



Land South of Villa Road, Impington

A sustainable village extension : Vision document

October 2021





Land to the South of Villa Road - Illustrative concept masterplan (1:3000)



Cirrus Impington Ltd are delighted to set out their vision for the allocation of up to 120 new dwellings at land South of Villa Road, Impington. The proposals would deliver a well-connected and sustainable new urban extension located within 450 metres / 6 minutes walk of the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway. Cirrus Impington Ltd and their development partners place the highest value on the environment, and are committed to meeting the Council's aspirations for net zero carbon.

Early technical appraisals have informed the design of the illustrative masterplan, with an emphasis on the preservation and enhancement of the local field structure, ecological setting and landscape characteristics of the Site. Surface and storm water modelling has been assessed with the movement and storage of water being designed into the landscape strategy, which includes new open space, play space and community orchards replicating historic vegetation. Importantly, technical work undertaken to help advise this Document demonstrates that the Site is at lower risk of flooding than indicated by the Environment Agency flood mapping.

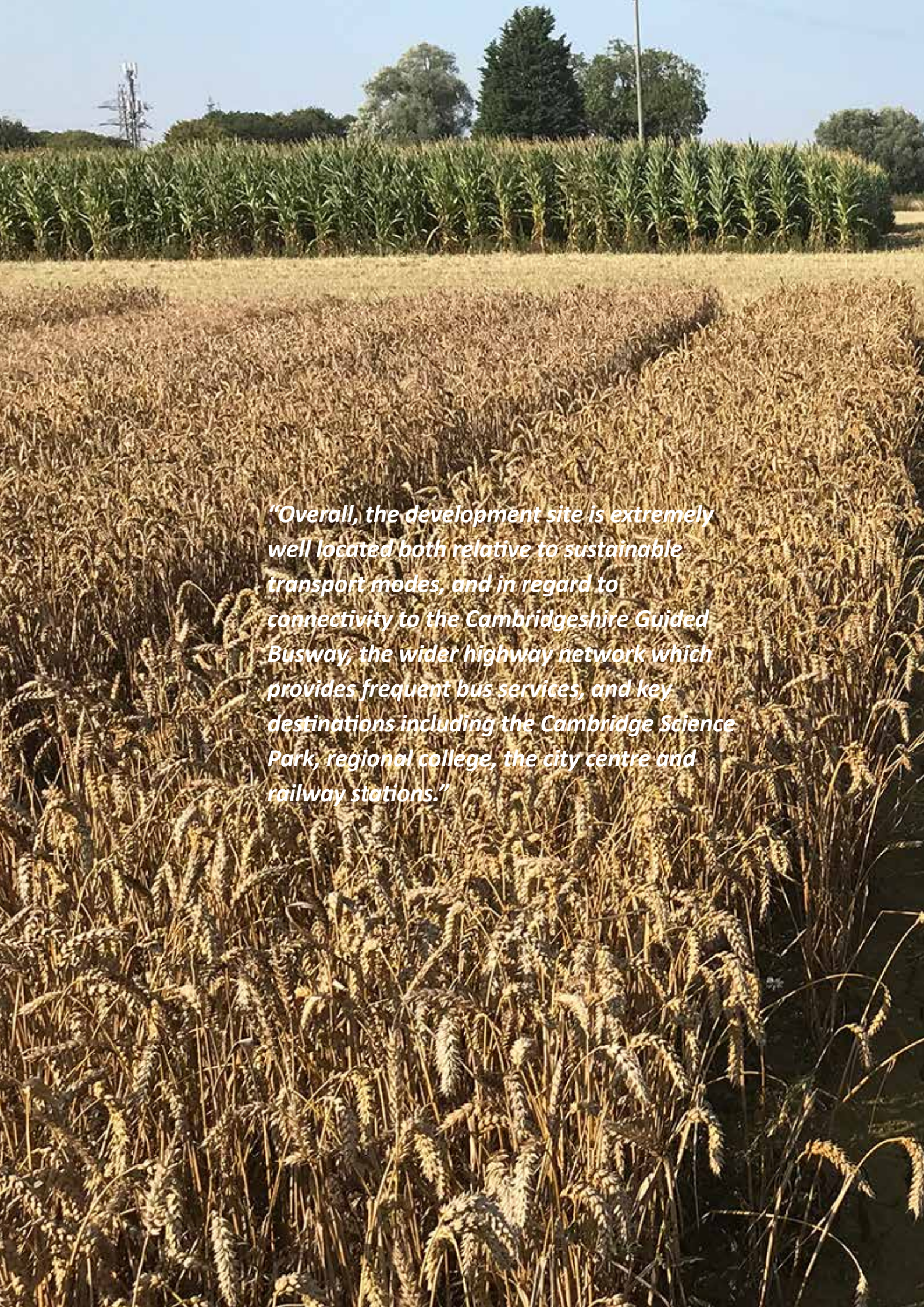
Foreword

The Site's allocation would deliver much needed homes, including affordable homes, and open space for the villages of Impington and Histon and would introduce a contextually considered, well-connected and sustainable urban extension at the local scale to complement the reliance on fewer and larger strategic Site allocations.

Sustainable development at land South of Villa Road, Impington responds to the locally defined Cambridge Green Belt purposes. The development would not constitute unrestricted sprawl and would not lead to Histon and Impington, Girton or Cambridge merging into one another. Similarly, opportunities to redevelop Sites within Histon and Impington would not be compromised by the allocation of this Site. The development would provide an opportunity to integrate the Site and the existing edge of the settlement with planting that softens and partially screens views to proposed and existing buildings, avoiding an abrupt edge but allowing glimpses of built form to maintain a settled rural character.

We appreciate your time in reviewing this document and hope that the illustrative design proposals and key issues enclosed will be considered in detail.

Cirrus Impington Ltd
October 2021



“Overall, the development site is extremely well located both relative to sustainable transport modes, and in regard to connectivity to the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, the wider highway network which provides frequent bus services, and key destinations including the Cambridge Science Park, regional college, the city centre and railway stations.”



