

# **SITE PROMOTION DOCUMENT**

**FOR**

**MARTIN GRANT HOMES LTD**

**REGARDING**

**LAND AT AMBROSE WAY, IMPINGTON  
(SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE)**

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**PLANNING** | **DESIGN** | **ENVIRONMENT** | **ECONOMICS**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Pegasus Group, on behalf of Martin Grant Homes Ltd (MGH), who are promoting the land at Ambrose Way, Impington. This document has been produced in response to South Cambridgeshire District Council's call-for-sites process that seeks land to meet the future housing needs of the district.
- 1.2 The call-for-sites process is the first stage of the early review of South Cambridgeshire District Council's and Cambridge City Council's Local Plans that were formally adopted in September 2018. This early review is a requirement of Policy S13 and will result in a single Local Plan that will direct development proposals across both the District and City Council areas.
- 1.3 The Local Plan Review will enable the Greater Cambridgeshire authorities to work proactively to accommodate rising local housing need. The adopted Development Plans for the two Greater Cambridgeshire authorities have a combined annual housing requirement of 1,675 dwellings. Recently published Local Housing Need figures indicate that the combined housing requirement could rise to 1,832 dwellings per annum. A large percentage of the housing growth will have to be met in South Cambridgeshire given the limited capacity in the urban area of Cambridge City.
- 1.4 Given the District's previous reliance on strategic scale residential led developments that have taken years to deliver, there is clearly a need for smaller scale development sites in sustainable locations to meet future housing need.
- 1.5 It is estimated that the site has a capacity of 200 dwellings and would be accessed via Ambrose Way and Mill Lane. The Development Framework Plan makes provision for significant landscaping that would help to integrate the development into the rural landscape and help define the boundaries of the village.
- 1.1 This document demonstrates how the site is capable of achieving one of the fundamental objectives of the NPPF, sustainable development, through the delivery of homes in one of the District's most sustainable settlements.
- 1.2 This document should be read alongside the following documents:
- Site Location Plan.

- Framework Plan
- Call for Sites Form
- Heritage Appraisal
- Transport Strategy Overview

## 2. THE SITE

- 2.1 The site lies to the north east of the centre of the village of Impington. The site itself measures approximately 8.72ha and is bounded by the residential curtilages of properties on Ambrose Way, Mill Lane, Paddock Close and Drake Way to the west. To the east there is a complex of agricultural buildings surrounded by fields, some of which form part of the site. There are almost continuous hedged boundaries to the north, east and south of the site interspersed with some mature trees.
- 2.2 Whilst Mill Lane is historically linear in nature Ambrose Way, Paddock Lane and Drake Way represent modern cul-de-sac developments extending eastwards that were built in the latter half of the twentieth century. Where Mill Lane meets Impington Lane there is a central green space with the village pond, which is seen as the centre of the village. Impington Lane then extends eastwards to the south of the site with residential properties either side of the highway. To the north of Impington Lane the large residential curtilages of the dwellings are separated from the site by agricultural land.
- 2.3 There is an existing agricultural access between 60 and 62 Mill Lane that forms part of the site proposal. Other than that the westernmost part of this access, the site falls outside the Impington village framework and within the Cambridge Green Belt.

