

**South West Cambridge –
Land north of Barton Road**

**Landscape and Visual Appraisal and
Green Belt Review**

for

North Barton Road Landowners Group

December 2019

Quality Control

Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Belt Review

South West Cambridge – Land North of Barton Road

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The Landscape Partnership is registered with the Landscape Institute, the Royal Town Planning Institute, and is a member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

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Contents

Report

1	Introduction	1
2	Landscape Character	3
3	Visual Character	17
4	Review of Cambridge Green Belt	24
5	Opportunities and Constraints	38

Appendices

Appendix 1 – A3 Figures and Photographs (separate A3 document)

Figure 01 – Wider Setting

Figure 02 – Green Belt and Conservation Areas

Figure 03 – Views and Public Rights of Way

Figure 04 – Site Units

Figure 05 – Landscape Strategy

Figure 06 – 1888-91 OS Map

Figure 07 – 1903-4 OS Map

Figure 08 – 1959-60 OS Map

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Landscape Partnership (TLP) was commissioned in December 2015 to undertake a landscape focused assessment of a Site at South West Cambridge – Land North of Barton Road on behalf of the North of Barton Road Landowners Group.
- 1.2 This study has been produced to support representations by Carter Jonas on behalf of the landowners to the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan being carried out jointly by Cambridge City Council (CCC) and South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). The established local plans for both authorities are the adopted Local Plans of 2018.
- 1.3 The Site is roughly bounded by Barton Road to the south, M11 to the west, West Cambridge campus to the north and the edge of Cambridge City to the east (see Figure 01). A fuller site description is provided in Section 2 below. The boundary between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District runs broadly diagonally across the Site from the north-west corner to the south-east corner.
- 1.4 TLP were previously appointed by St Johns College (between 2012- 2107) for the land that forms the northern part of the current Site area. TLP carried out some landscape studies and made representations through Savills on behalf of St Johns College to the emerging Local Plans that were later adopted in 2018. St Johns College are now part of the North Barton Road Landowners Group.
- 1.5 The current position of the City and District Council is that the whole site is defined as Green Belt within the adopted Local Plans with no planned development.
- 1.6 This report will consider the following:
 - a. Landscape character from the wider context to the site (Section 2)
 - b. Visual character with a focus on publicly accessible views (Section 3)
 - c. A role of the Site within the Green Belt (Section 4)
 - d. Opportunities and constraints for the site in relation to potential development (Section 5)
- 1.7 This document does not provide a detailed landscape and visual impact assessment, as there are at this stage no proposals to assess, rather it considers the in-principle suitability of the land for development, based on factors such landscape character and visibility and the contribution it makes to the setting of the city and the purposes of including land within the Green Belt
- 1.8 This report should be read alongside a number of related reports for other environmental topics including;

- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – (The Landscape Partnership)
- The Western Fields of Cambridge, Land North of Barton Road – Initial Appraisal of Significance October 2019 (Andrew Josephs Associates)

1.9 TLP carried out a site visit for this report in September 2019 to refresh the baseline and identify any changes in context since it was last visited in July 2016.

1.10 The report is illustrated by a number of supporting Figures and Photographs included in Appendix 1. The photographs (A- -Q and 1-9) provided in Appendix 1 were taken with an Olympus E420 digital SLR camera with a Zuiko Digital 25mm lens which is directly equivalent to 50mm lens on a manual SLR camera that uses 35mm film. In most cases the photographs have been stitched together to form panoramas.

2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

National Scale

- 2.1 At a national scale the Site is located on the eastern edge of the National Character Area (NCA) 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands. This covers a large area of landscape extending from Buckingham in the south-west to Peterborough in the north and Cambridge in the east. It is a landscape of gently undulating lowland plateau divided by shallow river valleys that comprises predominantly open arable farmland with regular fields bound by open ditches and trimmed hedgerows and scattered woodland. Statement of Environmental Opportunities (SEO) 3 states, *'plan and create high-quality green infrastructure to help accommodate growth and expansion, linking and enhancing existing semi-natural habitats'*.

District and City Scale

South Cambridge District Council

- 2.2 No detailed landscape character assessment has been undertaken that covers the whole of South Cambridgeshire. The District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, prepared in March 2010, does provide an overview of the broad definition of landscape character and settlement character that covers South Cambridgeshire. This identifies that the western part of the District and to the west of Cambridge, lies within the Landscape Character Area (LCA) C: Western Claylands. Reference is made to the following relevant characteristics which are of relevance to the Site:

- *'The gently undulating topography is divided by broad, shallow valleys,*
- *It is a predominantly open and intensive arable landscape. Fields are either bounded by open ditches, or closely trimmed hedgerows, both with a variable number of hedgerow trees'*
- *Small pasture fields with origins in 'ancient countryside' provide a buffer between settlements and medium size fields enclosed in the nineteenth century.*
- *Many nineteenth century enclosure fields have been amalgamated to produce very large arable fields.*
- *Each village is identified by a church spire, or tower, which enliven the skyline.*

- 2.3 Settlement character describes how the villages in the western claylands on the low fen islands are characterised by their, *'well defined edges provided by mature trees, thick hedgerows, copses or parkland. Small fields and paddocks also contribute to their landscape setting, providing a transition to the surrounding countryside. Many of the villages have a strong, linear form with rows of cottages*

and a few, larger farmsteads facing roads and paths. The closest villages to the Site are Coton, Barton and Grantchester.

Cambridge Inner Green Belt Study

- 2.4 The Cambridge Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (CIGBBS)¹ produced by LDA for both CCC and SCDC in 2015 identifies the Site as lying within and to the north-east of the Landscape Character Type (LCT) 4: River Valleys and within the LCA 4C: Rhee and Bourn Valleys (refer to Figure 8²). The Study at para 4.8.12 describes the LCT as follows, *'Cambridge is surrounded by river valley landscapes on its south west and southern edges. These valleys have been formed by rivers eroding the chalk or clay bedrock to create broad valleys, with a very gently undulating landform. There are numerous streams and tributaries. The alluvial sediment makes the land relatively fertile, allowing arable agriculture in higher areas, and pasture/ meadows in flood plains closer to watercourses.'* The Bin Brook is the watercourse passing through the Site which proceeds to flow into the River Cam to the east.
- 2.5 LCA 4C: Rhee and Bourn Valleys is further defined from paras 4.8.41 with relevant text including the following extracts, *'These valleys form the landscape to the south west of Cambridge. The landscape is comprised of a repeating pattern of subtle ridges and dips which reflect the drainage pattern. However, their overall appearance is relatively flat.The majority of land is in arable production, although pastures are common alongside streams.'*
- 2.6 The CIGBBS continues at 4.8.43 by stating, *'The key views to Cambridge within this character area are seen from the M11. The landmarks of the historic core are clearly visible and form skyline elements. Low lying countryside forms the foreground to these views, and the high quality green edge of the city means that the city appears to merge gradually with the countryside.* This description of views includes the views across the Site from the section of the M11 closest to it. However, in TLPs opinion the sections of the M11 with available views to the city are limited in extent (see Figure 03) and where present the landmark buildings in the historic core are only partly visible and relatively minor features. A fuller discussion of these views is provided in Section 3 below.
- 2.7 Land further to the west of the Site and west of the M11 rises up to LCT 5 and LCA 5A: Western Claylands. The text at 4.8.5 states, *'The overall impression is of a mature, peaceful rural landscape which enhances the topography of east-west ridges. There are some distant views of Cambridge from high points, including at Red Meadow Hill in Coton Countryside Reserve, but the majority of*

¹ https://www.scams.gov.uk/media/6596/a-cambridge-inner-green-belt-boundary-study_-main-report.pdf

² <https://files.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/rd-mc-030-part2.pdf>

these views are screened by vegetation in the summer months. An important approach into Cambridge from Bedford passes through the Western Claylands. Adjacent to the road is the American Cemetery, a memorable feature within the setting of the city. Just beyond the American Cemetery is a key elevated view of Cambridge. Cotton is the closest village to the Site and within c.500m from the West Cambridge University campus which lies to east of the M11. Despite the relative proximity there is negligible intervisibility between the Site and Cotton village due to the presence of intervening hedges.

- 2.8 The CIGBBS also assesses the role of the different areas of townscape/landscape in supporting the historic core and distinctive areas of the city. This includes the contribution which the surrounding landscape makes to the city is visible or where it forms part of the foreground of views from more distant viewpoints. The CIGBBS assessment also considers the contribution each character area makes to the 'essence' of Cambridge. Consideration was given to connective areas which may include significant landscape and/or townscape features.
- 2.9 The CIGBBS considers that the Site falls within a 'Supportive' landscape area adjacent to a 'Distinctive' townscape area to the west of Cambridge (see Figure 11³ in CIGBBS). These areas are seen to support the character of the Historic core and Distinctive areas of the city and provide a *'backdrop and ambience, and bolster the sense of place of the city and its approaches.'* The CIGBBS identifies that these areas are not unique but are locally distinctive. In relation to Sector 3 (in which the Site is located) paragraph 4.14.15 notes the large area of landscape to the west of the city extending up to the M11, *'provides an important foreground in views of the city, including the clearest views of the colleges and the historic core from the landscape anywhere around Cambridge.'* The CIGBBS then states that these supportive landscape areas are, *'key elements of the distinctiveness of Cambridge and its setting, and a fundamental quality of the setting and special character of the historic city.'* TLP accept that this area of land to the west provides one of the few locations with views towards the historic core. However, TLP consider that the extent to which the colleges and historic core of the city can be seen from these locations is relatively limited. The main landmark building visible is the University Library tower. Only parts of two colleges can be readily identified, namely St Johns College Chapel tower and the very upper section of King's College Chapel. In TLPs opinion the relative distinctiveness of these views and the weight to be afforded to them should not be overstated.

^{3 3} <https://files.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/rd-mc-030-part2.pdf>

Local Character and context

Landform

- 2.10 The Site is located at between c. 19m AOD at the north-west corner to c 11m AOD along Barton Road to the south-east boundary. To the east the land falls below the 10m contour along the alignment of Bin Brook. Most of the land between the M11 and the built edge of the city is at c. 10-20m AOD and comprises the gentle undulating lower slopes of the claylands as they run down to Cambridge. To the west, beyond the M11 corridor, the topography rises up above Barton, Coton and Madingley to elevations at and above 50m AOD. These low clay hills effectively mark the western edge of the wider setting of Cambridge. There are two ridges which run east west within this higher ground. To the north a ridge follows the A1303 Madingley Road at Madingley Hill. This higher ground is also reasonably well wooded. The second ridge lies to the south above Barton and is more open in character and extends towards the Open Access Land at Red Meadow Hill. The topographical features can be seen on Figure 01.