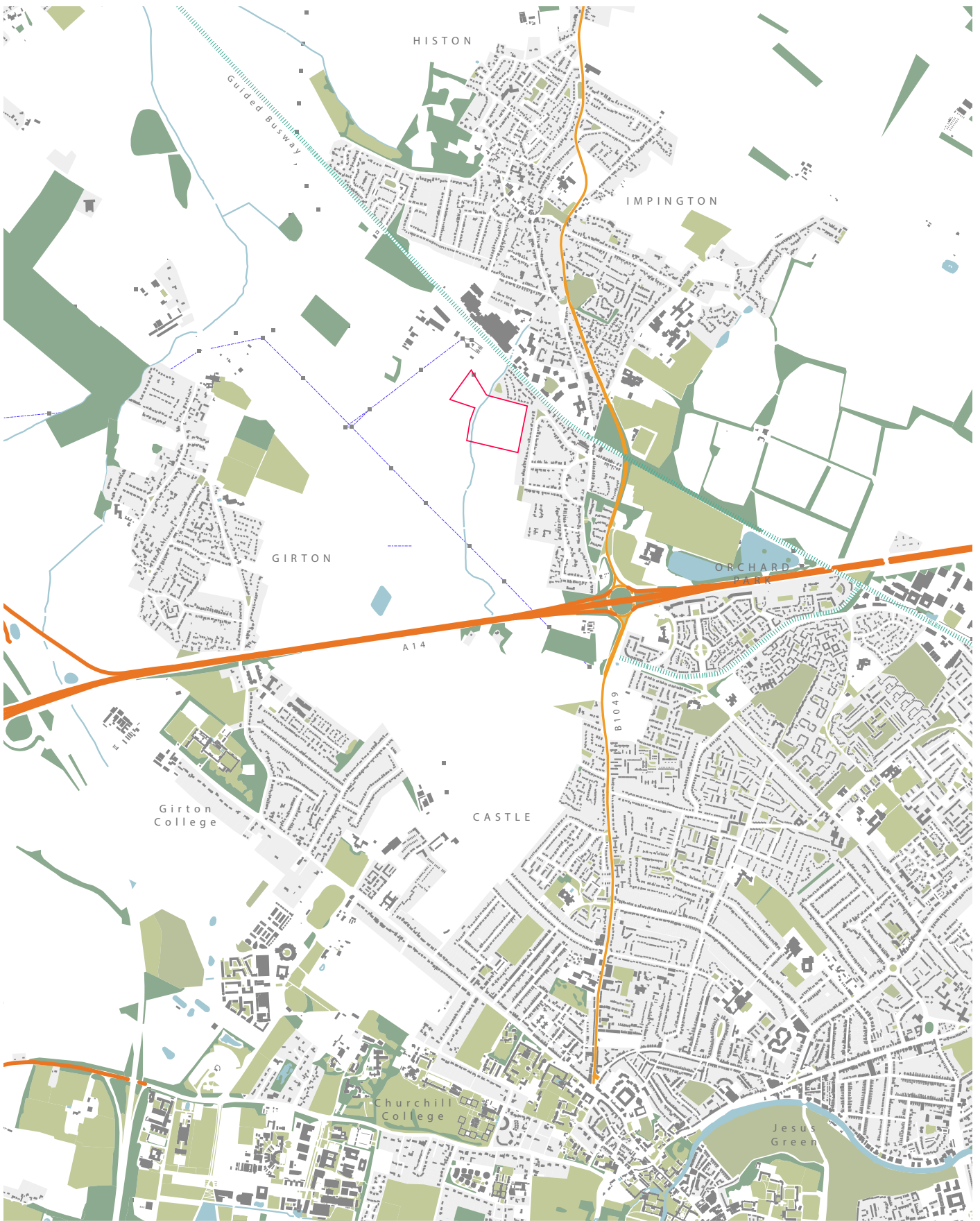


Existing aerial photograph



Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION	11
2.0	ASSESSMENT	13
2.1	Wider context	13
2.2	Townscape character	15
2.3	Urban evolution	19
2.4	Site context	21
2.5	Landscape character	25
2.6	Planning context	29
3.0	CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES	31
3.1	Heritage	31
3.2	Utilities	31
3.3	Topography	33
3.4	Flooding	33
3.5	Ecology	35
3.6	Accessibility	37
4.0	DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS	39
4.1	The Vision	39
4.2	A Place Making Approach	39
4.3	Concept masterplan	41
4.4	Design principles	43
4.5	Landscape strategy	45
4.6	Ecology strategy	46
4.7	Histon-Impington Village Design Guide	46
4.8	Net Carbon Vision	47
4.9	Development capacity	47



Site wider context plan (Not to scale)



KEY



Site Boundary

1.0 Introduction



Net Carbon Vision

Cirrus Impington Ltd are committed to delivering low carbon sustainable development and have a proven track record. The delivery of new homes at the Site is embedded within a commitment to meeting the ambitious Net Zero Carbon policy targets in the Greater Cambridge Draft Local Plan.

By considering net zero principles from the outset of the project, sustainable energy principles are much more likely to be realised than being additional features that are added at a later date. This includes the 'No new gas' policy, which is expected to be introduced from 2025 onwards, consideration regarding the supply and access to energy for electric vehicles (EV) and incorporating renewables such as wind, solar and biomass into the energy solution that will help to reduce the carbon intensity of electricity used at the Site.

This document sets out illustrative concept masterplan proposals for residential development on Land South of Villa Road in the village of Impington on behalf of Cirrus Impington Ltd. It is anticipated that the 6.72 hectare site can deliver up to 120 dwellings including necessary drainage measures and open space.

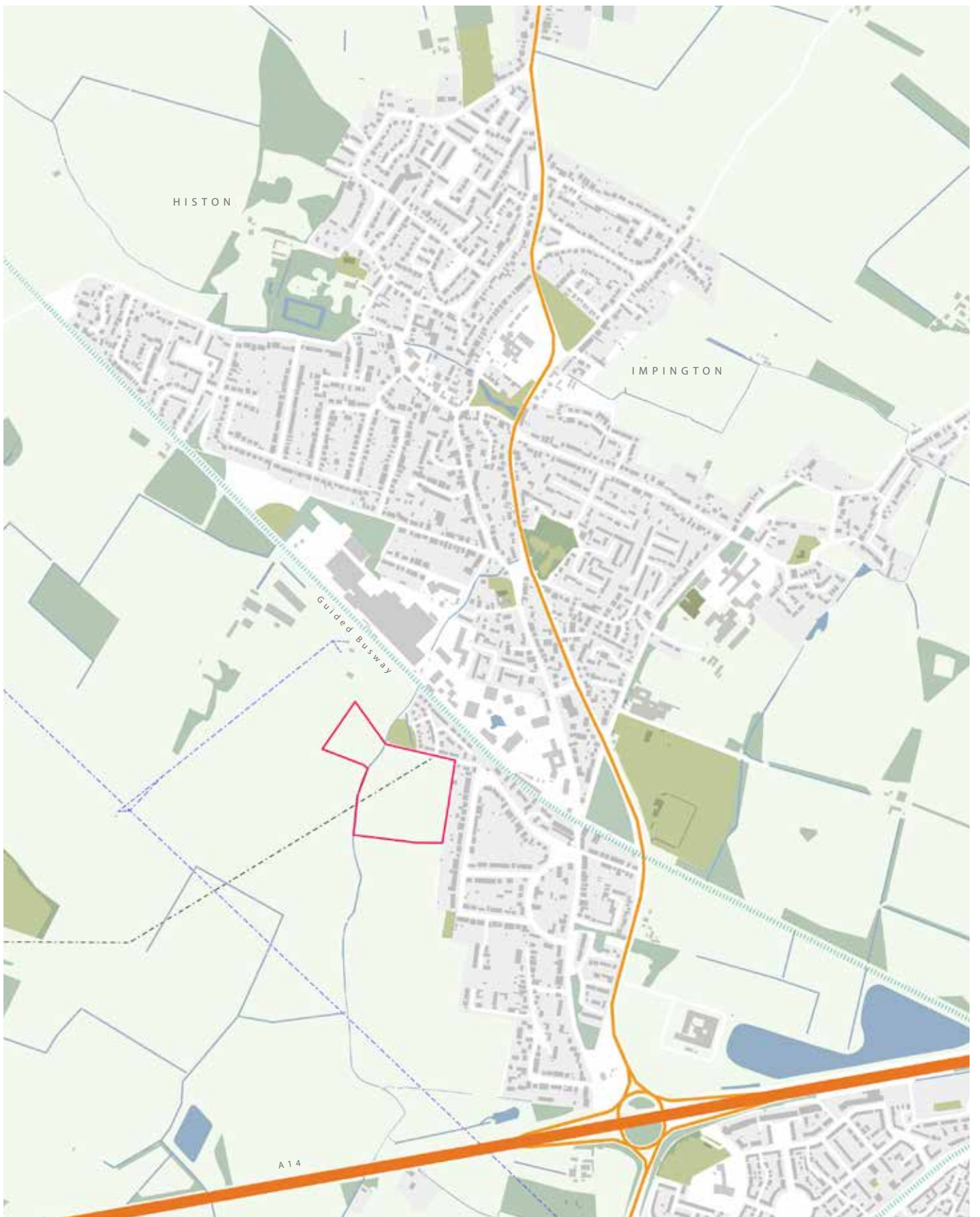
The document has been developed to support the proposed allocation for delivering housing growth in a sustainable and well-designed manner in response to the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan, which was prepared in May 2021.

This document provides an analysis of the proposed Site allocation and its context. The analysis undertaken has informed the design of the illustrative concept masterplan proposal in order to demonstrate both the capacity of the site and the manner in which development could be delivered. This process of design has taken into account the following:

- Sustainable movement modes and connectivity;
- The site's physical features and edge conditions;
- The landscape and Greenbelt setting;
- The local built surroundings;
- Nearby land uses;
- Recent development to the North of Villa Road;
- The settlement's urban evolution.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following surveys and reports:







- Pell Frischmann Impington Access Appraisal 230121;
- Create Consulting Engineers Summary Flood Risk and Drainage Matters Technical Note;
- Ecology Solutions Ecological Appraisal;
- LDA-Design Landscape Impact Assessment.



Site location plan (1.13500)



KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  2021 Impington and Histon Parish boundaries
-  Built form (Indicative)
-  Primary road
-  Secondary road
-  Cambridge Guided Busway / National Cycle Route 51

2.0 Assessment

2.1 Wider context



Impington and Histon Parish boundaries

The Site is located to the South-West of Impington and Histon villages and due to its geographical setting occupies land between the two settlements, approximately 4 miles North of Cambridge. Impington and Histon are classed as a 'Major Rural Centre' and form part of a network of villages that are enclosed by agricultural uses and Greenbelt designations in-between the outer edge of Cambridge City and other surrounding urban settlements including Peterborough, Huntingdon, St Ives and Bury St Edmunds.

Of great significance is the location of Impington and Histon to one another. Whilst originally separate villages, both settlements have evolved and now form one urban condition, often described as a single large village (as noted in the Histon and Impington Village Design Guide SPD). The villages mostly adjoin along the length of Bridge Road and Water Lane, which is interestingly characterised by historic structures and the backs of more recent development. Since 2012 they have been served by one administrative council.

