



GROSVENOR



Trumpington South

Green Belt and Landscape Appraisal

February 2020

Introduction

The landscape and settlement edge of southern Cambridge has seen significant change over the last 15 years and will see further change on completion of Trumpington Meadows and the potential Cambridge South West Travel Hub.

A preliminary green belt and landscape appraisal has been carried out on behalf of Grosvenor Britain & Ireland and USS Ltd. to determine the potential capacity for development at Trumpington South. This document demonstrates that specific shifts in the settlement and landscape pattern in southern Cambridge have, and will continue to, affect the site's contribution to the Cambridge Green Belt purposes.

The potential capacity of the site for future development has been appraised in the context of the potential Cambridge South West Travel Hub development to the south west of the M11, which is being progressed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

In defining the capacity of the site for development, we have also explored the type and nature of the

settlement edge together with an appropriate overarching mitigation strategy that would help preserve and enhance the settlement setting and overall sense of visual openness.

For the purposes of the appraisal, we considered the effects of the Travel Hub proposals in their current form. It is important to note, however, that should the proposals be altered or not come forward altogether, then the site's capacity for development is not reduced but the most appropriate treatment of the settlement edge and mitigation strategy will potentially be altered.



Landscape Character

Landscape character changes post-completion of Trumpington Meadows and development of the new Cambridge South West Travel Hub.

The site is located on the south western edge of Trumpington Meadows, a mixed-use development currently under construction, and immediately north of the M11 motorway. The landscape and the settlement edge has seen significant change over the last 15 years and further change will result with the completion of Trumpington Meadows and the potential development of the new Cambridge South West Travel Hub.

Post-completion of Trumpington Meadows

The landscape of the Trumpington Meadows Country Park and the Trumpington South site has been previously characterised as an area of the Rhee and Bourn Valley, a landscape type that is typically arable, particularly open in nature and relatively tranquil. Between 2002 and 2018, the expansion of mixed-use development within the Cambridge southern fringe and Trumpington Meadows Country Park has resulted in a moderate change to the landscape's key characteristics.

North west of Hauxton Road, the topography has remained relatively flat and low-lying. However, the

addition of earth bunds to create a screen and sound barrier for the M11 has reduced, to a small degree, the sense of visual openness, particularly in the area north west of the overbridge. The area south of the M11 and south east of Hauxton Road remains mostly open.

Existing hydrological features remain, such as small drains and ditches, and new features have been created as part of the recent development, including a swale and a retention basin improving drainage, with glimpses of the River Cam still visible from the Country Park.

Arable production still exists within the study boundary, but it now covers less than half of the landscape character area with the expansion of residential development and naturalisation of the country park between 2002 and 2019.

Post-development of the Cambridge South West Travel Hub

The current proposals incorporate significant areas of new structural landscape planting, concentrated along

the edge of Cambridge Road and the M11 to screen the built infrastructure. The result is that the general sense of visual openness, particularly to the west and where experienced from Cambridge Road, is reduced.

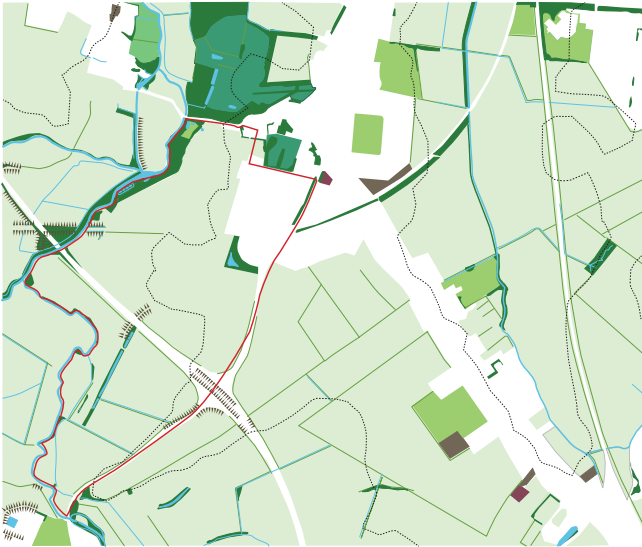
Subsequent development of the Trumpington Meadows Country Park and the proposed Travel Hub has and will continue to introduce further structural elements, creating a more complex and intimate landscape pattern, particularly north west of Cambridge Road.

