



Mid Norfolk Garden Town Proposal
Summary Document
November 2017

Planning +
Development

Architecture +
Urban Design

Archaeology
+ Heritage

Transport
+ Travel

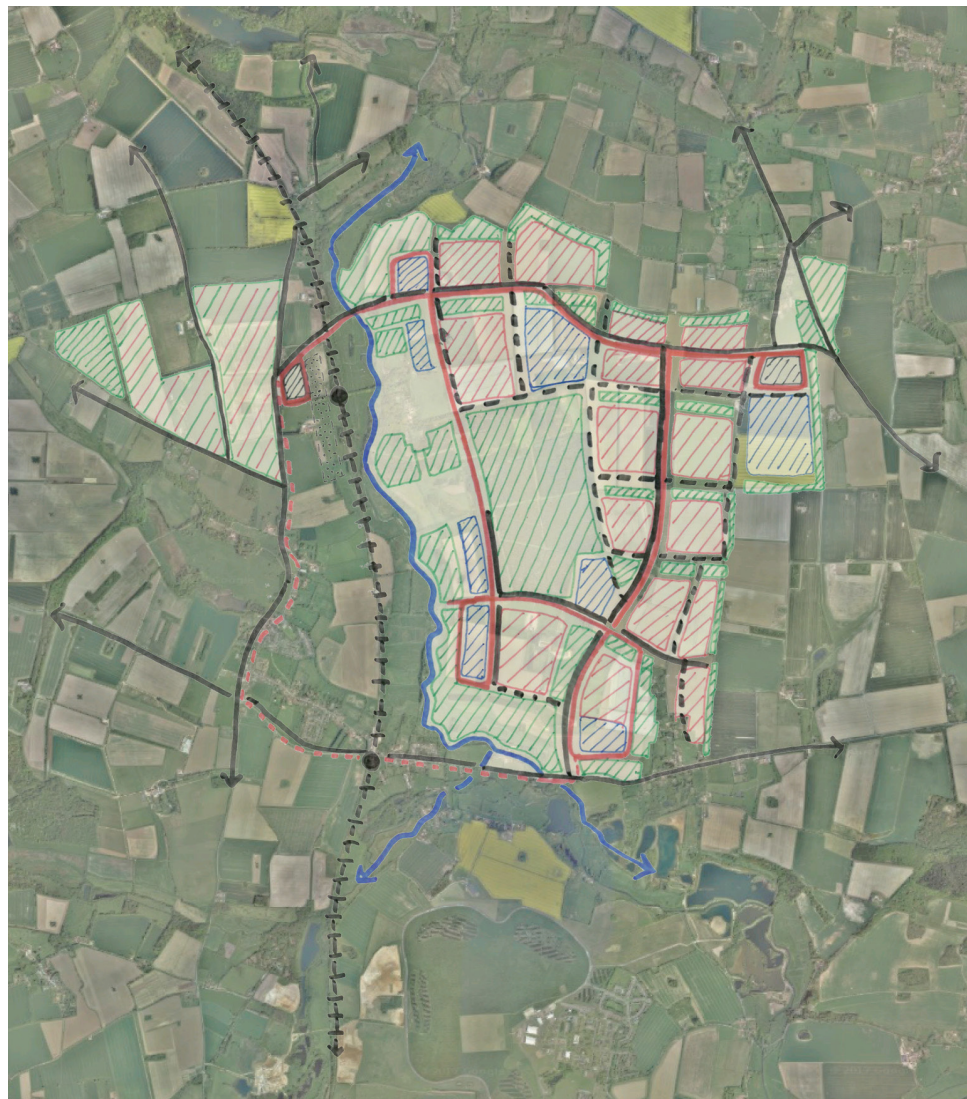
Background

The UK Government is taking action on a range of fronts to ensure the homes this country so badly needs, get built. Large new settlements have a key role to play in meeting this need by providing a stable pipeline of new housing well into the future. The Government's 2017 Autumn Budget contains further measures designed to encourage and deliver more Garden Towns and Villages.

