



# East Hemel

## Cambridge Study Tour Report

December 2024





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## 1. Headline summary

In December 2024, The Crown Estate (TCE) arranged a study tour to two neighbourhoods in Cambridge to learn about some new and recent developments and communities.

The tour took place on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December when the group visited **Trumpington Meadows and Clay Farm** in the southern fringe of the city and **Eddington** in the north-west.

The study tour forms part of the ongoing, collaborative approach to community and stakeholder engagement undertaken for the land at East Hemel. The insights and ideas developed from the tour will inform the forthcoming Community Design Workshops and engagement beyond.

Visiting these neighbourhoods offered an opportunity to see first-hand how design principles were applied in delivery and to talk to those that were involved in the process, including local councillors, designers and those responsible for delivery, to help understand:

- the scale of the development
- what works and what doesn't work so well
- design quality
- layout
- services and facilities
- movement and transport – including parking
- housing types, densities
- employment
- open and green spaces – including play areas
- sense of community, identity
- management and governance

The tour was a mix of presentations and guided walks around the neighbourhoods. This report provides a note of the lessons learned and knowledge exchanged from the tour and will be shared with other members of the community, through the East Hemel website [www.easthemel.co.uk](http://www.easthemel.co.uk) and at the Community Design Workshop-

## Lessons learned from Cambridge developments

1. Prioritise **sustainability and green infrastructure** to reduce environmental impacts
2. **Parks, orchards, allotments and wildlife** areas improve residents' well-being and enhance biodiversity
3. **Involve the community** in the planning and design process for a more inclusive and successful new development
4. Promote **sustainable transport options** that enhance mobility and reduce congestion
5. **Infrastructure first** (healthcare, education, roads) must keep pace with population growth
6. Provide a **range of housing types, sizes and tenures** for truly mixed, diverse, intergenerational communities
7. Design for the long-term. **Future proof** to accommodate population and climate changes.

## 2. Introduction

On Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024, a group of residents and representatives from community groups and service providers from the East Hemel neighbourhoods, along with officers from Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) and Dacorum Borough Council took part in a study tour to two distinct neighbourhoods in Cambridge. They were accompanied on the tour by representatives from TCE, its design team and Kevin Murray Associates (KMA).

The tour started in the southern fringe, visiting Trumpington Meadows and Clay Farm and finished in Eddington, in north-west Cambridge.

## 3. Trumpington & Clay Farm

The group were met at Trumpington Pavillion by Cllr Phillipa Slatter, Cambridge City Councillor for Trumpington and a local resident, and Jonathan Gimblett, Founder of HLME Development Consultancy, (formerly with Countryside Properties, the developer/masterplanner for much of Trumpington and Clay Farm) who is also a local resident.





The introductory presentation at Trumpington Pavillion.

Together, Philippa and Jonathan gave a short briefing presentation outlining how the Clay Farm development was masterplanned by developer Countryside Properties together with Cambridge City Council and PRP Architects.

Clay Farm is located to the east of the village of Trumpington within walking distance of Cambridge City Centre.

A range of developers have delivered a total of 2,188 private and affordable homes set within three design coded character areas. A new 49ha park has also been provided together with new commercial and community facilities including two new schools, a community hub and community garden.

Set around a variety of mature existing and new landscape spaces the contemporary style homes range in size from studio, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments through to 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom houses with 42% of the total number of homes being tenure blind affordable housing.

All homes achieve a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and a variety of other sustainability measures have been incorporated.

Philippa and Jonathan talked about the range of housing typologies, the importance of planning community infrastructure early in the process and some of the challenges that the designers, local authority planners, education authority and other stakeholders needed to grapple with to deliver the new neighbourhood.

