

Swindon Borough Local Development Framework

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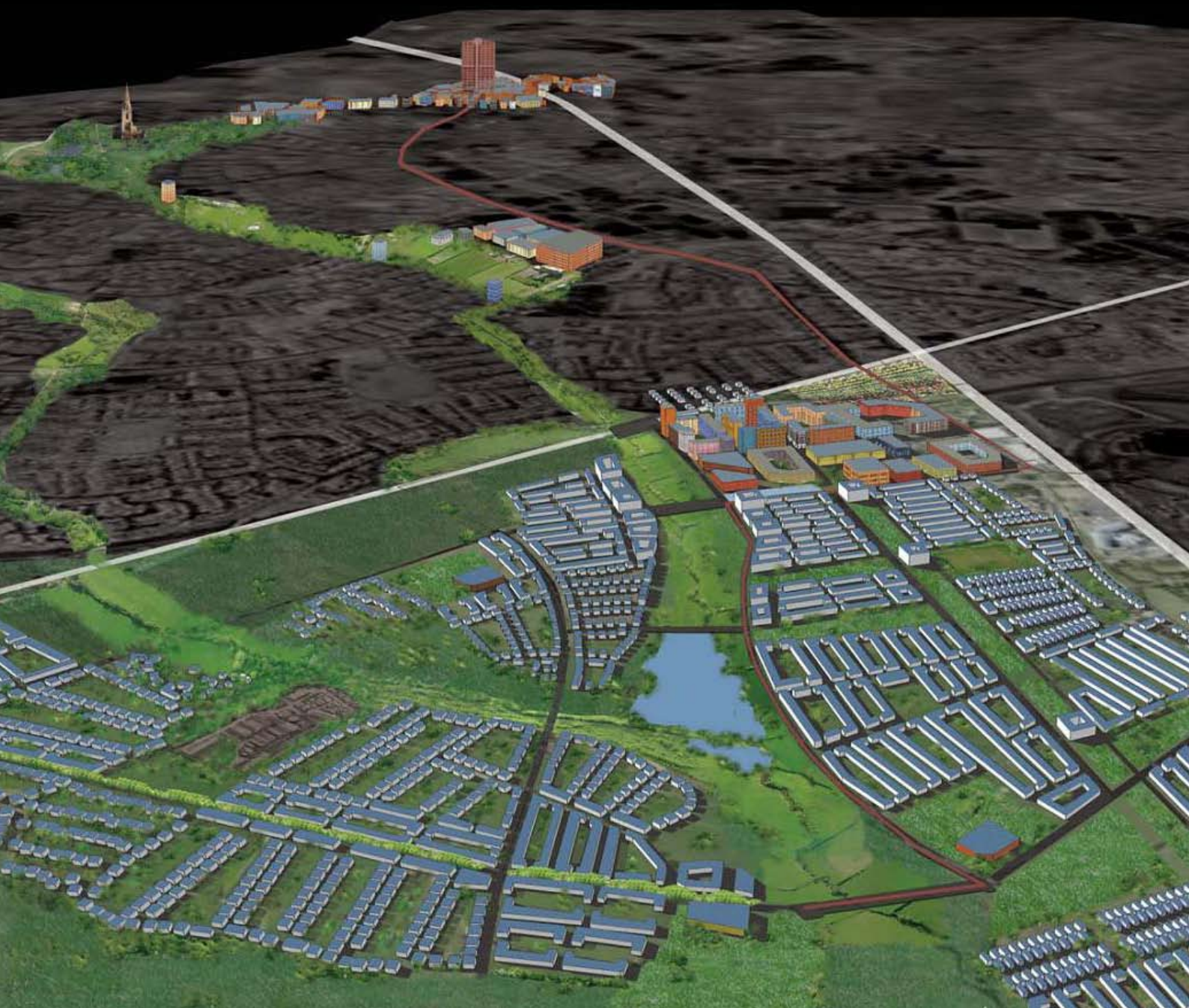
# Eastern Development Area Summary

*“A Greenprint for East Swindon”*

Draft Supplementary Planning Document

[www.swindon.gov.uk/spd](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/spd)