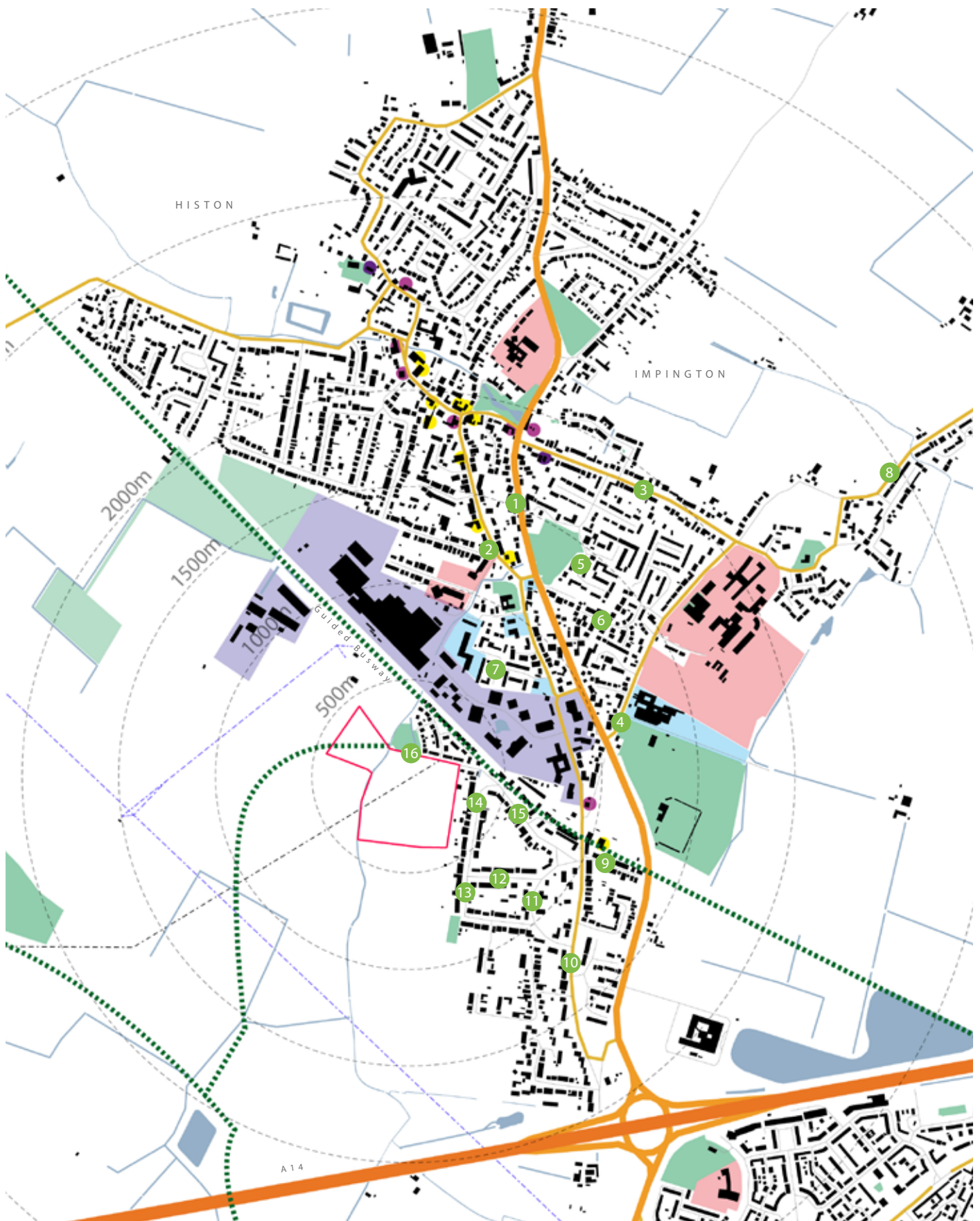


Figure ground plan (1.13500) - The numbers on the plan above relate to the Site photographs on pages 14-15.





Histon & Impington Village Design Guide village character areas

2.2 Townscape character

The wider townscape character of Impington and Histon is generally defined by mostly 19th and 20th Century two storey housing. To the East and South of Impington, urban development is mostly characterised by detached dwellings with deep gardens and mature trees which define the wider agricultural setting. To the North and West of Histon, the urban condition is generally more densely configured.

Both villages accommodate a number of existing facilities including Histon and Impington Brook Primary School, Impington Village College, a GP surgery, Care Home and local retail all within a twenty minutes walk of the Site. The Cambridgeshire Guided Busway is located within 450 metres / 6 minutes walk of the Site. Whilst the built form is mostly housing, land to the South of Histon is occupied by the Vision Business Park and light industrial uses which occupy land historically associated with the former railway. NIAB Innovation Farm occupies land to the West of the Site.

Impington and Histon benefit from extremely good transport links via the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (which occupies the former railway line that encloses the Southern edge of Histon), accommodating six bus movements an hour to Cambridge and St Ives. Both villages are structured by a number of primary and secondary vehicular thoroughfares providing good access to the surrounding area. The B1049 (Bridge Road, Water Lane and Glebe Way) serves both villages extending due South to the City of Cambridge and due North to the village of Cottenham and beyond. The villages are bisected East-West by Impington Lane (East) and Park Lane (West).

The Histon & Impington Village Design Guide identifies the villages as being of a 'varied character with many special places'. Surrounding development is described as being of 'Mixed Residential Character' to the North and as a 'Windmill 1930s Development' to the East.



Water Lane



Bridge Road |(North)



Impington Lane



New Road



Hereward Close



Henry Morris Road



Kay Hitch Way



Milton Road



Pepy's Terrace



Cambridge Road



The Crescent



College Road



South Road (South)



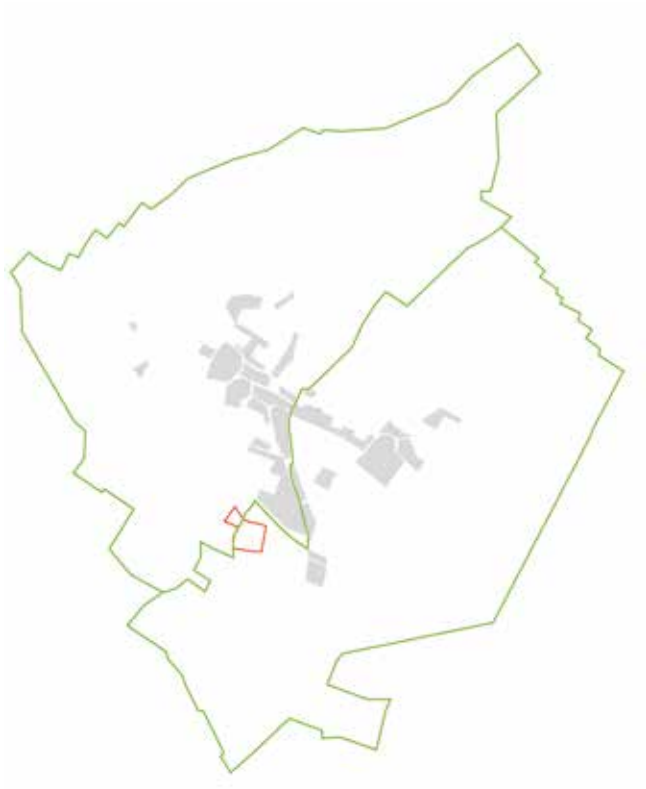
South Road (North)



Villa Road (South)



Villa Road (North)






19th Century



20th Century



KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Impington and Histon Parish boundaries
-  Impington and Histon urban form



21st Century

2.3 Urban evolution

Historic records show evidence of Iron Age, Saxon and Roman settlements at Impington and Histon. Numerous historic structures still stand including a number of Tudor buildings, the 17th century Histon Manor and 19th century Impington Windmill.

19th Century

Impington and Histon largely evolved along the strategic thoroughfares that bisect the villages and growth associated with the arrival of the railway, including along what is now the B1049 (Bridge Road, Water Lane and Glebe Way) that extends due North from Cambridge. Early Impington is characterised by many buildings of a similar age along New Road and Impington Lane that lead to St Andrew's Church, whilst early Histon extends from St Andrew's Church in the North along High Street, to the areas around The Green.

20th Century+







Due to the growth of local businesses including Unwins Seeds and Chivers Jams, Impington and Histon grew quickly, with housing in Impington being built to the East around woodland at Homefield Park and to the South adjacent to Impington Windmill. Histon similarly grew to the North, the demand for post-war housing being associated with the growth of Cambridge City, until both villages formed one wider urban area.



Site location plan (1:6000) - The numbers on the plan above relate to the Site photographs on page 20-21.



KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Green Belt (2018)
-  Impington Centre of Community
-  Cambridgeshire Guided Busway / National Cycle Route 51
-  Cambridgeshire Guided Busway bus stop
-  The location of site photographs on page 20-21



800m local centre radius
(Impington and Histon Neighbourhood Plan)

2.4 Site context

The Site totals 6.72 hectares and is located along the south-western edge of the existing urban area fronting Greenbelt and open farmland. To the East, a 1930's residential neighbourhood forms the southern boundary to Impington. To the North, the Site's edge condition is enclosed by the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway beyond which the Vision Business Park and light industrial uses characterise the southern edge of Histon.