This document outlines a heavy rail orientated garden town opportunity that is immediately deliverable to meet future housing needs within the Norwich Housing Market, Breckland and North Norfolk areas.

The Vision

The proposal is to deliver the Mid Norfolk Garden Town with the potential for circa. 10,000 dwellings that is connected to the main centres within the Eastern Region by an existing network of high-quality heavy rail and road links. This new rural garden town will work with the existing landscape to protect our beautiful Norfolk countryside whilst embracing high-quality design and futurism. It will be developed along smart health, transport and education principles and it will invest in its young people providing the right type of education, with excellent links to local employment, to help prevent out-migration and create supportive communities. This will be achieved through a knowledge of the Norfolk context gained over many years of observing this area; through careful financial modelling; community investment, stewardship and land capture models, all developed against long established garden city principles.



Sketch Masterplan



Housing Needs

The emerging Norfolk Strategic Framework outlines a need to deliver circa. 4,900 new homes per annum within Norfolk between 2015 and 2036. The numbers in this document will be increased further through the Government's new OAN methodology that is currently out to consultation. The majority of this need will be met on greenfield sites within the Norwich Housing Market Area. The Mid Norfolk Garden Town is well placed to meet this current and future planned housing need.

Planning Context

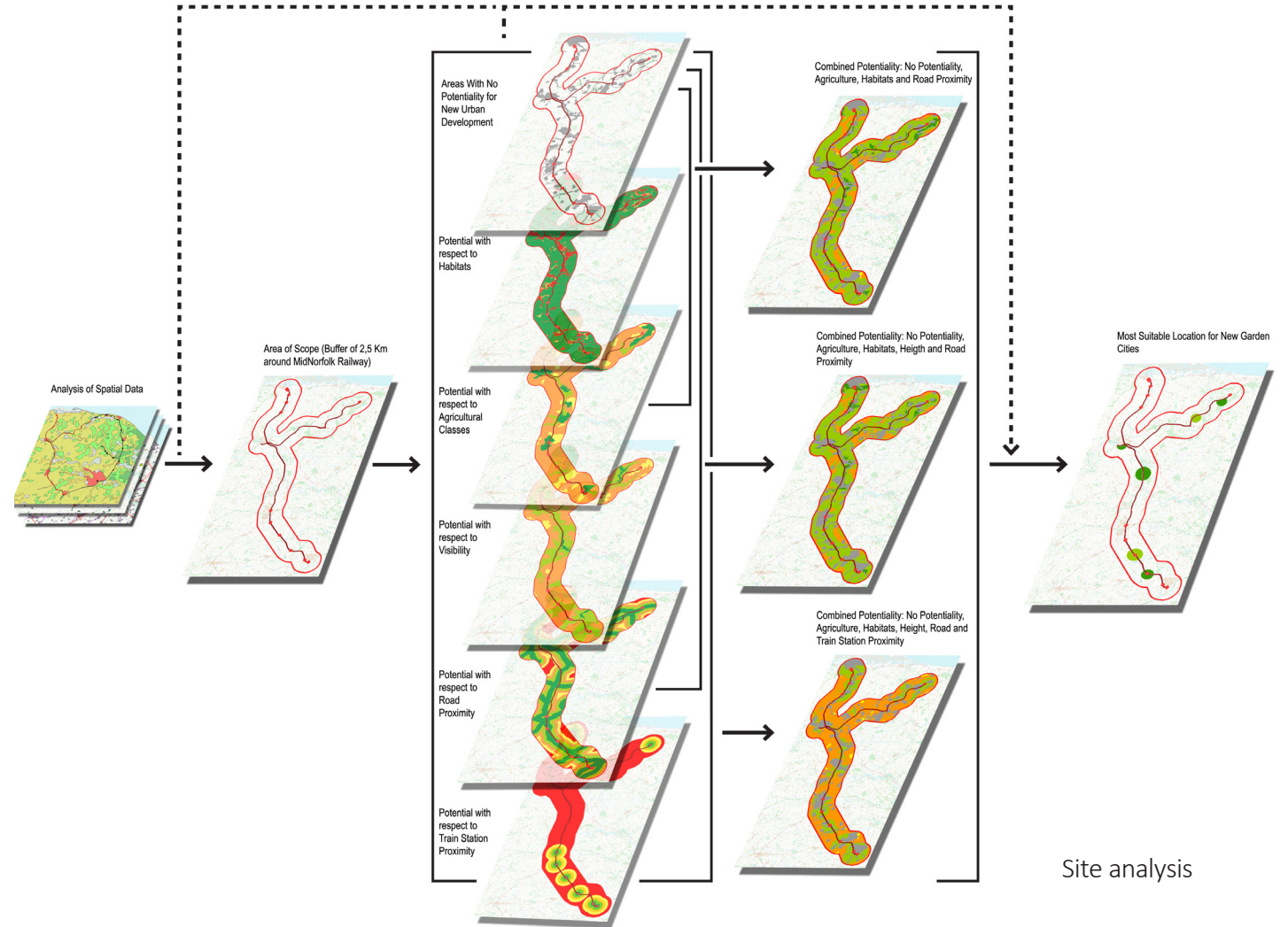
The emerging Norfolk Strategic Framework and Greater Norwich Local Plan documents identify an opportunity to deliver a new garden town or village within Norfolk. We have made written submissions into both processes and we understand that the Greater Norwich Growth Board Councils are keen to understand more about the Mid Norfolk Garden Town. We are aiming to make detailed representations promoting the scheme into the Regulation 18 version of the Greater Norwich Local Plan in March 2018. We will also promote the scheme through the next Breckland Local Plan review and the pending Regulation 19 version of the North Norfolk Local Plan processes. As there is a clear unmet housing need, the full extent of the land required to deliver the scheme is within our control and there is no need for a Development Corporation, the opportunity also exists to submit a planning application for the Mid Norfolk Garden Town and associated rail improvements under S.38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act immediately and without delay. We are confident that such an application would be supported as a means of meeting long term housing and employment growth requirements whilst increasing public transport access to other economic centres in the East of England.



