

Greater Cambridge Local Plan – Preferred Options 2021
Land at Papworth, Parcel A and B
Varrier Jones Foundation, Cambridge
December 2021

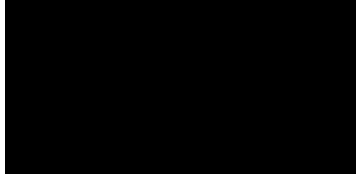


**LAND AT PAPWORTH
GREATER CAMBRIDGE
LOCAL PLAN -
PREFERRED OPTIONS
CONSULTATION 2021**

Quality Assurance

Site name: Land west of Papworth Everard
Client name: Varrier Jones Foundation and Papworth Trust, Cambridge
Type of report: Greater Cambridge Local Plan – Preferred Options Consultation 2021

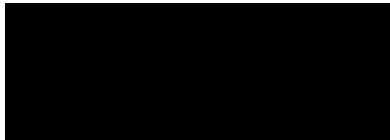
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Signed

Date December 2021

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Signed

Date December 2021

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	The proposed sites	2
3.0	Spatial Strategy	3
	Policy S/DS: Development strategy	3
	Policy S/RRA: Site Allocations in the Rest of the Rural Area	5
4.0	HELAA Proforma - Site Reference: 40428	7
	Adopted Development Plan Policies	7
	Flood Risk	7
	Landscape and Townscape	8
5.0	Highway Access	10
6.0	Conclusion	10

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 These representations have been prepared by Bidwells on behalf of the Varrier Jones Foundation, Cambridge (hereafter ‘VJF’) in response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Preferred Options, “First Proposals” 2021 consultation.
- 1.2 These representations add to those previously submitted in respect of land at the VJF estate, Papworth for land along the western edge of the village between the existing built form and A1198 by-pass (hereafter “the site”) to the 2019 Call for Sites and 2020 Issues & Options consultations.
- 1.3 These representations promote the site for residential development through the Preferred Options consultation for a landscape-led development options and seeks to give further certainty on the deliverability of the site. They also provide further clarification on technical points addressed in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) proforma and respond to the following proposed policies in the Preferred Options consultation document:
- Policy S/DS: Development Strategy; and
 - Policy S/RRA: Site Allocations in the Rest of the Rural Area.
- 1.4 The representations build on technical evidence supplied as part of the 2019 Issues and Options consultation and are accompanied by the following documents:
- Vision and Delivery Study which responds to technical points in the HELAA proforma (produced by Bidwells Urban Design Studio);
 - Village Assessment Addendum (produced by Bidwells); and
 - Updated Highways and access assessment (produced by EAS).