The Site is well contained and is framed by a number of different conditions. To the North, recently built housing fronts onto Villa Road, to the East residential properties dating from the 1930's with generous gardens back onto the Site, an historic field boundary defines the Southern edge and a drainage ditch envelops the Western boundary. Whilst the primary Site is geometrical in composition, land to the West of the drain is smaller and constrained by field boundaries and hedge rows including the orientation of Villa Road to the North, which extends to NIAB Innovation Farm in the West.

Being within close proximity (450 metres / 6 minutes walk) to Cambridgeshire Guided Busway the Site is very well-located to provide a high-quality and sustainable community with services providing up to six bus movements an hour to Cambridge and St Ives.

The Site photographs on pages 20-21 show the relationship of the Site to the surrounding edges, enveloping landscape condition and built context of Impington and Histon.



View West - Hedgerow and scrub along the Northern boundary



View East - Hedgerows along the Northern boundary



View West - The Site narrows in response to field boundaries



View East - Recent development fronting Villa Road



View North - Looking along the alignment of the existing drainage



View East - Existing development and listed Windmill



View South - Two storey brick structure and utilities infrastructure



View South - Boundaries characterised by dense hedge rows



View South - The boundary is defined by mature hedge rows



View North - A mature tree (TPO) and Villa Road beyond



View North-West - Dense tree coverage and development beyond



View North-West - Dense tree coverage gives way to views of the open countryside to the West



Site location plan (1:6000) - The Site photographs on p24-25 are selected views from the LDA-Design Landscape Impact Appraisal



KEY



Site Boundary

2.5 Landscape character

The Site is within the Green Belt and is characterised by two principal areas. The larger (eastern) parcel comprises of an arable field with a small stretch of scrub-land with orchard characteristics at its northern edge. The smaller (western) parcel adjoins the larger field at its north-western corner, separated by a watercourse. The land is characterised by grassland, scrub and groups of trees, bounded on its eastern edge by a hedgerow. The northern boundary is defined by Villa Road which leads to a NIAB facility. The southern boundary is open, defined by a post and wire fence.

Vegetation cover within the wider landscape beyond the settlements is relatively limited due to the large-scale, open field system. However in closer proximity to the Site, blocks of woodland, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, shelter belts and small tree groups create a localised vegetation pattern near Histon, Impington and Girton. This gives the landscape a relatively contained character, particularly within the area of agricultural land immediately to the North-West of the site.

LDA-Design undertook a Landscape Appraisal, which included two separate assessments (see example Site photographs on pages 24-25). Firstly, a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Study was undertaken to determine the potential visibility of development. Secondly, the actual visibility of the Site taking account of localised vegetation and features was undertaken on-Site.

The ZTV for the proposed development shows that potential visibility is located within an area of land contained by the settlement edges of Histon, Impington, Girton and the northern edge of Cambridge. Potential visibility extends North-West to Oakington, beyond where visibility becomes increasingly fragmented to the North-East and North-West. Local site observations confirm that vegetation within the wider landscape would significantly reduce visibility of the proposed development.

In close proximity to the site, from the roads at the edge of Impington, such as Villa Road, views of proposed buildings would be possible, either across the hedgerow that bounds Villa Road, or between buildings along South Road. The structure of the development should complement the existing grain of the settlement, helping reduce visual impacts by congregating open space and retaining a relationship with the open countryside.

Within 1km of the Site to the West and North-West views of the Site towards Histon and Impington are screened by linear vegetation along the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway, field boundary vegetation and woodland blocks within the arable landscape, mature tree belts and hedgerow trees along Girton's eastern edge and vegetation along roadsides. From further afield to the North-West, the layering effect of vegetation within the landscape, in combination with Site levels, prevent views towards the Site.

To the South and South-West views are more open, where there is less field boundary vegetation between the A14 and the Site. To the North of the A14, there is more vegetation within the landscape, partially obstructing views to the Site. From Public Footpath 135/5 at the Northern edge of Cambridge glimpsed views of the proposals would be possible (although the baseline will change once land allocated for development is built). From these locations, the Site is visible in the context of houses at the south-western edge of Impington and larger buildings associated with the NIAB and employment to the North of the busway.

There is an opportunity to integrate the Site and the existing edge of the settlement with planting that softens and partially screens views to proposed and existing buildings, avoiding an abrupt edge but allowing glimpses of built form to maintain a settled rural character.

Houses off South Road, Impington



View looking South-East from within Site - Boundaries defined by mature trees and existing built form

Hedgerow marking southern boundary A14 signage



View looking South to Cambridge from within Site - Boundaries defined by mature hedgerows, water course and pylons

Wooded tree line along public drain

Play area associated with Primrose lane development



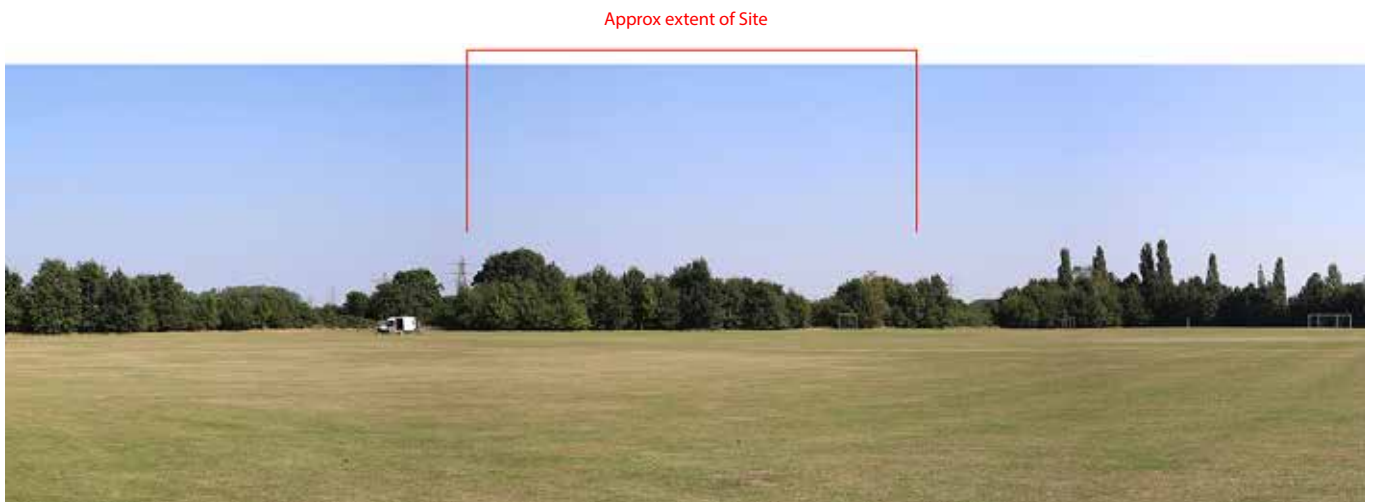
View looking East to Villa Road from northern Site boundary - Recent development and play area



View to Histon from Public Footpath 127/4 - Vegetation screens the Site including in the winter months



View to Histon from Public Footpath 127/4 connecting Histon to Girton - Hedge rows, trees and woodland block views of the Site



View from Girton Recreation Ground - Field boundaries of mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree belts prevent views of the Site

Impington is defined as a Rural Centre in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 in recognition of its good access to a secondary school, employment opportunities, a variety of services and facilities and good transport services to Cambridge. Despite this, only one allocation for 25 dwellings was made in Impington in the Local Plan 2018.

An application for development on part of the Site was submitted in December 2015 and withdrawn in March 2016 (planning reference S/2930/15/OL). Development has taken place within the last 10 years on the former Saica Premises to the North of Villa Road (planning reference S/0809/12/FL and others) and for two new dwellings South of Villa Road to the east (planning reference S/0241/16/FL and others).

The Site has previously been put forward by Kings Gate Management Company Ltd as part of the Call for Sites (Form ID: 40041) and as part of a potentially larger development also including land to the South (Form ID: 40239).

As part of a new blended housing strategy including developments of varying scales and a review of the existing Green Belt boundary, Impington provides a logical opportunity to help meet the housing need for the Greater Cambridge area in a sustainable location due to its existing good level of services, facilities and employment and good accessibility to/from Cambridge. Development on the Site would also deliver much needed affordable housing to help meet local needs.

2.6 Planning context

The eastern part of the Site has existing development on two sides, including Villa Road along its northern boundary. The Site is not within a conservation area. There are no listed buildings adjacent to the Site, with the nearest being to the South-East at the junction of High Street and Cambridge Road. Whilst the site is shown as partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3 on the Flood Map for Planning, the submitted 'Summary of Flood Risk and Drainage Matters – Technical Note 5 July 2021' demonstrates that by and large the Site remains unimpacted by fluvial flood events with updated allowances for climate change. The Site lies within the Green Belt.

