



## GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN – THE FIRST PROPOSALS

Land to the East of Whittlesford Highways Depot, Whittlesford,  
CB22 4WL

– Representation on behalf of landowners

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**Client:**

H. J. MOLTON SETTLEMENT

**Landowners:**

H. J. MOLTON SETTLEMENT

**Date:**

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**Prepared by:**

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## 1. Representations on Land to the East of Whittlesford Highways Depot, Whittlesford, CB22 4WL

- 1.1 Cheffins has been instructed by the client – H. J. MOLTON SETTLEMENT – to promote their interests in 'Land to the East of Whittlesford Highways Depot, Whittlesford, CB22 4WL' (herein referred to as "the site").
- 1.2 The site has been put forward for employment use and to act as an extension to the draft employment policy area outlined in *Policy S/SCP/WHD Whittlesford Parkway Station Area, Whittlesford Bridge*.

### Site Location and Context

- 1.3 The site extends to an area of approximately 3 hectares and comprises greenfield land located adjacent to the built-up area of Whittlesford Bridge (currently classified as a Group Village). The site immediately adjoins the Whittlesford Highways Depot to the west. Whittlesford parkway Train station is located approximately 200 metres from the site. The site is accessed from Station Road West which runs along the southern boundary of the site.
- 1.4 Included below is an image detailing the location of the site (see Figure 1). A site location plan also accompanies this representation.
- 1.5 The site is located within the Cambridge Green Belt and any allocation for employment use at the site would have the effect of removing the site from the Green Belt.



Figure 1: An illustrative map showing the location of the site (red line boundary) in relation to Whittlesford Bridge.

- 1.6 The site immediately adjoins the proposed new policy area outlined in *S/SCP/WHD Whittlesford Parkway Station Area, Whittlesford Bridge*. As stated in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan – First Proposals document, *Policy S/SCP: Policy Areas in the Rural Southern Cluster* will support a comprehensive approach to redevelopment opportunities in the area around Whittlesford Parkway Station to accommodate a transport hub, employment and housing in line with the principles set out in the Greater Cambridge Partnership’s Whittlesford Masterplanning Exercise.
- 1.7 **Figure 2** below outlines the boundary of the proposed policy area forwarded under emerging Policy S/SCP (red line boundary). The site being proposed by this representation (black line boundary) is immediately adjacent to the policy area.
- 1.8 The Greater Cambridge Partnership states that this policy is needed as the Whittlesford Parkway Station provides a reliable connection to both Cambridge and London, is close to the research and employment clusters in South Cambridge, and is predicted to see further growth in passengers in the coming years. The station area incorporates a range of existing uses, including employment, a few homes, Whittlesford Highways Depot, and the Whittlesford Station Side Car Park.
- 1.9 Aligning with the aims of Policy S/SCP, we propose that development of the site would make a valuable contribution towards needed employment space in the area. Allocation of this site would also ensure that the forecasted local employment growth can be accommodated in a comprehensive manner, with development complementing the existing the Whittlesford Highways Depot to the west.

