x. Landscaping shall be indigenous and receptive to local climate, geology and its built surroundings.

xi. All green spaces and planting shall be sustainable and delivered with a legally binding agreement that provides for their maintenance into perpetuity.



Welwyn Garden City © 2017



# Making best use of technologies in energy generation and conservation

**An Energy Strategy that embraces cutting edge technology and innovation shall be prepared. It will demonstrate how low carbon emissions will achieve challenging targets set by the local planning authority and deliver both short and longer term sources of renewable energy on and off the site.**

**i.** The Strategy shall demonstrate how best practice in energy conservation and generation will be achieved at both a micro and macro level in homes and commercial buildings while avoiding overheating in building design.

**ii.** The scoping of the Energy Strategy shall include the potential for a district heating network with hot water supplied by a combined heat and power plant or heat from a local waste plant.

**iii.** Energy production from solar gain shall incorporate the latest technology in and on buildings and structures as an integral well designed component of a building's design.

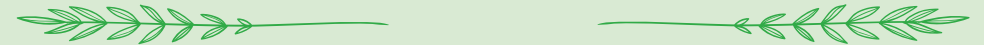
**iv.** The garden town shall embrace modern technologies for the household management of energy efficiency resulting in demonstrably lower energy use and utility bills than the national average.

**v.** Technology relating to energy generation and conservation is rapidly evolving and therefore the Strategy shall demonstrate how buildings can be adaptable and future proofed to respond to new technologies, such as battery energy storage.

**vi.** Targets set by the council will require a reduction in household waste and an increase in recycling rates significantly higher than is achieved in established towns in Kent. Internal and external storage for recycling and landfill waste shall be provided for all homes and businesses.

**vii.** The Strategy shall also demonstrate how the garden town will forward plan to meet the Government's commitment to ban all new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040 and include measures from the outset for all properties to have ready access to cost effective slow, fast and rapid electrical recharging points.

**viii.** All telecommunications, energy and other service infrastructure shall be provided in multi-service corridors that are easily accessible to statutory undertakers and do not involve digging up the public highway.



Shutterstock © 2017

# Prioritise walking, cycling and sustainable transport

- i.** A travel plan shall be prepared that has walking, cycling and access to public transport as a priority in the layout and design of the new settlement, with challenging targets set for non car use as a percentage of all journeys.
- ii.** A permeable network of tree lined streets, lanes, pathways and spaces will be created that provide footpath and cycle connections linking open spaces, recreational areas, neighbourhoods, the town centre, public transport and employment. It should extend to beyond the new community to existing villages, facilities and the countryside beyond.
- iii.** The masterplan for the garden town shall clearly show how new footpaths and cycle ways are linked to enhanced public rights of way and cycle paths, including the North Downs Long Distance Footpath and the Sustrans national cycle route network.
- iv.** Within the new garden town a hierarchy of footpaths and cycle ways shall be identified that are clearly separated from the public highway and also from each other where cycle speeds on through routes could be dangerous to pedestrians.
- v.** Well designed and well located cycle parking shall be provided within town centre and neighbourhood centres, at the station and transport hub as well as at employment and community facilities. The opportunity for a cycle scheme should be explored
- vi.** All housing should be planned with the objective of being within a 10 minute walk from local shops and services.
- vii.** Bus stops shall, unless impractical, be within a five minute walk of all homes.

**vii.** All volume house builders on Otterpool Park shall provide first purchasers of their homes with a “sustainable travel pack” that includes subsidised incentives for residents to walk, cycle and travel by public transport as an economic and convenient way to travel.

**viii.** The parking strategy for Otterpool Park shall be an integral part of the design of the new town and seek to achieve a balance that recognises the reality of car ownership and the need to avoid indiscriminate car parking. The street scene shall not be dominated by parked cars at the expense of local amenity and future forms of movement.