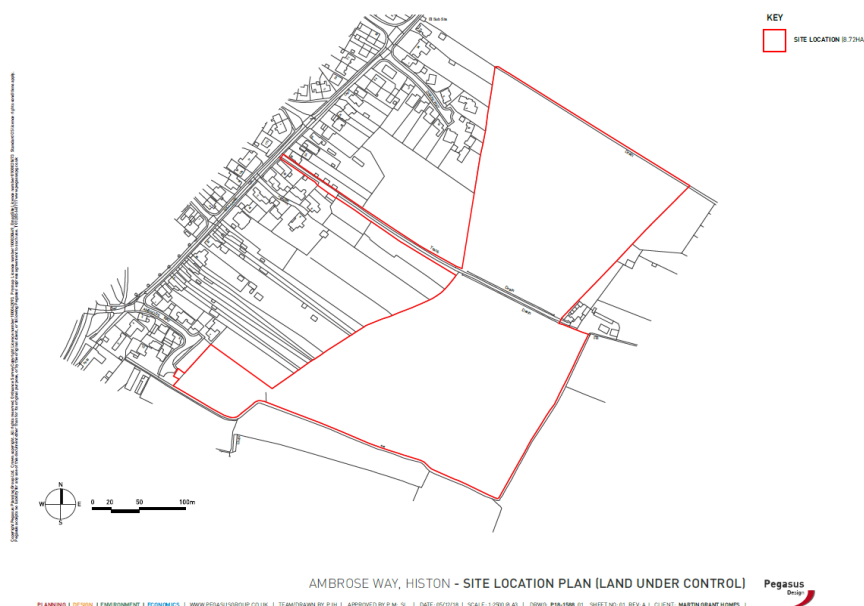


Figure 1 Site Location Plan

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2.4 Other than the trees interspersed in the boundary hedges there are no trees within the agricultural fields that make up the main area of the site.

### 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

#### The Development Plan

- 3.1 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 superseded the documents of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework 2007. Policy S/8 of the Local Plan identifies Histon and Impington as a Rural Centre. Rural Centres are the largest, most sustainable villages of the district where development without any limit on individual scheme size will be permitted within development frameworks.
- 3.2 Rural Centres are the highest classification of villages in the Local Plan reflecting their relative sustainability. Directing development to the more sustainable villages is an important element of the sustainable development strategy for the district. It is expected that this strategy will continue though to the new Local Plan in accordance with the overachieving aims of the NPPF to achieve sustainable development.
- 3.3 The Adopted Proposals Map extract confirms that the site currently lies within the Cambridgeshire Green Belt, outside of the Settlement Boundary and is partially affected by a Minerals Safeguarding Area (sand and gravel).

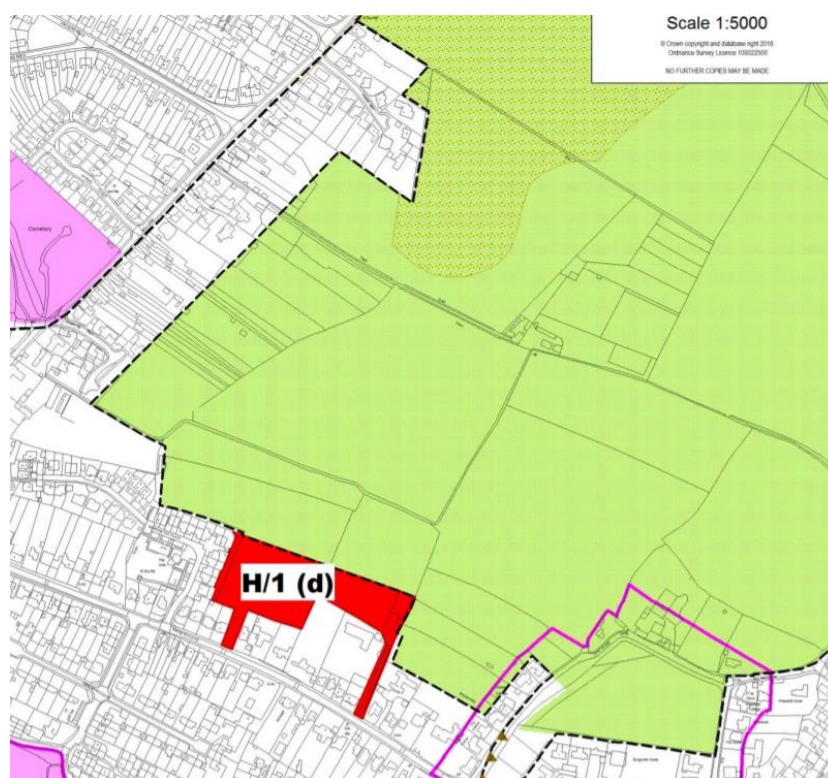


Figure 2 – Adopted Proposals Map

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## **Neighbourhood Planning**