The Green Belt serves five purposes:

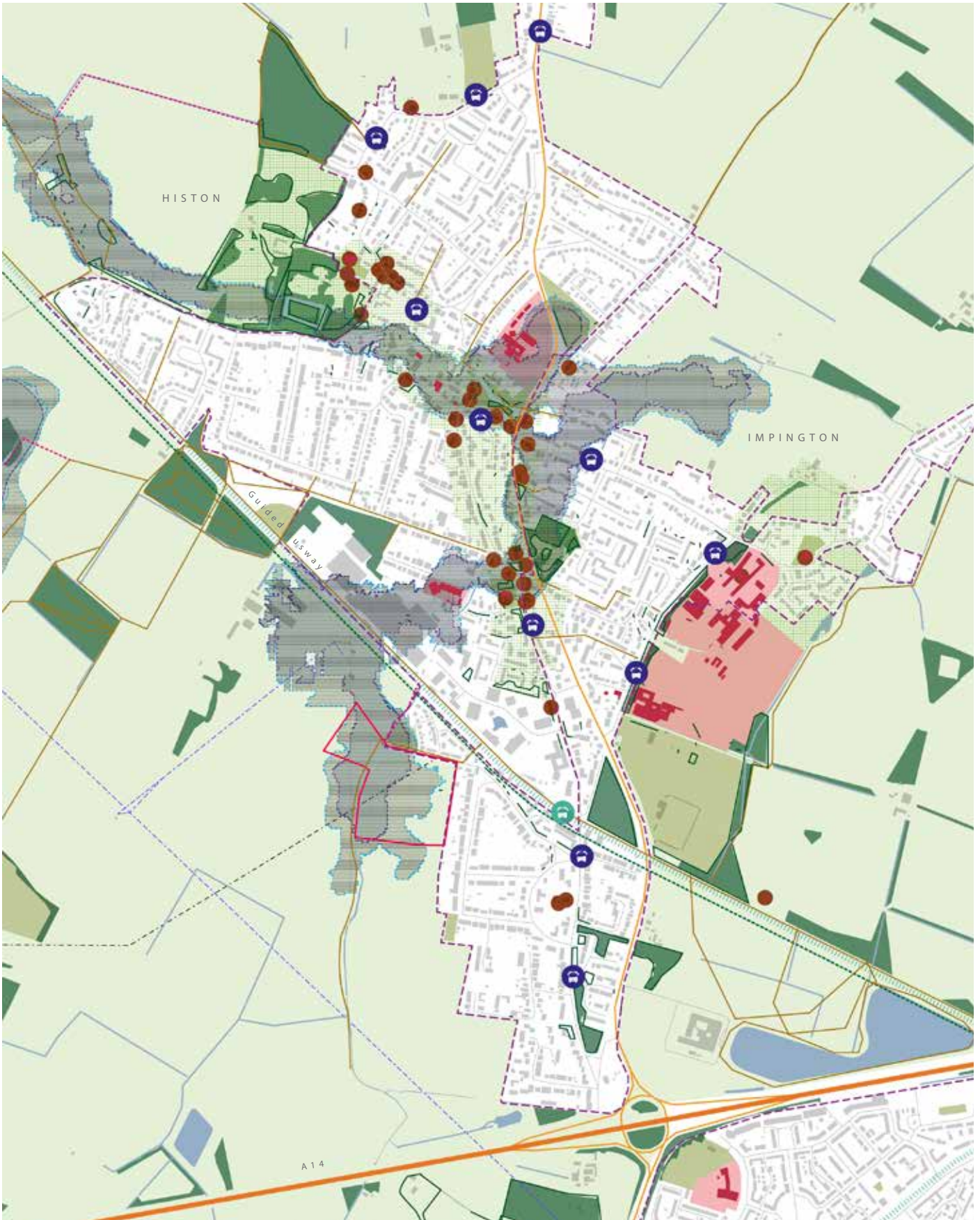
- a. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Locally defined Cambridge Green Belt purposes are set out in paragraph 2.30 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018:

- 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.






















In considering this Site in relation to these purposes, development of this Site would result in “encroachment” into the countryside (i.e. beyond the existing village boundary as identified in the 2018 Local Plan) but the development provides an opportunity to integrate the site and the existing edge of the settlement with planting that softens and partially screens views to proposed and existing buildings, avoiding an abrupt edge but allowing glimpses of built form to maintain a settled rural character. It would not constitute unrestricted sprawl and would not lead to Histon and Impington, Girton or Cambridge merging into one another. Opportunities to redevelop Sites within Histon and Impington would not be compromised by allocation of this Site.

LDA-Design has assessed the site in relation to the locally defined purposes and concluded that: the development would not be relevant to the compactness of Cambridge and the Site's contribution to this purpose is only limited (rather than moderate as concluded in the Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment 2021 (GCGBA); the Site makes only a relatively limited contribution to maintaining and enhancing the quality of its setting (as concluded in the GCGBA); and it only has a relatively limited contribution in preventing communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city (rather than the relatively significant contribution concluded in the GCGBA).



Constraints and Opportunities plan - Macro setting (1:13500)



KEY	
	Site Boundary
	Buildings
	Green Belt
	Woodland
	Public Parks
	Conservation Area
	TPO on site
	Water Bodies
	Relevant buildings
	Functional site
	Listed Buildings
	Development Framework
	Above ground utility corridor
	Primary road
	Secondary road
	Local road
	Busway line
	Footpaths
	Cambridgeshire Guided Busway / National Cycle Route 51
	Cambridgeshire Guided Busway bus stop
	Bus stop

03 Constraints and opportunities

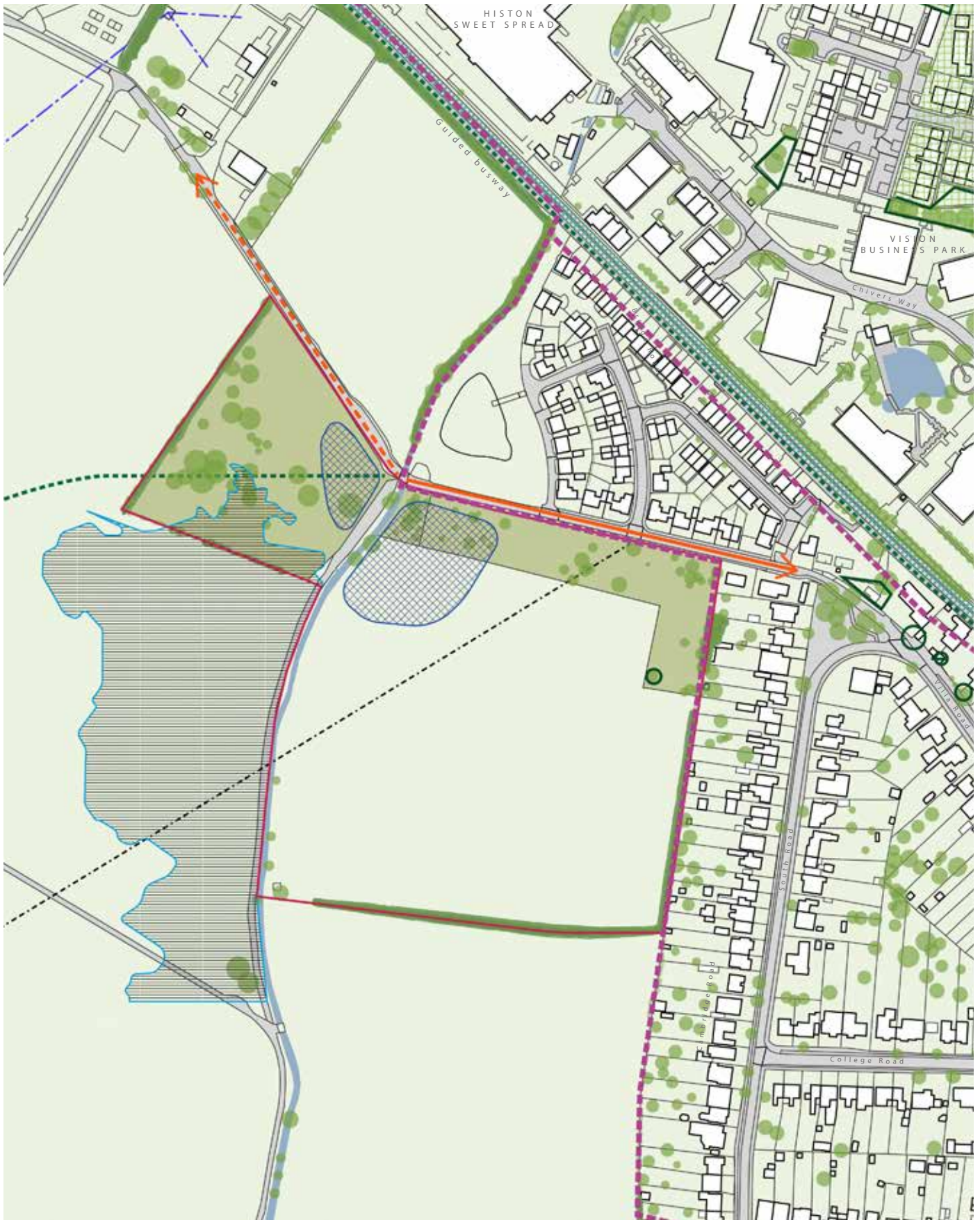
The Site is currently in agricultural use and within close proximity to local designations. These include the enveloping Green Belt, Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge Science Park, regional colleges and railway stations. At the local scale, the Site is located immediately to the South and West of the existing Development Framework boundary and in terms of movement and urban form would become a sustainable and natural extension to the existing village settlements of Impington and Histon village .