**ix.** Otterpool Park shall be designed with a legible pattern of interconnected streets with low design speeds.



Shutterstock © 2017

# Promote healthy and sustainable environments

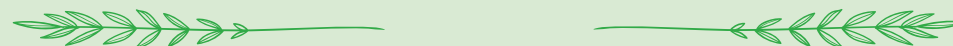
**Working closely with local Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board a healthy new town programme shall be developed that delivers high levels of public health at Otterpool Park. This programme shall embrace the principles set out below.**

- i.** Promoting physical activity and more active lifestyles for all age groups will be a central theme of Otterpool Park.
- ii.** Preventative health care measures shall include quality public spaces that are easily accessible and designed to be inclusive for all age groups.
- iii.** Provision shall be made for formal indoor and outdoor sports and recreation that are accessible by attractive walking and cycling routes.
- iv.** Streets should encourage community outdoor activities including interactive public art, play and meeting places, with homes providing natural surveillance.
- v.** Streets, spaces and public buildings should be designed to be attractive, safe, accessible and age friendly environments for all. Secluded areas should be avoided.
- vi.** Generous provision of seating in public places, level access for mobility scooters and local public conveniences shall be provided to encourage elderly people to get out and about.
- vii.** Homes, where practical, shall be built to meet the changing needs of occupants over their lifetime
- viii.** Smart homes will provide flexible and adaptable accommodation for elderly people and embrace the latest digital technology that links the home with the local health centre.

**ix.** A state-of-the-art medical centre that provides a 'one-stop shop' for outpatients including a cluster of GPs, a wide range of diagnostic services and primary care treatment shall be provided as early as practical in the development programme to meet the needs of the growing town and minimise the requirement for secondary care treatment at local hospitals. The medical centre should be located on an accessible site close to other community services.

**x.** Challenging air quality standards will be set for Otterpool Park and design and masterplanning must ensure that road and rail noise in dwellings, gardens and open spaces is minimised without resorting to unsightly barriers and screens.

**xi.** The construction and landform of Otterpool Park should be soil neutral to avoid any importing or exporting of earth.



Photograph © 2017



## Providing much needed new homes through a phased approach

**Otterpool Park will be created over the next 20 – 30 years, through a phased approach.**

**i.** The initial phase of development shall focus new housing in and around the town centre and in a village style neighbourhood well connected to the town centre by a walking, cycling and public transport network.

**ii.** In close proximity to the town centre and the railway station there shall be an emphasis on smaller residential units serving all age groups.

**iii.** Additional village style neighbourhoods will be masterplanned in future phases. All neighbourhoods will be expected to provide a mix of houses, flats and bungalows with land identified for custom and self-build housing in each phase of development.



Shornccliffe Heights © 2017

**iv.** Housing shall be planned to provide integrated communities with build, design and landscaping quality consistent regardless of phasing, tenure or market sector.

**v.** Housing shall be built to meet “Optional Requirement M4(2): Category 2 - Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings” as set out in schedule 2 of the Building Regulations.

**vi.** 10% of homes to be built shall meet the needs of a projected ageing population from active retired to those needing various degrees of nursing care.

**vii.** Off-site construction technologies that can bring forward the early delivery of new homes, taking advantage of advances in manufacturing methods are encouraged, where high quality design, durability and sustainability of the product can be proven.

**viii.** Homes should be designed with flexibility to respond to the changing needs of families without compromising design quality or the amenity of neighbouring properties.

# Maximising the visibility and enjoyment of local heritage assets

**Local heritage assets can make a significant contribution to defining the character and unique interest of Otterpool Park, attracting future residents, businesses and visitors.**

**i.** A Heritage Strategy shall be produced that identifies in detail the opportunities for the enhancement of local heritage assets, including Westenhanger Castle (including its associated barns), Otterpool Manor Farm, Upper Otterpool and other local buildings of historic interest.

**ii.** Westenhanger Castle shall become a focal point that helps inform the character of Otterpool Park. The masterplan shall identify the provision of a new and improved setting for the building including generous public open space via the delivery of a great park for the community, and the long term protection of key historic views.

**iii.** There is an opportunity for the existing buildings and barns at the Castle to be renovated to improve the setting of the building and provide space for businesses, leisure and craft industries/activities at the heart of the community.

**iv.** There is also a wider opportunity to enhance other heritage assets such as the nearby Lypne Castle and Lypne Conservation Area which, although outside the masterplan boundary, can make a significant contribution to the future prosperity of Otterpool Park.