- 3.4 On 9<sup>th</sup> September 2014 the 'Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Area' was designated. In October 2018, Histon and Impington Parish Council formally consulted on its pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 3.5 The Vision and Priorities document (August 2018) identified a number of key issues for the Neighbourhood Plan including:
- Maintaining the 'village character' of the community
  - Tackling the blight of the B1049
  - Providing sufficient (and top quality) healthcare and education
  - Supporting older and young people
  - Addressing crime and anti-social behaviour
  - Maintaining the roads, cycle paths and footways
  - Improving public transport
  - Addressing house prices and the shortage of affordable housing
- 3.6 The survey results from the Neighbourhood Plan Public briefing and workshop of 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016, showed that opinion about building on the Green Belt was divided. The survey showed that 38% of respondents were in favour of building on the Green Belt where it resulted in a significant delivery of affordable housing.
- 3.7 When asked about where new housing developments should be located, the most popular location chosen by respondents was to the north east of Impington and Impington.

#### 4. SITE SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 As Histon and Impington is designated as a Rural Centre it is one of the most sustainable villages in the district with good cycle and public transport connectivity with Cambridge.

4.2 Tables 1 and 2 below provides a schedule of key local services and their approximate distance from the site.

Table 1 - Local Services and Employment

Service	Facility	Distance from Site and Journey time.
<i>Social Infrastructure</i>		
Pre-School	Histon Early Years Centre, New School Road, Impington, Cambridge CB24 9LL	0.80 Km 10 minute walk
Primary School	Histon and Impington Junior School, The Green, Impington, CB24 9JA	0.48 Km 5 minute walk
	Histon and Impington Infant School, New School Road, Impington, CB24 9LL	0.96 Km 11 minute walk
	Proposed primary school (re-location of above infant school) – Buxhall Farm, Impington, Mill Lane, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9HW	0.48 Km 7 minute walk
Secondary School	Impington Village College, New Road, Impington, CB24 9LX	0.96 Km 12 minute walk
Sixth Form College	Impington Sixth Form College, New Road, Impington, CB24 9LX	0.96 Km 12 minute walk
GP Surgery	Firs House Surgery, Firs House, Station Road, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9NP	0.96 Km 12 minute walk
Dentist	Histon Dental Surgery, 66 Station Road, Histon, CB24 9LF	0.96 Km 11 minute walk
	Histon Dental Clinic, 10a Station Road, Impington, Cambridge CB24 9LQ	0.64 Km 8 minute walk
Hospital	Addenbrooke's Hospital, Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 0QQ	11.42 Km 23 minute car 59 minute bus
<i>Shops and Services</i>		
Convenience stores /Supermarkets	Co-op Food, Station Road, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9LQ	0.48 Km 6 minute walk

	Tesco Express, 30 High Street, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9JD	0.64 Km 8 minute walk
	Tesco Superstore, Cambridge Road, Milton, Cambridge CB24 6AY	5.14 Km 10 minute car 37 minute bus
Banks	Cambridge Building Society, 2 High Street, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9LG	0.48 Km 5 minute walk
	Barclays Bank, 15/17 High Street, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9US	0.48 Km 6 minute walk
Pharmacy	Well Impington, Station Road, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9NP	0.96 Km 12 minute walk
Public House	The Rose and Crown, 2 Glebe Way, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9JB	0.32 Km 3 minute walk
	The Red Lion, 27 High Street, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9JD	0.64 Km 7 minute walk
Restaurant / Café / Takeaways	The Boot, 1 High Street, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9LG	0.48 Km 5 minute walk
	St Andrew's Café, School Hill, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9JE	0.64 Km 9 minute walk
	Histon Village Fryer, 6 Station Road, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9JZ	0.48 Km 6 minute walk
<i>Recreation &amp; Leisure</i>		
Playing Fields	Histon and Impington Recreation Ground, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9EL	1.44 Km 18 minute walk 5 minute cycle
Allotments	Gatehouse Allotments, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9YZ	2.09 Km 5 minute car 7 minute cycle
Sports Facilities	Histon and Impington Recreation Ground, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9EL	1.44 Km 18 minute walk 5 minute cycle
	Impington Sports Centre, New Road, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9LX	1.12 Km 14 minute walk 4 minute cycle
<i>Employment Uses</i>		
Industrial Estate / Commercial Premises	Vision Park, Chivers Way, Histon, Cambridge, CB24 9ZR	1.28 Km 4 minute car 17 minute bus
	High Street, Histon Cambridge	0.48 Km 6 minute walk

