

**Part Two: Village/Town Visions**

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**8.8 Burwell****Description of Burwell**

**Burwell** is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest settlement in terms of population in the district, after the three market towns Ely, Littleport and Soham. The village is situated in the south of the district, 4 miles north of Newmarket and 11 miles north east of Cambridge. Burwell has an attractive historic core with two Conservation Areas, the earthwork remains of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Burwell Castle, a Scheduled Monument to the south of the village, Devils Dyke an SSSI and nearly sixty listed buildings. Burwell also lies close to Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve and the Newmarket horseracing industry. The main features of the village are shown on Map 8.8.

Though in East Cambridgeshire, its close proximity to Newmarket and lack of bus services to Ely mean that many people in Burwell look to Newmarket for shops and services. Burwell itself has a good range of services including a primary school, several shops, public houses, banks, village halls, a sports centre, swimming pool, doctor's surgery, pharmacy and petrol station. The village acts as a local service centre for the surrounding smaller villages, so existing retail and services need to be retained.

The key challenge for Burwell will be achieving balanced growth – ensuring that both housing and employment growth occur together. Some housing growth is needed in Burwell to meet the housing needs of the village and also in order to support the existing shops and services. Burwell has a range of employment opportunities, mainly provided on business parks on the edge of the village. However, it also has a high level of out commuting and one of the challenges for Burwell is to reduce this by providing more jobs in the village. The District Council will need to be proactive in helping to bring the employment allocations into use. There needs to be a balance however, between meeting these needs and retaining the rural feel of the village. It is important also to avoid further elongating the village by locating new housing close to the village centre.

It is important that the necessary infrastructure and facilities are in place to support the growth of the village. Burwell Village College Primary School is currently at capacity and this school year has had to expand into temporary classroom accommodation. Further growth would mean that expansion would need to be made permanent. The doctor's surgery may also need to expand to meet the needs of the increased population. Concerns have been raised about the quality of

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outdoor sports facilities in the village and there is a desire within the community to consolidate the outdoor pitches on a single site, alongside team changing and parking facilities. Raising the quality of the riverside area is another priority for the village.

The village has good road access to the A11 and A14. It has a regular bus service to Newmarket and Cambridge, but no bus service to Ely. However, one key infrastructure requirement is provision of a foot/cycle path around the bridge on Exning Road, to enable safe access to Exning and Newmarket for pedestrians and cyclists.

### Key statistics

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Burwell   |  |
| Population <sup>44</sup>                        | 6120   |
| Dwellings <sup>44</sup>                         | 2710   |
| New dwellings built 2001-2012 (net)             | 287  |
| Estimated new dwellings 2012-2031 <sup>45</sup> | 499  |
| Employment <sup>46</sup>                        |  |
| Existing public transport services              | Regular bus service to Newmarket and Cambridge (Monday – Saturday (as at July 2012)) |

### A Vision for Burwell

A vision for Burwell in the year 2031 is set out below – followed by a set of strategic objectives to deliver and facilitate the vision. The vision provides clear direction for development in Burwell up to 2031. It has been developed from the key characteristics and issues described above, and through consultation on the Local Plan. It has also been informed by the ‘Burwell Masterplan’ document which looks at the long-term growth of Burwell over the next 20 years. Its purpose is to inform debate on the future capacity of Burwell to grow, and feed into development of the Local Plan. The Masterplan can be viewed on the District Council’s website at [www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk) and is due to be formally adopted by the Council in February 2013.

#### Burwell vision statement

In 2031 Burwell will be a thriving rural community with a variety of local shops, services and employment that has retained its local village character and community support networks.

#### Burwell strategic objectives

1. Ensure all new development is in keeping with the rural character of the village, reflecting its distinctive design characteristics and with densities that respect the rural tradition of the village.
2. Avoid further elongation of the village, and focus housing growth close to the centre part of Burwell where easy access can be provided via foot or cycle to key services and facilities.
3. Address the traffic volume and speeding issues as new development takes place, seeking to promote walking, cycling and public transport wherever possible.
4. Support job retention and creation by retaining existing employment sites and facilitating new developments in the village.

<sup>44</sup> Population and dwellings for Burwell parish, Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group (mid-2010)

<sup>45</sup> East Cambridgeshire Housing Trajectory 2012. Note, this is likely to be an underestimate as it excludes potential supply from rural exception windfall sites.