Existing vegetation

- 2.11 The claylands outside the urban area of the city are predominantly used for a range of arable cropping. The fields on the Site are mainly enclosed by hedges of varying height. Most of the hedges are relatively tall (c.3-4 m). Between the M11 and Cambridge there are a number of hedges that visually combine to filter views from the west into and across the Site. There are also smaller areas of meadow and grassland. These mainly follow the course of Bin Brook and are also associated with riparian vegetation and small tree groups. Some of the stronger vegetative boundaries across the Site include that along the parish and district administrative boundary which runs diagonally across the Site.
- 2.12 A historical assessment of the fields within the Site is provided with The Western Fields of Cambridge, Land North of Barton Road – Initial Appraisal of Significance October 2019 (Andrew Josephs Associates). This report concludes that the modern fieldscape is mainly of 1805 origin resulting from the early 19th century enclosures. This process incorporated some earlier boundaries e.g. along parish boundaries and watercourses. The most significant boundary features are noted in the AJA report as being those along the parish boundary running north west to south east (and also two adjacent fields) across the Site and along the Bin Brook. Figures 06-08 in this report show the pattern of fields based on OS maps from 1888 and 1960. Hedges/Boundaries lost or added since the date of each OS map in comparison to the present day are shown. These plans illustrate that the broad pattern of field units present in 1880 largely remain intact today.
- 2.13 Woodland within the Site is limited in extent to the substantial linear mixed plantation adjacent to Barton Road (c 1990's origin) and a plantation (also late 1990's origin) located to the north-west

of Gough Way which now physically and visually contains the land to the east of the Site (Field Unit H on Figure 04) from the wider landscape.

- 2.14 Individual mature trees on the Site are restricted to a few in the established hedgerows and watercourses and a number associated with the smaller scale paddocks/pasture along Barton Road in the vicinity of Laundry Farm House.
- 2.15 In the wider area with the exception of Madingley Wood on the higher ground to the west there are few large woods in the area. However, there are a number of shelter belts and copses. A number of these follow main routes into Cambridge including on both sides of Barton Road and along Madingley Road which visually contain the approaches into Cambridge from the wider arable landscape beyond. There are also substantive linear plantations enclosing the Rifle Range to the south west of the M11. The local villages of Coton, Barton and Grantchester are also generally relatively enclosed by perimeter vegetation including copses, hedges and a number of mature gardens.
- 2.16 The western edge of Cambridge City extending between the Backs and River Cam to the western built edge of the City also contains a notable amount of mature vegetation. This is a function of the relatively low-density character of the residential areas, university college facilities and associated playing fields etc. There are many mature trees and areas of semi natural vegetation and large gardens in this part of the city that combine to help to create a soft green edge to the west of the city, despite it being urban in character. This density of planting also provides a considerable measure of screening to the majority of the buildings in the historic core as seen from the west including from across the Site.

Settlement and Built development

- 2.17 The character of the settlement varies in the locality. To the east of the site the western extent of Cambridge comprises individual houses and buildings which are located in a mature well vegetated setting. These include a number of architectural styles from the late 19th century onwards. Buildings include substantial detached houses set in large gardens and a number of university accommodation blocks dating from the 20th to early 21st century. Most of the buildings are architect designed and exhibit a bespoke and high standard of design. There are a number of other individual buildings including sports pavilions. The progression of built development to the west of the historic core is illustrated by the historic OS maps in Figures 06-08. These show how at 1888-89 (Figure 06) the core cluster of Cambridge Colleges leading to the Backs on the River Cam effectively marked the edge of the City with only scattered development and college playing fields to the west. By 1959-60 (Figure 08) built development had extended up to Wilberforce Road with low density of residential development and further development along the Madingley Road and

Barton Road routes. In the latter half of the 20th century infill west of Cambridge has occurred including some traditional residential development and some more bespoke college development.

- 2.18 Figure 04 shows the current extent of development and the considerable scale of the more recent West Cambridge campus development located beyond the northern boundary of the Site. This is in marked contrast to the other parts of development that has taken place west of Cambridge with a campus style including a number of large faculty buildings set within a formal landscaped masterplan layout. A number of these buildings are 4-5 storeys in height and employ a range of contemporary designs and materials. These are in the main of good design quality of their type, particularly when seen at closer quarters. However, from a greater distance the overriding impression is of several large buildings unrelated to the historic core.
- 2.19 Section 4.14 of the CIGBBS sets out how various broad townscape and landscape areas have been assessed in their 'function' to the distinctiveness and sense of place of Cambridge. The roles of the areas vary between areas around the city. The CIGBBS notes that the importance of the areas can also vary 'within' as well as between character areas. In terms of townscape the CIGBBS considers that all the land area adjoining the Site to both the north and east is 'Distinctive' i.e. it is specifically recognisable and distinctive to the city with distinctive buildings and quintessential views. At paragraph 4.14.12 the CIGBBS notes that this area, *'includes the ongoing University development at West Cambridge, which include buildings of distinctive, high quality architecture and other buildings of significant historical and cultural importance, such as the Cavendish laboratory.'* However, TLP consider that the West Cambridge development is in marked contrast to the rest of west Cambridge and not specifically in a recognisable 'Cambridge' style. With the possible exception of the Schlumberger Building the area is not dissimilar to many University campuses in the UK. While being implemented to a high architectural quality it is not unique. This is also the case for the Wilberforce Road University Sports facilities. It is not considered that West Cambridge campus is *'a fundamental quality of the setting and special character of historic city'* as set out in paragraph 4.14.13 of the CIGBBS. TLP consider this is an incorrect judgement for this part of Cambridge.
- 2.20 The closest villages are Coton and Barton and lie to the west. Both contain a mix of traditional vernacular dwellings in the village centre and some small scale 20th century estate developments. The church at Coton is relatively modest in scale and cannot be seen from the site although the spire is visible in the wider landscape.
- 2.21 Within the Site itself there are some individual clusters of buildings. These include Dumpling Farm to the south west towards Barton Road and Laundry Farm to the south. Laundry Farm includes a larger complex of University buildings (see Unit P on Figure4) which date from the second half of the 20th century and are accessed off Barton Road. These are utilitarian in appearance and include

galvanised palisade boundary fencing and lighting within the yard areas, which gives a localised discordant, urban fringe appearance.

Designations

- 2.22 The majority of the countryside beyond the city limits is designated as Green Belt (see Figure 02). A description of the merits of the site in Green Belt terms is provided in Section 4.
- 2.23 To the east of the Site and beyond Wilberforce Road is the West Cambridge Conservation Area (NB not to be confused with the West Cambridge University site which covers a different area). This is one of 11 Conservation Areas in Cambridge (see Figure 02). Most of these Conservation Areas in Cambridge are contiguous with each other. The Conservation Area abuts the Site in two locations to the east in the vicinity of the Bin Brook. The Conservation Area Appraisal⁴ identifies (at pdf page 62) 'Important Positive views'. Three arrowed locations are indicated along the track running from Grange Road west towards the Site. However, it should be noted that these are private views as this is not a public footpath.
- 2.24 There are two County Wildlife Sites (CWS) close to or on the site. These both comprise sections of hedgerow and verge. CWS C5.6 includes the hedgerow to the north of the footpath and cycleway that follows the Harcamlow Way. CWS C5.3 includes a section of the hedgerow and verge network to the adjacent to fields units B, D and G (see Figure 04). Further discussion on these features is provided in the Preliminary Ecology Appraisal.

Site Description

- 2.25 The site is approximately 156 hectares in size. The Site location is shown on Figures 01-08.
- 2.26 The Site boundaries as shown on Drawings 03 and 04 follow in a clockwise direction:
- Barton Road to the south,
 - Part of the M11 and M11 slip road to the south-west,
 - The field boundaries marking the ownership between NBRLOG and Cambridge Past Present and Future (CPPF) which extends up to and then beyond the M11,
 - The Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way to the north,
 - University Sports Ground to the north-west

⁴ <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/2855/west-cambridge-caa.pdf>

- Built edge of Cambridge to the west including Gough Way/Dane Drive

2.27 The landform comprises low lying and gently undulating ground. A finger of slightly higher ground runs through the Site from the west in an eastwards direction as noted by the presence of the 15m contour (see Figure 01). A further area of locally higher ground above 15m is located mid-way on the western boundary extending eastwards. The intervening land includes gentle valleys, the most southerly forming the route of Bin Brook which flows east and then adjacent to Barton Road in a concrete channel before passing through Gough Way and to the eastern edge of the Site. The land generally slopes slowly down from west to east towards the edge of Cambridge.

Site Character Units

2.28 The CIGBBS assessed the whole of the Inner Green Belt and divided it into Sectors. The Site formed the majority of 'Sector 3 – North of Barton Road', in the CIGBBS being further sub-divided into three sub areas as follows:

- 3.1 – Larger Arable Fields.
- 3.2 Smaller parcels of pastoral land along southern boundary
- 3.3 Mixed small parcels of land in east of sector

2.29 Sector 3 is described in the CIGBBS as follows, '*Land use in most of the sector is large scale arable farmland. However, there are some smaller scale areas, including sports fields and rough grassland to the east and pastoral fields in the south along Barton Road. Several of the field boundary hedgerows are designated as County Wildlife Sites. The sector also includes Bin Brook, which is designated as a City Wildlife Site. A number of public footpaths cross the sector and the Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way, which is also a well-used cycleway, is located along the northern boundary.*'

2.30 The boundaries of Sector 3 are shown on Figure 04. TLP have reviewed the sub areas in terms of character and find them to be broadly appropriate at the scale of landscape assessed and are consistent in terms of scale and sub-division with other sectors around Cambridge. There have been no substantive changes within Sector 3 since the CIGBBS was undertaken in 2015.

2.31 As part of this study individual land /field units have been identified in terms of their character. In addition, a broad indication is provided of the relative susceptibility of the individual land/field units across the Site resulting from a change of introducing built development. The type of change assessed is for 2-3 storey residential development with associated open space and infrastructure. The susceptibility is assessed on a three-point scale of Low, Medium and High where Low would be the most suitable to develop and High the least suitable. However, it should be noted that it is likely that a land/field unit may be of higher susceptibility to change in combination with adjacent areas

of higher sensitivity. The land/field units are identified as A- T and described below in Table 1 and shown on Figure 04.