Table 2 – Public Transport Connections

<i>Public Transport Links</i>		
Bus	Busway, Impington, Cambridge, CB24 9YS	1.44 Km – to bus stop 4 minute car
	Bus Service – Citi 8 into Cambridge – Hereward Close bus stop	0.48 Km – to bus stop 7 minute walk
Rail Links	Cambridge North Station, Cowley Road, CB4 0WZ	6.75 km 13 minute car

### Summary

- 4.3 Tables 1 and 2 demonstrate that residents of any development would have convenient access to an excellent range of shops and services which can be reached via sustainable modes of transport.
- 4.4 The village is also served by a direct bus link to Cambridge city centre and its public transport hubs (Cambridge Rail Station and Cambridge North Rail Station). These excellent connections offer sustainable travel options to major employment hubs and recreation/leisure destinations in Cambridge and further afield.
- 4.5 Impington is a settlement capable of accommodating future development at the scale put forward through both Call for Sites submissions. The potential re-location of the primary school to the north east edge of Impington, within convenient walking distance of the site further strengthens the site's sustainability credentials.

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## 5. GREEN BELT RELEASE

- 5.1 The adopted development plan confirms that the site is currently located in the Cambridgeshire Green Belt.
- 5.2 Paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans.
- 5.3 In light of the rising demand for market and affordable housing in South Cambridgeshire, the availability of development sites in urban areas and the rural nature of South Cambridgeshire, it is deemed essential and inevitable that the Council will need to undertake a thorough Green Belt review process as part of the Local Plan Review. The release of suitable and sustainable sites from the Green Belt will allow the Council to address the rising demand for housing in the district, as reflected in the Government's standard methodology figures, and cover the demand arising from the extended plan period covered by the Plan. The need for housing growth, particularly in the most sustainable locations, is an exceptional circumstance which warrants a review of the Green Belt.
- 5.4 At paragraph 133 the NPPF sets out the five purposes of Green Belt. Below we have carried out an initial assessment which identifies the extent to which the site at Ambrose Way, Impington contributes to the five purposes.

- **Checking unrestricted sprawl:** At the local level the proposed development will form a physical outward extension to the north eastern edge of Impington. The site does not perform a role in preventing the sprawl of Cambridge and can be contained by a new defensible Green Belt boundary.

The site benefits from good levels of enclosure to the east, west and south by virtue of existing residential development fronting Milton Road, Mill Lane, Ambrose Way and Merrington Place. The southern, eastern and western perimeter of the site benefit from a level of natural screening provided by existing trees and hedgerow. These established site boundaries form a clear 'barrier' to prevent unrestricted sprawl further beyond the site boundary.

**Preventing neighbouring towns from merging:** The nearest neighbouring settlement to the site is Milton (approximately 1.6 miles to the east of the site). Between the site and Milton is Milton Road which

forms an east to west road link. Milton Road is fronted by residential dwellings on its eastern side. In addition, a number of residential cul-de-sacs run off Milton Road. These streets and roads all form part of Impington and act as a significant barrier between the development site and the closest neighbouring settlement of Milton. The built-up area of Impington stretches north along Glebe Way and Cottenham Road beyond the northern boundary of the development site.

The development of the site for residential dwellings will not result in neighbouring settlements merging.