2.0 The proposed sites

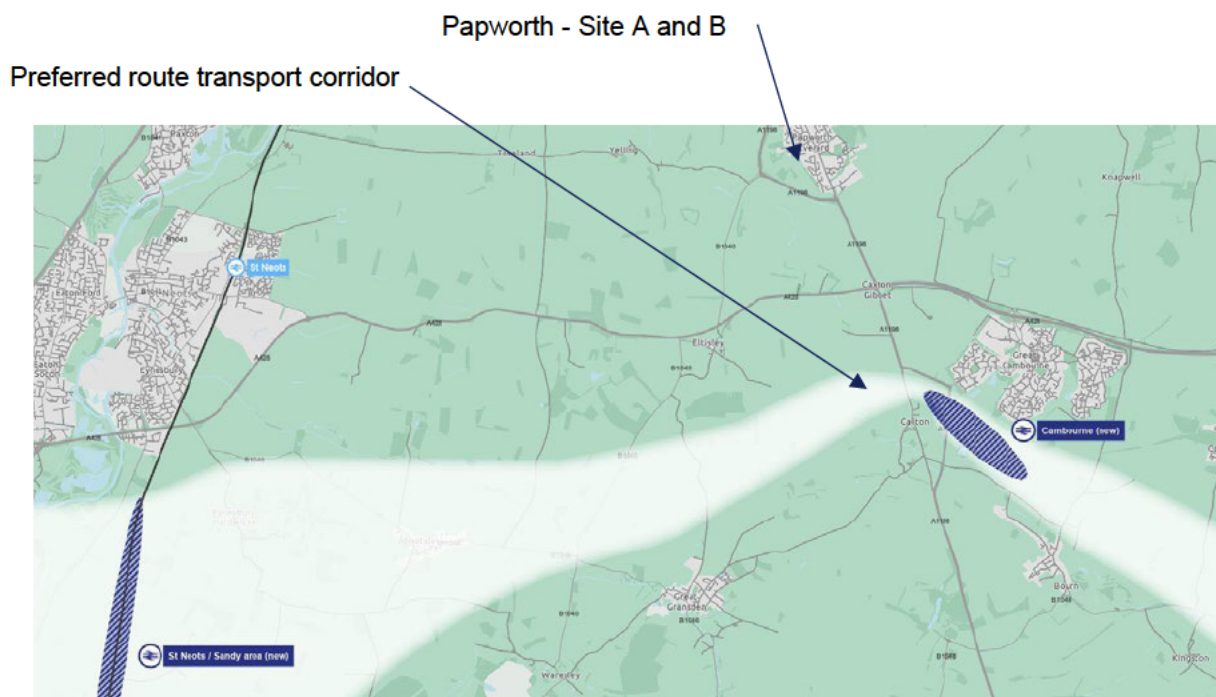
- 2.1 VJF is submitting three parcels of land at Papworth for consideration as site allocations in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan preferred options 2021. This representation addresses two of those sites, being:
- **Site A** – Site A is located to the west of the existing settlement of Papworth Everard and is enclosed to the west by the A1198 Papworth Everard bypass and to the east by the existing Papworth Everard village boundary. There is a brook that runs along the northern half of boundary between the site and Papworth Everard and then bisects the southern site half. The site is proposed for a landscape-led residential development of between 301-452 homes.
 - **Site B** – located on the north-western side of the village, the site comprises an area of scrub and grassland with some broad-leaved plantation woodland. The site is proposed as potential land for a primary school expansion or for community use.
- 2.2 Site A is considered suitable for a landscape-led residential development of between 302-452 dwellings, based on a detailed assessment of the context of the site. There is a range to the number of homes that could be delivered at this stage as it requires stakeholder engagement and statutory consultees involvement to shape the proposal and what scale of benefits are preferred. The site is located along the western side of the village and is enclosed by the A1198 bypass which acts as a defensible boundary and forms an enclosed parcel of land that can now have a planned and designed purpose put to it. Access to the western site can be achieved either via an access point already demarcated at the bypass roundabout between the A1198 and the B1040, or from Ermine Street South, as shown in the updated enclosed Transport Appraisal prepared by EAS (which directly responds to the Transport related HELAA comments).
- 2.3 The site would include affordable housing, landscaping, and a variety of open space. Cycle and pedestrian links would be retained and improved as part of the proposed development. The master plan strategy proposes a landscape led development which provides a sensitive and contextually appropriate addition to Papworth, responding to the sites sensitive heritage and landscape constraints.
- 2.4 Site B is the north western parcel and is proposed as land with potential for a primary school expansion or for community use.
- 2.5 As a registered charity, VJF has a deep and intertwined legacy with the history of Papworth Everard (Papworth). A unique and large custodian in the village, VJF is able to approach development collaboratively and holistically, with the capacity to provide facilities and beneficial development for the community in targeted locations throughout the village. The Village Assessment submitted to the earlier rounds of the Local Plan seeks to inform a conversation about how a development could be beneficial for the village with targeted enhancements to those identified areas of the village that would benefit the most. This representation is accompanied by an Addendum to the main Village Assessment to highlight where contextual changes have taken place and earmark that an updated Village Assessment could be useful once the Census statistics become available in 2022, to ensure that development benefits remain to be targeted where they can have the most beneficial impact.