April 2009





# What is the Eastern Development Area (EDA)?

- Swindon's Eastern Development Area will be a new community to the East of the A419
- It will have 12,000 homes including jobs, shops, schools, parks, public open space, sports and other facilities
- An indicative plan is shown on page 9

## What is this document for?

- This document is a summary of the draft planning policy document known as the Eastern Development Area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will give a planning outline of what is expected of the EDA and what is needed to develop it. If you would like to read the full document it is available at [www.swindon.gov.uk/spd](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/spd)

## Why the East?

- The Swindon Joint Study (2005) was a sub-regional study that took place to inform the regional plan
- It looked into how much growth could be accommodated at Swindon in the next 20 years in the current urban area and the most sustainable direction for growth as an urban extension
- It looked at potential to the Northwest, Southwest and East and concluded that the area to the East was most sustainable for growth.
- This was because it is close to large employers and because it is a large low-lying site with no critical landscape features and very little wildlife constraints

## What are we consulting on?

- The aim of the consultation is to get the opinions of anybody who is interested in the long-term planning and growth of Swindon and particularly the EDA
- We want your opinions on the plans! Do you agree with our approach to the EDA or not? You can let us know using the official form or online at: [www.swindon.gov.uk/spd](http://www.swindon.gov.uk/spd)

## What happens next?

- Consultation begins on 20<sup>th</sup> April for 8 weeks until 15<sup>th</sup> June
- When the consultation period is over the Council will look at all comments and take a final draft version of the SPD to planning committee for final agreement
- Once agreed it will be part of the Local Development Framework and will have legal status and will be used in considering planning applications

## Policy Context

- The draft regional plan proposes that Swindon Borough should deliver 34,200 new homes to 2026 including 12,000 new homes to the East of Swindon with strong links to the town centre
- The Swindon Core Strategy, (which is still being produced), will provide more detail on what is needed to deliver the EDA
- The Swindon Community Strategy outlines the community's vision, as a leading example of sustainable development with a worldwide reputation for change, science and technology

# Vision and Goals

## The Strategic Vision

- The Eastern Development Area must deliver high quality, compact and sustainable development well integrated with neighbouring communities
- The flood risk zones and green spaces will be used to connect different neighbourhoods or 'islands' together. These green spaces will have mix of activity and uses without increasing flood risk including;
  - Sustainable transport links
  - Recreation
  - Water
  - Wildlife habitat
  - Woodland
  - Wetland
  - Land used for producing crops and food
- The vision will strengthen Swindon's connection with the countryside through the green spaces in the EDA.
- Swindon's Central Area must be the focus for the town with good access and links from the EDA. The EDA should build strong links with east Swindon and can help provide benefits to those areas, such as access to shops, jobs, schools and leisure facilities

## The Development Principles - The EDA should:

1. Deliver a diverse living environment of high quality that accommodates growth targets within an efficient and generally compact urban form with a strong sense of place
2. Create improved eastern approach routes into Swindon and help redefine the image of Swindon
3. Form part of Swindon and integrate as seamlessly as possible with the eastern edge of town
4. Create new sustainable communities and facilities that connect with and protect the character of existing surrounding communities
5. Support the broader Swindon economy with new employment and investment opportunities
6. Become part of and help deliver a new improved strategic transport network for Swindon that encourages public transport, pedestrian and cycle use, seeking to achieve connectivity within and beyond the EDA
7. Assist the physical, social and economic regeneration of East Swindon
8. Conserve and enhance natural systems, watercourses, biodiversity and landscape resources, as part of an integrated green infrastructure proposal
9. Conserve and enhance Swindon's cultural heritage, recognising its key assets and preserving the identity of those assets within the EDA
10. Connect Swindon with its wider landscape setting in a sympathetic way

# Options

Three potential options were prepared for developing the EDA.

## **EDA Option 1- 'The Crunch'**

- 'The Crunch' would join the EDA with Swindon to make strong links to the town centre and benefits for the existing communities in east Swindon

## **EDA Option 2- 'The Stretch'**

- 'The stretch' turns the EDA in to a separate connected area on the edge of Swindon; the new development would not mix with the existing urban area in East Swindon

## **EDA Option 3- 'The Weave'**

- 'The weave' sees the EDA as a mixed part of Swindon, like 'the crunch', but does not look to achieve strong links in the short term. 'The weave' could evolve into 'the crunch' at a later stage

The favoured option is 'the crunch' because it would best meet the needs of development, and the vision and principles set out above.