<sup>46</sup> ONS 2009

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5. Protect and enhance the village centre, by retaining existing shops and facilities, and supporting proposals for expansion.
6. Provide enhanced infrastructure and facilities to support growth, including the consolidation of outdoor sports facilities on a single site off Newmarket Road.
7. Raise the quality of the riverside area of Burwell by exploring options to increase access and recreation facilities and ensuring that new development reflects and enhances the character of its riverside setting.

**Housing**

Burwell is one of the largest villages in the district, and is likely to continue to grow over the next 20 years.

A ‘development envelope’ has been drawn around Burwell to define the built-up part of the village where housing development may be permitted. The purpose is to prevent sprawl into the open countryside. Outside the development envelope, housing will not normally be permitted – unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as essential dwellings for rural workers, or affordable housing. Housing schemes outside the development envelope will be assessed against Policy GROWTH 2 and other Local Plan policies as appropriate.

There are some opportunities for development on land within the built part of Burwell, on ‘infill’ sites. It is estimated that there could be capacity for perhaps 156 dwellings between 2011 and 2031. Development on infill sites in the village will need to be in line with Policy GROWTH 2.

However, the supply of infill land in Burwell is limited and a new housing allocation site is therefore proposed on the edge of Burwell off Newmarket Road. Development on this allocation site will need to be in line with Policy BURW1 – see details below. The new housing site is located in the central belt of Burwell and should provide good access to shops and services in the core of the village and will avoid elongating the village. The site is allocated for approximately 350 dwellings. A summary of the potential houses sources is set out in the table below.

| <i>Housing sources</i>            | <i>Number of dwellings</i> |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Outstanding planning permissions  | 52                         |
| Potential large future sites      | 33                         |
| Estimated windfall on small sites | 52                         |
| Rural exceptions sites            | 12                         |
| Housing allocation                | 350                        |
| <b>TOTAL ESTIMATED SUPPLY</b>     | <b>499</b>                 |

**Housing allocation – land off Newmarket Road**

The site is located to the east of the village, and is currently open farmland. The area is bounded by residential development to the west, Newmarket Road to the south, and farmland to the north and east. The area was allocated for housing in the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy (2009) and identified as the preferred location for housing development in the Burwell Masterplan (2012). The site is in single ownership – Cambridgeshire County Council.

The allocation is for 350 dwellings, plus the provision of open space, and land for new sports pitches. It is estimated that approximately 20 hectares of land will be required to facilitate this scale of development. Land off Newmarket Road is an open field with no obvious boundaries, and covers far in excess of 20 hectares. The map for Burwell below shows a very large ‘area of search’ well in excess of 20 hectares, somewhere within which the scheme is likely to be located.

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Applicants will need to explore and justify the exact location and boundaries of the scheme, through the production of a site-specific Masterplan submitted alongside an outline planning application. A number of constraints will influence the location of the development, including the need to provide the main access route into the site off Newmarket Road (plus an emergency access route off Ness Road), as well as further investigative work relating to design, viability and deliverability.

The 20 hectare allocation will take up only a proportion of a large open field and landholding, and it is possible that at some unknown date in the future, there could be a proposal for further development on the site as part of a future Local Plan review. The design of any scheme will therefore have to have regard to this in relation to layout, design and access. This should take the form of an Indicative Development Framework or broad concept plan, which will need to be submitted alongside the planning application for the development.

There is a community aspiration for land to be available for self-build properties and part of the site should be identified for such purposes. There is also a desire to consolidate outdoor sports facilities in the village on a single site as part of this development.

Careful landscaping around the perimeter of the site will be necessary to create an attractive setting and entrance to the village and a suitable buffer between the site and the existing residential development.

Safe access to the site will be provided off Newmarket Road, as demonstrated through a Transport Assessment. This will need to have regard to potential future expansion on the site. An additional access point for emergency vehicles exists off Ness Road and this should be brought up to a useable standard for emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. It will also be important to provide pedestrian and cycle links through to Felsham Chase, to allow ease of movement for local people.

The District Council will require the preparation of a Masterplan for the whole allocation, prior to approval of a scheme. The Masterplan should establish the broad location of land uses, roads, services, open space and landscaping, and look at principles such as access and movement, built form and phasing. It will demonstrate how the site will deliver the key aims of the Policy BURW1, and ensure a high standard of comprehensive planning. The Masterplan will need to be submitted alongside an outline planning application. Whilst new development does not necessarily have to take a traditional form, it will be expected to harmonise and be sympathetic with the character of the village. Development will need to comprise of a mix of densities across the site and have regard to the rural character of the village and be sensitive to the edge of settlement location.