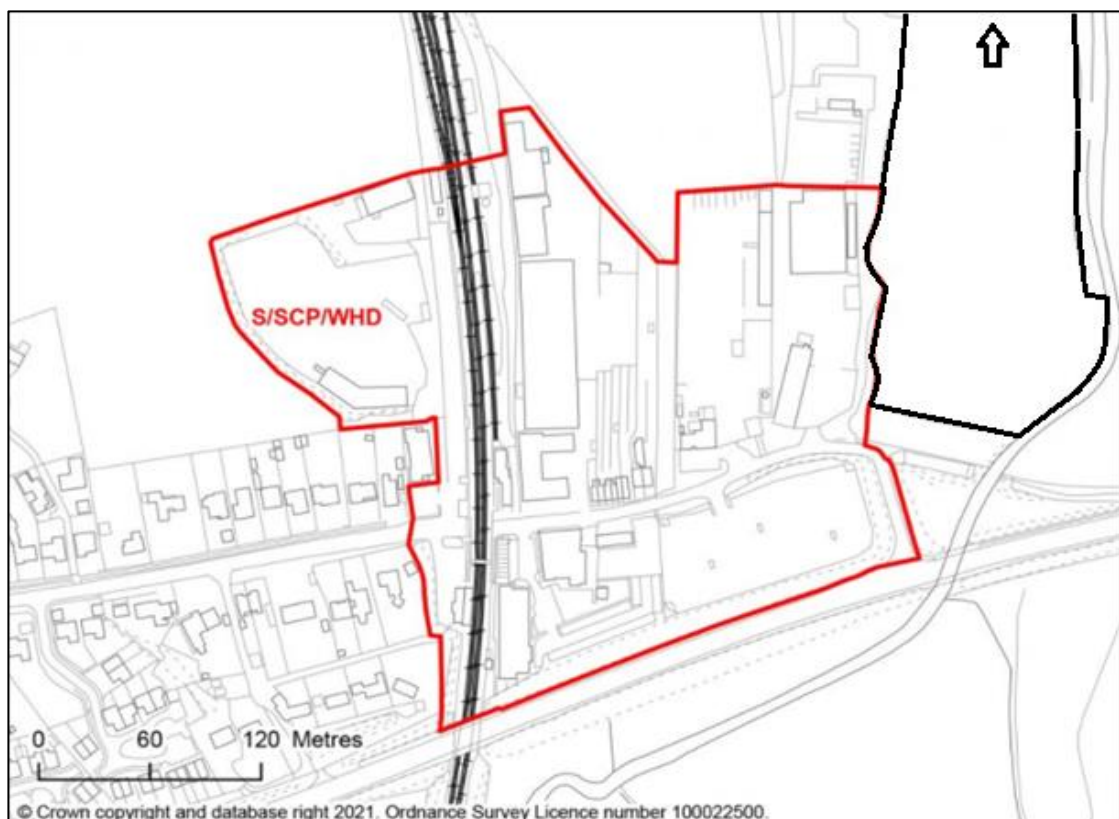


Figure 2: the boundary of the proposed policy area forwarded under emerging Policy S/SCP (red line boundary). The site being proposed by this representation (black line boundary) is immediately adjacent to the policy area.

## Demand for Employment Sites in the Greater Cambridge Combined Authority Area

- 1.10 Cheffins Commercial have provided details as to the market for industrial and warehouse buildings in the Greater Cambridge Combined Authority area in response to the recent draft allocation of employment sites in the emerging Local Plan. Cheffins is actively involved in the industrial and business space sectors and produce market reports and analysis based on its own, and shared, primary data.
- 1.11 In detailing the demands for buildings, they have used the former planning nomenclature of B1c, B2 and B8 (light industrial, general industrial and storage and distribution uses).
- 1.12 It is advised that *"As the Cambridge regional economy has grown over the last ten years so has the demand for industrial and warehousing property. This demand comes from both local businesses which are growing or relocating as well as from national/international operators who recognize market opportunities in the region.*
- 1.13 *Cambridge has not developed as a large-scale logistics location, but it does attract demand from warehousing and logistics operators wishing to service local, sub-regional and regional markets. Historically, the largest unit sizes for this type of "local" operation would be between 50,000-100,000 sq ft but more recently, with the massive growth of internet retailing we have seen "last mile" delivery businesses seeking unit sizes in excess of 100,000 sq ft to service regional/sub-regional markets. Our agency is currently involved in an active requirement for a last mile deliverer requiring a purpose-built building of 115,000 sq ft in the South Cambs District and we are aware of another similar company seeking 90,000 sq ft within the region.*
- 1.14 *Demand from existing, locally based businesses comes in many forms, including from manufacturing, local distribution and service providers, but the special feature of the Cambridge market is the preponderance of companies involved in the various technology sectors which have taken up industrial space in the market, especially new build space. Examples of such demand can be found at the Cambridge Research Park Enterprise development where all nine units were taken by "tech" companies. Cambridge medical robotics company CMR has recently announced it is having a new 75,000 sq ft production facility constructed outside of the district at Ely, and at the at Bourn Quarter (currently under construction) Cambridge Design Partnership have already committed to buildings of around 80,000 sq ft prior to completion of the development.*
- 1.15 *Our research shows that in the area within around a ten-mile radius of Cambridge (broadly equivalent to the Combined Authority area), the availability of industrial/warehouse space on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 is at a record low level of 185,000 sq ft. Availability has been reducing year on year over the last five years from c 400,000 sq ft in 2016. Typically, take up of industrial/warehouse space over the last ten years has been at around 300,000 – 400,000 sq ft per year.*
- 1.16 *Total industrial demand measured by applicant and agent enquiries is difficult to analyse with any accuracy because many enquiries are speculative and some cover wider geographical areas than just the subject area. An applicant may be happy to locate in a number of different locations. That said, Cheffins applicant database registered over 420 requirements seeking industrial and warehousing space (potentially) in the subject area during the last two years (2020- 2021) totaling over 8.5 million sq ft broken down as follows:*