Table 1: Land/Field Units and susceptibility to development

Field Unit	Description	Susceptibility to development
A	Small broadly square arable field to the north-west of the Site enclosed and bounded by mature hedges and copses. The Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way cycleway (Footpath Cambridge 31) follows the northern boundary although located just outside the Site itself.	Low The land unit is located to the west of the site almost adjacent to the M11. Enclosing hedgerows contain the character, but development would be relatively isolated and affect the sense of separation from Coton.
B	Large rectilinear arable field to the north-west of the Site. Mature hedges to southern boundary (County Wildlife Site) and more intermittent hedging to east (part County Wildlife Site). The northern boundary is bounded by a post and rail fence and the Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way cycleway runs parallel to the north. The West Cambridge campus to north.	Medium The land unit has a relatively close relationship with West Cambridge which will become increasingly noticeable with further planned development. However, the unit also extends towards the M11 and in this location it would become relatively more detached moving west.
C	Large rectilinear arable field to north-east of Site. Northern strip of Field C uncultivated. Established hedges to the majority of the boundary to the west, south and east (part County Wildlife Site). The northern boundary is bounded by a post and rail fence and the Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way cycleway runs parallel outside the site. The West Cambridge campus prominent to north.	Low A large open field closely related to West Cambridge. The presence of the existing development to the north and east indicates the site has a relatively good suitability for built development. This could be further visually contained by the addition of planting to the west and southern boundaries. Views towards landmark buildings in Cambridge could be included within the form of development.
D	Medium rectilinear arable field to west of Site. Established hedgerows to all boundaries (most designated as County Wildlife Site) apart from open boundary to Field G.	High The unit is located to the west of the site and relatively close to the M11 and rural edge. The field contains established hedgerows which are protected by a County Wildlife Site designation and would require suitable offset is to restrict development. The proximity to the west of the site and the designation notably limits the scope for development.
E	Sports fields to the centre and south of Site, currently set out for junior rugby (for Kings College School). Strip of grassland to the north and east running into copse to south-eastern corner. Established hedgerows containing majority of Field Unit. The presence of University Sports	Low The land unit is largely contained by vegetation and adjacent development and could accommodate new development without substantial effects on the wider area subject to suitable mitigation and design.

Field Unit	Description	Susceptibility to development
	Ground evident to the north through structures and floodlighting columns.	
F	Medium rectilinear arable field to centre of Site. Established hedgerows to north, west and south boundaries. Established broadleaved plantation (c 200m x 60m) to east boundary providing separation from Field H to the east. Northern strip was part of former University Rifle Range.	<p style="text-align: center;">Medium</p> <p>The unit is relatively contained by hedgerows and woodland to all boundaries, and in isolation some limited development would have a relatively limited influence. However, the potential for creating connectivity through a green finger linking units H and D/G would be restricted if the unit was developed. For this reason, development is less suited</p>
G	Narrow arable field bounded by established hedgerows with a number of trees within southern boundary which follows the parish/district boundary. Section of Coton 9 footpath passes through south-east corner.	<p style="text-align: center;">High</p> <p>The unit is located to the edge of the site and influenced by the presence of established hedgerows protected by a County Wildlife Site designation, which would require suitable offsets to restrict development.</p>
H	Medium rectilinear arable field to east of Site. Established hedgerows to north and established broadleaved plantation within Field F to west. Mature planting to southern boundary in strip which follows the flood relief channel and rear gardens of Gough Way and Dane Drive. Eastern boundary formed by Bin Brook which is also marked by riparian vegetation. Northern strip was part of former University Rifle Range.	<p style="text-align: center;">Medium</p> <p>The field unit is physically and visually well contained to the perimeter and for this reason would be suitable to accommodate built development. However, the proximity to the West Cambridge Conservation Area raises its sensitivity. The unit also provides the potential to accommodate part of a green finger extending from Cambridge through Unit I and F to the west. This would restrict its potential for development.</p>
I	Small area of rough grassland and scrub between the Bin Brook and the edge of Cambridge and West Cambridge Conservation Area. Intermittent, mature vegetation follows the west boundary along the Bin Brook. Beyond eastern boundary a number of mature trees located within gardens associated with residential properties along Cranmer Road. Northern strip was part of former University Rifle Range.	<p style="text-align: center;">High</p> <p>A relatively sensitive area of land adjacent to the West Cambridge Conservation Area and Bin Brook. Development opportunities are limited due to the flooding risk and would need to be small-scale to reflect the adjacent development on the edge of Cambridge. The unit would be better suited to form a buffer of open space with benefits for biodiversity and public access.</p>
J	Large irregular shaped arable field. Boundary to the south following parish/district boundary with tall established hedgerow and intermittent hedgerow. The western and northern boundary contained by mature hedgerows. Eastern boundary formed by flood relief	<p style="text-align: center;">Low</p> <p>The site adjoins existing residential development at Gough Way to the west. It is contained to all of its boundaries and there are limited connections to the wider rural landscape towards the M11. However,</p>

Field Unit	Description	Susceptibility to development
	channel and rear boundary gardens of properties on Gough Way.	development on the site would be visible from Red Meadow Hill. The creation of strong tree planting to the western boundary could effectively contain the influence of built development viewed from the west.
K	Small triangular field of grassland pasture enclosed by established hedgerows, with a number of hedgerow trees to all boundaries. parish/district boundary with intermittent trees than hedgerow runs to the north.	Low The fields unit is relatively well enclosed by vegetation to all sides. Development would have a limited effect on the openness of the surrounding landscape but would need to respect the flooding risk of Bin Brook.
L	Medium scale rectilinear field of grassland pasture enclosed by established hedgerows to all boundaries. Parish/district boundary with intermittent trees than hedgerow runs to the north.	Low The fields unit is relatively well enclosed by vegetation to all sides. Development would have a limited effect on the openness of the surrounding landscape but would need to respect the flooding risk of Bin Brook.
M	Medium scale rectilinear field of grassland pasture enclosed by established hedgerows to the south, and west. Smaller clipped hedges to north and east.	Low A modest area of pasture that could be partly developed alongside adjacent units L and K. However, the area closest to Barton Road including the mature trees and hedgerows should be retained as part of an open space corridor along the Bin Brook.
N	Small rectilinear field of grassland pasture enclosed by clipped hedges to the south and east and University of Cambridge Laundry Farm to west.	Low A small area of pasture that could be developed alongside adjacent field units.
O	Small rectilinear field of grassland pasture enclosed by established hedges to north, east and west and University of Cambridge Laundry Farm to south.	Low A small area of pasture that could be developed alongside adjacent field units.
P	Established buildings and hard surfacing and lighting associated with University of Cambridge Laundry Farm.	Low The existing University buildings are relatively unsightly and there would be a local benefit by removing the buildings and yard. New development should be relatively low level. The land unit is also from the elevated Red Meadow Hill where it sits within the view cone to the historic core of the city.
Q	Large rectangular field bounded by clipped hedgerows on sides. Footpath Cotton 6 passes through the field.	High Development within this field unit would extend development towards the M11 and be visible from the motorway and Grantchester Road. Development should be relatively low level and located to the centre and east of the

Field Unit	Description	Susceptibility to development
		unit. Substantive mitigation would be required to the perimeters of the area, particularly to the south and west. The field unit is visible from the elevated Red Meadow Hill where it sits within the view cone to the historic core of the city.
R	Small rectilinear grassland pasture bounded by mature hedgerow. Mature trees to the north-east boundary following the line of footpath Coton 6 which runs along the green lane and to the south-west boundary along the alignment of the Bin Brook.	High This is a small-scale linear field with strong enclosure but would be sensitive to development. The unit should ideally be retained as part of a semi-natural open space along the Bin Brook corridor.
S	Two large arable field units subdivided by an open ditch. Dumpling Farm located to the west within the unit. Large linear mixed plantation (circa 35 m x 530 m) to south-east boundary adjacent to Barton Road provides strong containment from road. Southern and western boundaries are open and adjoin Barton Road, Grantchester Road and the M11. Motorway traffic clearly evident to the west. Northern boundary formed by Bin Brook with variable hedgerows (taller to the east and the west and clipped to the centre).	High Development within this field unit would extend development into the rural area towards the M11 and be visible from the motorway and Grantchester Road. Substantive mitigation combining earthworks and planting would be required to the perimeters of the area, particularly to the west. The field unit is visible from the elevated Red Meadow Hill.
T	Group of small-scale rectilinear grassland fields, forming a linear strip adjacent to Barton Road. Bin Brook runs adjacent to Barton Road in concrete channel. Fields contain a number of mature trees to the boundaries and some stands of mature trees within them.	High The small-scale vegetated corridor following the Bin Brook would be sensitive to development and adversely affect the existing green corridor approach into Cambridge. There is scope to enhance this unit for green infrastructure

Landscape Value

- 2.32 In terms of landscape value, no part of the site is designated at the national or local scale. In the absence of any designations a consideration of local value can be aided by the criteria listed within Box 5.1 of the Guidelines to Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Edition 3- 2013. These set out below with my own consideration as to their merit in relation to the Appeal Site.
- 2.33 **Landscape Quality (condition)** – This criterion relates to the physical state of the landscape and the intactness and condition of the individual features. The retained hedges and hedgerow trees are generally in a moderate to good condition. There are sections of hedges that have and still suffer from Dutch Elm Disease. The arable fields are mainly in regular cultivation and pastoral fields,

largely used for grazing. However, a number of the smaller and peripheral Field units including, I and T are in a poor/declining condition. Condition is generally considered to be Moderate overall.

- 2.34 **Scenic quality** –Sector 3.1 (see Figure 04) which comprises the majority the Site comprises a typical lowland arable landscape. There is nothing particularly distinctive within the Site itself. The scenic quality of Sector 3.2 is a more enclosed and small-scale pastoral landscape. This is partially offset by the presence of the Laundry Farm development which is a notable influence to the north. There is some scenic quality in the strip in the fields (forming unit T) adjacent to Barton Road subject to improvement in condition. The scenic quality of the Sector 3.3 comprises a mix of land uses to the edge of Cambridge. The main positive features include established tree belts to the perimeter and edge of Cambridge and the more intimate character along Bin Brook. The scenic quality of the Site overall is assessed as Moderate.
- 2.35 **Rarity and representativeness** – The Site is considered to be representative of the landscape around the western edge of Cambridge.
- 2.36 **Conservation Interest** – There are County Wildlife Sites associated with a number of the hedges to the west and City wildlife Sites along sections of the Bin Brook. The Cambridge West Conservation Area is located to the east, but beyond the Site boundary. The conservation interest is considered to be localised and Moderate overall
- 2.37 **Recreation Value** - Footpath Coton 6, which connects between Barton Road and the Coton Reserve to the west of the M11 passes across the site. A short section of the cul-de sac Footpath Coton 9 crosses the Site in Fields G and D but then terminates (at the boundary of the former University Rifle Range) with no public access across the remainder of the site. The Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way – Footpath Cambridge 31 follows the northern boundary but is located outside the Site. Recreational value is also provided currently by the playing fields within Field E. There is informal but unauthorised usage of part of the site using a track that runs from Grange Road westwards across the site towards Footpath Coton 9.
- 2.38 **Perceptual aspects** – This criterion in the GLVIA refer specifically to experience of wildness and tranquillity. The Site is not wild and its tranquillity is affected by the M11 and Barton Road to the west and south-west. However, areas to the centre of the site and western edge of Cambridge are relatively quieter, albeit being adjacent to an urban area. The other perceptual aspect relevant to the site is the awareness of the presence of Cambridge, to the north and west. The overriding impression to the east is of a soft green edge to the city. There are some intermittent and limited views to individual landmark buildings within the historic core of the city. However, in most of the available viewpoints the landmarks (with the exception of the University Library tower) form relatively small features. Awareness of the West Cambridge Campus development to the north the

site presents a more modern 'commercial/educational' built edge to the Site, but this is not considered to be representative of an historic city.