3.0 Spatial Strategy

Policy S/DS: Development strategy

- 3.1 VJF support the principle of the proposed development strategy for Greater Cambridge and the approach to directing development to locations where active and new public transport is available, where green infrastructure can be delivered alongside new development, and where jobs, services and facilities can be located near to where people live. This approach is consistent with the NPPF, which at paragraph 11.a) states that all plans should promote a sustainable form of development.
- 3.2 Significant transport investment is planned around Papworth, which will further support the proposed sustainable expansion of the village. Transport connections to Papworth are set out in more detail within the accompanying Transport Appraisals prepared by EAS. There are a number of strategic schemes coming forward which will improve mobility in the area and better connections with key service centres. Furthermore, bringing forward development in Papworth would act as a catalyst and a source of additional investment to further improve local infrastructure to connect Papworth to the south and increase the opportunities and likelihood for Papworth residents and workers to travel, at least in part, by sustainable modes of travel:
- The completion of the A14 re-alignment and improvement works;
 - The East-West rail preferred route has been announced which will link with Cambourne which is just 4km south of Papworth (see figure 1 below);
 - A428 Highways England improvement proposals which includes new footpath and cycleway connections at the Caxton Gibbet junction and the re-alignment of the junction to reduce congestion in the area and improve journey times along this key transport route;
 - The Greater Cambridge Partnership's Cambourne to Cambridge Transport project which will improve transport connections. As part of these proposals, the proposed Scotland Farm Park and Ride is currently the preferred option. Scheme completion is currently forecasted in 2024; and
 - The Combined Authority Mayor committing to enhanced bus provision to better connect villages.
- 3.3 The Cambridgeshire Long Term Transport Strategy 2011-2031 supports this and identifies the major infrastructure requirements that are needed to address existing problems and capacity constraints on Cambridgeshire's transport network, and the further infrastructure that is required to cater for the transport demand associated with planned growth. It includes the following schemes will improve the connectivity of Papworth Everard:
- Strategic and local cycle network improvement between Huntingdon-Papworth Everard-Cambourne;
 - Area action plans for the A14 Trunk Road in Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire delivering;
 - New A14 trunk road, local road capacity, cycle and pedestrian routes;
 - Area action plan for the A428 Trunk Road in Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. This includes:
 - A428 Caxton Gibbet to Black Cat dualling by 2021, including a grade separated junction at the A1 Black Cat roundabout;
 - Bus priority measures Caxton Gibbet – West Cambourne, A428 to Bourne airfield;

- A428 park and ride; and
- A428 and A1198 junction improvements.



(Figure 1 : East west rail preferred option route)

- 1.1 Cambourne to Cambridge Public Transport Route and New Park and Ride Site: A number of options are being considered by the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) to improve journeys from the west of Cambridge into the city. This follows a successful public consultation with options soon to be presented for approval to the GCP Board for approval.
- 3.4 In its current form the village of Papworth is not providing a strong opportunity to reduce car trips within the district; however, the provision of links to the south will improve this. New development could be part of the solution to promote and help deliver more sustainable travel links for the benefit of all.
- 3.5 VJF support the principle of including allocations for housing and employment in the rest of the rural area as part of the proposed development strategy. The Local Plan should seek to allocate a component of its housing needs towards growth at existing villages. Sustainable development in rural areas makes an important contribution to ensuring the vitality of villages and supporting existing rural services and facilities.
- 3.6 This approach is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which at paragraph 79 states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.
- 3.7 Notwithstanding this clear direction in national policy, the emerging Local Plan makes very few additional allocations in the rural area and VJF objects to this approach. This approach threatens the vitality of villages within the rural area and stifles opportunities for further growth and

supporting local services. The allocation of additional sites in the rural area will also help to ensure that the housing supply for the Local Plan is balanced and robust, reducing the reliance on strategic sites and the limited allocations in villages. As such, the Development Strategy should include for further allocations in the rural area to ensure that a sound spatial strategy is developed and delivered.

- 3.8 It is important that any additional allocations accord with the principles of the proposed development strategy. Land at Papworth accords with the proposed development strategy as follows:
- Directing development to where active and public transport is the natural choice:
 - Future transport links with the east-west transport corridor improvements will bolster sustainable travel opportunities to Papworth.
 - Where green infrastructure can be delivered alongside new development:
 - The proposed development of the site would be landscape led with potential for benefits to the green infrastructure that exceed policy requirements, including new swathes of public open space
 - The site is predominantly agricultural land and is low ecological value. Through enhancements the proposals present an opportunity to deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 20%.