Size sq ft	No. of enquiries	Total sq ft (approx.)
Under 10,000	207	950,000
10,000 – 50,000	81	1,700,000
Over 50,000	45	5,850,000

- 1.17 *By comparison, Bidwells' latest market report (Autumn 2021) suggests active industrial and warehousing demand in the subject area as of June 2021 at a little under 2 million sq ft, up from 1.3million sq ft at the end of the previous half year.*
- 1.18 *To date industrial/warehouse take up has been only 180,000 sq ft. The data above would suggest that this limited take up of space is a factor of the paucity of supply in the market rather than a lack of demand. Much of the take up we have seen has been for new stock and there is currently less than 10,000 sq ft of new build stock available in the market (all of which is at one development in Sawston).*
- 1.19 *Two new developments will come on stream during 2021 at Bourn and Bar Hill, which will bring around 280,000 sq ft of new space into the market but given levels of latent demand that is likely to be taken up within a year. 80,000 sq ft at Bourn is already pre-let.*
- 1.20 *Based on the analysis of demand we would consider that the true potential level of annual take up for the subject area, would be between 500,000 – 1 million sq ft per year. Allowing for say 50% of the take up to be in the "churn" of existing buildings this would mean that the development of around 12.5 – 25 acres per year of employment land (based on "rule of thumb" 20,000 sq ft of built area per acre) would be required to satisfy the demand.*
- 1.21 *Our analysis of enquiries shows that the majority of demand is for smaller unit sizes (under 10,000 sq ft), but there are a significant number of enquiries for larger unit sizes. Many of the larger requirements are searching across a wider geography than the subject area but there are a significant number of existing, locally based companies as well as incoming businesses who are specifically seeking a Cambridge location and whose requirements are in excess of 50,000 sq ft. A small number of these require buildings in the order of 100,000 – 250,000 sq ft.*
- 1.22 *We consider that sites suitable for regional, sub-regional and local demand should be able to accommodate single unit sizes of up to 150,000 sq ft.*
- 1.23 *The above demonstrates that there is a very strong market demand for commercial development and there are questions as to whether this allocated site could be expanded to help meet this demand. This could be achieved by having a proportion of the 25m buffer to the south being outside the draft allocation, which is on land within the control of the site promoters. This will allow more efficient use of the land. Similarly, the allocation could be extended to the east of the A14 services. This will allow the proposed allocation to be extended. This parcel of land has very well-defined boundaries and there is sufficient room either on or immediately adjoining the site to address the flooding issues associated with the development of the site.*

### **Scoring Methodology and System**

- 1.24 *The performance of sites proposed for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) have been coded using a traffic light system (red/amber/green). Although traffic light scoring systems are commonly used in this context, the particular performance criteria applied by the Greater Cambridge authorities appears overly stringent and inconsistent.*
- 1.25 *According to the published assessment criteria and supporting text within the HELAA, a site will generally be scored as amber where there is a detrimental impact which could be satisfactorily mitigated. This is an unusually strict approach which results in sites seeming to score more poorly than they should. It is more common for such assessments to apply an amber score to indicate that there is a potential issue that would need to be addressed through further detailed technical work or masterplanning. The current scoring matrix*



indicates deliverability issues where there are none. Where there are clear opportunities for effective mitigation of an impact or evidence to suggest that the matter is unlikely to constrain development, then a green rating would be more appropriate.

