



**Silverdale
Close, Coton,
Cambridgeshire**

**Green Belt
Assessment**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership Ltd**

On behalf of:
Martin Grant Homes

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Section 1

Introduction, Purpose and Methodology

- 1.1 The Environmental Dimension Partnership (EDP) Ltd have been appointed by Martin Grant Homes to prepare a Green Belt Assessment for potential residential development on land south of Silverdale Close, Coton, Cambridgeshire ('the site'). The site location and planning context is shown on **Plan EDP 1**.
- 1.2 EDP is an independent environmental planning consultancy with offices in Cirencester, Cheltenham, Shrewsbury and Cardiff. The practice provides advice to private and public sector clients throughout the UK in the fields of landscape, ecology, archaeology, cultural heritage, arboriculture, rights of way and masterplanning. Details of the practice can be obtained at our website (www.edp-uk.co.uk). EDP is a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute¹ specialising in the assessment of the effects of proposed development on the landscape.
- 1.3 The site is located at the south-western edge of Coton and falls within the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Planning Authority (LPA). The site is situated entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which washes over most of the site context, as illustrated by **Plan EDP 1**.
- 1.4 The proposals for the site are illustrated on the Concept Masterplan at **Appendix EDP 3**. The proposed development is for up to 77 residential units with associated Green Belt buffer around proposed public open space. Development is limited to the northern site area, with the southern site area retained as flood water mitigation, open space and additional tree planting to reinforce the permanence of the boundary.
- 1.5 This Green Belt Assessment is a response to South Cambridgeshire District Council's recent Call for Sites consultation and the opportunity identified to promote the site for the upcoming Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Purpose and Structure of this Green Belt Assessment

- 1.6 This purpose of the Green Belt Assessment is to test whether bringing forward sustainable development on this site would allow the key purposes of the Green Belt, in the context of the wider settlement of Cambridge, to be maintained, or possibly even enhanced. The assessment considers the extent to which a continued sense of openness can be maintained within the tract of land around Greater Cambridge.
- 1.7 In undertaking the assessment described here EDP has:
- Reviewed the relevant policy context and evidence base supporting the Council's recent releases of land from the Green Belt at **Section 1**;

¹ LI Practice Number 1010

- Provided a review of the Council's assessment of the extent to which the site performs against the purposes of the Green Belt at **Section 2** underpinned by the detailed assessment in **Appendix EDP 1**. This has been undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect and follows a bespoke methodology and assessment criteria prepared by EDP (see **Appendix EDP 2**). References are made to the concept masterplan, saved as **Appendix EDP 3**; and
- Reached overall conclusions in **Section 3**.

Methodology

- 1.8 EDP have developed a methodology for Green Belt Assessment that allows for assessment of land in landscape character and visual terms, against the purposes of the Green Belt, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 paragraph 133 (included in **Section 2**), and our experience of Green Belt reviews. Unless stipulated otherwise, all references to the NPPF relate to the most recent release, published in February 2019.
- 1.9 For each NPPF purpose, the EDP criteria has been determined to allow for a more comprehensive analysis to be undertaken, in landscape and visual terms, of the contribution the site makes to the purposes of the Green Belt in this location. The criteria for each purpose and its weighting in making judgements are described in detail and listed in **Appendix EDP 2**.
- 1.10 The weighting reflects the contribution the site makes towards meeting the purposes of the Green Belt. This ensures that, whilst the NPPF does not require all five purposes, or tests, to be met simultaneously, the extent to which a site contributes to the criterion of a specific purpose will better inform the decision for it to be removed from the Green Belt or retained within it.

Section 2 Policy Context and Considerations

National Policy

2.1 The NPPF February 2019 states at paragraph 133 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.”

2.2 The NPPF (paragraph 134) states that Green Belt serves five purposes:

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. “*

Local Policy

2.3 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was adopted in September 2018 in which Policy S/4 – Cambridge Green Belt is relevant. Policy NH/8 – Mitigating the Impact of Development in and adjoining the Green Belt, is partly relevant where it applies to development of land at the edge of settlements, surrounded by the designation. This would be the resulting case to re-drawing the Green Belt boundary to align with the edge of the application site.

2.4 Policy S/4 is clear in stating that the designation chiefly relates to Cambridge and not surrounding villages:

“A Green Belt will be maintained around Cambridge that will define the extent of the urban area”

2.5 Therefore, the purpose of the Green Belt applies to controlling growth around Cambridge and not Coton. Arguably, a Green Belt Assessment is superfluous in this circumstance, as the site abuts Coton and not Cambridge. However, there appears to be a two-step process to addressing Green Belt matters: 1) removal of the site from the Green Belt, in which case policies relating to development *in* the Green Belt do not apply; or 2) development in the Green Belt, tested against Policy S/4, which states:

“New development in the Green Belt will only be approved in accordance with Green Belt policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.”