**Policy BUR 1: Housing allocation, land off Newmarket Road**

Approximately 20 hectares of land is allocated for residential development for approximately 350 dwellings. Applicants will be expected to identify the exact location and boundaries of the development scheme, somewhere within the broad area of search, through the production of a Masterplan for the scheme.

The Masterplan for the whole scheme will need to be prepared and submitted as part of an outline planning application, and approved by the District Council.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide an element of affordable housing (currently 40%) as required under Policy HOU 3, with priority being given to people in local housing need.

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- Provide a minimum of 2.2ha of public open space on-site and at least 1 play area.
- Provide a minimum of 2.5 hectares of land for 4 sports pitches, changing facilities and onsite parking within the site.
- Have particular regard to site layout, building height, and soft landscaping, to minimise the visual impact of the development.
- Provide appropriate landscaping as a buffer where necessary to existing developments and where the scheme follows the new edge of the village.
- Provide footpath and cycle linkages between Felsham Chase, Newmarket Road and Ness Road, and a foot/cycle path link through the site between Newmarket Road and Ness Road.
- Provide safe vehicular access from Newmarket Road, as demonstrated by a Transport Assessment, with an additional access point provided for emergency vehicles off Ness Road.
- Provide necessary highway improvements and traffic management measures on nearby roads, as demonstrated in the Transport Assessment for the development proposal.
- Provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to reflect current evidence of need within Burwell, including provision for an element of self-build properties
- Demonstrate how they fit with the longer-term plans for the area to the east of the allocation site – via an Indicative Development Framework or broad concept plan for the whole area
- Comply with the other policies of the Local Plan.

**Employment**

Burwell has a range of employment opportunities, mainly provided on business parks on the edge of the village. The main estate in Burwell is the Meadow View Business Park on Reach Road. To the north of the village is Broads Road Business Park and there are also a number of small units on Heath Road to the east of the village. Other key employers in the town include the school, Burwell House, the medical centre, and shops and businesses located in the village centre.

There are currently an estimated 1100 jobs<sup>47</sup> available in Burwell. The District Council is keen to try and provide more jobs in Burwell, and increase the levels of self-containment. The current self-containment level is estimated to be approximately 29%, e.g. with 1,100 jobs available for 3,800 people of employment age (16-64 years). As part of this strategy, a number of new sites are proposed for employment development in Burwell, to try and increase the stock of commercial premises. This includes employment allocations on Reach Road – see Policies BURW 2 and 3 below. A summary of employment potential on these sites is set out in the table below. The table also includes an estimate for additional home working employment in Burwell over the Plan period.

Additional jobs from these sites/sources alone could help to increase the level of self-containment in Burwell to an estimated 51% by 2031 (with 1730 jobs available for an estimated 3400 people of employment age)<sup>48</sup>. However, this is a conservative estimate and self-containment is likely to be higher, as it doesn't take account of other potential increases in jobs in the village from existing businesses, schools, shops and levels of home working.

*Employment potential on new sites in Burwell*

| <i>Location</i>              | <i>Hectares</i> | <i>Estimated jobs growth</i> | <i>Policy reference</i> |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Land at Reach Road           | 2.5             | 337                          | Policy BURW 2           |
| Former DS Smith Site         | 3               | 293                          | Policy BURW 3           |
| Home working                 |                 | 129                          | -                       |
| <b>TOTAL ADDITIONAL JOBS</b> |                 | <b>759</b>                   |                         |

<sup>47</sup> Source ONS 2009

<sup>48</sup> Future population estimate as provided by Cambs County Council Research Group, based on the housing trajectory

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It is also important to try and prevent the loss of existing business premises and land, in order to support local economic growth. This is even more crucial in the context of the current economy where viability and profits margins are low for business development, particularly speculative schemes. The District Council is keen to retain the existing stock of business land and premises in Burwell, given this context. Proposals to re-use employment sites in Burwell for other purposes will therefore only be permitted in certain circumstances – as set out in Policy EMP 1 in Chapter 5 Employment.

Large-scale new employment development should be focused in the allocated employment/mixed use sites – in order to facilitate their development, ensure suitable access, and minimise impact on the setting and character of Burwell. However, small-scale employment schemes that come forward on the edge of Burwell may be supported in principle – subject to Policies EMP 2, EMP 3 and EMP 4 (as set out in Chapter 5).