3.1 Heritage

There are no historic assets on the Site, however, there are a number of sensitive local historic designations. These include the Impington and Histon Conservation Area to the North of Cambridge Guided Busway, Impington Windmill to the East and other listed structures in located nearby in Impington and Histon.

3.2 Utilities

The Site is traversed by a low scale above ground utility corridor, which it is anticipated would be relocated below ground.



Constraints plan (1:3000)



KEY	
	Red Line
	Buildings
	Green Belt
	Natural environment area
	Hedgerow
	Tree
	TPO on site
	Conservation areas
	Proposed attenuation ponds
	Extent of flood zone
	Development framework
	Cambridgeshire Guided Busway / National Cycle Route 51
	Cycle routes
	Power line
	Telephone line
	Villa Road public access
	Villa Road Restricted access

3.3 Topography

The Site is mostly flat (c11m AOD) but varies from 13.4m AOD to c9.7m AOD either side of the existing drain.

3.4 Flooding

Flood modelling has been undertaken to better classify both the fluvial and surface water flood risks posed to the site. A fluvial flood model has shown that the site remains largely unimpacted by fluvial flood events with updated allowances for climate change. The modelled outputs show the eastern part of the site remains fully within Flood Zone 1 whilst a small part of the western side of the site is within Flood Zone 3.

The Lead Local Flood Authority have been consulted. They accept this modelling as a proxy for the surface water flood extents which severely impact the site. This has been confirmed due to the nature of the catchment being best represented by the above modelling study as opposed to the surface water flood modelling methodology and particularly because this broad scale modelling does not take into account the culverts to the North of the Site.

With regards to surface water drainage it is proposed the Site will drain wholly via controlled outfall to the above watercourse (with attenuation features placed beyond the flood zone), therefore flows in the local drainage network will not be significantly affected as runoff will be restricted to as near to greenfield runoff rates as practicable. Indicative attenuation basin sizes and locations have been provided to demonstrate required land take. Foul drainage in the local area has been assessed and connections appear to be available in close proximity to the Site.



Ecological features and landscape analysis plan (1:3000)



3.5 Ecology

Further surveys required at the next design stage:

- Reptile presence / absence;
- Amphibian eDNA;
- Water Vole and Otter;
- Bat emergence / re-entry and activity;
- Breeding farmland bird species.

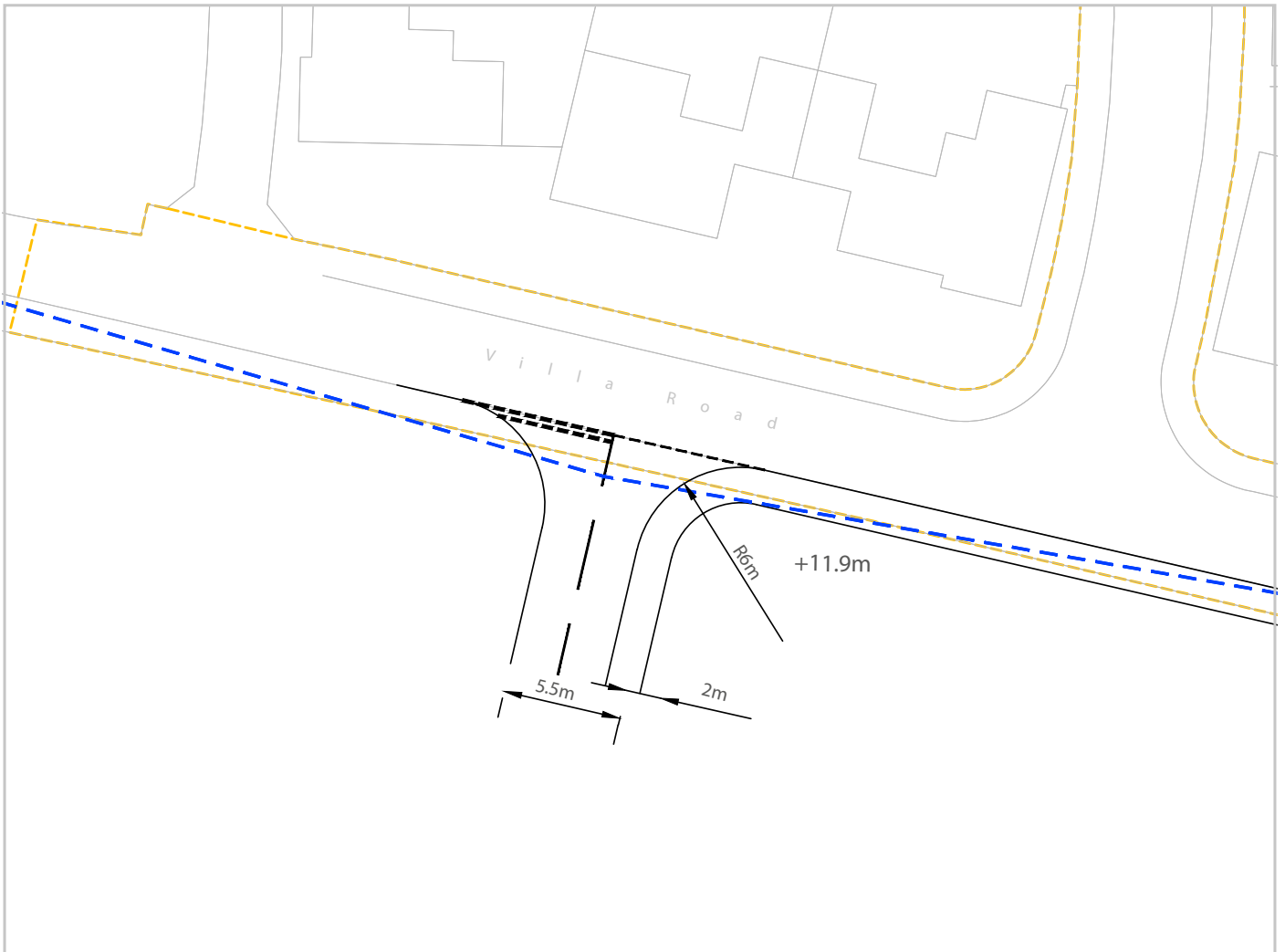
KEY	
	Red Line
	Buildings
	Green Belt
	Arable
	Public drain / Water course
	Public drain / Water course verge
	Mature hedgerow
	Modified grassland
	Scrub
	Rough grassland
	Existing play area
	Trees
	Bat potential tree
	Badger sett
	Potential badger sett
	Cambridgeshire Guided Busway
	National Cycle Route
	Existing dwellings strong frontage
	Existing dwellings backing onto Site

Ecology Solutions undertook an extended Phase 1 habitat survey in August 2021. While some habitats, such as the hedgerows and trees, are of heightened interest within the context of the site, the majority of habitats are of low intrinsic value. Subject to appropriate mitigation, there is not considered to be any insurmountable ecological reasons the site could not come forward for development, though further surveys are recommended to assess full ecological impacts. There is significant scope within the site to ensure that ecological enhancements can be achieved and that local and national biodiversity targets are accomplished.