- 2.6 In both cases, understanding the extent to which the site performs against the NPPF tests, enables a judgement to be made on the appropriateness of either removal from, or development within, the designation.
- 2.7 The Local Plan lists the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt (para. 2.30) as being to:
- *“Preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city with a thriving historic centre;*
 - *Maintain and enhance the quality of its setting; and*
 - *Prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city.”*
- 2.8 Special characteristics of the setting to Cambridge are listed (para. 2.31) as follows. It is notable that these focus on the land which is intervisible with Cambridge and not the application site at Coton:
- *“Key views of Cambridge from the surrounding countryside;*
 - *A soft green edge to the city;*
 - *A distinctive urban edge;*
 - *Green corridors penetrating into the city;*
 - *Designated sites and other features contributing positively to the character of the landscape setting;*
 - *The distribution, physical separation, setting, scale and character of Green Belt villages; and*
 - *A landscape that retains a strong rural character.”*

South Cambridge Local Plan Issues and Options

- 2.9 As part of the Local Plan process, the Issues and Options stage sought to identify land at the edge of Cambridge for release from the inner boundary of the Green Belt. Thereafter, several studies were commissioned to look at release of land around Cambridge and not the surrounding existing villages at the outer boundaries, as is the case with the site. In this planning context, Chapter 2 of the Local Plan, relating to Spatial Strategy, acknowledges that there should be development in villages for sustainability reasons (page 20).

- 2.10 The Greater Cambridge Local Plan, also adopted in 2018, contains Policy 4, relating to the Cambridge Green Belt. This follows similar wording to Policy S/4 above insofar as land should meet the purposes of the NPPF.

Other Relevant Considerations

- 2.11 The Cambridge Green Belt Study (September 2002) describes the setting to Cambridge but was not intended to identify specific land parcels for release.
- 2.12 The Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (2012) draws on and reviews the 2002 Study, from which it identified land on the edge of Cambridge, where it was considered that exceptional circumstances justified their release from the Green Belt. However, the study area focused on the land between Cambridge and the M11 to the west, the A14 and east Cambridge and did not include Coton or the site, which lies approximately 1.33km further to the west of the M11.
- 2.13 A newer document, the Cambridge Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (2015), reached similar conclusions to the previous 2012 Study. This too did not undertake a detailed assessment of the landscape west of the M11 and makes limited comment on the 'Outer Green Belt', which does not affect the site.
- 2.14 Two other documents pre-date the evidence base and are cited within them as contributing toward an understanding of the vision and setting of Cambridge:
- Plan for Cambridge, Professor Sir William Holford and H Myles Wright (1950); and
 - The Cambridge Sub-Region Study, Colin Buchanan and Partners (2001).
- 2.15 Part of the vision of the 1950 document was to ensure "*villages near the city boundary would require 'Green Belts' between them and the town*"; whilst the second purpose of the 2001 Study was to "*prevent further coalescence between settlements.*"
- 2.16 Aside from these documents, there is currently no evidence base that tests inclusion of the land within the outer parts of the Cambridge Green Belt. Given this apparent absence of a formal consideration of the site as part of any evidence base, EDP has undertaken its own assessment, as set out in the following section.

Coton Conservation Area

- 2.17 The Coton Conservation Area (CA) is entirely separated from the site by intervening 20th century residential built form. There is no intervisibility with the CA. The extent to which the site impacts on the historic setting to the CA falls outside of the remit of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) or this Assessment. The extent to which it contributes to its historic setting is therefore of limited relevance but is considered as part of the detailed assessment of the purposes of the site.

Landscape Character

2.18 The South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide: High Quality and Sustainable Development in South Cambridgeshire (adopted 02 March 2010) shows the Site as falling within the within the *C: The Western Claylands National Character Area* as defined in the *Countryside Character for East of England* (Countryside Agency 2005). This is relevant to understanding the contribution that the site makes to NPPF Purpose 3, “to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.”

2.19 Landscape character is summarised as follows:

“This character area comprises gently undulating arable farmland with, mostly, large fields and low trimmed hedgerows. Occasional medium to large sized ancient woodlands provide a distinctive feature and church towers and spires are key landmarks. Despite the presence of some major roads, much of the area has a relatively tranquil, rural character.”
(para. 3.23)

2.20 Settlement Character is described as follows:

“The mostly small, scattered villages of this area often have 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. ...” (para. 3.25).