**v.** Archaeological and other heritage assets will be evaluated and, where appropriate, safeguarded with their potential recognised in the masterplan and maximised for education and culture within the community.

**vi.** A new cultural, art and recreational strategy shall be devised, working alongside stakeholders and community, that complements heritage objectives, encourages grass-roots initiatives and provides long term support to the local economy.

**vii.** Public art can make a key contribution to place making and should be an integral part of the heritage strategy.



Westenhanger Castle © 2017

# Delivering distinctive high quality townscape with an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures

**An aesthetically pleasing townscape in a mature landscape environment shall be created that respects the setting of the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty including views from the North Downs Way and other local vantage points.**

**i.** The townscape shall comprise of urban higher density housing and supporting uses in a lively town centre. Development shall radiate out with reduced density and more rural character in the village style neighbourhoods reflecting the town and country vision of the original garden city movement.

**ii.** The masterplan for Otterpool Park shall set out a density hierarchy based on the following requirements:

- Urban residential density - the new town as a whole.
- Gross residential density of each place - the town centre and each neighbourhood.
- Net residential density - the built form within each street.
- Site density - the ratio of the dwellings to the site they occupy.

Comparators shall be provided of each component of the density hierarchy together with the transitional relationship between places.

**iii.** Neighbourhoods, buildings and spaces shall be planned to create a unique and distinctive character. Local and long range views shall be captured to provide interest and surprise.

**iv.** A high quality palette of building materials will be required that has resonance with the local area. Varied roofscapes will be an integral feature of the townscape as will balconies and roof gardens so as to ensure that all homes have some private space of their own. Houses shall have their own gardens and private outdoor spaces. Overall the architectural vernacular shall support local distinctiveness

**v.** The residential mix of the new settlement will include owner occupied housing, private rented housing, affordable/social rented housing and shared ownership homes in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

<https://www.shepway.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/core-strategy-review-2016>

**vi.** Building materials, landscaping and design should be of a consistently high quality throughout the new settlement regardless of tenure type.



Ingress Park © 2017

# Taking advantage of economies of scale and capturing land value

**Otterpool Park should be planned so as to create economies of scale that will remove barriers to development and deliver critical community and social infrastructure at the earliest possible opportunity, so as to meet the needs of a growing community.**

**i.** Otterpool Park should aim to be self-sufficient in terms of providing its own schools, health centres, community facilities and integrated transport systems and community facilities.

**ii.** Early phases of development should be planned in a way that will not disadvantage early residents or place pressure on existing local facilities and infrastructure, but is viable and deliverable.

**iii.** Key infrastructure, such as a new primary school and possibly a new secondary school, should be provided in phase one of the new settlement to support investment and community development.

**iv.** Where it is appropriate or necessary for services to be shared with other local communities this shall be decided after detailed local consultation and made clear as part of the planning process.

**v.** Existing nearby communities of Lypne, Barrow Hill, Sellindge, Westenhanger, Saltwood, Stanford and Postling shall have appropriate access to and benefit from the new community facilities provided.

**vi.** A section 106 legal agreement will be negotiated with the developer as an integral part of a planning permission that ensures investment arising from economies of scale is made at appropriate stages of the building of the new town for investment in key infrastructure.

**vii.** The uplift in land value that would be created by a grant of planning permission for Otterpool Park shall be captured to create:

- Early investment in key infrastructure.
- A sustainable strategy for the long term stewardship of the town.
- Investment in local assets that can provide a sustainable funding stream for the community facilities and those areas of the public realm that will be managed, in the future, by the public and voluntary sectors.
- An investment in sustainable development.
- Spaces and facilities designed with long term management and maintenance in mind.



Land at Otterpool © 2017

# Providing opportunities for self-build and custom build

**Custom and self-build housing can bring innovation, diversity and choice that are not always achievable in conventional housing developments. The masterplan for Otterpool Park shall place self-build and custom build housing as a central element of housing delivery.**

**i.** The masterplan for Otterpool Park shall identify a neighbourhood in phase one with serviced land provided for at least 100 self/custom build dwelling plots.

**ii.** A target, subject to on-going review, will be set to achieve a minimum of 10% and an aspiration of 20% of all dwellings in Otterpool Park as self or custom build, with each neighbourhood containing this type of housing.