- 1.26 Ultimately, the key question that needs to be answered by a site assessment would be, “is development of this site acceptable in planning terms?”. A revised scoring system based on the following key principles would be easier for stakeholders to understand a site’s suitability for development:
- **Red:** NO. This is a major concern which would likely result in planning permission being refused.
  - **Amber:** POSSIBLY. This is a potential concern for which there may be a design solution (i.e. further site-specific work is needed).
  - **Green:** YES. This is unlikely to be a significant concern or constraint on development.

### Suitability for Development

- 1.27 At present, the proposed site is adjacent to, but outside, the current settlement boundary for Whittlesford Bridge (as defined in the South Cambridgeshire Adopted Policies Map). However, the boundaries are due to be reviewed as part of the plan-making process for the GCLP, “with boundaries defined to take into account the present extent of the built-up area as well as planned new development” under proposed Policy *S/SB Settlement Boundaries*. The site is very well related to the existing settlement with the current development framework boundary bounding the site on three sides. Nevertheless, it must be recognised that the Greater Cambridge Partnership are seeking to review the settlement boundary in this location to facilitate much needed both residential and commercial development.
- 1.28 The site is located in a highly sustainable location, adjacent to the settlement framework for Whittlesford bridge and in easy walking/cycling distance of local facilities and services, including Whittlesford Parkway railway station – approximately 200m from the site’s entrance. Inclusion of the site would constitute a logical extension to both Whittlesford Bridge and the existing employment site to the west – Whittlesford Highways Depot.
- 1.29 We note that Whittlesford Parkway station has been subject to consultation by the Greater Cambridge Partnership<sup>1</sup>, with proposals outlining investment into extensions of the station building and additional car parking spaces for the facility. At its meeting on 19 February 2020, the GCP Executive Board agreed to support a draft delivery plan for the Whittlesford Station Transport Investment Strategy as a basis for further engagement with key stakeholders.
- 1.30 The Partnership’s commitment to the improvement of Whittlesford Parkway Station will ensure that there is enhanced capacity for increased patronage. As such, residential development at Whittlesford Bridge is ideally placed if the goal is to maximise public use of the improved Whittlesford Parkway Station, and there is some guarantee that the enhanced facility will be able to accommodate additional footfall generated by such developments. We would emphasise that rail services are by far the most sustainable form of public transport and development should be situated in conurbations with rail connections (e.g. Whittlesford Bridge) to ensure that incoming residents can travel sustainably.

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<sup>1</sup> Whittlesford Parkway Station Transport Masterplan. The Report was issued October 2021 with an addendum added January 2020

## Technical Assessment

- 1.31 Only limited work has been carried out to date in relation to the proposed development of this site, however, there is every reason to believe that an acceptable scheme could be devised which was sympathetic to the existing built forms of the settlement and nearby heritage assets. There are indications that safe and convenient accesses could be provided to the site, and no known highway capacity constraints.
- 1.32 The following sections outline how development of the site may impact locational factors assessed within a HELAA; the GCLP's traffic light scoring system is used as the basis for the suggestions outlined below.

### *Landscape and Townscape*

- 1.33 It is clear that the site is not in an especially exposed location; existing built development bounds the site to the south, east and west, granting the site a strongly defined boundary. We do not anticipate any significant adverse impact on the countryside setting and Green Belt as a result of the development of the site.
- 1.34 Development of this site would have a limited impact upon the settlement character. The proposed development would constitute a logical continuation of Whittlesford Bridge and the Whittlesford Highways Depot, as the site is bounded by existing commercial buildings to the south and west. Local views are highly unlikely to be impacted by development as existing views are already limited by the built form of developed land to the east of Whittlesford Parkway Station. Indeed, the site could be enhanced by the development in combination with a detailed landscape design strategy.
- 1.35 Based on the above comments, we recommend that a 'Green' rating for landscape and townscape impacts would be appropriate.

### *Flood Risk*

- 1.36 The site is primarily located within Flood Zone 3 entailing a higher risk of flooding. As part of the detailed development proposals for this site, a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy will need to be formulated. This will seek to provide a sustainable drainage system on site which minimises the impacts of both flood risk and surface water flooding. This will include attenuation ponds which will be managed to maximise their ecological and biodiversity benefits. Therefore, subject to suitable wording regarding the need to provide an appropriate flood risk and drainage strategy and minimise flooding a green score should be attributed to this element of the site assessment.
- 1.37 As such, we advise that the site should receive a 'Green' or 'Amber' rating for flood risk factors.