2.21 The character of the village and its rural context is largely consistent with the description within the Design Guide. In particular, the vegetation at the site boundaries provides visual filtering and screening in views from the adjacent agricultural land towards the site and the existing settlement edge. This contributes to integration with the existing and proposed settlement edge. Further examination of the differences in representation of the characteristics is included in **Appendix EDP 3**, from which conclusions are drawn on the contribution the site makes to Purpose 3 of the NPPF, para. 133.

Section 3 Green Belt Assessment

EDP Green Belt Assessment

- 3.1 EDP has undertaken an assessment of the extent to which the site performs against the purposes of the NPPF Green Belt tests. This has been undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect and follows the bespoke methodology referred to in **Section 1** and assessment criteria prepared by EDP (see **Appendix EDP 2**) to examine the purposes in further detail.
- 3.2 The detailed findings are presented in the Green Belt Assessment within **Appendix EDP 2**. A summary of the findings in relation to each of criteria for examining the five purposes is provided in **Table EDP 3.1**.

Table EDP 3.1: Summary of EDP Site-specific Green Belt Assessment

Green Belt Purpose (NPPF)	EDP Methodology Criteria	Site Contribution
Purpose 1 To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.	What contribution does the site make to providing a contiguous open area between the settlement edge and the wider Green Belt?	Low
	What contribution do the site boundaries make to maintaining openness with the wider Green Belt?	None
Purpose 2 To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.	To what extent is the site associated with the existing settlement edge(s)?	Low
	Given the distance between the whole of the site and next nearest settlement edge, what is the effect of the perceived and actual intervisibility or potential for coalescence?	Low
Purpose 3 To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.	What contribution does the site make to representation of the key characteristics of the countryside?	Low
	To what extent is the site urbanised, either by on-site or off-site features?	Low
Purpose 4 To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.	Does the site represent the special characteristics of the setting to the historic town?	No
	Is there intervisibility between the site and historic landmarks?	No
Purpose 5 To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	Not tested.	N/A
Overall Weighting		Low

- 3.3 EDP's assessment of the site, in relation to the main purposes of Green Belt, shows that rather than being a high functioning part of the Green Belt, the sites provides a **low contribution** to the Green Belt purposes. Further detailed analysis, which has informed these findings, has been carried out by EDP and is detailed in **Appendix EDP 1**.

Review of The Findings of The Published Green Belt Study in Relation to The Site

- 3.4 The following paragraphs summarise the detailed findings of the EDP tests and considers these in light of the potential to remove the site from the Green Belt and redevelop it whilst ensuring the fundamental purpose of the adjoining Green Belt can be maintained.

Purpose 1: To Check the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built-up Areas

- 3.5 The main finding in respect of this assessment is that the existing mature woodland to the site's western and southern boundaries prevent the site from allowing unrestricted sprawl to develop. There is no development within the site that has resulted through unrestricted growth.
- 3.6 Furthermore, redevelopment of the site is expected to come forward as part of a planned approach, dealt with formally through the planning process and not in a piecemeal fashion of an unrestricted nature.

Purpose 2: To Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging into One Another

- 3.7 The geographic distances between Coton and the next nearest villages at Barton and Comberton as well as Cambridge to the east, are so great that the potential for merging as a result of removal of the site and redevelopment of it, is unlikely in the current plan period. Additionally, the effects of distance and intervening vegetation along the boundaries of the site and in the intervening landscape, ensures there is no perception of a reduction in the openness of the Green Belt from these surrounding settlements, were the site to be removed and re-developed.

Purpose 3: To Assist in Safeguarding the Countryside from Encroachment

- 3.8 The site makes only a limited contribution to the key characteristics of the landscape of the Western Claylands, principally as a small part of the wider agricultural landscape. However, the mature woodland along the southern and western boundaries considerably reduces the perceptual relationship of the character of the site with the wider Western Claylands. This level of containment also ensures that the site makes only a very limited contribution to the setting of the village, which is not readily appreciated due to the absence of public rights of way passing through the site.
- 3.9 In that regard, the site makes only a low contribution to the countryside of the Green Belt, defined as the Western Claylands.

Purpose 4: To Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns

- 3.10 The site is screened from the CA and Cambridge by intervening 20th century-built form in Coton and there is no intervisibility between the CA or Cambridge where a full appreciation of their landscape setting can be appreciated. The site therefore makes no appreciable contribution to the historic setting to either the CA or Cambridge.

Purpose 5: To Assist in Urban Regeneration, by Encouraging the Recycling of Derelict and Other Urban Land

- 3.11 The most recent Green Belt studies commissioned by the relevant Councils have determined that this purpose cannot be tested in the context of demonstrating potential removal of land from the designation. This test therefore does not form part of the Green Belt Assessment.