**iii.** The promoter shall demonstrate the measures being taken and the support given to:

- Individual self-build/custom build housing.
- Group and community led housing projects.
- Developer led custom build.

**iv.** Shepway District Council will investigate establishing a Community Led Homes fund that will enable local people and groups working together to promote innovative forms of housing development and management at Otterpool Park.

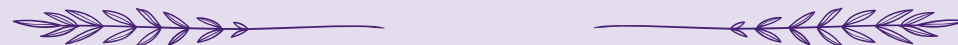
**v.** In allocating sites for custom and self-build housing priority will be given to people and associations with local connections and those on the council's self build register. Consideration will be given as to whether or not it's appropriate to introduce a local connection test and a financial solvency test.

**vi.** Innovative designs will be encouraged that are flexible and incorporate cutting edge technology, particularly in the field of low carbon and low

energy consumption. Self-build and custom build housing will not be required to be uniform in scale, plot width or materials.

**vii.** However, straightforward parameter requirements will need to be established by:

- planning policy and a design code prescribing those developments that meet the guiding principles of place making and sustainability, and/or
- a "plot passport" scheme introduced alongside a Local Development Order where plot purchasers submit an application to the local planning authority for a compliance check against an established design code.



# Providing spaces for local food growing

**Creating healthy communities and providing the opportunity to grow food locally is an integral part of the garden settlements ethos.**

**i.** Allotments for local food growing shall be identified in the masterplan and provided on fertile land with safe and convenient access from all residential neighbourhoods.

**ii.** The masterplan could also include the provision of community orchards for growing local indigenous fruits, subject to evidence of demand for this activity.

**iii.** A scheme that encourages the produce grown on allotments and community orchards to be sold in local shops or at a community market will be introduced so as to promote healthy living, community cohesion and reduce “food miles”.

**iv.** A scheme that encourages local leadership and community participation in local food growing, such as community composting, shall be established.

**v.** In lower density areas houses with generous gardens should be provided and the scope for communal food growing areas established.

**vi.** In higher density areas where small or no residential gardens are proposed, new homes should have access to an allotment for local food growing within 800m (10 minutes walking time).

**vii.** Buffer zones on the edge of the settlement and between the new settlement and existing settlements maybe suitable for allotments and agricultural use provided these are not isolated from the local community and with safeguards built into a legal agreement that these areas will have long term protection from development.

**viii.** Otterpool Park shall include meadowlands and a biodiverse landscape that can provide places of natural beauty, informal recreation and seasonal wild food alongside each other.

**ix.** Measures shall be put in place for the community management of allotments, community orchards and community woodlands that ensures their long term upkeep and protection.



Hawkinge Allotments © 2017

# Establishing a suitable legal entity for long term management

**Key infrastructure will need to be provided starting at an early stage of the development of the new town, with arrangements made for its long term maintenance and management.**

**i.** A strategy for long term stewardship should include, as a central element, the creation of a Community Trust overseen by trustees and/or a new elected body.

**ii.** Although the precise model for the Trust will need to be agreed, it must ensure that Otterpool Park has an empowered, self-reliant community that can manage its own key assets and have local people at the centre of place making and town life.

**iii.** The Trust must be capable of generating a sustainable income from some of its assets so as to balance its budget and support a thriving local community.

**iv.** Infrastructure that will need to be managed and maintained by the Trust includes:

- Strategic and local open space
- Sports pitches
- Leisure facilities
- Community halls and other community buildings
- Public squares and spaces
- Sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS)
- Allotments

**v.** Landscaping needs to be a lasting legacy, with high quality maintenance arrangements put in place for the long term, for example ensuring street trees are replaced. A section 106 legal agreement entered into alongside the grant of planning permission will include requirements to ensure the quality of all open space and physical assets on handover to the Trust.

**vi.** A community development programme should allow for changing governance arrangements as the community grows, and consider potential for the future creation of a Town Council.

**vii.** An objective of the Trust or new elected body will be to nurture community development and participation working with a network of volunteers.