The broad distribution of land use has also altered, with the landscape to the north east remaining in arable cultivation but to the north west becoming increasingly naturalised and, in part, urbanised by the introduction of a new junction, bus lane and associated earthworks.

The parcel of agricultural land which forms the site, to the north west of Hauxton Road, will become increasingly segregated from the wider expanse of agricultural land to the east.

Landscape and settlement pattern

2002



- Semi-rural character and soft settlement edge
- Simple landscape pattern and limited structure
- Strong sense of openness
- Prominent primary infrastructure
- Analogous landscape to east and west of Hauxton Road / Cambridge Road
- Poor biodiversity potential

Post-Trumpington Meadows



- Semi-urban character and abrupt / urban edge
- Diversifying landscape pattern and improved landscape structure
- Strong sense of openness
- Prominent primary infrastructure
- Analogous landscape to east and west of Hauxton Road / Cambridge Road
- Improved biodiversity potential

*Post-Cambridge
South West Travel Hub*



- Urban character north of the M11 and abrupt / urban settlement edge
- Diversifying landscape pattern and strong landscape structure
- Contrast between landscape east and west of Hauxton Road / Cambridge Road
- Prominent primary infrastructure
- Improved biodiversity

Landscape Character

Urbanisation of transport corridor

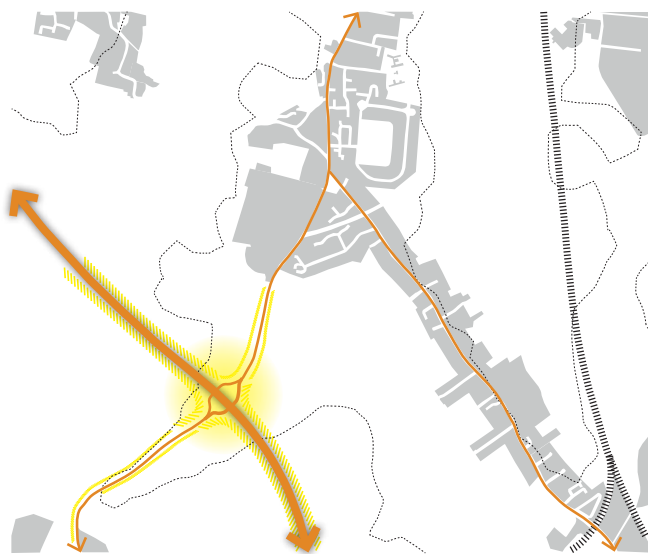
In 2002, the M11 and junction 11 was significantly audible and visually intrusive to the north and south across the open landscape but the settlement edge was more subtle and set back in the landscape.

The development of Trumpington Meadows has seen the expansion of the development creating a

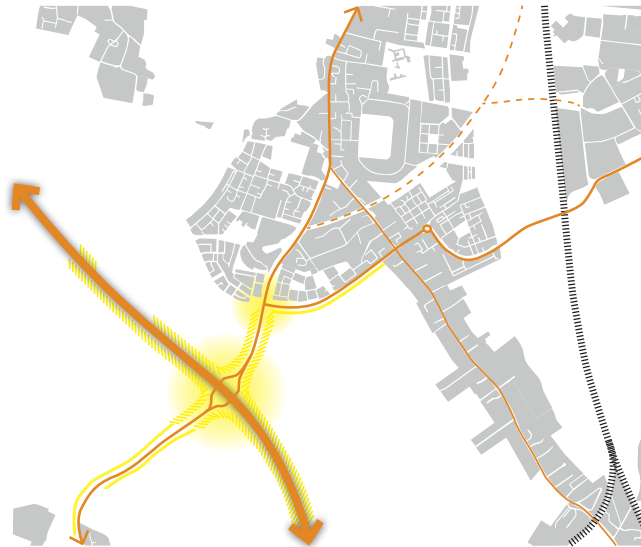
prominent urban edge and gateway into Trumpington. The creation of the earth bund north of the M11 has partly reduced audible and visual intrusion. However, the addition of Addenbrooke's Road and the junction adjoining Hauxton Road, along with the development, further intensifies the impact of built infrastructure on the landscape, seen opposite.