The presentation further highlighted:

- Importance of involving community – setting up partnership mechanisms

- Planning in meanwhile, temporary and phased activity and uses
- Importance of school, health, retail and other community uses
- Provision of places to gathering, including community growing spaces and public spaces
- The value of participative art installations, reflecting community input
- Creative design thinking – especially at detailed functional level

**Questions from the visiting group following the presentation, included:**

**Q: What about private outdoor space and gardens? Having your own bit of sky and cloud is important. It is an amazing way of relaxing, and good for your mental health. Was this considered at Trumpington?**

A: Trumpington was planned so that everyone had some form of outdoor space. Many people did not want large gardens due to the maintenance burden, rather just a small space to sit out in. The developers provided a range of options in response to community feedback.

**Q: As you were building on flat meadowland, how have you mitigated flooding?**

A: We have excellent SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage systems) - which also attract more bird life than we could have expected. They are easy to maintain and come in a variety of forms including swales, balancing ponds, rain gardens etc.

**Q: How much of the residential areas are adopted by the local authority?**

A: All roads are supposed to be adopted. Anglian Water have or are to adopt all water features. Some integral to the new station are being built. SUDs help the landscape establish itself.

**Q: Are the homes green-roofed with solar panels, even though they look discrete?**

A: Yes, they are hidden and don't detract from the look and feel of the area. Technology has progressed, people expect charging points etc. I think you can be more optimistic now, as progress has raised standards.

**Other key points raised through the presentation:**

- Try and get interpretive boards in from the beginning, while the money is being spent.
- Community centre was one of the first buildings to be built.
- Courtyards, mews, modern living, flexibility to work from home.

## Clay Farm walkabout

The group split into two separate tours – a community/amenity focused route (Group A), and an infrastructure and built-environment focused route (Group B). Participants self-selected which of the routes they wished to go on.

### Group A: Community focus



Map showing layout of Clay Farm.

Phillippa led Group A on a route that took in:

- A range of housing designs, types and tenures
- Community facilities and services
- Cycle and pedestrian pathways and the Guided Busway
- Community gardens, allotments, orchards
- Balancing ponds, SUDs, green and open spaces
- Leisure and sports facilities

The group discussed the importance of early delivery to build 'social infrastructure in' from the outset of a new development, to accelerate the forming of connection between people, to create a sense of cohesiveness to the community.



## Key considerations:

### Affordable housing is crucial

- A significant portion (42%) of the new housing developments in Trumpington and Clay Farm were designated as tenure blind, **affordable housing** or **social housing** to ensure inclusivity.
- However, rising property prices in Cambridge meant that many homes remained out of reach for lower-income families.

### Mixed-use developments work best

- Clay Farm was designed as a **mixed-use** area, incorporating homes, retail spaces, healthcare centres, and schools.
- This approach reduces commuting needs and strengthens community bonds.

### High-density housing needs smart, innovative design

- There were concerns that the **density of housing**, led to overcrowding and parking shortages.
- **Shared community spaces, green rooves, and well-designed pedestrian areas** helps to alleviate sense of overcrowding and smaller housing plots.

### Public transport must be integrated early

- The **Guided Busway** provided a rapid transport link between Trumpington and central Cambridge.
- However, some developments were completed before public transport infrastructure was fully operational, causing early traffic issues.

### Cycling & walking infrastructure is essential

- Trumpington's expansion included **dedicated cycle lanes, pedestrian paths, and car-free zones** to encourage sustainable travel.
- These features helped reduce car dependency but required continuous maintenance and connectivity improvements.

### Parking & traffic management needs better planning

- Higher housing density led to parking shortages and increased street congestion in some areas.
- Some streets lacked enough allocated parking, leading to frustration among residents.

### Green spaces improve urban living

- The Trumpington Meadows Nature Reserve, the community orchard, and other parks provided much-needed green space in an urban area.
- These spaces support **biodiversity, mental and physical well-being, and recreation.**

### Eco-friendly standards

- Many homes in Clay Farm were designed with **solar panels, rainwater harvesting, and energy-efficient materials.**
- Need to ensure the highest eco-standards and design are applied.