Letchworth Garden City © 2017



# Economic Sustainability - maximising opportunities for new employment space

**Otterpool Park shall have a vibrant local economy that fosters community prosperity with a wide range of businesses supporting the environmental and social sustainability of the town through creating employment opportunities and supporting local suppliers.**

**i.** A challenging target shall be set at the outset of masterplanning the new settlement for the number of jobs that will be created across the private, public and voluntary sectors for a genuine mix of employment.

**ii.** Provision of a range of modern, high quality employment space shall be delivered in appropriate and accessible locations across the new settlement.

**iii.** The masterplanning of the settlement should identify land suited to accommodating companies operating in growing regional, national and international markets with a capacity to contribute to employment and GVA growth.

**iv.** Potential target sectors that should be investigated to support economic activity include green construction, environmental goods and services, advanced manufacturing, creative digital media and business, professional and financial services and other emerging markets. The potential for an upmarket hotel should be pursued

**v.** Additionally, an innovation centre or hub that supports business start-ups shall be included in an early phase of the development. This shall provide space to encourage successful businesses to grow.

**vi.** The scale of employment space located near the gateway to Europe (Channel Tunnel) will provide a new opportunity to complement the offer at locations such as Folkestone town centre, Hythe and other growth locations across East Kent. It shall provide an opportunity for new ideas to flourish.

**vii.** The employment offer for Otterpool Park shall include skills development and apprenticeship opportunities to be delivered working alongside Shepway District Council and other partners.

**vii.** Employment space should be planned and phased as part of a comprehensive delivery framework commensurate with the development of associated infrastructure and new homes so that job opportunities are available for when housing first becomes occupied. Interim uses could be accommodated on suitable sites as the settlement establishes.

**viii.** The location offers space for a learning and research campus for a growing University that would be influential in how the overall community grows in a sustainable way.

**ix.** Businesses locating at Otterpool will be expected to be an active part of the community and help infuse a spirit of entrepreneurship and enterprise that will be a hallmark for a 'good economy' location.



Cambourne Business Park © 2016



## Providing an ultrafast IT enabled community

**Otterpool Park shall be designed as a “smart town” with investment to ensure that traditional networks and services are made more efficient with the use of “smarter” digital and telecommunications technology for the benefit of all its residents and businesses.**

**i.** Buildings and infrastructure throughout the new settlement shall incorporate the latest information and communication systems which shall be readily adaptable to a rapidly changing technological environment.

**ii.** The development shall incorporate, at suitable locations within the public realm, information relating to an integrated public transport system so as to provide real time and mobile enabled public transport.

**iii.** Data analysis and smart monitoring of water use, energy use and waste generation shall be incorporated into all new homes, workspaces and community buildings.

**iv.** An online community shall be encouraged for use by all residents and businesses with the objectives of:

- Fostering community engagement
- The local management of assets
- The co-ordination of event management
- Real time transport information
- The swapping, recycling and reuse of goods

**v.** All homes, offices, cafés, public spaces and community buildings constructed at Otterpool Park shall be enabled for ultrafast fibre optic broadband. Broadband speeds shall be reviewed at periodic intervals so as to provide the highest standards of connectivity available. Periodic reviews of the masterplan shall demonstrate how the latest information technology is to be incorporated into each phase of new development.

**vi.** Where practical, the latest high speed internet technology shall be rolled out to the neighbouring communities of Lympe, Postling, Stanford, Sellindge, Westenhangar and Barrow Hill.

**vii.** The designs for every new dwelling constructed at Otterpool Park shall clearly identify adaptable space suitable for home working.

**viii.** Third place work will be encouraged from cafés, community buildings and business areas.

**ix.** Ducting for fibre optic and other cabling shall be located outside the public highway and should be designed for easy access by all utilities so as to avoid unnecessary roadworks and surface patching.



Shutterstock © 2017

# Maximising investment in and the use of existing infrastructure assets

Otterpool Park should minimise demand on the existing infrastructure network by embracing a “smarter” town philosophy. Where new infrastructure is required this should focus on improving existing infrastructure assets at an appropriate stage of the development programme.

**i.** Westenhanger Station should be upgraded as part of an integrated transport hub that maximises its potential to attract passengers and promote sustainable travel patterns.