Site Selection

The site for this new garden town has been selected as a result of its exceptional transport advantage and through a robust sieving process looking at GIS layers. This work looked extensively at the following key matters:

- Topography, gradients and site levels;
- Vegetation types and the position of existing and historic trees and hedgerows;
- Landscape fit and capacity, extent of visual envelope and wider landscape designations;
- Road hierarchy, patterns of movement, existing road/rail services and connections to the wider network, transport capacity and opportunity;
- Networks of Natura 2000 sites, extent of ecologically sensitive areas and the species present;
- Agricultural land grades, existing farming practices and the opportunities in the agri-food sector to create employment;
- Flood risk and surface water flows;
- Heritage, historic ancient monuments, listed buildings and historic landscapes;
- Existing settlement hierarchies and patterns;
- Air quality issues.

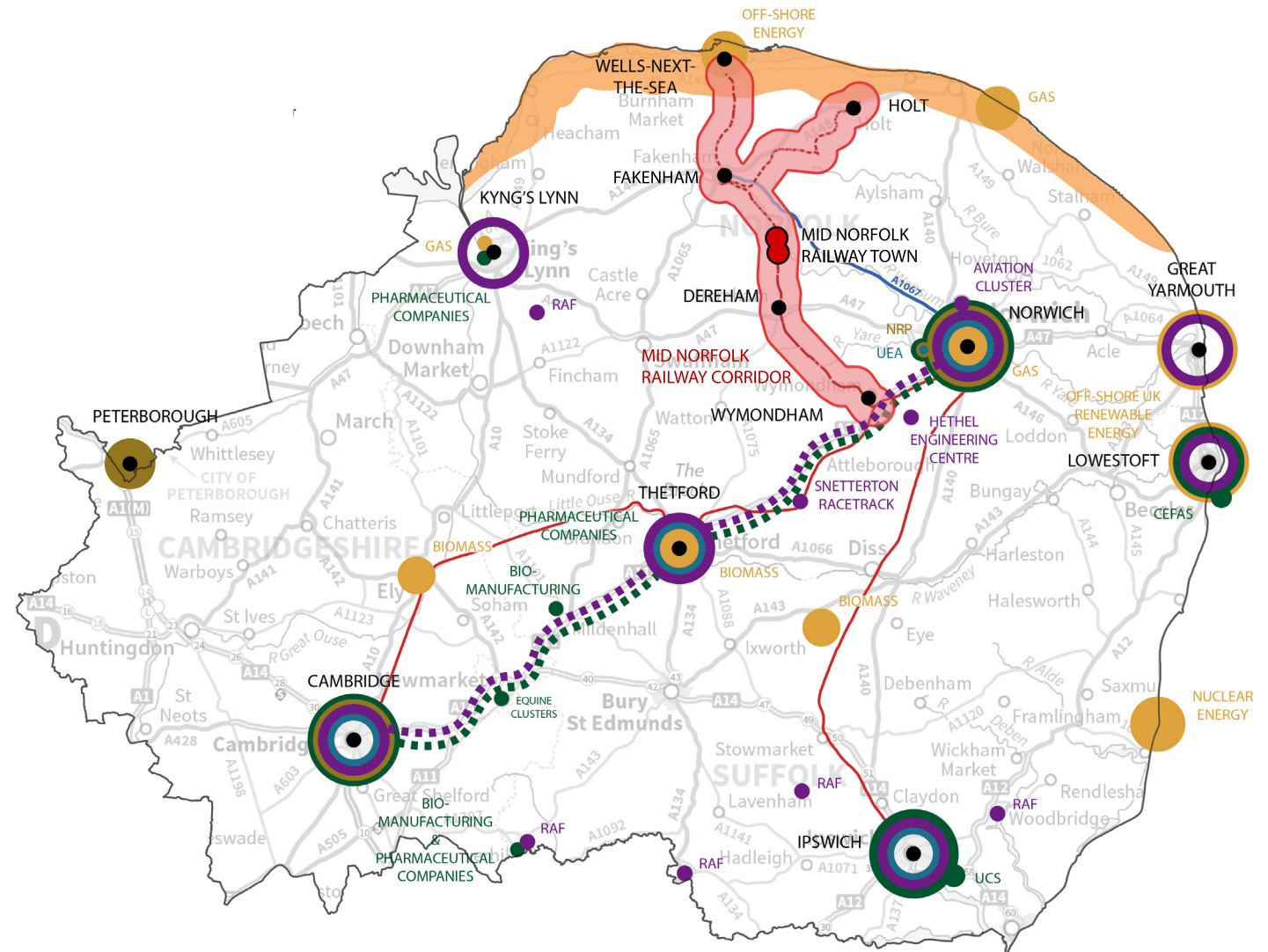


Proposal

The aim was to accommodate a garden town of up to circa. 10,000 new dwellings that is at the same scale of other garden towns already proposed at Ebbfleet, Harlow and Gilston, Bicester, Basingstoke, Didcot, and in North Northamptonshire and North Essex.

The site selected is designed to connect the operational and underused 28km Mid-Norfolk Railway that is a private heritage railway with its own rolling stock connecting the town of Wymondham (on the Norwich to Cambridge rail line) with the A1067 Fakenham Road that is a main arterial route into Norwich.

The selected site is also within a 12-minute drive time of the newly constructed Norwich Northern Distributor Road around the City of Norwich that connects the A1067 route with the main A47, A11 and A12 trunk roads connecting Norwich with Cambridge, Peterborough, Ipswich and London.