- **Safeguarding the countryside from encroachment:** The site already has a strong visual relationship with the village, marked through its proximity to built form to the west, east and south. This coupled with the site's visual containment, will mean whilst there will be physical encroachment, the perception of this will be limited.
- **Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns:** In this case, the Green Belt preserves the setting and character of Cambridge. Consequently, the site plays little purpose in preserving the setting and character of Cambridge. Conversely, its development will potentially relieve pressure for greater development within and around the city of Cambridge itself. In relation specifically to Impington, the site's visual containment together with a sensitively design scheme at the application stage will ensure the impact of the new built form upon the existing character of Impington will be minimal.
- **Supporting urban regeneration:** In this case the urban regeneration relates to Cambridge where there are relatively few opportunities for regeneration (where opportunities do exist, these have been identified in the Council's planning policies and/or are currently being progressed by developers). In South Cambridgeshire the pressing need for housing necessitates expansion beyond existing developed urban land and some Green Belt sites.

5.5 The development site performs poorly against the NPPF's Green Belt purposes, as such, when coupled with the need to deliver new housing growth at the most sustainable locations in the district it should be considered for release from the Green Belt as part of the Local Plan review process.

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## 6. OTHER SITE CONSIDERATIONS

### Flooding and Drainage

- 6.1 The GOV.UK flood mapping extract (Figure 3) confirms that the northern parcel of land within the site boundary falls within Flood Zone 1, as such, it is at a low risk of flooding.
- 6.2 The southern parcel of land currently falls within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. My client has commissioned a flooding and drainage consultant to review the potential flooding constraints associated with the development of the site. The work undertaken to date has confirmed that the area of the site currently affected by the flood zone designations can be reduced.
- 6.3 The exact reduction in the area of the site affected the flood zone designations is still to be confirmed at this stage and is subject to a modelling exercise. On this basis the submitted Development Framework Plan acknowledges the presence of this current constraint.
- 6.4 To inform the Council's review of the site and demonstrate its sustainability and suitability, my client will make future submissions on this matter at a later date. My client is confident that there is a technical solution to this matter which would allow a development of 200 dwellings to come forward whilst not exposing residents of the site or existing residents of the village to an increased level of flood risk.
- 6.5 On the issue of flood risk it is noted that a development of 31 dwellings at Land West of Merrington Place, Impington was approved in June 2011 (Ref: S/1847/10). This development, which has since been built out, is located to the south of the promotion site and lies entirely within Flood Zone 2 and 3. This approval further indicates the potential for a flooding and drainage solution at the Ambrose Way site.

### Highways

#### *Site Access*

- 6.6 The site has a direct frontage onto Ambrose Way and Mill Lane. The Transport Strategy document supporting this submission reviews site access options and confirms that:

- 
- A new vehicular and pedestrian access off Ambrose Way can be provided to serve the proposed development.
  - A pedestrian/cycle and emergency access only access can be provided utilising the existing track running east of Mill Lane.

6.7 A safe and robust access can be delivered to serve the site and all of its potential users.

6.8 For further details regarding highways access and impact please see the submitted Transport Strategy document prepared by iTransport.

#### *Highways Impact*

6.9 The Transport Strategy document also provides a high-level appraisal of the potential traffic impacts arising from the development of a scheme of 200 dwellings. The Strategy documents confirms that junctions on the local highway network are operating within capacity.

6.10 Any planning application at the site would be supported by a detailed Transport Assessment. The scope of such an Assessment would be agreed with Cambridgeshire County Council and include a detailed assessment of how local junctions operate. If the increase in vehicle movements arising from the proposed development results in junctions operating over capacity, then suitable mitigation would be investigated and provided as necessary.

#### **Heritage and Archaeology**

6.11 This submission is supported by a Heritage Appraisal which assesses potential built heritage and archaeological constraints. The appraisal confirms that there are no built designated heritage assets on site or in its immediate vicinity.

6.12 The Appraisal considered the impact of any development upon: 2 Mill Lane (Grade II listed building) located 70m to the west of the site, Impington and Impington Conservation Area located 110m to the south west of the site and the Church of St Andrew (Grade I listed) located 380m to the south east of the site. The Appraisal confirms that built heritage assets are not a constraint to the development of the site.