### Flooding & drainage considerations are vital

- Trumpington's expansion required **sustainable drainage solutions** due to the area's natural water flow.
- Features like **ponds, wetlands, and permeable surfaces** helped manage flood risks. But there were still pockets of flooding seen on the visit.



Group A standing in Hobsons Square – the mixed-use centre of Clay Farm, with housing, shops, cafés, restaurants, post office and Clay Farm Centre, a purpose-built community centre that houses multiple users including a library, an NHS health centre, a café and spaces for hire.





A variety of brick patterns and windows added interest to this block of flats.



The group saw a range of housing, of different designs and densities, with limited parking but on key routes linking to public transport provision.





Despite the inclusion of well-designed and situated SUDS, there were still some pockets of flooding around some of the housing.



A path linking natural open space to a residential area.





Trumpington Allotments.



Trumpington Community Orchard.



Group A saw how important community gardens, allotments and open spaces were to local people, helping to build community cohesion and enabling healthy living.



## Group B: Infrastructure focus



Jonathan led the group on the route, pointing out design features within Clay Farm. There was particular interest in the aesthetics of the neighbourhood, with comments about the brick architecture being plain, and some of the smaller streets being very claustrophobic in places, but elsewhere, the layout being very spacious.



Group B discussion of the arrangement of streets and parking management.





Part of the tour route showing an enclosed streetscape.

There was particular interest in how parking is managed, with a notable lack of on-street vehicles. There was discussion about the policy of only one car parking space per house, even if they are two or three bed units. There was also some discussion on the contrasting walking / cycling culture of Cambridge, as a flat, university city, in comparison with the East Hemel site and surrounding established neighbourhoods and communities, which are at a significantly higher level than Hemel Hempstead town centre, and the opposite side of town to the railway station.

Further group discussion included:

- Range of house types and sizes – within overall plan
- Integration of 'tenure blind' affordable
- Integration of school (frontage) as part of distinct place in neighbourhood
- Role of lanes and green routes – pedestrian permeability
- Varied approach to gardens and open space – e.g. terraces
- Variety of types/sizes within same housing typology
- Diverse views on materials, especially brick colour – some reticence about dominance of buff colour
- Key role of planting and colour – to enhance placemaking and 'cared for' neighbourhood
- Role of Council in maintaining adopted shared/green/public spaces



- Urban edge – access, views, and role of biodiversity and water management
- Circulation and parking – 20mph and limited through traffic – and sufficiency of spaces (e.g. for visitors)
- Cycle routes and supporting infrastructure
- Community facilities – central location
- Key role of different sized play areas
- Public art, wayfinding and local identity – plaques, views, street and place names



Group B learning about the streetscape with a children's play area.

### Questions that were asked:

**Q: Does every small sub-community / site have a pumping station or just this site?**

A: No just this site due to site constraints.

**Q: In terms of phasing, how was this built?**

A: The school was being finished when the housing was started.

**Q: How do you get such good quality of design?**

You ask for it. Conversation between the head of planning and a strategic design code. On top of that, as developers bring forward particular plots, they have to produce detailed design codes. Design code testing day, with 6 architecture firms, to engage together and help form the design codes. Agreement with local authority that it wouldn't be too rigidly applied (for example the road outside the school.)

**Q: Did you have any competition on architects on this site?**

We didn't on this project, no.

**Q: Is the planting managed through a management fund / company?**

No, it's adopted and maintained by the council.



Discussion over lunch, in a newly opened pizza restaurant.

### Discussion points over lunch

Participants were encouraged to reflect on what they had seen so far and, in a conversation facilitated by Kevin Murray, with Jonathan and Phillipa, the following points were discussed:



## Layout of communities

- There is a 'Power of 10' concept reflected in the Jellicoe plan (Hemel Hempstead) – that prescribes the co-locating at least 10 uses together, to create local community centre locations.
- You have to have the land set aside beforehand. So temporary amenities is good, but you must bank and reserve space for various uses that are needed in the future.
- A flexibility and range of typologies is needed. People need places to downsize with social amenities such as a coffee shop, which could be temporary initially.
- East Hemel is as far away as you can get from the station and town centre. Public transport is going to be an issue.