**ii.** A package of enhancements to the station should potentially include:

- A new hub with priority to pedestrians, cyclists and bus users
- Lengthening of the platform
- New station buildings
- Enhanced customer experience and facilities
- A new footbridge between platforms
- A suitable level of car parking that meets the needs of Otterpool Park and nearby villages

**iii.** There is a major opportunity that will be pursued working alongside partners and stakeholders to secure a high speed rail service between Westenhanger and London St Pancras. This will stimulate new business investment into Otterpool Park.

**iv.** The existing bus network that serves surrounding towns and villages will be upgraded as an integral element of the transport hub at Otterpool Park. All new homes, where practicable, shall be within a five minute walk of a bus stop.

**v.** The capacity of Junction 11 shall be upgraded and other key junctions on the road network shall, where necessary, be redesigned and improved.

**vi.** The masterplanning of Otterpool Park shall investigate and bring forward proposals for:

- On-site waste recycling
- The provision of on-site energy generation
- A decentralised energy network

**vii.** Where new and sustainable forms of infrastructure provision can't be provided within the new settlement existing infrastructure assets such as reservoirs, wastewater treatment works and energy installations should be upgraded without causing environmental harm.



Westenhanger Station © 2017



## Creating local neighbourhood centres within walkable distances

The masterplan for Otterpool Park shall include a multi-purpose town centre close to public transport links, supported by “village style” neighbourhoods that meet the day to day needs of residents but are easily accessible to the town centre and to each other.

i. Each neighbourhood centre will include a primary school, pre-school nursery, convenience shopping, open space and recreational activities at an early stage of its development so as to foster sustainability and community cohesion.

ii. Each neighbourhood centre shall be master planned as a place that has its own distinctive identity. New buildings, the public realm and open spaces shall incorporate high quality design, materials and landscaping that creates a signature character for that neighbourhood in the unique setting of the North Downs.

iii. All community buildings will be of an inspired design and seek to meet zero carbon standards as exemplars. They should provide a range of local services potentially supported by outdoor sports pitches, activity zones, an open air performance space and other meeting places.

iv. Each centre shall be planned to foster community development and identity and promote healthy living by encouraging mentally and physically active lifestyles. New ways of delivering integrated community services that support the new settlement will be explored.

v. Neighbourhoods and the town centre shall be connected by a legible pattern of active streets, footways, cycle ways and open spaces with maximum permeability and room for landscaping to mature.

vi. Road infrastructure should be designed for a low speed environment, with priority given to pedestrians and cyclists and the minimisation of grade separation, roundabouts and highway furniture.



Hawkinge Community Centre © 2017

# Creating an attractive town centre as the heart of the settlement

**A vibrant high street will be created at the heart of Otterpool Park that meets the needs of residents, workers and visitors with attractive cultural, community, shopping and leisure facilities.**

**i.** Food shopping shall be provided that allows choice and variety as well as reducing the need to travel for day to day shopping.

**ii.** A wider range of shopping floorspace should also be provided that creates a vibrant town centre without impacting on the vitality and viability of other town centres including Folkestone, Hythe and Ashford.

**iii.** Higher density development with several stories of residential use above commercial premises will be appropriate in the town centre. The buildings should interact with the public realm. Streets should be of a generous width with provision made for walking, cycling and outdoor seating.

**iv.** The high street shall be planned so that it is within easy walking distance of the station and located within an area of higher intensity housing and other uses so as to increase footfall and support businesses.

**v.** The town centre will be a safe environment readily accessible by foot, bike, bus and car. It shall include the highest standards of accessibility for all members of the community.

**vi.** Buildings, recreational areas and landscaping shall interrelate so as to provide character, interest and a unique sense of space and place.

**vii.** Buildings at street level in the town centre shall have frontages that open up to public spaces. Indoor and outdoor eating and drinking places shall be provided and an adaptable town square shall be planned to accommodate temporary outdoor markets and events.

**viii.** The town centre should also include a mix of entertainment venues and sports activities that meet the needs of all age groups.



Fountains at Folkestone Harbour © 2017

# Folkestone

Hythe & Romney Marsh

Shepway District Council



[www.shepway.gov.uk](http://www.shepway.gov.uk)