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Section 4 Conclusion of Green Belt Assessment

- 4.1. EDP has been commissioned by Martin Grant Homes to undertake a Green Belt Assessment to examine the performance of the site against the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt. Part of this approach has been to review the Cambridge and joint Cambridge/South Cambridge Council evidence base in relation to Green Belt, which has found that there have been no specific studies undertaken on the outer Green Belt boundary, including the site. In this instance, this Assessment includes consideration of the site using the bespoke methodology prepared by EDP for instances where no suitable evidence base or 'like for like' comparison exists.
- 4.2. This Green Belt Assessment concludes the site provides a **low contribution** to Green Belt purposes, primarily due to three key factors: 1) existing, proximate permanent defensible boundaries; 2) limited representation of key characteristics of the countryside; and 3) no valued contribution to the historic setting to Coton CA or the setting to Cambridge. As a result, the site relates far more closely to the existing settlement edge of Coton and does not have a fundamental role in protecting the openness and permanence of the Green Belt.
- 4.3. Removal of the site from the Green Belt can be undertaken immediately, without the reliance on establishment of new defensible boundaries. This is reflected in the Concept Masterplan (**Appendix EDP 3**) for redevelopment of the site, which includes clear opportunities to provide an on-site commitment to retain and reinforce the defensible boundaries. In combination with the low contribution to the NPPF purposes, removal of the site from the Cambridge Green Belt will preserve the special qualities of the setting to Cambridge and:
- *“preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city with a thriving historic centre;*
 - *maintain and enhance the quality of its setting;*
 - *prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city;”*
- 4.4. This assessment has concluded that the site could reasonably be removed from the Green Belt and, it can be developed in accordance with the principles of the Concept Masterplan (as detailed in **Appendix EDP 3**) without harm to the openness and permanence of the Green Belt overall. Additionally, redevelopment of the site would provide potential benefits in terms of creation of an attractive, integrated settlement edge, a defensible Green Belt boundary over the current plan period, and maintain the identity of Coton as being entirely surrounded by Green Belt.

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Appendix EDP 1

Green Belt Assessment Methodology and Criteria

Review Criteria

A1.1 As noted in the NPPF, paragraph 133, the Green Belt serves five purposes. For each NPPF purpose, criteria have been developed that allow for a comprehensive analysis to be undertaken, in landscape and visual terms, of the contribution the site makes to the function of the Green Belt in this location. The criteria for each purpose is described in more detail and tabulated below.

Purpose 1: To Check the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built-up Areas

A1.2 This is a test that considers whether the site is able to prohibit sprawl. Commonly sprawl is ribbon development but may also be piecemeal development in isolated areas or along settlement edges. A site may already have been compromised by some form of development, in which case it is relevant to consider the extent to which that development has eroded the sense of openness, this being whether or not there is a sense that the site within the Green Belt is still open and absent of development.

A1.3 Sprawl may also be discouraged by defensible boundaries to existing settlements that are either natural (e.g. topography, woodland or water course) or man-made features (e.g. as a main road, main railway line, or settlement edge). These may be within the site or share a boundary with it. Sites that do not contain defensible boundaries may contribute towards greater openness.

Purpose 2: To Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging into One Another

A1.4 The consideration is whether or not the settlement growth could lead to merging with another town. The wording of the NPPF refers to 'towns', but often the Green Belt affects settlements of a considerably smaller geographical scale, in which it is more relevant to consider the potential for merging of neighbouring settlement edges to distinct settlement areas that might be defined as towns.

A1.5 In essence, the purpose seeks to avoid coalescence of built form. This can be perceived in terms of geographic scale in either plan view or 'on the ground' by intervening natural or man-made features.

A1.6 The interpretation of 'merging', in terms of geographic distances, differs according to the study area. Whilst a review of distinct towns might need to account for distances over several kilometres, when considering gaps between smaller settlements, the range can be much smaller with distances reducing to as little as 100m in some cases. It is of note that susceptibility to 'merging' depends on distance between two settlements, and each situation needs to be reviewed in relation to the local landscape and visual context.