## Provision and phasing of community infrastructure (amenities)

- Very impressed with the way this area has developed in terms of infrastructure and community space etc. you should be able to have community centres to cover 5,500 - 7,000 people.
- Likewise, health service provision is a big issue. As someone elderly concerned about hospital provision - if I am in Watford, I as an elderly man might end up lonely in hospital, with no visitors as it is difficult to get to.
- If a developer can put up a sales suite, they can put in temporary amenities from day one. These don't have to be the finalised version but mean that communities do not start out without the needed infrastructure.
- One example of a model of incremental service provision is a single form entry for secondary school development to make sure that the school opens on day one, fulfilling other important strategic objectives, such as the local authority's sustainable travel aspirations.
- In the planning, design and development of new communities, a more permissive than exclusionary approach is desirable – for example, cycle and community cafes and food vans permitted and supported from the outset.

- An example of the above is Hampstead Heath school for girls. 19th century building. 5 temporary classrooms put on university college land. People grateful that they are moving forward, even in a paid for school.
- Everyone wants to see key community infrastructure delivered in the early stages - temporary or permanent - in terms of those initial spaces for playgroups, allotment groups, venues for cheese and wine evenings.
- There are some old pubs doing very well as the community has grown around them. The same could be relevant for East Hemel.

### **Community involvement and stewardship**

- New people may not have enough resource, local knowledge, financial and other support to be able to ask for what they need, so need help.
- Groups of residents met together with the council at Trumpington Southern Village Hall, and established a mechanism / process between old and new residents to guide delivery of new infrastructure with S106 funding. Having those mechanisms from the beginning is really important and leads to key services and amenities being embedded early on.
- In some countries they employ someone (ie a retired person) as someone to support the community to get things going. There may be an equivalent of this for East Hemel? These can work on the basis of cut price housing for "residential volunteering" models where people have to volunteer a certain number of times a week. Lower rent etc.
- Trumpington Residents Association formed to bring together the needs of the old and new communities. They supported existing populations – for example grandparents wishing to downsize to smaller houses and flats, nearer family.

### **Architectural design**

- Future proofing of housing design - housing on multi levels needs ground floor with bathroom etc to be able to accommodate older people in an extended family model.
- Large windows can be too big for people to be able to afford curtains – and has been an issue for some social housing tenants.

## 4. Eddington

In the afternoon, the group headed to Eddington to the north-west of Cambridge. The group were met by Matt Johnson, Head of Development at north-west Cambridge's Estates Division, University of Cambridge. Matt gave a quick contextual introduction to the development, as a project of Cambridge University, which sought to address some of the requirements of supporting the university's academic and staff communities, tackling issues such as short-term tenure, affordability and accessibility to the university buildings.



Plan showing route of walkabout and key residential developments and environmental features





Discussion on the variety of sizes and types of accommodation offered in Eddington.

The group saw a range of different tenure types, generally at a higher density than Trumpington, with public squares and community amenities such as a community centre, supermarket, shops, coffee shops and bicycle shops. It was explained to the group that some of the retail units had taken a few years to come into use, and that the university had incentivised businesses, to help them get established.

The group also saw a district heating scheme that was partly operational, though learned that this approach had been seen as revolutionary at the time it was designed, but in 10-15 years district heating has given way to heat pumps, which are far cleaner and more efficient, but due to their longer and cooler operating temperatures, do not benefit from the economy of scale of a classic district heating scheme. The conclusion of this discussion was that there is a striking need to maintain flexibility to allow technical solutions to evolve over time and be incorporated into existing and new buildings alike.