### *Accessibility to Services and Facilities*

- 1.38 The proposed site is sustainability situated to make good use of the ample amenities in Whittlesford Bridge and other nearby settlements. The site would benefit from the amenities already present in Whittlesford Bridge, which includes local shops, a village veterinary practice, a hotel, cafés and restaurants, and the Whittlesford Parkway station – a train station which offers frequent, direct services to Cambridge, London, and Stansted Airport. Furthermore, the site is only a 15-minute walk or a 5-minute cycle from the core of

Whittlesford which offers additional local services, including local shops and professional services, a post office, two public houses (The Bees in the Wall and The Tickell Arms), a village hall, a large park (The Lawn) containing playgrounds and sports playfields, a local church, and a primary school.

- 1.39 *The Settlement Hierarchy Study* (Appendix 1H of the Development Strategy Topic Paper) notes that Whittlesford Bridge is served by "good sustainable transport links" and, thus, "performed well using the sustainability scoring system". The site would benefit from existing bus services to Saffron Walden (via the 101 bus service) and Trumpington (via the 7A bus service), with the nearest existing stops being roughly 0.5 miles from the proposed access. The site's connectivity will also benefit from a new travel hub near the A11/A1307/A505, which will connect Whittlesford Bridge to other settlements.

#### *Access*

- 1.40 Vehicular access to and from the site would be taken from Station Road East to the south of the site. The road would be built to adoptable standards and it is reasonable to assume that at least 16,000sqm floorspace could be served via this access.
- 1.41 Masterplanning and design exercises are yet to be complete, however, provision of safe pedestrian and cycle access to and from the site would be achievable.

#### *Transport and Roads*

- 1.42 Whittlesford Bridge is very well connected in transport terms. The A505 runs to the south, the A1303 to the east, the M11 is 2km to the west and the A11 is 3km to the east. Whittlesford Parkway Station has connections to both Cambridge and London and is located approximately 200m from the site's entrance.
- 1.43 *The Settlement Hierarchy Study* (Appendix 1H of the Development Strategy Topic Paper) notes that Whittlesford Bridge is served by "good sustainable transport links" and, thus, "performed well using the sustainability scoring system". The site would benefit from existing bus services to Saffron Walden (via the 101 bus service) and Trumpington (via the 7A bus service), with the nearest existing stops being roughly 0.3 miles from the proposed access. The site's connectivity will also benefit from a new travel hub near the A11/A1307/A505, which will connect Whittlesford Bridge to multiple areas with key amenities and employment opportunities, including the Babraham Research Campus and Granta Park. Meanwhile, the site's active transport connectivity will benefit from the forthcoming Sawston Greenway (as envisioned under the South East Cambridge Transport scheme), granting residents safe access to services and facilities in Sawston and Cambridge by foot or bicycle
- 1.44 As part of an application, the applicant will consider the cumulative impacts onto the local highway network and any potential impact on the functioning of trunk roads and/or local roads could be reasonably mitigated.
- 1.45 As such, a 'Green' rating would be appropriate in this context.

#### *Archaeology*

- 1.46 An appropriate archaeological investigation strategy will be undertaken to assess the impact of development on any archaeological factors, which will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.



1.47 As such, a 'Green' or 'Amber' rating would be appropriate in this context.

#### *Historic Environment*

1.48 The site is not located within any conservation areas. The closest heritage asset to the site – Chapel of Hospital of St John the Baptist – is a Grade II\* listed building <200m from the site's access. Detailed design measures can be implemented through a planning application stage to ensure the site's development has a neutral and positive impact on any heritage assets.

1.49 Considering the site's location and the mitigation measures that can be implemented through detailed design, a 'Green' or 'Amber' rating in the context of historic environment factors would be appropriate.