Upon development of the Cambridge South West Travel Hub, there will be further expansion of the built infrastructure to the north and south of the M11. This is seen significantly by the inclusion of the bus route and the perceived widening of Hauxton Road. There will be further urbanisation of the landscape and the southern gateway to Cambridge.

2002



Post-Trumpington Meadows



Post-Cambridge South West Travel Hub



Earth bund north of the M11, reducing visual and audible intrusion, post-Trumpington Meadows



Addenbrooke's Road / Hauxton Road junction, post-Trumpington Meadows



Contribution to green belt purposes

Changes to the function and qualities of the green belt purposes

These alterations to the landscape, specifically the urbanising nature of future development and associated reduction in visual openness, will alter the contribution of the site to green belt purposes, particularly the setting of and approach to the settlement edge. These changes have also altered the qualities and function of the green belt.

Locally, the principal purpose of the Cambridge Green Belt is to preserve the setting and special character of Cambridge and to prevent the merging of communities with each other and with the city. We consider the contribution of the site to the prevention of communities merging into one another to be weak and so, initially, our focus has been the changing nature of the site and surrounding environs and how this has and will affect the setting of Cambridge.

The LDA Inner Green Belt Assessments (2012 / 2015) make various conclusions about the character of the approach to Cambridge and the function of the green belt, which are addressed in turn:

Settlement edge

- 'Area between M11 and edge of Trumpington Meadows

(finished development edge) are characterised as level views with a countryside foreground and a mixed urban edge (Parts of the eastern side of Cambridge and rural fringes to Trumpington Meadows, Glebe Farm and Clay Farm)'

The existing character of the settlement edge is recognised as mixed urban with a countryside foreground. Development within the Cambridge Southern Fringe is relatively prominent and strong in form and has significantly altered the nature of the edge. The countryside foreground remains, however.

The implementation of the new Cambridge South West Travel Hub and associated woodland planting will reduce the overall extent of the countryside foreground to an area between the M11 and the edge of Trumpington Meadows, essentially the area of the site.

Key views

- 'Key views to Cambridge from the surrounding landscape, including level views from east and west'
- 'Key view of Cambridge identified from Cambridge Road, north of the M11 / adjacent to J11' (shown in blue).
- 'First view of Cambridge identified 1km SW of J11,

Cambridge Road and incorporates agricultural land up to and including the edge of Trumpington Meadows' (shown in orange).

With the proposed introduction of woodland planting on the edge of the M11 and Cambridge Road, the first views of Cambridge will be limited to J11 and Hauxton Road and will incorporate a substantial countryside edge as far as Trumpington Meadows.

Approach

- 'The approach to Cambridge along Trumpington Road is a historic road and distinctive route into Cambridge. The first view of the city comes approximately 1km west of the M11 junction. From the M11, there is a short stretch of open countryside before the urban gateway of the ongoing development at Trumpington Meadows and Glebe Farm, this being the gateway to Trumpington rather than to Cambridge itself.'

The introduction of further built infrastructure on Cambridge Road and Hauxton Road will further urbanise the approach to Cambridge / Trumpington. The 'short stretch' of open countryside from the M11 will remain unaffected by the proposed Travel Hub.