Other discussion points included:

- Some liked coherence of street plan and blocks – others less so
- Interest in approach to energy – and need for flexibility
- Interest in approach to waste storage and collection
- Quality of architecture was of interest – some support for specific aspects



- Procurement mechanism of blocks/areas – eg partnering Hill etc
- Relationship between (higher) density and local facilities/services
- Bus route and car access and parking – plus role of Park and Ride
- What is the role/amount of the subsidy to bus company?
- Feeling that this was more corporate, and less applicable to East Hemel (special circumstances)
- Interest in greater variety of materials – by some
- Importance of SUDS, swales, greenspace
- Welcomed critical review of earlier stages and ‘continuous critique and learning’



The group discussing the innovative and subtle underground refuse collection solutions employed in Eddington.





Sustainable urban drainage systems are integrated attractively into a street setting.



A rain retention feature forming part of a landscaped open space.





Attractive planting, interesting architecture and paved surfaces contributing to a quality streetscape.



Some of the taller buildings are in keeping with the style of Eddington.





A street view of one of the many low traffic routes.



The group finish the study tour at a combined hairdressers and café.



## **Lessons learned from Cambridge developments**

Common themes and insights from all the neighbourhoods visited to reflect on for East Hemel:

### **Housing and density**

A range of housing types and tenures is necessary to create truly mixed and inter-generational communities. These should include small and large family homes, apartments, homes for the elderly including sheltered housing. Affordable and social housing is important for key workers and the low paid or unemployed. Tenure blind developments are essential to creating cohesive communities.

Higher density developments (done well) foster a better sense of place, if supported by sufficient facilities and services, and high-quality design to enable walkable neighbourhoods with good cycle networks and public transport links and open and green spaces.

### **Movement, accessibility, public transport, parking**

Safe, attractive, walkable streets and paths make a difference to residents. Supported by the early provision of reliable, accessible and convenient public transport means that many will not need to resort to private car use. Restrictions on parking and number of spaces per house will also encourage a reduction in car use. If parking is provided it should not dominate the street and more innovative and interesting solutions should be sought. To encourage more cycling, a safe, connected cycle network should be incorporated in the design and layout from the outset.

### **Design**

A high quality of design and attention to detail provides a better end product. Securing the best architects and designers through design competitions could help achieve this. Design codes are also beneficial to ensure the masterplan vision, principles and ethos are adhered to. Eco-conscious and sustainable design needs to be incorporated from the outset, taking account of waste disposal and management systems, recycling facilities and bike storage. New technologies and energy provision must be considered with flexibility built in order to respond to future changes/advancement in technologies. Designs should be as energy efficient as possible, including photo voltaic panels, water conservation, ventilation and heat-pump technologies.

### **Open and green spaces**

There is a need to provide well designed and located public open and green spaces, with a purpose. They should serve all age groups, and include allotments, playgrounds, parks, playing fields, meeting and resting spaces, such as community

squares. Such spaces should be well designed and planted with a management and maintenance regime in place. Green spaces should encourage biodiversity and could be multi-functional, such as a SUDS to help soften the urban fabric. Existing trees and hedgerows should be kept, particularly to provide much needed greenery and maturity of environment in early stages before new planting has developed. All open spaces should feel safe for all users, natural surveillance is key.

### **Services and facilities**

Imperative that all essential services required to support a healthy and thriving community are provided as soon as possible, including schools (for all ages), medical facilities, community centres and hubs, a range of retail provision from supermarkets to smaller independent shops. Leisure provision in the form of restaurants, pubs, cafés and coffee shops all help to encourage the development of a strong, integrated and cohesive community.

### **Stewardship**

Partnership working and coordinated management will help to relieve any issues along the development journey. Community involvement and communication are essential.

## 5. Feedback Analysis

The following shares the feedback received from attendees.

### General feedback

Almost everyone who completed a feedback form said they found the tour very useful, with the information provided being helpful and relevant, with learning that could be shared with others within the East Hemel communities. Attendees felt there were lessons to learn from each place, especially, for example, where things hadn't worked so well. They were all happy to recommend participation by others in future study tours and/or events relating to East Hemel.