Purpose 3: To Assist in Safeguarding the Countryside from Encroachment

- A1.7 In terms of Green Belt, the ‘countryside’ is the landscape outside of the current development limits, and which is generally defined by key characteristics such as hedgerow networks, varying field patterns, presence/absence of woodland, downland character, topographical features or open space and access to it, etc. Countryside is likely to be undeveloped land that is typically rural and often managed for agriculture or forestry, or simply kept as an open natural or semi-natural landscape. It may, however, contain man-made features such as historic landmarks, properties, mineral extraction or larger areas of settlement.
- A1.8 This assessment is informed by the identification of key landscape characteristics of the site and its surroundings, derived from a review of the published landscape character assessment and consideration against aerial mapping of the site, its surroundings and a site-based baseline review undertaken to inform the design of the concept masterplan. Consideration is also given to the extent of recreational access provided to the Green Belt through the site.
- A1.9 Sites that are highly representative of the key landscape characteristics, and exhibit them in good condition, make a stronger contribution towards safeguarding the countryside than land that is less representative of the landscape character area or contains features that are in poorer condition. This allows a relative and qualitative consideration to be applied to landscapes.
- A1.10 The matter of ‘encroachment’ is also a judgement that considers whether or not development (such as built form along the edge or within it, pylons and high voltage overhead cables, sub-stations, quarrying and urbanising features such as street lighting, road signs, road infrastructure, etc.) is found in the site or influences it, and also the degree to which it has preserved the key characteristics or divorced them from the wider countryside. A site that has limited or no urbanising influences has a stronger role in safeguarding countryside.
- A1.11 Finally, encroachment can also be prohibited by the presence or absence of particular natural or man-made features that separate existing settlement edges from the wider countryside. Typically, encroachment is prevented from progressing by large man-made features such as dual carriageways, or motorways; natural features might include woodland, large water bodies, such as lakes and rivers or deep, steeply sloped valleys. Such features may border a site or be contained wholly or partially within it.
- A1.12 However, natural features in particular, including woodland, rivers or ridgelines, may suffer a loss of their integrity as prominent features within the landscape if development is progressed upon, or near, them. These features should therefore be safeguarded where possible or integrated sensitively into design proposals.

Purpose 4: To Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns

- A1.13 The setting and special character of an historic town is usually depicted by the presence of one or more conservation areas to denote an historic association with the built form. Consideration is also given to potential views towards historic landmarks such as churches, listed buildings or scheduled monuments.
- A1.14 This does not, however, constitute an appraisal of the historic setting of a designated or non-designated historic asset, the nature of which would be determined by a suitably experienced historic consultant and falls outside of the remit of this Green Belt assessment.

Purpose 5: To Assist in Urban Regeneration, by Encouraging the Recycling of Derelict and Other Urban Land

- A1.15 This purpose falls outside the scope of this report and has not been tested.

Review Scoring

- A1.16 EDP has developed a methodology for Green Belt Reviews, which is based on landscape and visual assessment methodology with regard to the purposes of the Green Belt and our experience of Green Belt reviews.
- A1.17 The site is scored against the criteria for each purpose as shown in **Table EDP A1.1**, with criteria weighted as **no**, **low**, **moderate** or **strong** contribution towards meeting the purposes of the Green Belt. Occasionally, scores are spread if part of the site makes differing contributions. This ensures that, whilst the NPPF does not require all five purposes, or tests to be met simultaneously, the extent to which a site contributes to the criterion of a specific purpose will better inform the decision for it to be removed from or retained within the Green Belt.

Table EDP A1.1: NPPF Paragraph 133 Green Belt Purpose

NPPF paragraph 133 Green Belt Purpose	Criteria	Application of Criteria to Site and Criteria Weighting: (No Contribution; Low; Moderate; Strong)
Purpose 1 To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates a clear, recognisable distinction between urban fringe and open countryside; and Settlement scale will differ and 'large' may be relative to: hamlet, village, town, city. Typically, a settlement that is the size of a town or city would be considered as a large built-up area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes, the site is absent of development and associated influences and strongly contributes to the openness of the Green Belt (Strong); b. There is an absence of development within the site, but it is overlooked by adjacent/nearby development (Moderate); c. No, the site contains development and/or does not clearly define a distinction between the settlement edge and the open countryside (Low); and d. Land use of the site results in it forming neither countryside or urban (No contribution).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defensible boundaries have a role in limiting unrestricted sprawl as they create the boundaries to Green Belt parcels. These may be within the site or form part of its boundary; and Such boundaries can be permanent, such as roads, steep topography, woodland or require additional reinforcement such as hedgerows, tree belts, streams. Fences do not form defensible boundaries. Incomplete or low boundaries may result in part/all of a site making a greater contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The site does not have defensible boundaries and maintains openness with the wider Green Belt (Strong); b. The site has some defensible boundary/boundaries and maintains openness in some directions. Additional reinforcement needed (Moderate); c. The site has some permanent boundaries such as roads/railways/rivers/high ground and partially defensible boundaries, some of which do not require additional reinforcement (Low); and d. The site has permanent defensible boundaries that would immediately prevent sprawl (No contribution).

