# APPENDIX E
# CASE STUDIES OF URBAN EXTENSIONS, URBED

# Almere, The Netherlands

Almere, is a fine example of smart growth, developing along existing transport links to ensure a well integrated system. It is now 30 years old and has gone through a number of phases of development, all of which have extended along the spine of the main railway line. It is now extending again and the new neighbourhood is intended to follow the latest principles of eco-design and sustainability.

The original town centre was designed for a population of 80-90,000, and provided 40k sq m. of retail to a relatively poor population, as people earning minimum wages relocated from Amsterdam. They have now added another 180k sq m. of shopping plus a supurb new theatre overlooking a large lake, a new library, and 2,500 car parking spaces, which are under the new shopping centre. This ensures that the centre is still accessable by car whilst retaining an emphasis on being pedestrian friendly.

Developers have gone for neighbourhoods of around 20,000 homes, with their own schools and local shops, but with distinct identities. Thus one area has been promoted as the Rainbow neighbourhood, through a careful selection of different colours for all the homes. The neighbourhoods are linked by a busway with a resesrved lane, the buses are very frequent and provide a means for people to get into the town centre of work without having to use their cars. There are also redways, which are cycle lanes and there is ample provision of cycle storage throughout the development.

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# Cirencester, Gloucestershire

Cirencester, once known as 'the Queen of the Cotswolds', is one of the countries more successful market towns holding its own where other towns have lost out to out of town developlment. It offers a useful model for Ely as it is of a similar size (population around 19,000) and it has grown considerably over the last few years, attracting the kind of infrastructure that Ely may well be able to benefit from.

By putting control over parking within the Cotswold department of Development and Heritage, a proportion of the profits from car parking in Cirencester have been allocated to town centre initiatives, yeilding over £14,000 a year. The next stage of development will involve developing some of the car parks, once the Council has found a way of financing a new multi storey car park.


Cirencester now has the advantages of being by-passed on two sides, and is within easy access of growing centres of employment, like Swindon. It also could benefit from improvements to the railway service as a result of dualing the line between Kemble and Swindon, and from new visitor attractions, such as the restoration of the old canal, which has already started in Stroud, and which could link through to the Cotswold Water Park once the Sapperton Tunnel is reopened.

A major new office development in a landmark building has enabled Jacob Rothschild's St James Place company to consolidate five buildings on the site of the old leisure centre. A new £7 million leisure centre combines a pool, gym and health facilities in an attractive modern building.

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# Madley Park, Witney, Oxfordshire

Witney is similar to Ely, as it is close to Oxford, and has accomodated a lot of the new housing in West Oxfordshire. As well as extensions of the town centre, including a new Waitrose, and redevelopment of the old blanket mills, the town has expanded on its edges. On the site of a farm, a new urban extension, 'Madley Park' has been built connected to a new bypass on one side, and an existing bus route on the edge of town on the other.

Madley Park has been developed by a number of volume housebuilders including Charles Church, Permsimmon and Taylor Wimpey. A variety of housing has been built in the Cotswold tradition, with most of the houses being stone clad, and in terraces or closes. The different blocks are linked by countryside, with a small river in the heart. A key feature is a new primary and special needs school, built next to an existing secondary school. This adjoins a neighbourhood centre, which includes a small Coop food store, and some unit shops including a Chinese restaurant, with flats above.

The development was started in 2002 and is now almost complete, with a total of over 1,100 units. 117 units are affordable homes, delivered by the Madley Park parternship (West Oxfordshire District Council, Sovereign Housing Group and Leadbitter Constrution) which have been built to Eco-homes specfication and include features such as passive stack ventilation and low energy light-ing. It has proved very popular with a range of unit sizes, including large town houses on the road into the development.

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# Vathorst, Amersfoort, The Netherlands

Vathorst is an excellent example of sustainable development, making use of durable materials and energy resources (e.g. solar energy systems, district heating by means of an incinerator), efficient use of space (clustering of amenities) and high-quality architecture.

The first commitment to build Vathorst was made in 1995 with the first buildings going up in 2002. Between 2002 and 2014, some 11,000 new houses are being built (approximately 6,700 had been built by 2005) on an area of about 550 hectares, with all the necessary amenities, including shopping facilities (17.500m2) a business area covering 45 hectares of retail and offices and a railway station. Development is on a relatively small scale with some 70/80 houses being designed by one architect.

An exceptional feature of Vathorst is that its amenities will keep in step with the building process, for examples creches, schools, a health care centre and shops are available from the start of people moving in by using temporary buildings.

The development when complete will include; 5-6 primary schools (including religious based, Catholic, Protestant, Islamic); 2 secondary, 1 agricultural, 10 football courts, 10 tennis courts, a skateboard park, and a swimming pool. Live-work housing has been built to attract business offering servics such as osteopaths, dentists,etc.

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# Vauban, Freiburg, Germany

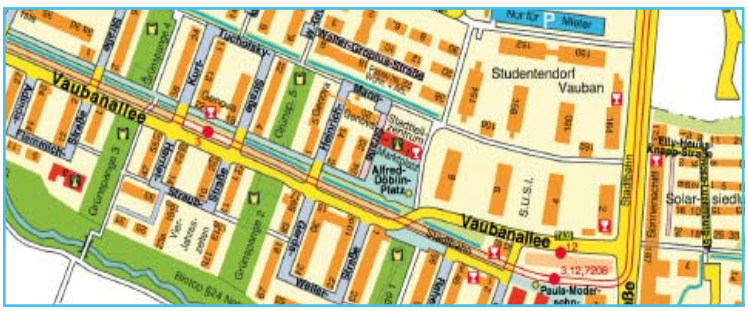
Vauban, Vauban started in 1994 and is promoted as ‘soalr capital’, because it has the most solar panels in Europe. The 41 hectare site is on a former French barracks and has become a show-case for sustainable development. It is planned for 5,000 residents and 400 jobs, and is nearly complete. 70% of the units have been developed by small builders and self-build cooperatives, with land costs at market value representing about a fifth of the value of a completed unit.

Vauban, was very much the product of community action. The city acquired the barracks from the government at a reasonable price (the land value is about 20% of the cost of a home there). Opposition to a proposed nuclear power plant led to the region-al government asking how energy needs were to be met, which in turn led to setting up the Vauban Forum in 1994. The munici-pality is committed to zero carbon development on land it owns.

The most innovative aspect of all has been in minimising environmental impact. This starts with the way building are positioned. Combined Heat and Power is installled, using gas, and this accounts for half the energy consumed in the city. The new buildings are energy efficient, and some interesting work has been done on using solar power for cooling in a complex known as the Solar Estate. Many of the ideas have been devel-oped by the architect Thomas Frish, whose own circular house, the Heliotrope, moves round to follow the sun.

The sense of community has been created by the green pioneers, and by the communal green areas. There is a supermarket on tha main road, and the small shop units have attracted a number of craftspeople. There are also a number of attractive cafes and bars where you can sit outside.


The principles of ‘car free and parking free’ living have been applied. Cars are parked at the periphery of the site in a multi storey community car park. Nearly 50% of households are car free. This is encouraged by good public transport and a car sharing system.

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