Following is a transcript of feedback provided by some of those who attended, to the more detailed questions about the places visited:

**What did you consider the positive learning points about Cambridge southern fringe (Clay farm / Trumpington)?**

- *Easy access between areas, focus on community.*
- *The housing raised on stilts with secure underground parking and preservation of hedgerows. Green lanes.*
- *High quality design. How high density can still have outside space for every unit. Integration of cycle / walkways*
- *I found the amount of information and the enthusiastic commentary very helpful.*
- *A very community focussed project from the outset integrating the thoughts and aspirations of the existing residents (Trumpington villagers) to provide a welcoming feel running on the ground for the newbies schools/facilities/leisure/infrastructure to mitigate any snagging issues structural/physical/mindfulness*
- *Beautiful designs - very high standard; Stirling Prize winning building; many awards. Good connections to central Cambridge by bus & train. They learn from mistakes. Good variety of designs.*
- *Different styles of dwellings in one development sit comfortably together when broken up into separate smaller estates ("phase names"). Cars can be accommodated without taking over the roads outside houses. Appeals to both younger people with families and retired folk. Despite few litter bins,*



*minimal litter and graffiti. Low level of road noise = more tranquillity and calmer atmosphere. Feels safe particularly for children*

- *I liked the ease of access for public transport, cycling and outdoor space, while still providing some limited parking for private cars. Also, I felt that the housing provided a good mix of private, social and council homes, which appeared to be of a modern design, and differentiated it from the nearby older village properties, thereby giving it an individual identity. I felt that the community hub was of a good size for family gatherings and public events. While also incorporating it within a library and doctors' surgery was a great idea*

**Summary of responses to the question: What did you consider the negative learning points about Cambridge southern fringe (Clay farm / Trumpington)?**

- *Potential for ASB X Crime*
- *Not so keen on high density housing. Disappointed to hear they're thinking of getting rid of the hens by the community orchard!*
- *Lack of atmosphere - no coffee shops etc. or places for people to go apart from very central area.*
- *The problems that different organisations have communicating with each other is an issue. I am a bit concerned that the overall view I take away is that if the residents don't push hard for promises made by the developers, it's unlikely to happen.*
- *Inevitably it is big, and the integration of Trumpington Village with Clay Farm to form a town demands a challenging mindset for the 2 societies to mix. The parts of Clay Farm were cul-de-sac based and I was left wondering if the lack of connectivity created issues. The secondary school has created its own focus for outsiders to use the sports facilities, but do they use the Hobson Square resources naturally to make a greater connection?*
- *I notice there were no subdivision of footway into pedestrian and cyclist. But maybe they're right not to! Some streets and parking looked awkward with chicanes; I didn't like that. I have v. few criticisms.*
- *Local brickwork used in majority of dwellings becomes boring (soulless) to look at. Different styles of bricks on the same dwellings or alternate dwellings would add more colour, vibrancy, atmosphere and in particular, individuality.*

*Dwellings all very "square" and "boxy" in shape and lacked three dimensional features which would have added to their visual appeal. Community Square where shops are located are closed to vehicles, limiting commercial use (mobile food stalls etc). These areas require more practical solutions. The grass areas are already full of large weeds and moss. Pathways will require cleaning. Grounds maintenance is essential to maintain a fresh appearance. Given very few private back gardens, there did not appear to be many green communal areas in close proximity to homes (only the main Park). Reliance placed on balconies etc? Difficult to find your way around if you are visiting/delivering etc.*

- *I was disappointed to learn that the roads and residential access arrangements had not been adopted by the local authority, leaving residents with potentially huge maintenance costs. I was also very concerned to learn that there appeared to be no clear plan, as to who was responsible for managing any flooding potential, evident by the alarming height of water in one of the ponds directly next to a block of flats*