#### *Biodiversity and Geodiversity*

1.50 The site is an arable field and, in itself, appears to be of low ecological value. There are no apparent priority habitats within the site, though vegetation along the site's boundary may be of ecological value. Development of the site could be designed in such a way that there is ample open space, which would contribute biodiversity net gains. To mitigate any possible detriment to the environment and ensure that development can deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity, ecological assessments can be undertaken as part of a planning application. Furthermore, consultations with Natural England can be undertaken at the planning application stage to further ascertain how ecological impacts may be reasonably mitigated and further environmental benefits may be facilitated by the development.

1.51 Therefore, we recommend that the site be granted a 'Green' rating in relation to impacts on the site's biodiversity and geodiversity.

#### *Air Quality*

1.52 The site is not situated within an AQMA. We anticipate that the site will have a minimal impact on traffic if developed. Therefore, we advise a 'Green' rating for air quality factors.

#### *Noise, Vibration, Odour, and Light Pollution*

1.53 While the site may be impacted by noise and vibration caused by the railway, these can be mitigated through a planning application. Matters of noise and vibration were considered on an outline planning application for a residential redevelopment of the Lion Works site – directly east of our proposed site – that will abut the railway (see ref: S/0746/15/OL). This application was approved with conditions in 2018. Therefore, similar to existing developments in Whittlesford that have been granted planning permission, a noise survey can be undertaken, and appropriate mitigation measures can be secured via planning conditions if needed.

1.54 Based on the above, we advise that the site be granted a 'Green' rating in this context.

#### *Contamination and Ground Stability*

1.55 The site comprises arable greenfield, so it is unlikely that significant contamination is present. Sites of this nature would normally receive a green rating in a sustainability assessment. If

contamination was found, this should not preclude development as any necessary conditions can be applied through a planning application.

- 1.56 Therefore, a 'Green' rating for contamination and ground stability would be appropriate for this site.

#### *Site Density*

- 1.57 The proposed development would deliver circa 16,000 m<sup>2</sup> employment floorspace, providing much-needed industrial, warehouse and office space in a sustainable location that adjoins with an area already proposed for commercial development by the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Considering the nature of the site and adjacent employment areas, this density would ensure that development of the site is conducted in a comprehensive manner and compliant with the built form of adjacent employment zones.

### **The Proposed Policy Framework**

- 1.58 The following section includes comments on the emerging policy direction as published in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals.

#### *Policy S/SCP: Policy areas in the rural southern cluster*

- 1.59 We support the new policy area S/SCP/WHD Whittlesford Parkway Station Area, Whittlesford Bridge however due to the sustainable location we believe this policy area should be expanded eastwards to include the land to the east of Whittlesford Highways Depot. This site immediately adjoins the policy area S/SCP/WHD and inclusion of this site would act as a very logical extension.
- 1.60 Furthermore, the policy is limited to "redevelopment" of the existing built up area and the inclusion of the adjoining, well contained site to the east would facilitate much needed further growth. The greenfield site would support the strategy and follow the redevelopment of the brownfield and as it is an unconstrained site can be delivered in a timely manner.

#### *Policy S/JH: New Jobs and Homes*

- 1.61 The widespread promotion of Neighbourhood Plans (page 24) is likely to act as a constraint on development in the rural area. Research on the progress and effectiveness of neighbourhood plans<sup>2</sup> found that 55% of the draft plans published for consultation have 'protectionist' agendas and many are openly anti-development. Therefore, there is a likelihood that this agenda will create inevitable conflicts between the national aim to significantly boost employment and local community NIMBYism. The idea of 'top down' housing targets being set by the local authority may also dissuade some areas from engaging with the neighbourhood planning process altogether.

#### *Policy S/SB: Settlement Boundaries*

- 1.62 Although much of the Greater Cambridge area has a dispersed settlement pattern, the draft plan does not support the 'organic' growth of smaller settlements. To ensure that local housing needs can be fulfilled and prevent any further loss of key local services, a more flexible and tolerant approach is needed towards development in the rural area.