- 2.39 **Associations** – there are no known specific associations with writers in relation to the Site. In relation to artists the CIGBBS at Figure 20⁵ includes a line drawing from 1688 entitled, *Prospect of Cambridge from the West (Cambridgeshire, Cambridge City Library)*. It is unclear exactly where this is taken from and the character of the intervening land has since changed due to enclosure of the open fields and introduction of the M11. In the drawing a number of the historic buildings within the city are clearly seen, including Kings College Chapel. However, the current views available from similar viewpoints are less distinctive and much more masked by intervening vegetation and a well treed edge to the city.
- 2.40 Based on the above assessment it is considered that the Site has overall a Moderate Landscape Value. The value of the Site is no more than an ordinary lowland agricultural landscape with a few features of local interest. The interface with the M11 and West Cambridge to the north reduces the value while the relationship between the Site and the edge of the historic city of Cambridge that would increase its Landscape Value.

⁵ <https://files.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/rd-mc-030-part2.pdf>

3 VISUAL CHARACTER

- 3.1 The focus of the visual assessment in this study is of views for publicly accessible locations. A number of representative views are provided within Appendix 1 with locations shown on Figure 03. These cover views from public locations as shown on Photographs A-P. For completeness and to understand the existing visual character a number of views are also provided from private locations, as shown on Photographs 1 to 9.
- 3.2 The Cambridge Local Plan 2018 includes at Page 339, Appendix F: Tall Buildings and the Skyline, Figure F.3 Topography and Strategic Viewpoints, a figure illustrating a number of viewpoints. A number of these are relevant to the Site (3, 4, 14 and 15) as discussed within the appropriate receptor group below.

Views from roads

- 3.3 Public views from roads represent locations with the greatest potential for people to see the site. Receptors are generally considered to be of Low Sensitivity from roads but this may increase to Medium for important scenic routes.
- 3.4 Views from Barton Road are illustrated by Photographs A- D. Viewpoint A illustrates the relatively more open views as the south-west corner of the site where a cycleway crosses Grantchester Road/Barton Road. There are open views across the site with Field S, associated Dumpling Farm, most visible. The development forming the West Cambridge Campus including the associated cranes for current construction visible on the horizon but generally set beyond established vegetation. There are no views to any landmark buildings within the historic core from this location.
- 3.5 The majority of the views along Barton Road are typified by Viewpoints B, C and D where established tree belts and mature trees contain views along the road corridor into the Site. The visual character changes closer to entering Cambridge as illustrated by Viewpoint D, where the smaller scale pasture fields within Unit T can be appreciated next to the road corridor. However, views into the remainder of the Site, beyond are restricted by intervening hedges.
- 3.6 There are views from the M11 corridor towards the Site and Cambridge beyond. The location is included as Strategic Viewpoint 15 in the Cambridge Local Plan. No photographs are included from this corridor for safety reasons. The sections of the motorway where there is some visibility across the Site are marked on Figure 03 which illustrates that there are two sections with views. Views travelling north are slightly more available than for those travelling south due to the angle of view for the motorist and passenger. Other parts of the motorway corridor are contained by highway vegetation. Views from the southern section of the M11 are primarily over Field Units Q and S.

Views beyond these fields are similar in character to those illustrated by Viewpoint A, with more distant layering of hedgerows across the Site and denser vegetation both towards and within the edge of Cambridge. The buildings at edge of the modern West Cambridge campus are clearly identifiable. A few landmark buildings within the historic core can just be identified. However, with the exception of the University Library Tower, only the small upper sections of the university buildings can be appreciated. Views from the northern section of the M11 are more contained by established hedgerows around the boundaries of Field units D, G and J (see Viewpoint M). However, the development within West Cambridge, also forms the more prominent built development visible from the motorway. The appreciation of the historic core from this route is similar to that described above. TLP consider the views to the historic core to be fleeting and peripheral to the experience of the low sensitivity receptor.

- 3.7 The only other location where there is a view from a public road is from Grantchester Road as illustrated by Viewpoint Q. This viewpoint is also included as Viewpoint 4 within the Cambridge Local Plan (Figure F.3) Cambridge Local Plan. The character of the view is very similar to that from the M11, as described above. The view is taken from a minor road linking Coton and Grantchester. Most of the route is contained by roadside hedgerows apart from a short section (c 80 m) where views are available as illustrated by Photograph Q. Receptors on this route would almost exclusively be motorists whose focus would be travelling along Grantchester Lane rather than across the Site and towards Cambridge. Along this short break in the hedgerows the character of the view to the west is initially over open arable fields and then to the M11 corridor where the moving traffic is the primary feature. Views beyond the M11 are of a well treed horizon extending across the Site and to the edge of Cambridge. An awareness of the historic core of Cambridge is limited to the same buildings as described above from the M11. TLP again consider this to be a fleeting and secondary peripheral view towards Cambridge for most receptors and question the validity for its inclusion as a Strategic Viewpoint within the Local Plan.

Views from rights of way and access land

- 3.8 There are a number of existing public rights of way within the study area. There are two connections east - west from Cambridge to the land west of the M11. The route to the north between Coton and Cambridge on Footpath Cambridge 31 is the best surfaced route as it also provides a key cycle route between Cambridge and the West Cambridge campus. The route also forms part of the Harcamlow Way /Wimpole Way. The second east-west route follows Footpath Coton 6 which runs from Barton Road over the M11 to the Coton Countryside Reserve. North-south connectivity between these two radiating routes cross the site is currently lacking, despite a section of Cople 9 running part of western Site boundary. Views from public rights away within the countryside are typically assessed as being of high sensitivity unless there are factors that would reduce this locally such as evidence of low usage or major distracting features.

- 3.9 There are a number of footpaths and permissive routes west of the M11 associated with the Cambridge Past Present and Future Coton Reserve which facilitates access to areas of countryside including Red Meadow Hill. The closest permissive route through Coton Reserve follows a surfaced track located c 350m west of the M11 running south of Coton 5. Views towards the Site from this route are screened by intervening planting along the M11 corridor and a minor ridge of higher ground in the adjacent arable field. There are some glimpses of landmark buildings between established hedges from this route, but they are very limited.
- 3.10 Views from Footpath Cambridge 31 and Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way are illustrated by Photographs I, J, K and L. Viewpoints I and J illustrate the views along the surfaced segregated cycleway/Footpath travelling west and leaving Cambridge. Along this section there is a tall hedgerow to the north of the cycleway which contains views at close quarters to the West Cambridge development. From Viewpoint J there are open views over the open character of Field Unit C and then to boundary hedgerows around this unit. Red Meadow Hill can be seen in the distance. Traveling further west views to the established University buildings in West Cambridge are much more prominent and a feature of the route.
- 3.11 Views travelling eastward along the footpath closer to the M11 are illustrated by Viewpoints K and L. Viewpoint L illustrates a typical view over Field Unit B for receptors on the right of way. The foreground and middle distance are formed by the arable character of the landscape with the established mature hedgerows, albeit gappy in places beyond. The distant horizon is formed by the soft green edge of Cambridge which includes some hedgerows and woodland blocks within the Site. The established housing at Gough Way is also just visible above set within the mature tree groups and hedges. Views of key landmarks within historic Cambridge are available as with other views from the west from roads. The most notable building is the University Library tower, which is a function of its relative much greater height, closer proximity and 'skyscraper' character. The other historic landmark buildings that are locally intermittently identifiable include: the spire of Our Lady of the Assumption and English Martyrs (hereafter referred to and Roman Catholic Church), Tower of Johns College Chapel and Kings College Chapel. However, for each of these other landmarks, the visibility of the feature is of a small feature set within a largely green vegetated horizon. While these landmarks may be 'identifiable' in places they are of minimal importance within the view.
- 3.12 The Cambridge Local Plan includes as Viewpoint number 14 views from the 'Coton Footpath over the M11'. At the point where the footpath crosses the M11 there is dense vegetation associated with the motorway and embankments of the footpath. This prevents any views towards the city and could clearly not be described as a Strategic View. TLP would challenge the inclusion of this viewpoint within the Local Plan. The closest point available on the right of way with a relatively

more open views is found at Viewpoint K which is taken across Field Unit A to the North-West of the Site. However, in this view the established hedgerows around the field contain most of the outward views over the remainder of the Site. There is a view to the University Library, but this is considered to be of secondary importance to the view overall and could not be described as of 'Strategic' importance.

- 3.13 Views from Coton Footpath 6 are illustrated by Viewpoints E-H inclusive. Viewpoint E and F illustrates the visual character travelling east towards Barton Road. At Viewpoint E (outside the Site). Views towards the Site are largely contained by the established hedgerows around the boundary. The most notable built features are the development within West Cambridge seen to the north-west, a number of which break the skyline. The very top of the University Library tower is just identifiable above the ridgeline, but is of incidental importance. Viewpoint F illustrates an open view from Coton 6 looking east towards Cambridge. The immediate foreground is of the open arable field within Field Unit Q with boundary hedgerows round the perimeter. Again, the development at West Cambridge campus comprises the most noticeable elements of built form to the north-west of the view. The presence of the established Laundry Farm buildings and associated lighting infrastructure are also identifiable above the boundary hedgerows within Field Unit P. Available views to landmark buildings within the historic core of Cambridge is as stated before largely limited to a view of the University Library tower, together with very small-scale incidental views of the top of Johns College chapel and Upper Section of Kings College chapel. Views from this footpath are not included within the list of Strategic viewpoints on Figure F .3 in the Cambridge Local Plan. However, a view from a similar location to Viewpoint G is included within the CIGBBS (Figure 9⁶ as a Key Low level view - P2 and in Figure 15 Photograph 2). The text on the photograph states, '*This viewpoint gives low level views of several key landmarks within the historic core, as well as views of the newer West Cambridge site. It demonstrates the soft green edge of Cambridge as seen from the western side of the city and highlights the proximity of the historic core to surrounding countryside. The view is across the rural foreground to the city, with Distinctive Cambridge, formed by Fellows' houses, Colleges and University buildings west of the historic core, immediately beyond.*' TLP agree that the location does provide an opportunity to view towards the edge of Cambridge. However, many of the features such as fellows' houses and colleges are not visible since they are subsumed within the Green vegetated edge of the city. TLP would challenge the importance of this viewpoint as a location to identify key landmarks since the scale of the landmarks are small features within the view (with the possible exception of the University Library tower). In addition, there is a limited ability to appreciate the true character of these buildings and as they are seen in the context of Laundry Farm which introduces an adverse element of built character. Furthermore, it is TLP's

⁶ <https://files.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/rd-mc-030-part2.pdf>

opinion that if this Viewpoint is considered in the CIGBBS to comprise a 'Key Low level view' then the importance of any other views across the Site towards Cambridge to appreciate the character of historic Cambridge would be even more inconsequential.