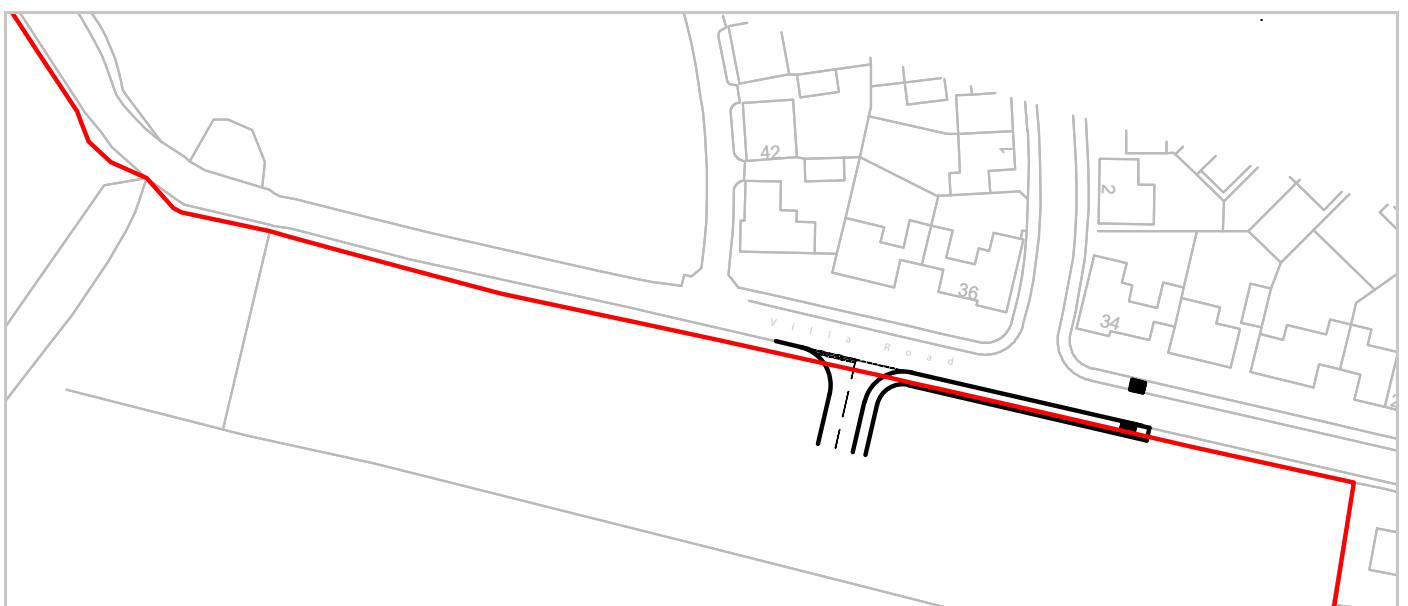
The Northern boundary was identified as being of high reptile suitability including mixed tall grassland and scrub in the North-West. At the North-eastern and South-western corners potential badger sett entrances were identified whilst an Ash tree located in the North-West corner showed medium potential for roosting bats. Hedgerows and scrub surrounding the boundaries provide suitable habitats for foraging and dispersing bats, and for nesting birds whilst the arable land may offer nesting bird potential for Skylarks, although none were recorded. Given the habitats present it is likely an assemblage of common invertebrate species is present. Grassland and scrub are likely to be of great interest to hedgehogs.

The drainage channel along the Western boundary was notable for a number of species including a potential badger sett along the Western bank but showed limited potential for amphibians such as Great Crested Newts. No evidence of Otters were recorded but a potential entrance to a Water Vole burrow was found along the western bank. The ditch is also likely to be of some interest for foraging and dispersing bats.

The two storey brick structure located at the South-West corner of the Site accommodated various findings including the presence of an active badger sett and medium potential for roosting bats.







Pell Frischmann indicative Villa Road site access junction design (Not to scale)



Pell Frischmann indicative access junction location plan (Not to scale)



- KEY
-  Red Line
 -  Buildings
 -  2.4m x 43m Visibility Splay (MfS)
 -  Indicative Extent of Adopted Highway

3.6 Accessibility

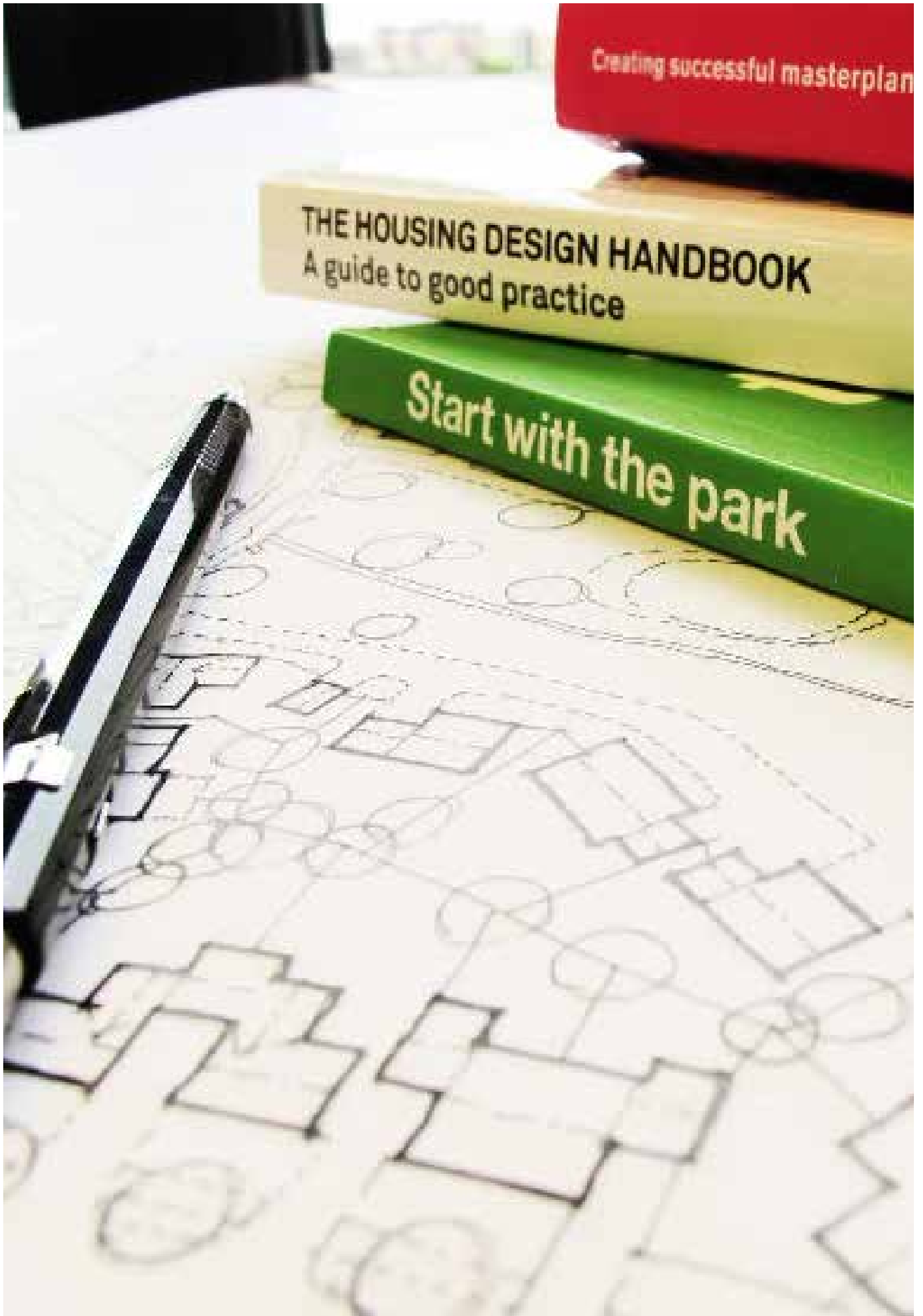
Pell Frischmann have undertaken an Initial Access Appraisal for the Site to provide an appraisal in terms of future access options and potential off-site highways implications.

Overall, the development Site is extremely well located relative to sustainable transport modes, and in regard to connectivity to the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway (450 metres / 6 minutes walk), the wider highway network which provides frequent bus services, and key destinations included the Cambridge Science Park, regional college, the city centre and railway stations.

Cambridge County Council places a heavy emphasis on sustainable travel choice and particularly active travel and the site aligns perfectly with this. As such it would be possible to justify a very low vehicle trip rate from the site, the principle of which the county has accepted elsewhere.

The Site has sufficient frontage onto Villa Road to deliver an appropriate Site access junction, of which an indicative layout has been designed (see left) in accordance with the guidance provided within the Cambridgeshire Design Guide (2021) and Manual for Streets (MfS) (2007), particularly with regards to carriageway widths, kerb radii and visibility requirements. The suitability of Villa Road for residential development has been established with the construction of the scheme to the North.

There are no Public Rights of Way within the site. Public routes are located to the North of the site, connecting Histon and Girton; and National Cycle Route 51 is located along the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway.



04 Development proposals

4.1 The Vision

Key aspirations

- Delivering best practice in development which is responsive to the environmental constraints, including the existing mature vegetation;
- Quality homes for a wide range of local needs, space to live and play, good access to facilities, public transport and a place people can be proud of.
- Positive identity to ensure that the new development responds to the site and contextual opportunities, so fully integrating with its surroundings and defining new spaces;
- Viable and sustainable place, which is deliverable and contributes in a positive way to the long term economic viability of the area;
- A connected place which links and integrates with the existing community of Impington and Histon;
- A welcoming place which helps to foster a strong scene of place and community.