Settlement edge and openness

2002



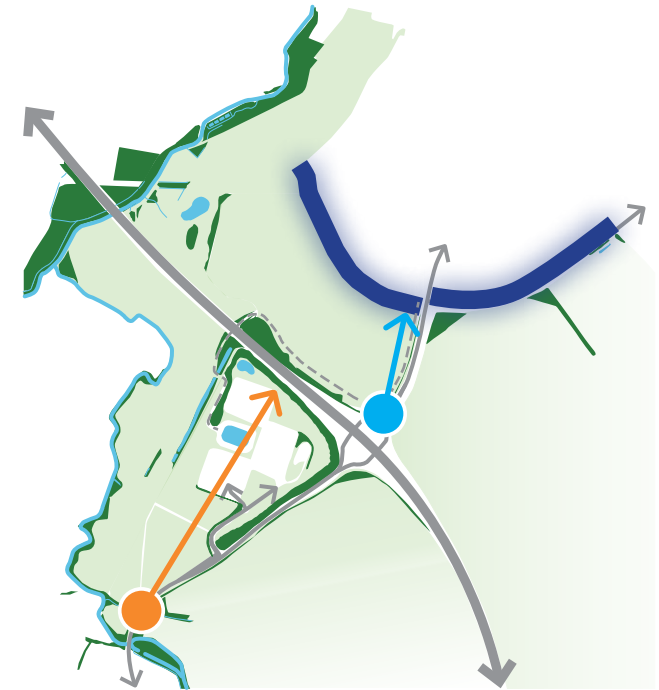
- **First view of Cambridge from the west of the M11:** Wide open and broadly rural setting with only glimpsed views of the settlement edge.
- **Key view from the M11:** Level views of open countryside extending as far as the River Cam and partial views of the soft settlement edge of Trumpington.

Post-Trumpington Meadows



- **First view of Cambridge from the west of the M11:** Wide open and broadly semi-rural setting with views of a continuous and strong urban edge.
- **Key view from the M11:** 'A short stretch of open countryside' and a 'distinctive urban gateway of the ongoing development at Trumpington Meadows and Glebe Farm, this being the urban gateway to Trumpington rather than to Cambridge itself'.

Post-Cambridge
South West Travel Hub



- **View from the west of the M11:** Interrupted and obscured by woodland planting associated with the Travel Hub. Strong sense of enclosure / wooded character.
- **Key / first view from the M11:** A short stretch of open countryside and enclosed / framed views over a small parcel of agricultural land to the country park and River Cam.

Landscape Capacity

Sufficient countryside edge preserved, ensuring that the landscape predominates

Future development of Trumpington South will provide an opportunity to create a new settlement edge which responds to the changing and increasingly enclosed nature of the landscape. The extent of the settlement edge should allow for a sufficient countryside edge to be preserved, ensuring that the landscape predominates.

We have carried out preliminary exercises exploring the optimum extent and treatment of the countryside edge which have in turn partly determined the capacity of the site for development.

Alterations to the landscape will provide the opportunity to enhance the countryside edge and, by extension, the setting and special character of Cambridge. These provisions could provide significant compensatory improvements to the green belt, over and above standard development requirements.

The countryside edge also provides the opportunity to enhance the function of the green belt, providing additional opportunities for recreation.

A significant net gain in biodiversity has been observed within Trumpington Meadows Country Park, an area

that has become an increasingly valued area of naturalised public open space. Naturalisation of the landscape and extension of the country park as part of the Trumpington South proposals will provide similar opportunities for significant biodiversity gain while creating a substantial and altogether connected and cohesive series of habitats.

The introduction of landscape structural elements should be considered carefully to ensure the visual openness is preserved, while maximising longer distance views to the east and west to the River Cam.

Protecting the setting and maximising openness



- Strong level of enclosure to the south of the M11
- Emphasis on the landscape setting to the north of the M11
- First sense of openness experienced to the north of the M11



- Preserve sense of openness
- Preserve medium - long distance views as far as the River Cam
- Ensure the treatment of the landscape responds to the character of the landscape north and west of Cambridge Road / Hauxton Road



- Ensure sufficient gap is maintained between the M11 and development edge to preserve the sense of openness



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