- 3.14 Views travelling west along Footpath Coton 6 are illustrated by Viewpoints G and H. Viewpoint H illustrates the contained view along the Green Lane running from Barton Road until reaching Viewpoint G where the open landscape becomes the predominant feature. From Viewpoint G views over Field Unit Q and the traffic on the M11 are readily visible with Red Meadow Hill also visible on the horizon beyond. From this location the modern development at West Cambridge is also clearly visible to the north, while the historic core is concealed by boundary vegetation.
- 3.15 Public footpath Coton 9 runs to the west of the site boundary close to the M11, which is a dominant and very noisy feature at this distance. The boundary hedges screen most views to the east as illustrated by Viewpoint M. There are a few framed views in gaps in the hedging into Field Unit D from the public footpath. From these locations there are views over the fields towards the city, which include some of the historic landmarks including University Library tower, the Roman Catholic Church spire and the corner pinnacle spires of Kings College Chapel. However, there are also views to the much closer and prominent buildings associated with the modern West Cambridge development seen rising over the hedgerows to the north including the modern tent style structure of the Schlumberger Buildings (Grade II) and other prominent buildings such as the Department of Materials Science and Metallurgy.
- 3.16 Viewpoint P from Redmeadow Hill represents the most notable elevated location in the study area with a view over both the Site towards the edge of Cambridge. This viewpoint was included within the Cambridge Local Plan as Viewpoint 3 and also identified within the GIGBBS at P1 (Figure 9) and illustrated by the corresponding photograph at Figure 15 and Photograph 1. The viewpoint is noted in the CIGBBS as a Key elevated view. The view is from an area within Coton Countryside Reserve managed by CPPF. The availability of views in the Reserve is largely restricted to the top of Redmeadow Hill since the access track leading up to the hill are bounded by hedgerows. The text within the CIGBBS at Figure 15 states, *'This viewpoint allows elevated views across much of Cambridge, from higher ground on the edge of the Western Claylands. It demonstrates the compactness of the historic core of the city, with landmarks such as King's College and the University Library breaking the vegetated skyline and identifying the city centre. The green edge to the city is also clearly visible, with little of the built form of Cambridge seen through the vegetation and the rural foreground to the city (principally Sectors 3 and 4) seen in front of the vegetation. Higher ground to the south east and south of the city can also be seen in the distance, including the Gog Magog Hills.'*

- 3.17 TLP would agree with the above description of the view from Red Meadow Hill. The location provides panoramic views of Cambridge city as a whole including the historic core cluster and more recent developments along with the higher ground of the chalklands to east as backdrop. The cone of view for Strategic Viewpoint 03 is sub divided into two sections by a young copse depending on where the viewer is standing. The historic core and cluster of landmark buildings is visible at c. 4km distance including the University Library tower, King's College Chapel, St John's Chapel tower and the Romain Catholic Church spire. All of these buildings are set within and beyond a soft green edge. The most visible prominent Field Unit from Red Meadow Hill within the Site is Field Q which visually aligns below the main historic core. However, Laundry Farm is also visible within the same view corridor. TLP would also add to the description in the CIGBBS that the M11 corridor and associated traffic also forms notable features within the middle-distance detracting from the character and setting of Cambridge. Further to the north-west from the same viewpoint the extensive development at West Cambridge at c 2km represents the largest and most prominent buildings (several being 4-5 storeys high) within the panoramic view. Further to the south-east Addenbrooke's Hospital and other research buildings form notable clusters.
- 3.18 A further viewpoint is included within the Cambridge Local Plan as Strategic Viewpoint 2, Madingley Rise, Madingley Road and also in CIGBBS as a Key Elevated View. These views face east from the elevated Madingley Hill. There are no clear views towards the Site from this location due to the enclosing mature tree cover either side of the road. TLP would also consider that there are limited views of the historic core of Cambridge from this location. Viewpoint O included within this study illustrates elevated views over a c.100 m section of Footpath Coton 2 which runs south of Madingley Hill back to the village of Coton. This comprises an elevated framed view over much of Cambridge and the distant higher ground to the east of the city. It includes Addenbrookes, Wadlow wind turbines on the chalklands and historic city centre landmarks. However, most of Site is not visible as it is screened by intervening trees. The main development in the middle distance in front of historic Cambridge is the modern West Cambridge development.
- 3.19 Within the Cambridge Local Plan, a view from within Cambridge City at Castle Hill Mound (Strategic View 1) is identified. This includes landmarks in the city core at relatively close range (within 500-1000m). There are also views west of Cambridge towards the Site but to the periphery of the identified cone of view for Strategic View 1. However, the mature tree cover between the Backs and the site screens any views to the Site itself. The elevated western claylands beyond the M11 mark the distant horizon at c 4km. It is not anticipated that there would be any notable impact on this Strategic View from the introduction of residential development on the site.

- 3.20 From Grantchester Meadows (Strategic Viewpoint 5) to the north of Grantchester village the extent of intervening vegetation including along Barton Road would screen all potential views to the Site. The views to the buildings in the historic core would be unaffected and lie to the east of the Site.

Views from Residential locations

- 3.21 Views from private houses are not a planning matter unless there is an unacceptable effect on the residential amenity. However, there are some views across the site from some residential properties which would be affected to a degree and the locations involved are noted below.
- 3.22 The main area of residential development affected is Gough Way and Dane Drive to the south-east. A number of these houses have some open views over the Site including to the west over Field Unit J and over Field Unit H to the north.
- 3.23 Properties at Cranmer Road have views to the west over Field Unit I and H.
- 3.24 There would be views from Dumpling Farm and the two cottages at the access track leading to the farm on Barton Road.
- 3.25 It is not anticipated there are any views from Coton onto the Site due to intervening vegetation.
- 3.26 There are two wayside properties on Grantchester Road, near Viewpoint Q but these have dense vegetation to the rear gardens towards the Site.

4 REVIEW OF CAMBRIDGE GREEN BELT

- 4.1 The Site falls fully with Green Belt as defined in the Cambridge Local Plan and South Cambridgeshire District Local Plan. The extent of the Green Belt is shown on Figure 02.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in February 2019, sets out the protection of Green Belt land in Section 13, in which it identifies that the *'fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence'*. It sets out at para 134 the five purposes of the Green Belt as:

1. *'to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
2. *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
3. *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
4. *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
5. *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land'*

- 4.3 Paragraph 136 sets out that *'once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period'*. Paragraph 138, highlights that when reviewing Green Belt boundaries, there is a need to promote sustainable patterns of development and the consequences of channelling development towards urban areas inside Green Belt towards towns and villages. Paragraph 138 also states that were it is deemed necessary to release land from the Green Belt, the impact of removing the land *'can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land'*. Paragraph 141, states that *'once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land'*. Where new Green Belt boundaries are formed, paragraph 139, notes the need to *'define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent'*.

- 4.4 It is considered that there would be some in principle conflict with the Green Belt designation through the development of the Site. There would be an inevitable loss of openness and permanence and also conflict with purposes 1, 3 and 4 as stated above. However, this would be the same for any significant development around the edge of the city and require a planned release of Green Belt and local redrawing of the Green Belt boundary. Nonetheless the development of the Site would bring a number of opportunities to deliver compensatory enhancements to areas of retained Green Belt within the Site in accordance with paragraphs 138 and 141 of the NPPF to deliver: enhanced public access, biodiversity benefits and a range of formal and informal recreation where there is currently limited scope for such activities.

Cambridge Local Plan 2018

- 4.5 The Cambridge Local Plan (CLP) 2018 is the current adopted policy and reflects the needs of the City Council at the time of its preparation. Relevant policies from the adopted plan are set out below. However, this Landscape and Visual Appraisal is submitted in the context of the emerging Joint Local Plan that is now being prepared. The emerging joint plan will consider whether to release land from the current Green Belt to meet the projected identified development needs.
- 4.6 The CLP states at para 2.3, *'The vision for Cambridge is of a compact, dynamic city, located within the high quality landscape setting of the Cambridge Green Belt.'* Strategic Objective 6 states, *'protect and enhance the landscape setting of the city, which comprises the Cambridge Green Belt, the green corridors penetrating the urban area, the established network of multi-functional green spaces, and tree canopy cover in the city'*. Para 4.2.4 continues, *'This section on the spatial strategy for Cambridge sets out the city's approach to planning for the compact city through focusing new development in accessible locations, reusing previously developed land and completing the delivery of planned new urban neighbourhoods, and small Green Belt releases where exceptional circumstances can be argued. Sufficient land for housing, jobs and education/research, and supporting land uses to meet objectively assessed needs, is allocated at locations and in amounts compatible with this compact city strategy. Continued protection is given to the Cambridge Green Belt, the River Cam corridor and the setting of the historic city.'* The CLP proposed six small scale Green Belt sites for release.
- 4.7 The CLP continues under Policy 4 The Cambridge Green Belt at para 2.51, *'The Green Belt preserves the unique setting and special character of the city and includes green corridors that penetrate deep into the urban and historic heart of Cambridge. It is a key component in providing for active and passive sport and recreation, for amenity and biodiversity. A significant proportion of the Cambridge Green Belt within the city's boundaries is in agricultural use. The Green Belt is one of the key elements that contribute to the symbiotic relationship between high quality of life, place and economic success of Cambridge.'*

4.8 Policy 4 sets out three specific purposes for the Cambridge Green Belt as follows:

1. *preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city with a thriving historic centre*
2. *maintain and enhance the quality of its setting*
3. *prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city*

4.9 The first two purposes for Cambridge correspond with NPPF purpose 4, *'to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns'* while the third local purpose is a variation of NPPF purpose 2 – *'to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another'* by including smaller settlements rather than towns. This is seen in the Local Plan as including villages and neighbourhoods that are not connected to the existing City.

4.10 The CLP continues at paras 2.54- 55, *'the remaining areas of Green Belt have increased in value as they are now closer to the city's edge and less Green Belt land remains to perform the unique roles played by the Cambridge Green Belt. The Green Belt is a critical environmental asset for Cambridge in forming the important setting for a compact, historic city and contributing to the high quality of life and place enjoyed here.'*

Both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are keen to see the Green Belt as a positive rather than a purely negative planning tool. Opportunities have been taken at Trumpington to shape a new Green Belt edge that enhances the landscape setting of the city, as well as enhancing opportunities for recreational access. Growth should be targeted towards sustainable and less landscape sensitive locations as a part of the overall strategy, which should be seen as a whole across both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.'

4.11 The above extract confirms how in some locations e.g. at Trumpington that recreational access has been enhanced in combination with development to bring forward benefits for the population as part of a well-planned edge to the city. This principle could be sensitively utilized in other locations including the Site.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018

4.12 In common with the CLP the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (SCLP) 2018 is the current adopted policy and reflects the needs of the District Council at the time of its preparation. Relevant policies from the adopted plan are set out below.