NPPF paragraph 133 Green Belt Purpose	Criteria	Application of Criteria to Site and Criteria Weighting: (No Contribution; Low; Moderate; Strong)
Purpose 2 To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settlements maintain a recognisable edge; • The extent to which the site forms a logical fit with the settlement or, is perceived as an extension that could erode openness; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent loss or noticeable reduction in distance between towns/settlement edges; this may also be affected by agricultural land use or topography. A larger distance or more prominent topographical change would be better capable of accommodating change than a narrow gap; and • The gaps may contain different elements, be it natural (e.g. topography, woodland, agricultural land or large open spaces) or man-made features, which prevent merging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The site forms the gap between two settlement edges (Strong); b. The site abuts two settlement boundaries and therefore forms part of an indent (Moderate); c. The site abuts one settlement boundary but is not divorced from it (Low); and d. The site is clearly separated from the settlement boundary and would not undermine the sense of openness (No Contribution). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Immediate and clear intervisibility with next nearest settlement edge (Strong); b. Partial intervisibility with next nearest settlement edges (Moderate); c. Limited intervisibility with next nearest settlement edges (Low); and d. No intervisibility with next nearest settlement edges (No Contribution).
Purpose 3 To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The countryside comprises 'key characteristics', which define the landscape and the way it is perceived in visual terms or through physical patterns; and • Key characteristics may be derived from a review of published landscape character assessments and EDP's own review of landscape character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The site is highly representative of host landscape character area/type; does not contain landscape detractors (Strong); b. The site is partially representative of host landscape character area/type; there are some landscape detractors (Moderate); c. The site has a low representation of characteristics; many landscape detractors (Low); and d. No representation of landscape character area/type; high number detractors that weaken landscape character considerably (No Contribution).

NPPF paragraph 133 Green Belt Purpose	Criteria	Application of Criteria to Site and Criteria Weighting: (No Contribution; Low; Moderate; Strong)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroachment: features such as settlement edge, speed signage and street lighting affect the extent to which the countryside is perceived to change from rural to urban. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. There are no urbanising features within the site or directly influencing it (Strong); b. There are several off-site urbanising features affecting the site (Moderate); c. There are many off-site urbanising features affecting the site (Low); and d. The site is distinct due to its urbanising features (No Contribution).
Purpose 4 To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The representation of the special characteristics that contribute to the setting of an historic town, as defined by one or more conservation areas; and • The representation of the special characteristics that contribute to the setting of an historic town, if these are set out in the Council's supporting evidence base, where different from those defined for conservation areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The site is highly representative of the special characteristics associated with the setting to an historic town (Strong); b. The is partially representative of special characteristics associated with the setting to an historic town (Moderate); c. The site has some representation of special characteristics associated with the setting to an historic town (Low); d. The site has no representation of the special characteristics associated with the setting to an historic town (No Contribution).
Purpose 5 To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	Not tested.	Not tested.

Appendix EDP 2 Detailed Green Belt Assessment

Description of the Site

The site lies at the south-western edge of the village of Coton, with existing residential development characterised by predominantly 20th century development immediately to the north, off Pendrick Close and east, off Silverdale Avenue. The development spans the full length of these boundaries.

To the south, the site boundary is formed by Bin Brook and mature woodland aligning this watercourse.

To the west, mature woodland in a roughly triangular shape lies off-site, spanning the full length of the boundary. The woodland measures approximately 90m wide in the southern and central portions, narrowing to approximately 20m in the northern portion where it meets with the existing settlement edge. The context of the site is illustrated by **Figure EDP A.1**.



Figure EDP A.1: Site and immediate context.

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		
Application of Criteria	Assessment	Score
Does the site form a contiguous open area between the existing settlement edge and the wider countryside and/or large built-up area?	The site is currently undeveloped and physically and visually separated from a much larger contiguous open area extending to the west and south. There are no roads extending through the site, and therefore no unrestricted ribbon development has extended into the wider countryside.	Low Contribution
Application of Criteria	Assessment	Score
Does the site have a defensible boundary, which can prevent sprawl?	The mature boundary to the south is effective in forming an immediate permanent defensible boundary, more so as a result of the Bin Brook. To account for the potential (but unlikely) removal of the mature woodland further south, the Concept Masterplan for redevelopment of the site indicates a large area of additional tree planting and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) basin to reinforce these boundaries.	No Contribution