Strategic context and analysis



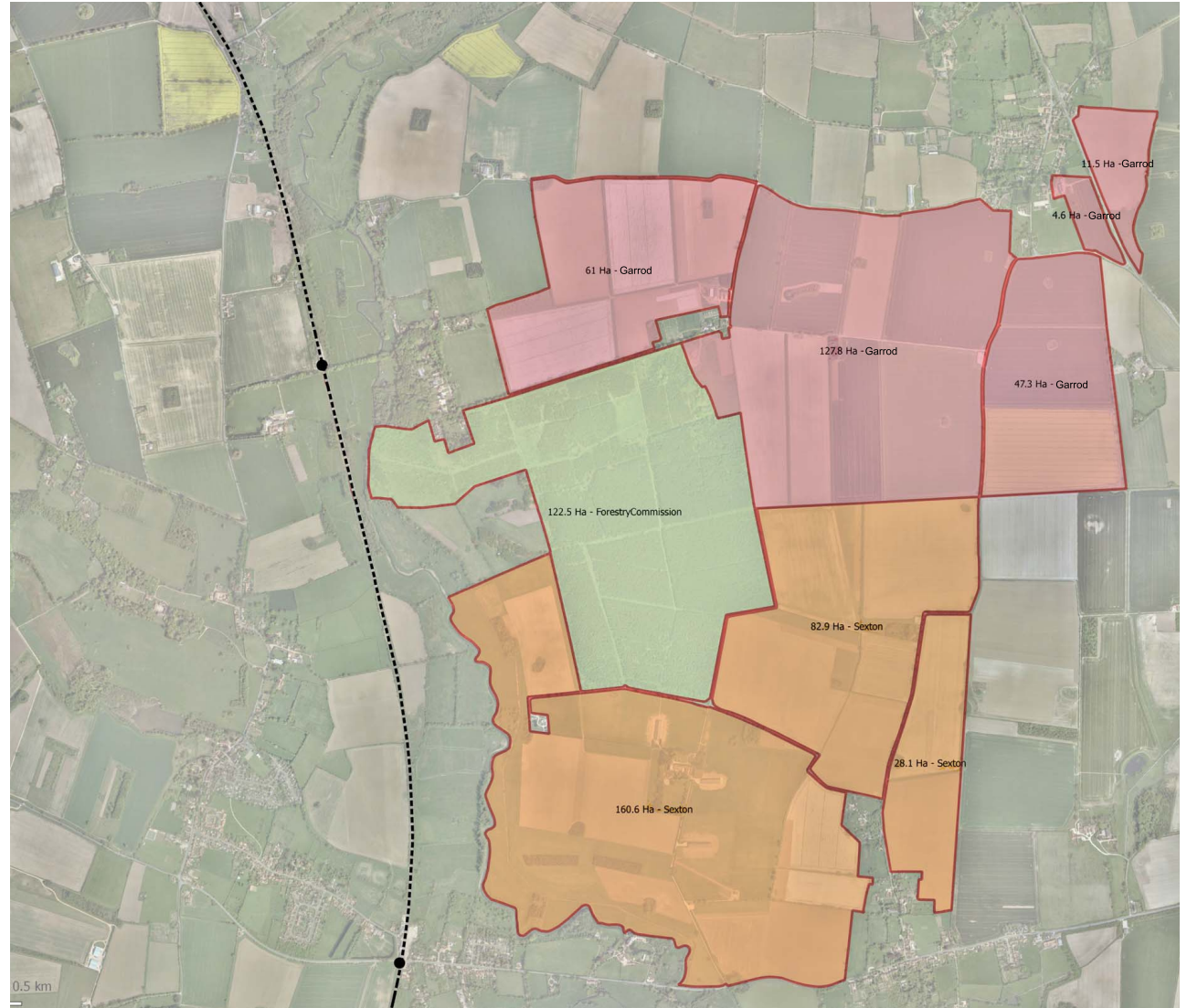
Land Ownership

The full extent of the site (some 1294 acres) that is required to deliver the Mid Norfolk Garden Town is under the control of the promoter Norfolk Railway Village Ltd. This control is through a conditional contract with the land owners and the company also has full control of the freehold interest of the former North Elmham Station site. The company is currently working with the Mid Norfolk Railway Trust to deliver a new platform, drop-off area and car parking within this site.