- 4.13 Policy S/4 of the adopted SCLP 2018 sets out that Green Belt will be protected in line with the approach in the NPPF. The supporting text for Policy S/4 includes the same purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt as in Policy 4 of the CLP and set out above and also cites the CIGBBS which was carried out jointly both local authorities.
- 4.14 Policy NH/8 of the SCLP relates to mitigating the impact of development in and adjoining Green Belt. The Policy requires that, *'Any development proposals within the Green Belt must be located and designed so that they do not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt,'* and *'Where development is permitted, landscaping conditions, together with a requirement that any planting is adequately maintained, will be attached to any planning permission in order to ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.'*
- 4.15 Policy NH/9 allows for redevelopment in the Green Belt as long as proposals meet a number of criteria including: replacement buildings are not materially larger than ones replaced and limited infilling that does not have any greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 4.16 Policy NH/10 allows for the provision of new buildings for outdoor sport and recreation, so long as they do not harm the openness and purposes of the Green Belt.

Recent case law

- 4.17 There have been several recent appeal decisions that have further interpreted the openness of the Green Belt and the potential harm to the purposes of the Green Belt. This includes the High court challenge brought by Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) and Oxton Farm against North Yorkshire County Council and Darrington Quarries Ltd which considered the visual dimension of openness, and requires that the decision maker is required to consider how the visual effects of a development would affect the openness of the Green Belt and whether these effects are likely to be harmful or benign. As openness is not defined in the NPPF, different factors are capable of being considered as relevant to the concept and this is now considered to include both visual as well as spatial factors.

Cambridge Inner Green Belt Boundary Study 2015

- 4.18 The Cambridge Inner Green Belt Study (CIGBBS) of November 2105 was originally produced to inform the emerging Local Plans by providing an update of the previously prepared 2012 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study, December 2012. The CLP 2018 provides some of the background where it states at 2.32, *'In response to issues raised by the Inspectors during the Local Plan Examination, the Councils commissioned a new independent Inner Green Belt Review in 2015.'* The CIGBBS is being considered in this appraisal since at the time of writing it still forms the most up to date evidence base commissioned by the councils on the Green Belt (from a landscape

perspective). This appraisal also considers the Site and the potential for development using the criteria set out in the CIGBBS.

4.19 The CIGBBS identified that the National Green Belt purposes and Cambridge Green Belt purposes (both as set out above) are '*manifested and performed in various ways specific to Cambridge and its surrounding landscape.*' The study defines and describes 16 qualities of Cambridge and its surrounding landscape which it considers directly contribute to the performance of Green Belt purposes. These 16 qualities are then used as the criteria for assessing the individual sectors of the Inner Green Belt. The CIGBBS notes that qualities are '*all equally important and each contributes to the performance of Green Belt purposes*' and that there is no use of numerical scoring as this would inevitably lead to a focus on lower scoring areas. It is noteworthy that there is a heavy focus on qualities/criteria that relate to the historic character and setting of Cambridge.

4.20 The 16 qualities/criteria identified are drawn from a number of previous studies and set out as follows:

1. *A large historic core relative to the size of the city as a whole*
2. *A city focussed on the historic core*
3. *Short and/or characteristic approaches to the historic core from the edge of the city*
4. *A city of human scale easily crossed by foot and by bicycle*
5. *Topography providing a framework to Cambridge*
6. *Long distance footpaths and bridleways providing access to the countryside*
7. *Key views of Cambridge from the surrounding landscape*
8. *Significant areas of Distinctive and Supportive townscape and landscape*
9. *A soft green edge to the city*
10. *Good urban structure with well-designed edges to the city*
11. *Green corridors into the city*
12. *The distribution, physical and visual separation of the necklace villages*
13. *The scale, character, identity and rural setting of the necklace villages*
14. *Designated sites and areas enriching the setting of Cambridge*

15. Elements and features contributing to the character and structure of the landscape

16. A city set in a landscape which retains a strongly rural character

- 4.21 TLP made representations on behalf of St Johns College to the emerging Local Plans (between 2012- 2017) that were later adopted, including a critique to the methodology used in the CIGBBC. TLPs comments included the complexity of using 16 criteria (a number of which overlapped) and that some criteria were of peripheral importance to Green Belt and should not be considered to have equal importance e.g. Quality 6 relating to long distance footpaths and bridleways. While there are still some differences between TLP and the approach taken in the CIGBBS it is noted and accepted that the CIGBBC forms part of the Councils current evidence base.
- 4.22 The CIGBBS identified 19 sectors of the Inner Green Belt, which were assessed to understand their importance to the performance of the Green Belt purposes. Most of the sectors were also divided into sub-areas, where there were differences in character within the sector. The Site occupies the majority of Sector 3 which was sub-divided into three further sectors, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 as shown on Figure 04.
- 4.23 The CIGBBS concluded that, *'all areas of land within the study area (with the exception of one small area, sub area 8.2) are important to Green Belt purposes but the reasons differ from one area to another. For example: West of the city, the Inner Green Belt plays a critical role in maintaining the impression of a compact city, with countryside close to the historic core. The rural character of the land emphasises this and is seen as the foreground in views from approaches to the city, the M11 and the countryside west of the M11.'*
- 4.24 Other sectors around Cambridge were seen as being important for other varying reasons. The conclusion in the Executive summary of the CIGBBS states, *'Whilst virtually all areas of land within the study area have been assessed as being of importance to Green Belt purposes, consideration has been given as to whether it may nevertheless be possible for certain areas of land to be released from the Green Belt for development without significant harm to Green Belt purposes.'* The findings of the CIGBBS was that this only applied to a few small sites to the south and south-east of the city.
- 4.25 However, despite the findings of the CIGBBS it is noteworthy that significant Green Belt releases have been allowed previously in recent years e.g. the allocation of North-West Cambridge as part of the joint (CCC and SCDC) Area Action Plan in 2009. Furthermore, given the presence of Green Belt tightly encircling Cambridge, accommodating future development needs of the city will be evermore challenging. If growth is to be achieved this can only occur through one or a combination of the following: i) redevelopment of existing developed areas in Cambridge, ii) development

beyond the Green Belt, or iii) release of land from the Green Belt. This will be a key decision for Cambridge in the future that will need addressing in the emerging Local Plans.

Assessment of Green Belt Sector 3

- 4.26 Section 6 of the CIGBBS provides a detailed application of the 16 qualities against each of the Sectors. We now review the description and analysis of Sector 3: North of Barton Road, in relation to the Site and by use of Figure 04 reference is also made to smaller scale individual Field Units (A-T) that TLP have identified for this study. The description is provided at Section 6.6 of CIGBBS (pages 86 to 92).
- 4.27 It is noted that the Sector is the closest area of Green Belt to the historic core. TLP would agree with the descriptions within paragraphs 6.6.1- 6.6.2.
- 4.28 Paragraph 6.6.3 states that the Sector contains a key view of several of the City's distinctive landmarks from the public footpath that passes through the south of the sector to a footbridge over the M11. It also notes there are similar views from the western end of the Harcamlow Way in the sector. TLP would challenge the judgement (as already covered in Section 3 above) that the view illustrated by '*Photograph 2: arable land of Sector 3 west of the historic core*' shown on Figure 15 of the CIGBBS is a 'Key View'. While the view includes four landmarks buildings within the historic core of the city, it is only the University Library tower that makes a notable contribution to the skyline. Despite the architectural importance and quality of other structures including St John's College Chapel and Kings College Chapel these are distant views to the upper (and non-publicly accessible) sections of the buildings. Furthermore, the cluster of utilitarian buildings within Laundry Farm form the more immediate and middle-distance context above which the tops of the buildings in the historic core are seen. TLP therefore dispute that this is a key view of importance.
- 4.29 In relation to the other views from the western section of the Harcamlow Way towards the M11 these are illustrated by TLP's Photograph L. In this view the key feature is the University Library tower with the Roman Catholic Church spire also visible. TLP consider that while there are some views to a few landmarks within Cambridge they do not indicate the presence of the wealth of historic buildings within the city centre. The University Library tower is a substantial high-rise building visible from a number of sections along the Harcamlow Way on the skyline. However, it would still be possible to retain views to this landmark building through an appropriate design layout on the Site. The character of the library tower is that of an 20th century interwar skyscraper and one more characteristic of a feature seen being in an urban/university campus environment. There are small windows in the section of the tower that is visible from the Site these windows are from storage areas and not used by the public.

4.30 The CIGBBS then continues to assess each of the qualities in tabular form at pages 86-92- providing a distinction between Sub-areas 3.1-3.3 where appropriate. TLP comment on those sections in a similar tabular form in Table below.

Table 2 – Comments on CIGBBS assessment of Sector 3

Cambridge Green Belt Quality from CIGBBS	TLP Comment on text within CIGBBS (Section 6.6) in relation to proposed development at South West Cambridge - Land North of Barton Road
<p>1. A large historic core relative to the size of the city as a whole</p>	<p>The GIGBBS notes that with the 'exception' of the West Cambridge campus affecting Sector 3 there has been more limited development to the west of Cambridge. However, the CIGBBS does not comment on the style or scale of the new structures at West Cambridge and their visual influence upon the Green Belt. Rather the study remains neutral on the substantial additions at West Cambridge that are in TLP's opinion in marked contrast to the more historic development further to the east towards Grange Road and along the Backs. TLP consider that the introduction of the West Cambridge campus development extending west to the M11 already exerts a locally prominent influence on the neighbouring Sector 3.1 of the Green Belt.</p> <p>An area of new high-quality architecture on the Site could form a sympathetic extension to the west of Cambridge and integrate with the aggregation of larger education and research buildings within the West Cambridge campus. Cambridge has progressively expanded to the west since the 1880's (see Figures 6 to 8, Appendix 1). What was formerly a close relationship between the historic core of the colleges and the Backs with the rural countryside to the west has progressively become more detached over the last 150 years by incremental development to the west of the Backs. TLP do not consider that it is necessarily inappropriate for further development to occur in this direction subject to a suitable masterplan and strategy to protect character and setting of the city.</p> <p>There would be some conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>2. A city focused on the historic core</p>	<p>The description within the CIGBBS is that historic Cambridge remains a clear focus of this part of the city. TLP agree that there is a focus towards the city but the Sector is not in the City and there are few locations where this link is readily seen. The link is as much perceptual as visual. The only public views of any note within the Site are from Footpath Cotton 6 and along the Harcamlow Way and in these views it is the University Library tower that is the primary focus. Views to this landmark building could be retained in a suitable development layout. In contrast other landmarks in the city are seen intermittently and are minor features in the available views.</p> <p>The CIGBBS study states that the retention of Green Belt has prevented large urban extensions to the west of the city that would compete with historic core. However, West Cambridge presents a new and large-scale education and research facility separated from the original historic core. West Cambridge is the most visible and prominent area of development adjacent to Sector 3.1. TLP consider that a well-considered residential scheme would present minimal competition with the historic core. In addition, the presence of the M11 to the west is already a prominent and distracting feature to the west of the Site and this influence could be mitigated by strategic landscape on the Site.</p>