**What did you consider the positive points about NW Cambridge (Eddington)?**

- *Aesthetically pleasing. More controlled demographic*
- *Liked the architecture and spatial planning. Also, the communal heating system. Quiet surroundings.*
- *High quality design, Variety of typologies*
- *This site seemed to be well organised and better managed compared to Trumpington. This seemed to be because Cambridge University are the main contributor.*
- *The high-tech heating is one example of Cambridge University creating a magnet to draw in residents both university-associated or not the stage of this semi-circular development could be likened to a theatre where you will focus on the transport hub and shops and food outlets. Really good it was a day one priority and provisions good to see the mix of I'd say the openness encouraged a feeling of freedom, yet the semi-circular style suggests togetherness building architecture creating an individual uniqueness to residents regardless of tenure*
- *Very informative talk by Matt. Beautiful designs - excellent designs inspired by Cambridge colleges. Matt explained many things. E.g. The procurement*

*process with contractor (Hills?). Also grouping of blocks, car access and pedestrianisation and energy etc.*

- *Where you have good cycle lanes and public transport, the number of cars on a development can be reduced. Practical and affordable rented accommodation for a transient workforce. Private dwellings made more attractive by use of contrasting bricks, different roof shapes and architectural features. Despite few litter bins, minimal litter and graffiti. No wheelie bins (other than green bins?) due to underground facilities keeps walkways tidy and saves space in dwellings. Low level of road noise = more tranquillity and calmer atmosphere Feels safe particularly for children.*
- *This development was clearly excellently designed with housing styles that would suit the high-end, short-term rental residents that it was hoping to attract. It also incorporated some ingenious concepts for ground source community heating and the potential provision of an independent water supply for flushing and washing, which was to be separated from drinking water. Like the Clay Farm development there was good provision for public transport and cycling, together with outdoor amenity space and shops*

#### **What did you consider the negative points about NW Cambridge (Eddington)?**

- *Needs more CCTV. Needs more parking for visitors*
- *Emphasis is on as few cars as possible - not suitable for everyone. No access to roof gardens. Also, not much garden space for individual households.*
- *It came across as a gated community, which I do not object to, but I feel East Hemel will not be like that.*
- *Surprisingly my only downer is that the openness is too vast and makes it too easy to avoid saying hello or exchanging pleasantries albeit around Turing Way there was more intimacy in addition we were never far from the hub during our walking tour.*
- *University itself had some criticisms that they would avoid in future development, E.g. The small bridges over water courses, the excessive parking spaces for postgrads, the central power station building - no need for it, just supply 2 cables".*
- *Timing of opening of shops, food stores in relation to occupancy of the estate. Drainage channels in green spaces, although effective, could be*



*underground so that areas can be used by residents rather than “dead space”. Cycle lanes in opposite directions not used by cyclists. Green areas not attracting residents*

- *The lack of residential parking was a concern, as the residents might wish to explore areas outside of Cambridgeshire during their stay. It was also noted that many homes had no near-by car parking provision. Therefore, making large size supermarket shopping difficult, this was evidenced by the high number of shopping trolleys abandoned outside of flats, houses and scattered around walkways. During the tour I was concerned that I was not made aware of any provision for local GP services, or indoor community facilities, except for cafes and restaurants. Overall, this development did not appear to be very family oriented and was more akin to a transient environment for its residents. Overall, while the Eddington development provided some excellent ideas in terms of building design concepts and how the incorporation of environmental technology could benefit the wider community. I felt that it was not a good example for how a long-term residential development could best suit its intended residents e.g. of Hemel East. However, it was well worth the visit to see a different residential concept.*

## 6. Conclusion

The issues, lessons and knowledge acquired from the Cambridge study tour will be

- fed into the ongoing work of the Crown Estate’s planning and design team
- referenced at the community design workshops
- shared through public exhibitions and this report, to help people understand what was discussed and where it may be relevant to East Hemel
- studied further as a comparator benchmark in specific themes and topics, both of design and placemaking, and of processes and management.

The specific responses to each topic will be provided in due course in the Statement of Community Involvement when the application design proposals are finalised.