The vision is to create a sustainable new living environment, with new homes, including affordable housing, that are accessible to everyone, an inclusive place which makes everyone feel comfortable, safe and secure, a place where people want to live, which promotes an active lifestyle and sense of well-being. The proposals will provide ready access to existing public open space and the wider countryside. It will deliver a wide range of choice of new, sustainable, high quality housing, including affordable housing.

The proposed development will deliver a high standard of housing design irrespective of price or tenure. The scheme will focus on establishing a strong sense of community.

4.2 A place making approach

A place making approach has been adopted to ensure that the development responds positively to the context and opportunities of the surrounding area and the site. Building on this, a strong vision has been developed which brings new site-specific ideas into play, as well as drawing on best practice. The concept is driven by the objective of creating a strong sense of place and community, fully integrated and linked into the immediate surroundings and the villages of Impington and Histon.



Illustrative concept masterplan in the context of the Impington village setting (1.3000)



4.3 Concept masterplan

An illustrative concept masterplan has been prepared to demonstrate how a high quality development could be delivered on Land to the South of Villa Road. The design of the masterplan has been informed by the site’s existing landscape setting, field boundary geometries and the urban grain of adjacent existing development. The proposals respond to technical surveys and Site appraisals, the principles of which are summarised on the following pages.

The illustrative concept masterplan demonstrates the capacity for up to 120 dwellings. The exact housing total is dependent on policy, unit mix, market sensitivities, specific house types and parking ratios, and further technical assessments regarding design, layout and drainage to the West of the Site.



A LANDSCAPE INFORMED MASTERPLAN SOUTH OF IMPINGTON





Illustrative concept masterplan (1.3000)





4.4 Design principles

The illustrative concept masterplan can be summarised by the following design principles (see plan opposite):

- Site access is from a new junction on Villa Road;
- The urban structure is characterised by a gently curving street, which envelops the proposed drainage ponds and extends the geometries established to the North;
- East-West streets are characterised by a more formal rectilinear structure informed by existing field boundaries and existing urban structure to the East;
- Private drives extend into the edges of the development facilitating views to open countryside and open space;
- The primary street network accommodates a movement circuit around the development creating a permeable connective framework;
- East-west streets accommodate SuDs drainage corridors that allow surface water to flow to the existing water course along the western boundary;
- Development is of a denser character to the North becoming more informal around the edges;
- The collective quantum of development replicates the informality of urban form and gardens that undulate along the western edge of Impington (See diagram);
- All proposed streets and edge conditions are fronted onto by proposed dwellings;
- A pedestrian and bicycle circuit extends into open space along the western and southern edges;
- Land to the West of the water course has been retained as open space and will be planted with trees and orchards replicating historic vegetation;
- A village green characterises the southern end of the primary North-South street;
- Development fronts on to Villa Road in the North and the southern and western edges. Dwellings back on to the eastern boundary replicating the existing setting;
- Parking is accommodated in garages or parking barns;
- The SuDs ponds to the North-West are indicative and subject to further testing at the next design stage.



The Site will sensitively replicate the informal edge condition



Landscape strategy plan (1:3000)





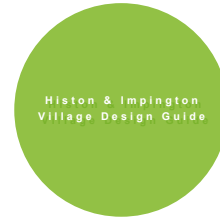
4.5 Landscape strategy

In considering the locally defined Green Belt purposes as set out in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 (see chapter 2.6 Planning context), development of the Site would not constitute unrestricted sprawl and would not lead to Histon and Impington, Girton or Cambridge merging into one another. Sites within Histon and Impington would not be compromised by the allocation of this Site. Development would provide an opportunity to integrate the Site and the existing edge with planting that softens and partially screens views, avoiding an abrupt edge and allowing glimpses of built form to maintain a settled rural character.

KEY	
	Red Line
	Buildings
	Proposed open space
	Green space for habitat creation / community orchard
	Proposed attenuation ponds
	Open space cluster (Wildlife / community benefits)
	Proposed tree planting (Incl 10m buffer from water course)
	Existing hedgerow to be retained
	Defensible edge (water course and associated trees)
	Proposed hedgerows
	Existing dwelling backing onto Site
	Existing dwellings strong frontage
	Proposed frontage
	SUDs feature / Swales
	Potential pedestrian link
	Potential play area

The landscape strategy for the illustrative concept masterplan prepared by LDA-Design includes the following key principles:

- Establish an urban structure that reflects the rectilinear field pattern and nearby street pattern (to the East) by providing a grid structure within the development;
- Ensure that the first dwellings facing the road extends no further westwards than the existing development;
- At the Site's North-West corner, an area of public open space should be established creating an arrival space at the edge of South-West Impington;
- East-West streets should accommodate SuDS corridors;
- Enhance the water course with planting to emphasise its role as the defensible boundary to the site;
- Provide informal footpaths along the waterfront as identified in Histon and Impington Village Design Guide;
- Plant hedgerows along the northern and southern boundaries, mitigating for the likely loss of hedgerow along Villa Road;
- The planting of a community garden on land to the West of the water course would reintroduce historic Site characteristics;
- The westernmost parcel's location beyond the water course separates it from the settlement edge and as a result it should remain free of buildings;



4.6 Ecology Strategy

The design of the illustrative concept masterplan will respond to the following aspirations as identified in the Ecology Solutions Ecological Appraisal:

- Provide a biodiversity net gain;
- Introduce a diverse selection of native plant species offering new foraging and nesting opportunities;
- Retain linear features along the boundary of the site with new planting bolstering the green infrastructure;
- Create species rich habitats, such as wild flower meadows and native scrub, which offer new opportunities for bats;
- Provide bat boxes against suitable trees or buildings to increase opportunities for new roosting;
- Provide new wild flower meadows, grassland, scrub and hedgerow planting to promote new habitats for Hedgehogs;
- Retain existing hedgerows and trees as part of the new proposal for the interest of bird species;
- Provide bird boxes against suitable trees or buildings to increase new nesting opportunities and provide ecological gains.

4.7 Histon and Impington Village Design Guide

The illustrative concept masterplan responds to key guidance set out in the Histon-Impington Village Design Guide:

- To provide development of a contextually appropriate scale, density and grain;
- To provide and maintain existing views of the countryside and to not 'round off' the village;
- Provide a strong landscape framework (tall trees, hedgerows, shrubs etc);
- Respect and respond to the history and historic references of the area;
- Maintain 'soft edges' that interface and interact with the countryside;
- Provide open views across the site into the countryside and its landmarks;
- Extend the network of pedestrian and bicycle routes connecting to the village and existing facilities;
- Provide new green space to reinforce the woodland character of the valued green space in the village;
- Provide contextually appropriate 2 storey development with local features, materials and detailing;
- Provide parking with minimal impact and screened by rich landscape;
- Provide an urban form and northern building line that reflect the existing context along Villa Road;
- Provide an urban structure that responds to the field boundaries and nearby streets.



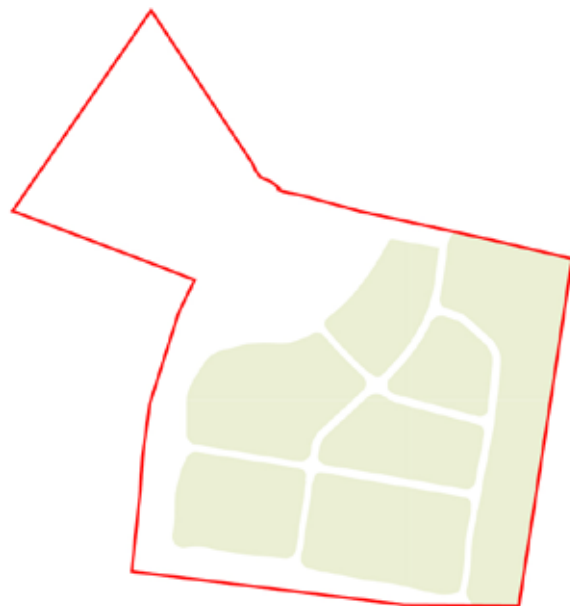
4.8 Net Carbon Vision

By considering net zero principles from the outset of the project, sustainable energy principles are much more likely to be embedded through the core of the project rather than being additional features that are added at a later date. This includes the 'No new gas' policy, which is expected to be introduced from 2025 onwards, consideration regarding the supply and access to energy for electric vehicles (EV) and Incorporating renewables such as wind, solar and biomass into the energy solution that will help to reduce the carbon intensity of electricity used at the Site.

The delivery of new homes at the Site is embedded within a commitment to meet the ambitious Net Zero Carbon policy targets in the Greater Cambridge Draft Local Plan.

4.9 Development capacity

Based on the illustrative concept masterplan, a development capacity plan has been produced that shows the area of developable parcels and associated number of proposed dwellings:



Site Area (ha)	6.72
Total Development Area (ha)	3.5
Development Coverage	52%
Total Units (@30-35dph)	Up to 120