**Employment allocation – land at Reach Road**

The site is located on the southern side of Reach Road, directly adjacent the Meadow View business Park and is currently uncultivated. The eastern boundary of the site is bordered by Reach Road and the western boundary of the site borders farmland. The site was identified as a potential area for employment development in the Core Strategy (2009) and the Burwell Masterplan (2012).

The Local Highway Authority has indicated that some improvements to Reach Road would be required. A Transport Assessment would also be necessary to consider the adequacy of the Reach Road/B1102 junction to cope with additional traffic volumes.

The existing electricity pylons and overhead cables that cross the site will influence the layout of the development. Part of the site is situated in an area of high flood risk, so mitigation of flood risk will need to be demonstrated in the detailed design and layout of the site

It will be important to provide landscaping on the eastern and western boundaries of the site. There may be an opportunity to improve the existing view of development on the approach from Reach Road to the west through an appropriate strategic planting scheme.

**Policy BUR 2: Employment allocation, land at Reach Road**

Approximately 2.5 hectares of land is allocated for employment development (B1/B2) on land at Reach Road.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide safe and secure vehicular access to the site from Reach Road
- Ensure there is sufficient capacity at the Reach Road/B1102 junction for the additional traffic flows generated by development at this site
- Have particular regard to the scale, height, design and massing of buildings and landscaping, in order to minimise visual impact on the surrounding countryside
- Take into account the existing electricity pylons and overhead cables when considering the layout of the development.
- Provide landscaping along the boundaries with adjoining agricultural land and retain existing hedgerows and trees.
- Demonstrate that the flood risk on the site can be adequately mitigated
- Comply with other policies of the Local Plan.

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**Employment allocation – Former DS Smith Site, Reach Road**

This site is part of a larger site previously occupied by DS Smith. The original site was allocated for housing and employment in the 2000 Local Plan (a 49/51 split). Whilst the housing element of the site has been built, the employment element (this site) remains vacant.

The old factory building remains on the site, now in a derelict state, and the site is very overgrown.

The site is bordered to the south-east by housing, to the north is an existing employment area and Burwell Fire Station. Along the western boundary of the site is 'Paulines Swamp', a County Wildlife Site.

The Council considers that it is important to retain this strategic employment site in Burwell as the Council's Jobs Growth Strategy identifies a need to retain existing employment sites in order to underpin future economic growth.

There is a demand for employment land in the south of the district, and the loss of employment land may harm local firms, who may find it difficult to find suitable replacement sites. It is also important to retain employment sites to ensure that housing growth is matched by a growth in job opportunities for local people – in order to avoid further out-commuting. In addition there is a strong local desire to retain the site for employment use as demonstrated in the Burwell Masterplan and it remains an employment allocation in that document.

The loss of an employment site is normally only appropriate in policy terms if continued employment use is not viable, or there are environmental issues, or if an alternative use would bring wider community benefits (as set out in Policy EMP 1). The owner has not demonstrated how these criteria can be met.

A buffer zone between the site and the adjoining housing will need to be provided and suitable landscaping established along the other boundaries. Development will also need to be sensitive to the nearby County Wildlife Site.

The Local Highway Authority has indicated that some improvements to Reach Road will be required. A Transport Assessment is also necessary to consider the adequacy of the Reach Road/B1102 junction to cope with additional traffic volumes.

**Policy BUR 3: Employment allocation, former DS Smith site, Reach Road**

Approximately 3 hectares of land is allocated for employment development (B1, B2 & B8) on the DS Smith site, Reach Road.

Development proposals will be expected to:

- Provide safe and secure vehicular access to the site from Reach Road
- Ensure there is sufficient capacity at the Reach Road/B1102 junction for the additional traffic flows
- Have particular regard to the scale, height, design and massing of buildings and landscaping, in order to minimise visual impact on the adjoining housing and surrounding countryside
- Protect and enhance County Wildlife Site 11
- Provide landscaping along the boundaries with adjoining agricultural land and adjacent properties

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- Comply with other policies of the Local Plan.

**Village Centre**

Burwell has a historic village centre which provides a range of food (convenience) and non-food (comparison) shops, pubs, community facilities and other services. The current key attractors include Barclays Bank, Lloyds Pharmacy, Post Office and the Co-Operative store. There are also a number of important community facilities in and around the centre, including the churches, library, Sports Centre, and the Mandeville Hall and Gardner Memorial Hall meeting rooms. There is no main shopping area, but shops appear in clusters in the core of the village along High Street, the Causeway and North Street.