Application of Criteria	Assessment	Score
To what extent is the site associated with the existing settlement edge(s)?	<p>Figure A2.2 illustrates that the site forms an indent to the existing edge of Coton and therefore does not extend substantially further south or west than the existing settlement edge boundaries.</p> <p>In that respect, removal of the site from the Green Belt would only marginally reduce the extent of the designation between Coton and the next nearest settlements to the south, at Barton and south-west, at Comberton through the removal of a site spanning just c.235m between its south-western and north-eastern extents.</p>	Low Contribution
Given the distance between the whole of the site and next nearest settlement edge, what is the effect of the perceived and actual intervisibility or potential for coalescence?	Due to the visual enclosure of the site by development and vegetation adjacent to the site boundaries, and across the wider generally flat landscape to the south, there will be a barely perceptible – if at all – reduction in the Green Belt with the next nearest settlements. The does not represent a parcel of land that is fundamental to preventing coalescence with the next nearest villages.	Low Contribution

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		
Application of Criteria	Assessment	Score
To what extent does the site represent the key characteristics of the countryside?	<p>At the smaller grain of the site itself there are, inevitably, local characteristics that influence the character itself, and as a result its representation differs from that of the Western Claylands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern hedge comprises a narrow belt of semi-mature native trees and shrubs that is likely to have been planted when adjacent residential development was introduced; • The hedge to the east has come under some pressure from the adjacent housing so that its condition is compromised to some degree; • Existing development to the north and east does little to reflect the characteristics of the historic village core and, in this respect, contributes little to the ‘sense of place’; • The existing development detracts from the rural tranquillity and exerts an urbanising influence across the site; • Large buildings at High Cross erode the rural tranquillity in the locality; • The near site context is consistent with the Design Guide description of ‘settlement character’ where “<i>small fields and paddocks also contribute to their landscape setting, providing a transition to the surrounding countryside</i>”; • However, the mature woodland along the southern and western boundary which defines the edge of the site, also creates an abrupt change from the interior of the site to this wider character. 	Low Contribution

Application of Criteria	Assessment	Score
To what extent is the site urbanised, either by on-site or off-site features?	Two storey residential development immediately to the north and east exerts a strong urbanising influence on the site. The mature woodland to the west and south assists greatly in containing this urbanising character and would continue to limit urbanisation of the wider Green Belt, if the site were to be removed and developed.	Low Contribution

Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Application of Criteria	Assessment	Score
To what extent does the site represent the special characteristics of the setting to the historic town?	 <p>Figure EDP A2.3: Conservation Area (edged pink) is separated from the site to the south-west by more modern development</p> <p>Coton Conservation Area (CA) is entirely separated from the site by much of the intervening 20th century residential built form.</p> <p>In terms of special characteristics listed in the adopted Local Plan, relating to the setting to Cambridge, there is no intervisibility between the site and Cambridge and therefore no full appreciation of the landscape setting to the city.</p>	No Contribution
To what extent is there intervisibility between the site and historic landmarks?	There are no public rights of way (PRoW) crossing the site from which views of the church are currently afforded.	No Contribution


Purpose 5: To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land		
Application of Criteria	Assessment	Score
Is the site within the Green Belt, and therefore not representative of derelict or other urban land?	Not tested.	N/A
Overall Weight		Low Contribution

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Appendix EDP 3
Concept Masterplan
(edp4413_d007a 08 April 2019 RA/PW)

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 Application Boundary	3.46 ha
Net Developable Area @ 30dph equates to 70 dwellings	2.36 ha
Open Spaces and Planting	1.10 ha

New residential development respects the privacy and amenity of existing dwellings by backing onto neighbouring properties on Pendrick Close

Vehicular access via Pendrick Close

Proposed residential development has generous back gardens, which back onto established woodland. Sensitive boundary treatments enable these rear gardens to benefit from a green outlook

The view of the existing woodland from the entrance to the site is complimented by new planting, which allows glimpsed views of the proposed play space

New residential development has generous back gardens, which protect the privacy and amenity of existing properties on Silverdale Avenue and accommodate the recommended drainage and ecological offsets to the existing watercourse

Potential pedestrian connection to Silverdale Avenue

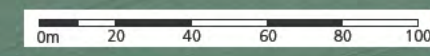
Proposed attenuation basin provides opportunities for a permanent wetland feature and bio-diversity enhancements, refer to MEC report

Proposed natural green space is overlooked by neighbouring dwellings and provides opportunities for informal recreation. This area could accommodate new landscape treatments and bio-diversity enhancements linking into the wider green network

Potential for additional new planting to screen pumping station from view

The proposed play space has a 20m offset from neighbouring dwellings, which overlook the space and provide natural surveillance

