Clay Farm, Cambridge

This 113 ha site which was granted permission in 2014 has been developed to provide 2,300 homes, a park, community college, primary school and local centre. A large scale SuDS scheme has been implemented featuring attenuation lakes and green roofs.

The site has included a green roof on the Local Centre. Green roofs retain and store the first flush of rainwater and promote natural processes such as evapotranspiration. As well as providing effective source control, green roofs also provide a level of treatment for rainwater.

Attenuation has also been incorporated into areas of public amenity space. Whilst increasing the attractiveness of the area they also act to incorporate water into the environment, making the community more aware of how rainfall is managed. At Clay Farm, varying depths of temporary attenuation have been provided through stepped levels and also incorporates permanent storage ponds with reed beds to promote water treatment and biodiversity.
Four attenuation ponds have been situated in the eastern section of the site, fed by open watercourses which run through the development. The largest of these ponds is located in the south-eastern corner of the site. This pond is designed to hold water permanently and promotes biodiversity with islands to provide resting points for waterfowl. The smallest pond is located in the north-east corner of the site and remains dry for most of the time, designed to fill up only during most extreme rainfall events. Reed beds have been planted within the ponds to filter and remove surface water pollutants whilst also creating habitats for biodiversity.

Bird spotting structures have been positioned adjacent to the attenuation lakes, encouraging the community of Clay Farm to engage with nature.

Water then leaves the site at a controlled rate of 2 l/s per hectare into Hobson’s Brook watercourse which dissects the site.