The village centre appears to be performing well, given the population of Burwell and its catchment area. Whilst it provides a good range of community facilities, there is a fairly limited choice of shops, restaurants and cafes. It is important to retain the existing retail and commercial employment uses in the village centre and support opportunities for expansion to ensure it continues to fulfill its service centre role for residents and neighbouring communities – see Policy BUR4. More parking is also needed near the shops and services as the current public car park is heavily used and should be retained. It will also be important to protect existing community facilities in the village centre. As set out in Chapter 7, the loss of community facilities will be resisted under Policy COM 3.

**Policy BUR4: Burwell Village Centre**

The strategy for the enhancement and development of Burwell village centre is as follows:

- Existing retail units within Burwell village centre are to be retained. The conversion or redevelopment of existing retail units to other uses (particularly housing) will be discouraged in accordance with Policy COM 2.
- Proposals for additional retail and village centre uses in Burwell will be encouraged.
- Enhanced pedestrian and cycle routes and cycle parking to be provided within the village centre.
- The current public car parking at Burwell Ex-Servicemen's Social Club should be retained for its current use.

Privately owned car parks and car parking areas located in or close to Burwell village centre should be retained – unless applicants can demonstrate that alternative provision of equivalent value can be made to off-set any loss.

**The Weirs/Riverside**

The Weirs form the boundary of the village on the western side of the village. This is an attractive area, which at present is spoilt by litter and dumping. Burwell Lode was significant in the historic development of this area. The Weirs provides an attractive footway that could be developed to form part of a village trail to trace the former industrial history of the village. There is also scope to promote the natural history and biodiversity of the locality.

There is potential here for small scale marina development with associated facilities, employment and recreational opportunities associated with fishing and boating, and development of boating links with Wicken Fen, provided that the scale of the proposals is modest and in keeping with this rural Fen area.



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Any development of this area should look at the potential to improve and enhance this area, which could benefit from better pedestrian and cycle access links and improved signage and landscaping. Proposals must be able to demonstrate that any additional traffic generated from development in this area can be accommodated and any impact on North Street mitigated.

**Policy BUR 5: The Weirs/Riverside**

The quality of The Weirs/Riverside area should be enhanced as this is a key open space for the people of Burwell. Opportunities should be explored to improve public access and create a new village trail along the river area.

Development proposals adjacent or in the vicinity of The Weirs/Riverside associated with the provision of river recreation facilities will generally be permitted and will be expected to:

- Be sensitively designed and in scale with the character of the area
- Improve pedestrian and cycle access links to this area
- Improve the appearance and setting of the area

Demonstrate through a Transport Assessment that additional traffic generated can be accommodated and mitigated.

**Infrastructure and community facilities**

Burwell needs to be served by appropriate levels of infrastructure and facilities, in order to ensure the quality of people's lives and prevent unnecessary travel. This includes infrastructure such as water, energy, sewerage treatment works, and roads – and community facilities such as schools, open space, health, and sport and recreation facilities.

As outlined in Chapter 7, the District Council will continue to work with infrastructure providers to enable the delivery of necessary infrastructure and facilities. The District Council will also seek to secure planning obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy monies from developers towards new infrastructure and facilities required as a result of new development.

It will also be important to protect existing community facilities. As set out in Chapter 7, the loss of community facilities will be resisted under Policy COM 3. Proposals for new community development that benefits Burwell will be supported in principle, subject to Policies GROWTH 3 and COM 4.

The key future infrastructure and service requirements for Burwell are set out in the table below. These have been identified through technical work, discussions with infrastructure providers, and community consultation - and are linked to the estimated future levels of growth in Burwell over the next 20 years.

| <i>Infrastructure / facility</i> | <i>Location</i> | <i>Provider</i>                                      | <i>Delivery date (est.)</i> | <i>Details</i>  |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Extension to Primary school      | The Causeway    | Cambridgeshire County Council                        |                             | Temporary extension granted 2012 – more permanent expansion to be determined. |
| Exning Bridge                    | Newmarket Road  | Cambridgeshire County Council/Suffolk County Council |                             | Provision of a safe foot/cycle path around the bridge                         |
| Outdoor Sports                   | Newmarket       | Cambridgeshire                                       |                             | Consolidation of outdoor sports   |

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|---|----------------|--------------------|--|---|
| facilities  | Road           | County Council     |  | pitches, car parking and changing facilities on Newmarket Road housing allocation site          |
| New link to create Burwell Circular walking/cycle route | Newmarket Road | Developer          |  | Provision of foot/cycle path link from Newmarket Road to Ness Road                              |
| Improvements to riverside usage, appearance and access  | The Weirs      | Various            |  | Possible modest Marina type development adjacent to Burwell Lode plus .....                     |
| Expansion of Doctors Surgery                            | Newmarket Road | Cambridgeshire PCT |  | A extension to the existing surgery premises may be necessary to meet demands of new population |