## **South Marston**

In all three options development north of the A420 will be needed. It is important to protect South Marston from being joined with Swindon, so two further options are proposed to achieve that:

### ■ **South Marston Option 1:**

Extend the village and create a boundary between South Marston and the EDA

### ■ **South Marston Option 2:**

Create a boundary between the EDA and South Marston north of the railway

The favoured option is Option 1 because it helps to create a stronger sense of separation from Swindon, improved services and facilities such as shops, bus links and community facilities for South Marston, the opportunity to link with sites to the west and the creation of a strong, central 'village green'.

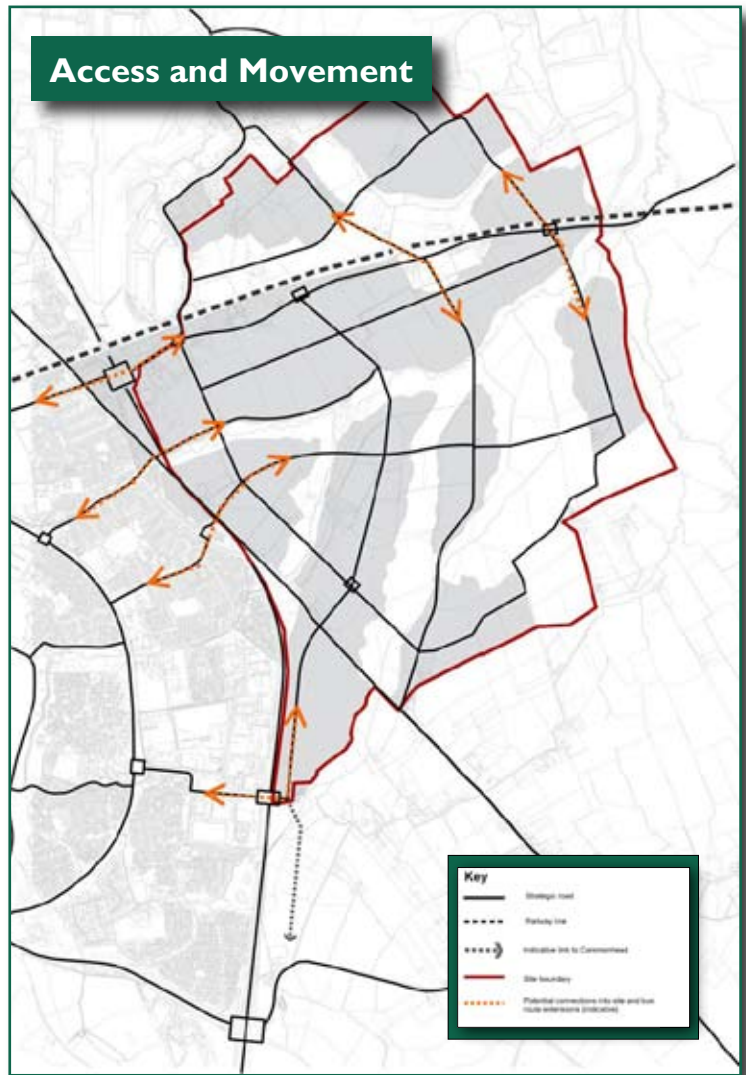
# Part 3- The Plan

## **Movement and Transport**

To be able to support transport needs, the EDA will deliver the following:

- A Rapid Transit Link to Swindon's Central Area
- Improvements to White Hart Roundabout
- A 'Green Bridge' around the River Cole providing strong walking links to and from the EDA
- New links at Dorcan and Commonhead
- A new two-way link across the railway line
- Encourage other ways of transport than the car but also to provide appropriate parking
- Measures to minimise rat-running through the nearby villages and east Swindon

## Access and Movement



### Regeneration and Linkages

- It is important that growth at the EDA benefits existing communities as well as the new ones. If it does not then there is a risk that existing communities will decline as investment is focussed at the EDA and the Central Area

To make sure that existing communities are well linked with the EDA the following is proposed:

- **Physical links**- strong and direct links across the A419; including White Hart, a 'Green Bridge' and a new link at Dorcan
- **Regeneration Corridor**- between the EDA and Swindon town centre with fast movement and the creation of a new place with local services and facilities around the Greenbridge area based on the needs of the community
- **New development** - small-scale development in east Swindon to help people to move around more easily and to provide new facilities
- **Education facilities**- providing improvements to current facilities or new facilities in east swindon

It is important that these are researched further with the community to make sure that the plans make real improvements. Not all of these can be delivered by the EDA and Swindon Borough Council will plan for these separately.

### Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure includes networks of green spaces such as; parks, woodland, informal open space, nature reserves and historic sites and links such as; river corridors, floodplains, wildlife corridors and greenways. There is a lot of Green Infrastructure within the EDA and this will benefits in terms of:

- Nature and biodiversity
- Play and recreation
- Promoting healthier lifestyles
- Education and links to schools
- Good quality facilities
- Local food production
- Reducing and adopting to climate change

The Green Infrastructure at the EDA should create its own strong identity with residents and visitors with the creation of a special attraction or 'landmark feature'. The EDA will also create opportunities for wildlife and biodiversity to move easily through the built and natural environment, which will strengthen links between Nightingale Wood and the North Wessex Downs and to current communities in Swindon.

## Housing

- 35% affordable housing (this may reduce to 30% depending on the regional plan)
- Affordable housing in blocks of no more than 15 homes, mixed into the communities
- Mix & size of houses must reflect Swindon Borough Council's latest housing needs
- Designed to provide accessible and adaptable living spaces for everyone from young families to older people and individuals with disabilities
- Provide a mix of housing, with family housing, smaller and larger houses, there will be less of a need for smaller flats at the EDA as these will be provided in the Central Area

## Employment and jobs

- The EDA is very near to a number of employment sites including Honda, Keypoint and Dorcan, and strong links must be made to these
- The EDA must not compete with the regeneration plans for the town centre
- The EDA should cater for around 5,000 jobs on around 35 hectares
- Key employment areas are proposed around White Hart at the District Centre, Dorcan and Nightingale Wood
- The sectors that the EDA is likely to be attractive to are linked to car manufacturing at Honda, distribution and some office development, that complements plans for the town centre

## Local Facilities

### District Centre

The District Centre will be very important in joining the EDA together with East Swindon, in giving the EDA and East Swindon character and identity and in providing shops, jobs and activities for people who live in the area.

- The district centre should be in the Northwest of the site and must create a focus, bringing in people from the current areas of East Swindon and the EDA.
- It must deliver a high quality urban environment giving a focus for the whole of East Swindon
- It must not compete with the town centre
- It will include a food superstore, cafes, businesses, retail, public space and community activities
- The EDA district centre should be designed in a 'high street' style layout like Old Town or Gorse Hill and not in a car park style like West Swindon or the Northern Orbital Park

### Schools

The Swindon School Place Planning Study predicts that there will be a need for around 14 'Forms of Entry' (FE) at the EDA for both primary and secondary school children. A form of entry is a year group of 30 pupils e.g. 2FE school would have two classes of 30 pupils per year group.

- There are 3 options for secondary schools that's could meet the demand at the EDA:
  1. 2 new secondary schools within the EDA
  2. 1 new secondary school in the EDA and 1 in the existing urban area
  3. 1 new secondary school in the EDA and an increase in size and improvements to schools at Dorcan, Churchfields and / or Kingsdown
- In total there will be 7 new primary schools. Where possible, primary schools should be placed with neighbourhood centres, create a local focus for the community

### **Neighbourhood centres**

It is proposed that 5 neighbourhood centres (around 3 – 9 shops) are provided in the EDA including:

- Local shops and facilities (e.g. hairdressers)
- Public House/ Restaurant if needed
- Small offices/ employment
- Residential above the shops
- Community facilities/ places of worship (religious places)
- Public art
- A recycling point

### **Leisure facilities**

New sports facilities will be needed and should be linked to the secondary schools. A sports centre must be provided including:

- A sports hall with 6 courts, at least 1 should be designed for other specific uses (e.g. dance)
- Swimming pool
- Health and fitness suite