Cambridge Green Belt Quality from CIGBBS	TLP Comment on text within CIGBBS (Section 6.6) in relation to proposed development at South West Cambridge - Land North of Barton Road
	<p>There would be limited conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>3. Short and/or characteristic approaches to the historic core from the edge of the city</p>	<p>There is limited visibility of the Site from the main vehicular approaches to the historical core of the city. While there are glimpsed views from the south-west on Barton Road the majority of the road corridor is well enclosed from Barton Road by plantations, mature trees and hedgerows. The character of this approach could be protected and enhanced with retention of tree belts and improvements to the Bin Brook corridor. The Harcamlow Way (+ Wimpole Way, Cambridge 31) is noted as a local approach for pedestrians and cyclists. This route is already well used between the West Cambridge campus and the historic core and would not be physically affected by development on the Site. There are open views across the adjacent arable fields (Field Units A, B and C) and there are opportunities to retain vistas to the historic core. The CIGBBS text for Sub-area 3.3 describes (permissive) footpath links within this sub area (from Gough Way to Cranmer Road). These routes could be retained unaffected. However, there are currently no public or permissive footpaths through the northern section of Sector 3.3. A suitable masterplan could deliver new and enhanced approaches to the historic core from corridors of green space and retained Green Belt in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 138 and 141.</p> <p>There would be limited conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>4. A city of human scale easily crossed by foot and by bicycle</p>	<p>Is agreed that this Sector is the closest to the historical core. Therefore, development of the Site would mean that it is likely that access to the city centre would primarily be by foot and bicycle and would not conflict with this quality. This opinion is supported by the current of pedestrian and cycle movement on the Harcamlow Way between Cambridge and Coton and which also serves West Cambridge and also along Barton Road cycleway to the south of the Site.</p> <p>There should be no conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>5. Topography providing a framework to Cambridge</p>	<p>TLP agree with the description within the CIGBBS that the topography is flat with landform only rising up beyond the M11.</p> <p>There should be no conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>6. Long distance footpaths and bridleways providing access to the countryside.</p>	<p>There are two public footpath/bridleways routes that cross the Sector. Cambridge 31 (Harcamlow Way) to the north and Coton 6 to the south. Development on the Site would reduce the section of Coton 6 and Cambridge 31 in the countryside, but development would provide opportunities for greater access to countryside: within the Site, on other land east of the M11 and to the west of the M11 including Coton Reserve. It is possible that enhanced footpath connections to the east of the M11 between the existing rights of way could provide circular routes connecting with existing footpaths 39/31a, 55/9 and the site. This would benefit the use of the retained Green Belt for recreation in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 138 and 141.</p> <p>There would be limited conflict with this quality.</p>

Cambridge Green Belt Quality from CIGBBS	TLP Comment on text within CIGBBS (Section 6.6) in relation to proposed development at South West Cambridge - Land North of Barton Road
<p>7. Key views of Cambridge from the surrounding landscape</p>	<p>TLP agree that the panoramic viewpoint from Red Meadow Hill (see Appendix 1 Photograph P) is important with views towards the historic core within the panorama to the east along with other larger scale modern development at West Cambridge and Addenbrookes. The most visible Field Units seen in the context of the historic core as viewed from Red Meadow Hill are Q and S (see Figure 04). A suitable strategy is required to minimise any adverse effects. Development should be kept relatively low in Units Q and S. Development would then be well below the skyline. Planting mitigation and/or subtle earthworks at key locations across the Site including within Q and S east of the M11 could help to contain the visible presence of proposed built form.</p> <p>TLP consider that the lower-level views including those from Grantchester Road (see Appendix 1 Photograph Q) and those to the east of the M11 (including Photograph F) are less distinctive in that the landmark buildings in the historic core of note are limited to the University Library tower with others being relatively less identifiable or small in scale. It is TLP’s opinion that while these lower level views provide opportunities to see some landmark buildings from the Green Belt they are of relatively limited importance and do not comprise ‘strategic views’. The lower level views are also in marked contrast to the very clear high-quality environment and views within the historic core of the City and most notably along the Backs.</p> <p>There would be some conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>8. Significant areas of Distinctive and Supportive Townscape and Landscape</p>	<p>There would be a loss of supportive open countryside. However, since the M11 is considered to be a visually detracting influence on Sector 3.1 and the visibility of the historic landmark buildings is relatively limited from this location, TLP consider that an alternative approach would be to visually contain the motorway and its traffic to the eastern boundary.</p> <p>While the CIGBBS considers that Sector 3 as a supportive landscape by providing a rural setting to Cambridge, it does not mean that the whole of the Site needs to be retained in its existing character to fulfil this function. Areas to the west of the Site and within the adjacent landownerships could still be retained as open to support this quality.</p> <p>The West Cambridge University development to the north is also considered in the CIGBBS to be a ‘Distinctive townscape’ (and in the same category and the West Cambridge Conservation Area). However, TLP consider that the character of West Cambridge campus does not rely on its relationship with the Green Belt.</p> <p>There would be some conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>9. A soft green edge to the city</p>	<p>The presence of vegetation within Sector 3 and also within the edge of Cambridge to the east all contain (visually screen) existing built forms towards the edge of Cambridge and in the historic core. Landmark buildings are only occasionally visible.</p>

Cambridge Green Belt Quality from CIGBBS	TLP Comment on text within CIGBBS (Section 6.6) in relation to proposed development at South West Cambridge - Land North of Barton Road
	<p>The CIGBBS study notes West Cambridge as an exception. However, the study does not provide any descriptive material against this quality on the effect of West Cambridge despite the considerable mass and height of a number of the buildings.</p> <p>It is readily feasible to introduce new and repositioned soft edges to development on the Site in the form of tree cover and still retain some new publicly accessible views across retained open land towards the city along green corridors. This approach would support NPPF paragraphs 138 and 141 by delivering enhanced visual amenity.</p> <p>There would be limited short term conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>10. Good urban structure with well-designed edges to the city</p>	<p>The CIGBBS states that the urban edge to the Sector has a Distinctive townscape, <i>'including the new development at West Cambridge'</i>. It is not disputed that West Cambridge is distinctive. However, it is a very different character to that of the area to the east of Wilberforce Road. If the CIGBBS is of the opinion that the West Cambridge southern boundary presents a well-designed edge to the city along its full-length despite it being <i>'much less vegetated'</i> then it should be equally feasible to create a well -designed edge to the city in the Sector by a combination of landscape and good quality architecture.</p> <p>There should be no conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>11. Green corridors into the city</p>	<p>The CIGBBS clearly states that the majority of Sector 3 does not contribute to any of the green corridors from the countryside into the heart of Cambridge. The exception is sub-area 3.3 which provides a <i>'partial green corridor into the city'</i>. This would indicate that the majority of the Grange Farm site and Sub-area 3.1 does not currently form a notable green corridor into Cambridge. However, in contrast and in conflict paragraph 5.2.45 of the CIGBBS states that the green corridor in West Cambridge, is of great importance to preserve.</p> <p>It would be feasible to retain and create new and improved green corridors across the Site on land retained in Green Belt leading into Cambridge from the west. These could follow Bin Brook and Barton Road to the south and to the centre by linking the fields associated with the County Wildlife Sites to the west and leading east into Cambridge at Grange Road near the University Rugby Union Ground and at Cranmer Road. These new and enhanced routes would support NPPF paragraphs 138 and 141.</p> <p>There should be no conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>12. The distribution, physical and visual separation of the necklace villages</p>	<p>The CIGBBS states that Sub-area 3.1 plays a key role in separating Cambridge from Coton.</p> <p>However, TLP consider that while the sub-area 3.1 provides part of the physical separation there is minimal visual interconnectivity between the Site and Coton. This separation is aided by the M11 and associated vegetation in the intervening land. Furthermore, the West Cambridge Development already extends Cambridge towards Coton.</p>

Cambridge Green Belt Quality from CIGBBS	TLP Comment on text within CIGBBS (Section 6.6) in relation to proposed development at South West Cambridge - Land North of Barton Road
	<p>There would be limited conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>13. The scale, character, identity and rural setting of the necklace villages</p>	<p>The CIGBBS states that Sector 3 does not form part of the setting of any of the necklace villages. TLP agree with the CIGBBS this but it is perhaps surprising as under quality 12 above it indicates Sector 3 plays a 'key role' in the separation between Cambridge and Coton.</p> <p>There should be no conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>14. Designated sites and areas in reaching the setting of Cambridge</p>	<p>The CIGBBS notes the presence of: County Wildlife Sites associated with some of the hedge corridors, City Wildlife Sites along the Bin Brook and the West Cambridge Conservation Area. However, it would be feasible to retain and integrate all these features into a sensitive development of the Site. This could include retaining land to the west of the Conservation Area as open land as part of a retained Green Belt corridor and providing scope to enhanced the biodiversity value of the designated wildlife sites.</p> <p>There should be no conflict with this quality.</p>
<p>15. Elements and features contributing to the character and structure of the landscape</p>	<p>TLP agree with the analysis within the CIGBBS for this quality. The majority of the listed features could be retained within a sensitive development on the site.</p> <p>The only potential, conflict is in respect of the views to landmark buildings. TLP's opinion is that the views of landmark buildings although a positive feature should not be overstated in number, extent or scale. Furthermore, it would be possible to retain a number of the views within a well-designed layout.</p> <p>There would be limited conflict with this quality</p>
<p>16. A city set in a landscape that retains a strong rural character</p>	<p>The description in the CIGBBS is that the Sector retains a '<i>strongly rural character</i>' and is '<i>the closest area of 'rural feeling' Green Belt land to the historic core of Cambridge character one of the rural feeling close to the historic core</i>'. However, in TLPs opinion this view should be offset against the influence of the M11, the new Cambridge University development to the north at West Cambridge and existing and adjacent sports uses. These factors do not form part of a '<i>strongly rural character</i>' which in TLPs opinion has been overstated. The CIGBBS also states that the extent of tree coverage inside the city helps to reduce visibility of the presence of the urban area while retaining a strong visual connection to a number of landmark features in the historic core. This is an apparent contradiction.</p> <p>TLP consider that while development on the Site would inevitably physically reduce the Green Belt that by following a pattern that combines: retained open land and green fingers, a strong green edge and suitably scaled architecture in the Cambridge style, that new development could effectively combine high-quality residential development with substantive areas of accessible green infrastructure, much of this being retained as accessible Green Belt. A rural character could be retained to the west of the development and lead into green fingers into the City in a pattern characteristic of the best of Cambridge</p>

Cambridge Green Belt Quality from CIGBBS	TLP Comment on text within CIGBBS (Section 6.6) in relation to proposed development at South West Cambridge - Land North of Barton Road
	<p>e.g. along the River Cam and Hobsons Brook. This approach would support NPPF paragraphs 138 and 141.</p> <p>There would be some conflict with this quality.</p>