Mid-Norfolk Railway

The Mid Norfolk Railway that currently operates a heritage service represents a unique planning and development opportunity. The Trust is committed to bringing the rail line back into commercial use and it has worked towards this aim since its inception in 1972. The Trust owns all the rights (including unusually transferred former British Rail powers), rolling stock, certification and other paperwork necessary to operate a passenger and rail freight service between the town of Wymondham and County School Station near the village of North Elmham. Importantly due to the transfer of powers, its platforms, signalling, sidings, turning loops, track bed, crossings and other associated infrastructure can be improved, replaced and upgraded at any time without the need for a Transport and Works Orders or Parliamentary time with associated delays. The delivery of the garden town land capture model as a funding mechanism will secure an economic future for both new and existing communities along its route.

The rail corridor also provides existing utilities to the garden town site and, through the delivery of a new data centre within the garden town, could be used to create a new virtual smart city along its route. This approach could be used to connect into the discussed Global Crossing network along the Norwich to Cambridge line to deliver high-speed communications, funding opportunities and a commercial advantage across Mid-Norfolk.



Land ownership plan



A Modern Interpretation of Garden City Principles (Core Values)

The Mid-Norfolk Garden Town will be developed against the following Core Values:

- **Future economy** which will include the use of smart technologies and education to attract business generators and deliver the right type of workforce as well as fostering, supporting and rewarding innovation and ingenuity, particularly amongst the young;
- **Community** focused around engagement, support for community and civic society, smart education and healthcare as well as future methods of policing and social care;
- **Transport** centred on maximising the pull-factor through a community supported Mid Norfolk Railway as a conduit for sustainable travel and economic change;
- **Education** support for training and apprenticeships directly linked to the development, the use of smart technologies and a focus on re-skilling to meet technological change;
- **Food manufacture and supply** to include allotments, intensive poultry, salad and vegetable production, employment spaces for food processing and grazing linked to the dual use of recreational and leisure spaces;
- **Green spaces** will be designed and managed through community led stewardship models to enhance their usability and ecological potential;
- **Utilities** focused around the Mid Norfolk Railway line as a conduit to deliver high-speed broadband and services as well as localised power generation, storage and the capture of waste heat for growing and heating;
- **Housing** will be energy efficient to enable low carbon lifestyles as well as providing self and custom build housing options and more innovative forms of affordable housing supported by community land trust initiatives.

Financial Principles

Financial modelling to-date accords with the approach advocated by the 2014 Wolfson Economics Prize finalists—Barton Willmore, Shelter, Urbed, Chris Blundell and Wei Yang & Partners. This is provided in support of this proposal.

Key Summary Points

- Land is controlled and deliverable.
- Heavy rail orientated garden town developed along garden city and smart city principles.
- Concept accords with Government ambition.
- Financial modelling based on 2014 Wolfson Economics Prize finalists.
- Carefully selected site, strong urban design proposition and architectural proposition.
- An opportunity now exists for a funding and development partner.

Opportunity

There is a strong opportunity for a partner to work with Lanpro and Norfolk Railway Town Ltd to deliver the Mid Norfolk Garden Town vision. The potential exists for an organisation to provide the financial backing, in addition to the latest Government funding, for a major development proposal of this nature. A partnership will include an opportunity to help shape a visionary master plan and community engagement programme through to delivery of homes and infrastructure in this first planned new settlement within Norfolk.



Norwich

Brettingham House,
98 Pottergate,
Norwich, NR2 1EQ
Tel: 01603 631319

Retford

Office 16, Retford Enterprise
Centre, Randall Way,
Retford, DN22 7GR
Tel: 01777 552001

Colchester

Unit 2, Parkside Office Village,
Knowledge Gateway,
Colchester, CO4 3ZL
Tel: 01206 656021

York

Blake House,
18 Blake Street,
York, YO1 8QG
Tel: 01904 803 800

www.lanproservices.co.uk

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