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<sup>2</sup> Turley Associates (2014). Neighbourhood Planning: Plan and Deliver?  
Available at: [www.turley.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/news/Turley %20Neighbourhood%20Planning\\_March\\_2014.pdf](http://www.turley.co.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/news/Turley%20Neighbourhood%20Planning_March_2014.pdf)

- 1.63 Through the application of tightly drawn settlement boundaries, development is strictly controlled on sites in the 'open countryside'. But it is not logical to treat all sites equally in policy terms. Although sites within sensitive valued landscapes and the green belt should receive a high level of protection, the sensitive development of some sites on the edge of a village would cause no significant harm (e.g. Whittlesford). Such a pragmatic approach is often taken at appeal; rounding off development where there is a defensible physical boundary or allowing a high-quality development with extensive landscaping that would soften an existing harsh area of built form can be acceptable in certain locations.
- 1.64 Overall, a carefully worded criteria-based policy which was supportive of organic growth adjacent to existing built-up areas should not perpetuate unfettered incremental growth.

*Policy CC/NZ: Net Zero Carbon New Buildings*

- 1.65 Draft Policy CC/NZ sets a high threshold of 150 homes for calculating whole life carbon emissions. Support should also be expressed for developments of <150 dwellings where this information is provided voluntarily.
- 1.66 What support will be available for developers in seeking to meet the high standards proposed? Will the potential impact on viability be taken into consideration? Regardless of the chosen approach, it would be useful to include further guidance/information in a supplementary planning document (SPD).

*Policy CC/WE: Water Efficiency in New Developments*

- 1.67 What support will be available for developers in seeking to meet the high standards proposed? Will the potential impact on viability be taken into consideration? Regardless of the chosen approach, it would be useful to include further guidance/information in an SPD.

*Policy BG/GI: Green Infrastructure*

- 1.68 The adoption of a green infrastructure standard should be a recommendation, not a requirement. Developments should not be opposed where all reasonable steps have been taken to protect and incorporate green infrastructure.
- 1.69 Regardless of the chosen approach, it would be useful to include further guidance/information in an SPD.

*Policy WS/HD: Creating Healthy New Developments*

- 1.70 Health Impact Assessments should be a requirement for major developments only. For minor developments, this information should be optional or simplified, for example through the use of a short questionnaire (similar to the Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Checklist).

*Policy J/NE: New Employment and Development Proposals*

- 1.71 As established above, demand for both commercial development space has grown due to industrial expansions across Cambridgeshire in manufacturing, supply chain logistics and distribution, as well as the various technology sectors. However, the record low levels of available industrial and warehouse space are indicative of a widening gap between the supply of and demand for industrial space – a gap stimulated by a paucity in supply. As such, we support the Greater Cambridge Partnership's policy direction, which encourages employment development at appropriate scales on village boundaries.

- 1.72 In relation to Land to the east of Whittlesford Highway Depot in Whittlesford Bridge, commercial development of the site would provide a substantial boost to local job opportunities and would constitute a comprehensive expansion of the existing employment space along the site's western boundary. Furthermore, aligning with the aims of Policy J/NE and various other sustainability initiatives forwarded by the Greater Cambridge Partnership, development of the site would provide new commercial space with direct links to rail networks, therein reducing the need for incoming commuters to rely on their private cars.

*Policy I/ST: Sustainable Transport and Connectivity*

- 1.73 We support the Greater Cambridge Partnership's aims to deliver 'sustainable and inclusive communities' by connecting new developments to existing transport networks. The Partnership's commitment to the improvement of Whittlesford Parkway Station will ensure that there is enhanced capacity for the projected increase in commuters both to and from Whittlesford Bridge. As such, commercial development at Whittlesford Bridge is ideally placed if the goal is to maximise public use of the improved Whittlesford Parkway Station, and there is some guarantee that the enhanced facility will be able to accommodate additional footfall generated by such developments.
- 1.74 We would emphasise that rail services are the most sustainable form of public transport and development should be situated in conurbations with rail connections (e.g. Whittlesford Bridge) to ensure that incoming residents can travel sustainably.

**Availability and Deliverability**

- 1.75 The First Proposals plan is heavily reliant on the delivery of a handful of strategic developments, particularly large and complex sites. To ensure that the delivery of industrial space does not stall, and the supply-demand gap for employment space widens as a result, a pipeline of smaller developments which can deliver commercial sites quickly will be needed in the short-to-medium term. Our proposed site on Land to the east of Whittlesford Highways Depot in Whittlesford Bridge is suitable, available, and deliverable within 0-5 years.