Summary of findings within Sector 3

- 4.31 Paragraph 6.6.4 in the CIGBBS provides a summary of the importance of the sector to the Green Belt Purposes. The key qualities listed in the CIGBBS that would be affected by development in Sector 3 are Quality 1 (A large historical core relative to the size of the city as a whole), Quality 7 (Key views of Cambridge from the surrounding landscape) and Quality 16 (a city set in the landscape which retains a strongly rural character). Therefore, of the 16 criteria evaluated in the CIGBBS three are stated for Sector 3 as being notable. The CIGBBS clarifies that no individual criteria were of greater or lesser importance rather that all were important. This approach is considered to be unhelpful in that it would appear that even if two or three criteria were seen as being harmed then there would be a case for arguing no Green Belt release in that Sector. This could be construed to be unnecessarily restrictive and not help the identification of sites on a relative basis.
- 4.32 In relation to criteria listed in the CIGBBS summary for Sector 3 it is accepted that for Quality 1 (A large historical core relative to the size of the city as a whole) that development on the Site would result in some conflict with the quality. However, from Sector 3 the relative size of the historic core compared with the size of the city as whole cannot be readily appreciated. The scale of the city and historic core are not visible from the Sector. It is only with a wider knowledge of the structure of the city and based on use of mapping that its relative scale can be readily understood. In any event the historic core of the city, is located east of Queens Road and already contained beyond the late 19th century and largely 20th century development west of The Backs. Therefore, appreciation of the character and qualities of the true historic core are much more to do with the experience of being within the area rather than from locations or viewpoints on the western edge such as within Sector 3. This position is supported by the limited outward public viewpoints from the western edge of the Conservation Area.
- 4.33 In relation to the views across Sector 3 it is agreed that for Quality 7 (Key views of Cambridge from the surrounding landscape) there are some existing views to a few of the landmark buildings identified in the CIGBBS (i.e. buildings 1, 2 ,3 and 4 listed and shown on Figure 01). However, apart from the University Library tower the degree of visibility of the landmarks in these views in TLP’s opinion is relatively restricted. None of the available views are considered by TLP to be specifically

designed views but are more a consequence of height of the buildings and relative proximity. The most notable view is the elevated location at Red Meadow Hill (TLP Photograph P and CIGBBS Photograph 2) from within the Open Access Land. From this location there is a wide panorama stretching several miles over Cambridge and its wider setting. The city is largely set within trees with only the taller structures visible. The most prominent and closest structures are those at the West Cambridge campus. The likely visibility of any new development on the Site within this panorama would depend on its location, height, scale, design, materials and intervening mitigation. It is considered feasible to introduce sensitive development on the Site while still being able to appreciate views to the historic core and the landmark buildings from Red Meadow Hill. TLP consider that the viewpoints in the CIGBBS from the lower lying ground towards the historic core are of reduced and limited importance since the identifiable landmark buildings are typically seen in conjunction with other built forms such as Laundry Farm and the M11 corridor and associated traffic or are largely obscured by intervening vegetation on the Site or to the edge of Cambridge. The lower level views are not considered to be views of Strategic Importance.

- 4.34 In relation to the Quality 16, it is accepted that that the open countryside provides part of the context and setting to Cambridge from the west. However, if open areas of land were retained as a foreground to the west in combination with areas of structural landscape both within and on the edge of the development, then it is quite probable that the character of a rural foreground could be retained with development located beyond a new soft green edge.
- 4.35 The CIGBBS concludes at paragraph 6.6.5 in relation to the implications of Green Belt release for development that, *'it is unlikely that any development within sector could be accommodated without substantial harm to Green Belt purposes'*. In TLP's opinion this is too broad and restrictive an approach. It does not consider or analyse potentially different scales of development within the Sector that could still preserve the important qualities of the Sector. The CIGBBS continues *'Development within sub areas 3.1 or 3.2 would remove the characteristic setting to the city, diminish (both in reality and in perception) the presence of the countryside close to the distinctive core of Cambridge and obstruct key views*. TLP also consider these conclusions are too crude and severe. TLP consider that sensitive development on the Site could partly retain the setting of the city and its rural foreground. TLP also consider that within sub area 3.3 it is feasible to introduce development and also retain the distinctive townscape character of the West Cambridge Conservation Area which is by its very nature already largely inward looking. The conclusion of the CIGBBS is that *'no Green Belt release should be contemplated in this sector'*. This is a very similar conclusion for majority of the sectors around Cambridge (with the exception of Sector 8.2 and small parts of Sectors 10.1, 10.2, 11.1, 11.2 and 13.1). Previous conclusions on the suitability of development in the Green Belt including Sector 3 and consequential Green Belt boundary changes should be examined again as part of the emerging Local Plans.

5 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

5.1 Following the assessment of the site and its landscape context in Sections 2 and 3 above and the consideration in Section 4 of the 16 qualities identified in the CIGBBS that contribute to the Green Belt in Sector 3 including the Site a set of opportunities and constraints have been identified for the Site relating to landscape and visual matters. An overview Landscape Strategy plan (Figure 05) has also been produced to illustrate a number of the points described below.

5.2 Opportunities

- a. The Site provides the opportunity to create a comprehensive and sensitive well-planned development in a sector of land to the west of the city with excellent sustainable access links into and out of the city and university.
- b. The scheme could combine high quality architecture with a network of distinctive open spaces. Proposals should reflect and build on the traditions of Cambridge as a centre of excellence.
- c. The site is not designated at a national or local level for its landscape quality or value.
- d. The Site is broadly level or at most gently undulating. Topography does not represent a constraint and efficient use of the site for development is achievable.
- e. A scheme could be developed to retain and enhance the watercourses through the Site benefiting local character and biodiversity. This could involve rewilding the canalised sections of the Bin Brook to form a semi-natural character within small-scale fields along the Barton Road approach to Cambridge.
- f. Land use on the Site is predominantly agricultural and arable with some localised areas of pasture around Laundry Farm. The structure of the historic field pattern and hedged enclosures, including those designated as County Wildlife Sites and City Wildlife Sites could be retained and integrated with suitable offsets within a creative masterplan.
- g. Existing woodland is limited to semi-mature plantations along Barton Road and to the east (of Field F) in the centre of the Site. These features could be retained to provide continued physical and visual enclosure.
- h. The functional and utilitarian Laundry Farm development (forming land Unit P) could be removed and replaced with high quality residential development.

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- i. A comprehensive development could enable the creation of a strong network of green infrastructure across the site with strategic areas of open space forming green fingers of retained Green Belt into Cambridge. These could focus on:
- o a major east-west corridor leading between Grange Road in the east and towards Coton in the west
 - o a corridor to the south along Barton Road utilising existing woodland and
 - o an enhanced corridor combining Bin Brook and footpath Coton 6 leading to the Coton Reserve.

The existing hedgerows and areas of adjacent semi natural vegetation and water courses/ditches could form the basis of semi-natural green corridors. These could be widened within the Site to enhance opportunities for wildlife and include multi-functional SuDS features. The green infrastructure network could include a transition in character from rural in the west to more formal areas closer to Cambridge and associated with residential development. This could reflect other examples in the city along the Cam and Hobson's Brook. The approach of retained accessible land in Green Belt would support NPPF paragraphs 138 and 141.

- j. The M11 and associated traffic is a visual and audible intrusion on the western section of the Site. There is scope to provide a softening and screening of the interface between the Site and the M11 by earthworks and planting. In addition, remaining land located outside the Site but east of the M11 could by agreement with the landowners be incorporated into the green fingers and rural edge of the development. This land is under the ownership of Cambridge Past Present and Future who already managed the Coton Reserve to the west of the M11. Inclusion of this land is not a requirement of the success of development on the Site but provides scope for further enhancement.
- k. A wider network of public rights of way could be provided across the Site. Coton 6 is the only route that passes through the Site. Other existing rights of way on the Site form cul-de-sacs. There is scope to provide new north-south connections to the west of the Site and routes that lead centrally through green corridors to Grange Road, Barton Road and Wilberforce Road and then into Cambridge. The approach of retained accessible land in Green Belt would support NPPF paragraphs 138 and 141. Cambridge 31 (Harcamlow Way/Wimpole Way) is located just outside the Site to the north and already provides good pedestrian and cycle links to the historic core. This route would not be physically affected by development but there is scope to provide additional connections from the site and into the West Cambridge campus.

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- i. Vehicular access can be achieved directly from Barton Road in the south and from Clerk Maxwell Road and Charles Babbage Road to the north. Routes into and through the site could be designed to cause minimal loss of hedgerow and vegetation and integration with adjacent land uses.
 - m. A suitable interface with the existing and expanding West Cambridge campus can be provided. The introduction of residential development stepping up from low to medium heights towards the northern section of the Site boundary would help to visually reduce the existing massing and scale of the existing 5 storey development at the southern edge of the West Cambridge development, which includes some prominent built forms.
 - n. Strategic native tree planting adjacent to the perimeters of the residential development area could provide the potential for creating a new soft edge and visual enclosure of development as seen from the west.
 - o. Views to the landmark buildings in the city and most notably the University Library tower can be retained and framed within a development layout. The main vistas should run west to east following the Harcamlow Way and through the development.

5.3 Constraints

- a. The Site is fully located within the Cambridge Green Belt. Sector 3 of the Cambridge Green Belt as identified in the CIGBBS (between Cambridge, Barton Road, West Cambridge campus and the M11) is considered to play a role in the characteristic setting of the city and in providing countryside close to the distinctive core of Cambridge. There would be some conflict with NPPF Green Belt purposes 1, 3 and 4 (see Section 4 above) and Cambridge City Council/South Cambridgeshire District Council Green Belt purposes 1 and 2 (see Section 4 above). As a result, the development of the Site would need to justify exceptional circumstances to enable Green Belt release from those parts of the Site that would be developed. Design proposals could help reduce adverse effects on the retained Green Belt. This could include the provision of Green corridors leading into Cambridge retained as Green Belt, as elsewhere in the city. Furthermore, the retained Green Belt has the potential for enhancement for access, recreation and biodiversity in support of Paragraphs 138 and 141 of the NPPF.
- b. The location of the Site in its proximity to Cambridge and its historic core
- c. Strategic Views into Cambridge (as considered in Section 3 above) should be evaluated for their importance and the effect of development on the Site. Views from within the Site and

along the adjacent Harcamlow Way cycleway towards landmark buildings in Cambridge should be identified and where possible built into the proposed masterplan. Views beyond the Site to the west including from M11 and Grantchester Road should be considered. The most notable viewpoint is from Red Meadow Hill. The height and massing of development and strategic planting within the view cone over which the historic core is visible should be given careful consideration to retain views to the historic core of city.

- d. Locations designated as County Wildlife Sites and City Wildlife Sites should be retained and enhanced. These include mature hedges and supporting habitats along watercourses and boundary ditches.
- e. The interface with the West Cambridge Conservation Area should be given careful consideration. Most of the interface is inward looking and already softened by intervening development and mature tree planting. However, there is a central section near Bin Brook where there are likely to be some views out of the Conservation Area albeit these are currently largely from private locations. Views looking towards the Conservation Area from the Site should also be carefully considered.
- f. The flood risk of the Bin Brook, which crosses the Site provides a localised constraint to where development is feasible. The flood risk areas should be suitably designed to bring landscape and biodiversity enhancements alongside flood attenuation and SuDS features.