6.13 In respect of archaeology the appraisal confirms that existing records indicate that there are no prehistoric or Romano-British features within the site. In

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addition, the appraisal confirms that there are no medieval, post-medieval or undated features recorded within the site.

- 6.14 At present, there is no evidence to suggest the presence of significant archaeological remains within the site that would be a constraint to development.

### **Ecology**

- 6.15 In terms of on-site ecology, a future planning application for the site would be supported by robust Ecological Surveys to establish as to whether there are any species or habitats on-site; and to advise what measures can be included in the scheme to deliver ecological enhancements.

### **Trees**

- 6.16 There are no TPOs on or in close proximity to the site. Any vegetation at the site would be retained as far as practically possible, any removals would be replaced with new planting to ensure any development delivered a net gain in trees.

### **Minerals**

- 6.17 The adopted proposals map reveals that the northern parcel of the site is subject to a Minerals Safeguarding Area (sand and gravel) designation.
- 6.18 By virtue of its proximity to existing residential dwellings on Mill Road the area of the site affected by this designation would likely be unsuitable for any kind of standalone extraction operation, as such, we do not believe this to be a significant constraint. Subject to consultation with the Minerals and Waste authority, if necessary, a level of extraction could be deliverable as part of the development/ build out of the site.

## 7. PROPOSALS

### The Proposal

7.1 The submitted Development Framework Plan (also submitted separately) provides an indicative Layout for a residential development of 200 dwellings.



**Figure 4 – Development Framework Plan**

7.2 The Development Framework Plan provides the following:

- 200 dwellings of which up to 40% would be affordable in order to comply with current policy requirements in the district;
- Development at an indicative density of 33 dph (the indicative developable area equates to 6.04ha);

- An indicative Layout capable of providing a range of house types and sizes to meet local needs;
- A main vehicular and pedestrian access off Ambrose Way and a secondary pedestrian, cycle and emerging access only off Mill Lane;
- A new defensible northern landscape boundary. This boundary will form a firm edge to the settlement at the point which it meets the newly re-defined Green Belt boundary;
- Indicative perimeter blocks of development which respect the amenity of neighbouring residential development to the south and the west;
- Significant on-site open space, play space, walking routes and landscaping to ensure that the site provides on-site recreation space; and
- The retention of the vast majority of on-site trees and vegetation.

## **8. DELIVERY**

- 8.1 As confirmed on the Call for Sites Forms and accompanying letter from the landowner, the site is available for development.
  
- 8.2 In terms of implementation and delivery, it is estimated that development at the site could be completed in 48 months following the formal allocation in the Local Plan and the subsequent approval of all necessary planning applications.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 This submission demonstrates that the Land at Ambrose Way, Impington is a sustainable, suitable and deliverable site for residential development. The extent of the flood constraints associated with the southern part of the site will be confirmed through future submissions.
- 9.2 By virtue of its comprehensive service provision, excellent public transport connections and size Histon and Impington is designated as a Rural Centre in the adopted Local Plan settlement hierarchy. It is one of the most sustainable settlements in what is a largely rural district, as such, it is clear that the settlement should be a focus for housing growth in the Local Plan Review.
- 9.3 In progressing the Local Plan Review the exceptional circumstances exist whereby the Council would be fully justified in undertaking a review of the Cambridgeshire Green Belt in order to deliver much needed housing growth at the most sustainable and suitable sites in the District.
- 9.4 The Land at Ambrose Way, Impington performs poorly when assessed against the purposes of Green Belt as set out in the NPPF. On this basis, the site should be subject to a detailed appraisal through the Council's Green Belt review process. Indeed, in our assessment, the site should be released from the Green Belt as part of the Local Plan Review.
- 9.5 The submitted Development Framework Plan demonstrates that a sensitively designed scheme of 200 dwellings can come forward at the site. Any scheme will reinforce the boundaries of the site through significant landscaping to create a new defensible boundary to the settlement and Green Belt.
- 9.6 The Land at Ambrose Way, Impington is suitable, available and achievable and should be allocated via the Local Plan Review process.