Arrangements must be made for a second sports facility which should include the same facilities as above but without a swimming pool. This should be linked to:

- A second secondary school in the EDA; or
- A new secondary school in East Swindon; or
- New or improvements to sports facilities at an existing school in east Swindon

### **Public Open Space**

There will be a need for around 90 hectares of public open space, of which around half should be provided outside of the flood risk zones. This will include:

- Children's Play Areas
- Playing Pitches including; adult, junior and mini football, cricket, adult and junior rugby
- Other outdoor and informal sports facilities e.g. Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- General open space
- Allotments

### **Community facilities**

New community facilities located in the neighbourhood centres and schools should provide:

- Small and medium theatre and performance spaces
- Dance and music studios and recital rooms including music studios
- Digital studios for film, radio and TV
- Art studios including ceramics
- Multi-purpose halls

## Emergency services and Health

- There is a need to identify a site for a new Fire Station
- Neighbourhood Police Points at the district and neighbourhood centres
- Safe and accessible environments to help reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Two new GP surgeries, with dentist and pharmacy
- Design at the EDA should encourage healthy lifestyles which includes; the chance to walk and cycle, sports facilities and links to and from communities outside the EDA

## Sustainability, Energy and Waste

- Buildings at the EDA should be built to the highest standards of design and quality that can be delivered meeting government targets
- Renewable Energy must be provided on site; further work needs to be done on this but is likely to include wind energy and a heat and energy plant which heats nearby buildings
- There will be a need to provide a new Sewage Treatment Works and Waste Recycling Centre to meet Swindon's growth, if the EDA is deemed the best place to have these then there is room
- Recycling points at the Neighbourhood Centres

## Urban Design Goals

- Character and context- whilst creating new places, the EDA should respect the existing historic and natural qualities of the area/site
- Identity- the EDA should have sustainable, creative and modern design for buildings
- Continuity and enclosure- streets should have specific widths and heights and development blocks should create fronts looking on to the public spaces, brightening it up with activity
- Quality of the public places and spaces - the EDA should create high quality, attractive and successful public spaces; both built and natural
- Biodiversity and diversity- local biodiversity should be protected and improved through attractively designed environments; mixing wildlife and built environment. The EDA should also provide a mix and choice of housing and character, addressing the needs of the local community
- Ease of movement- the EDA should be easy to move around and provide natural surveillance by making sure that streets, footpaths and cycle ways are looked over
- Legibility- each neighbourhood should have a clear layout and identity so it's easy for people to find their way around, this can be achieved by using focus points, landmarks, main buildings, special corners, public art, lighting, clear signs, framing and improving local views
- Adaptability- flexible uses and the option to change over time to allow extension and changes
- Compactness and resource efficiency- the EDA should make the best use of land so that people can live more effectively, to make services and facilities possible