Proposed pumping station with 15m offset to development, refer to MEC report



client
Martin Grant Homes

project title
Silverdale Close, Cotton, Cambridgeshire

drawing title
Concept Masterplan

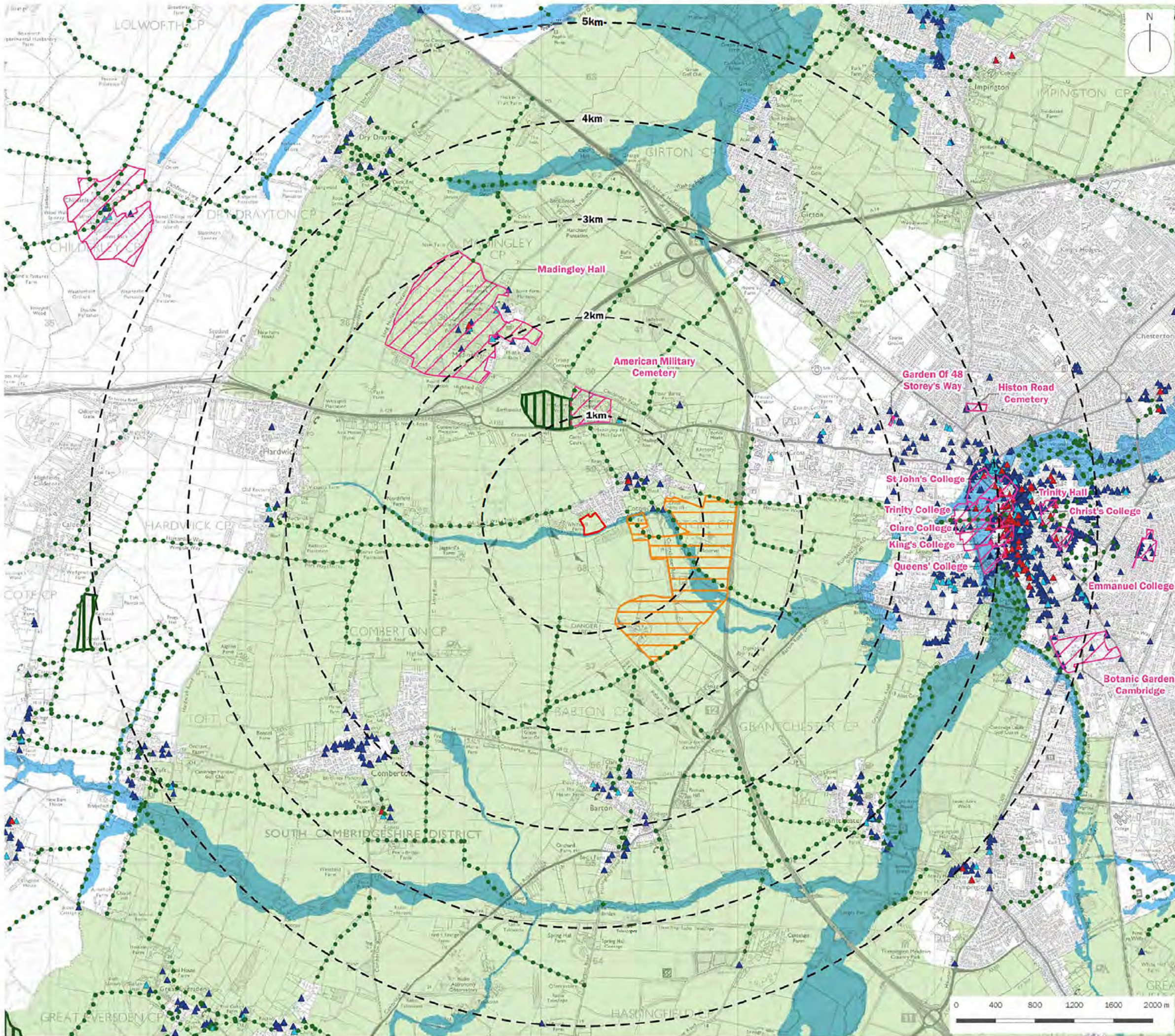
date 08 APRIL 2019 drawn by RA
drawing number edp4413_d007a checked PW
scale 1:2000 @ A3 QA JTF



Plan

Plan EDP 1 Environmental Planning Context and Considerations
(edp4413_d004b 08 April 2019 GY/TR)

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- Site Boundary
- Range Rings (at 1km intervals)
- Landscape and Access**
- Country Parks
- Public Rights of Way
- Flood Zone
- Ancient Woodland
- Heritage**
- ▲ Grade I Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II* Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II Listed Building
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Planning**
- Green Belt

client
Martin Grant Homes

project title
Silverdale Close, Coton, Cambridgeshire

drawing title
Plan EDP 1: Environmental Planning Context and Considerations

date	08 APRIL 2019	drawn by	GY
drawing number	edp4413_d004b	checked	TR
scale	Refer to scale bar	QA	LB

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