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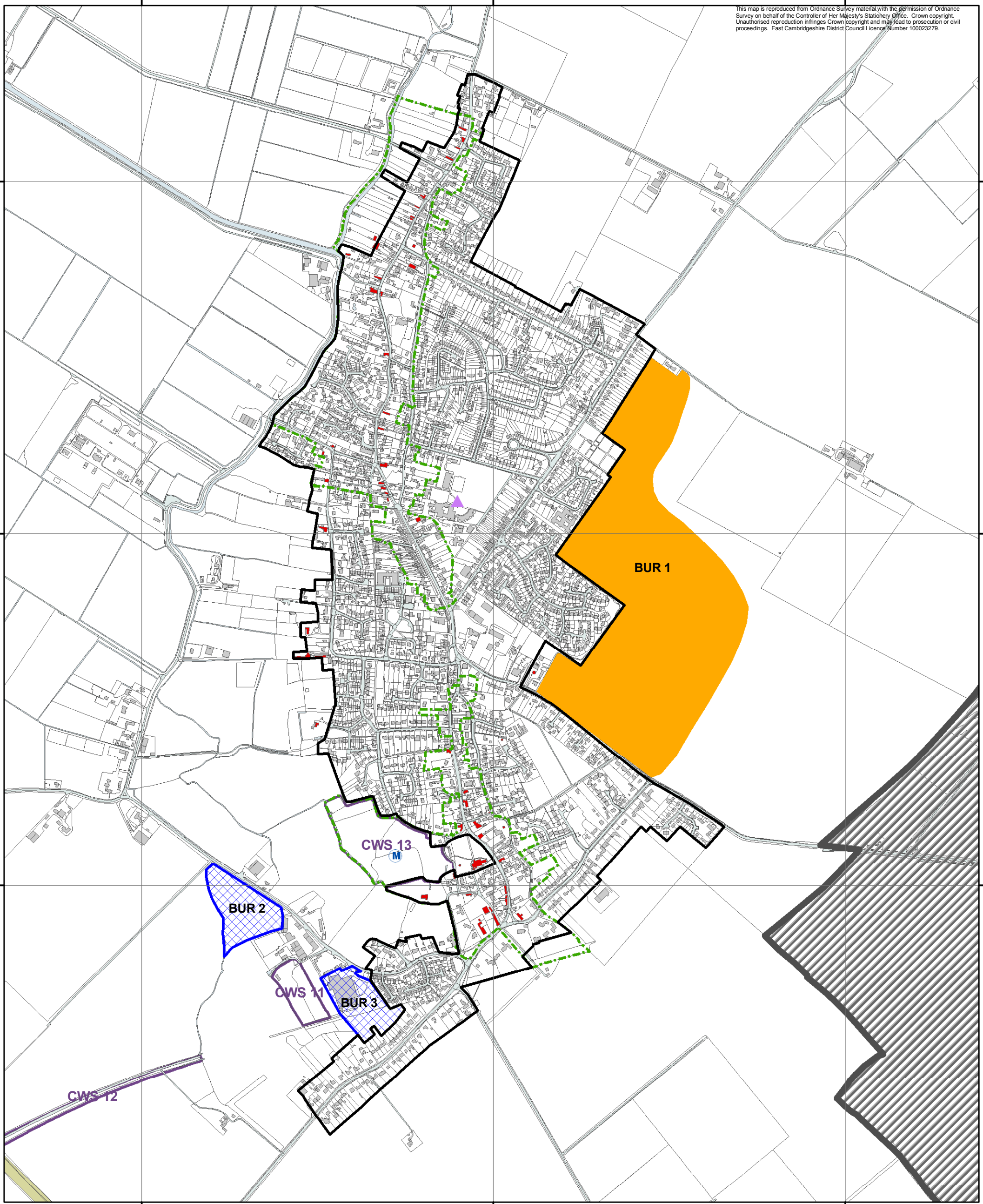
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**Key**

|                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Development Envelope              | Listed Building            |
| Housing led/Mixed use allocations | Primary School             |
| Employment allocation             | Scheduled Ancient Monument |
| BUR X Local Plan Policy           | Outside district           |
| Conservation Area                 |                            |

Map 8.8  
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1:10,000