## Environment Protection

### Flood Risk

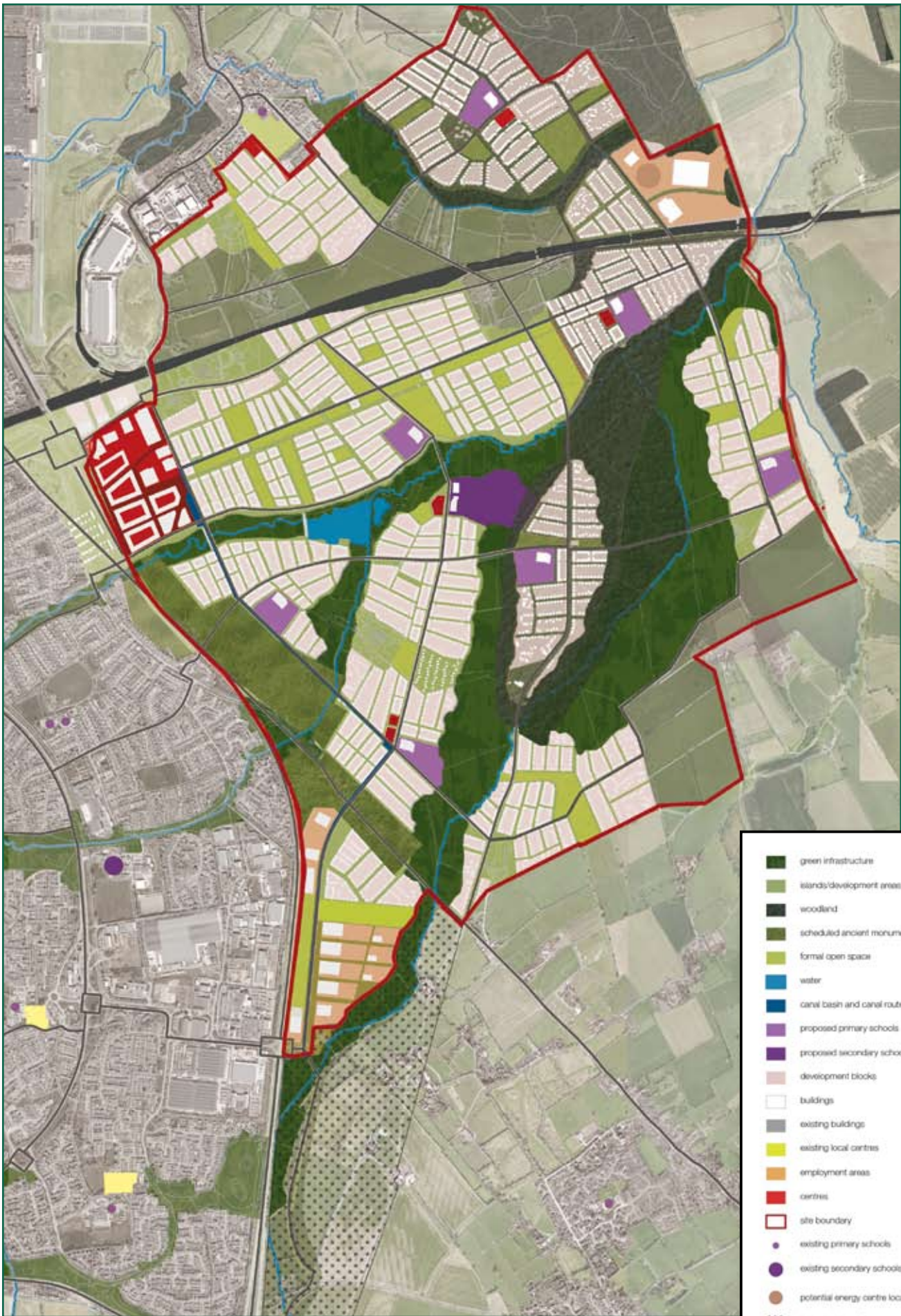
- There are rivers and watercourses, with flood risk areas, that run through the EDA
- No built development will be provided on flood risk areas
- There are opportunities to improve existing flood risk problems in the EDA by improving land that is currently not very well drained
- There are opportunities to improve existing flood risk problems in east Swindon and South Marston

### Ecology and Biodiversity

- There are no designated areas for wildlife protection within the site
- There is potential for protected species to exist in the EDA and impact on these must be mitigated and possibly alternative habitat provided
- The river corridors provide a focus for wildlife interests and these should be made stronger
- Biodiversity should be improved through the whole development including buildings and gardens

### Historic environment

- There is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and other areas of important archaeology on site
- There are a number of Listed Buildings and other buildings of importance on site
- These historic sites will have to be protected and a strategy to minimise the impact of development will be needed



- green infrastructure
- islands/development areas
- woodland
- scheduled ancient monument
- formal open space
- water
- canal basin and canal route
- proposed primary schools
- proposed secondary schools
- development blocks
- buildings
- existing buildings
- existing local centres
- employment areas
- centres
- site boundary
- existing primary schools
- existing secondary schools
- potential energy centre location
- indicative link to Commonhead

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This information about Draft eastern Development Area Supplementary Planning Document - A Greenprint for East Swindon is available on the internet at [www.swindon.gov.uk](http://www.swindon.gov.uk).

It can be produced in a range of languages and formats (such as large print, Braille or other accessible formats) by contacting the Customer Services Department.

Tel: 01793 445500    Fax: 01793 463331    E-mail: [customerservices@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@swindon.gov.uk)