Policy S/RRA: Site Allocations in the Rest of the Rural Area

- 3.9 VJF supports the principle of policy S/RRA in allocating sites for homes and employment in the rural area. The Local Plan should seek to allocate a component of its housing needs towards growth at existing villages. Sustainable development in rural areas makes an important contribution to ensuring the vitality of villages and supporting existing rural services and facilities. This approach is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which at paragraph 79 states that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.
- 3.10 Notwithstanding this clear direction in national policy, the emerging Local Plan makes very few additional allocations in the rural area and VJF objects to this approach. This approach threatens the vitality of villages within the rural area and stifles opportunities for further growth and supporting local services. The allocation of additional small to medium sized sites in the rural area will also help to ensure that the housing supply for the Local Plan is balanced and robust, reducing the reliance on strategic sites and the limited allocations in villages. As such, the Development Strategy should include for further allocations in the rural area to ensure that a sound spatial strategy is developed and delivered.
- 3.11 To fully support the rural area and develop a sound spatial strategy with a mixture of deliverable and suitable rural allocations, Land at Papworth should be identified as an allocation for residential development. The site represents a sustainable location for development which will help to meet the housing needs of Greater Cambridge in the next Local Plan period. The land is available, achievable and suitable and the development proposals will bring a number of tangible social, economic and environmental benefits to support the delivery of a sound and sustainable spatial strategy as part of the Local Plan, including:

- The opportunity to deliver a substantial amount of affordable housing to help meet the needs of Papworth and the wider District, including the potential to possibly deliver an element of custom and self-build;
- Locating residential development in a sustainable location, within close proximity to existing and proposed services, facilities, infrastructure and employment opportunities.
- A landowner who wishes to work with the local community in order to shape a proposal which meets the needs of and can provide wider benefits to the village;
- Delivery of a substantial amount of open space which would be accessible to new and existing residents and would provide connectivity with the allocated recreation ground extension;
- Supporting Papworth's economy, including local shops and services;
- Enhancing biodiversity levels across the site. The site is predominantly agricultural land and can currently be considered to be of low ecological value. The proposals present an opportunity to deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 20%; and
- An informed position through the submitted Village Assessment to help shape how best the development can bring the widest and far reaching benefits to the village and local community.

4.0 HELAA Proforma - Site Reference: 40428

- 4.1 An assessment of the site has been undertaken as part of the HELAA (Site reference: 40428). Overall, the HELAA assessment of the site is good, rating the site green on technical matters of open space/green infrastructure, with several matters highlighted amber which can be readily mitigated as part of any application and master planning process. The HELAA also inappropriately suggests 'Red' items, which this prepetition addresses below and finding that the site is suitable and deliverable for a mixed-use scheme.

Adopted Development Plan Policies

- 4.2 **HELAA Comment:** Primarily outside Development Framework; Within or Partially within Site Specific Policies/Housing, Employment or Recreation allocation; Within or Partially within 400m of the District Boundary
- 4.3 **VJF Response:** The site lies outside the development boundary but directly adjacent to it. The land would be ideally located to form a natural extension to the built-form of the village and to be naturally contained by the bypass.

Flood Risk

- 4.4 **HELAA Comment:** The assessment for flood risk identifies:

Flood zone: Partly in Flood Zone 2 (11%)

Partly in Flood Zone 3 (10%)

Surface water flooding: 7% lies in a 1 in 30 year event

10% lies in a 1 in 100 year event

18% lies in a 1 in 1000 year event

- 4.5 **VJF Response:** No built development should be included within areas at risk of surface water flooding or within Flood Zones 2 and 3. An 8 metre buffer should also be maintained from the watercourse to provide a biodiversity and habitat corridor.
- 4.6 The surface water drainage will discharge to the watercourse with a restricted discharge to the 1 in 100 year greenfield runoff rate with storage provided for all events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + 40% climate change.
- 4.7 With an appropriate layout, as indicated on the Concept Layout submitted, there is no restriction to development from flood risk.

Landscape and Townscape

- 4.8 **HELAA Comment:** Primarily outside a PVAA NCA 88 Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands District Area

The Western Claylands. The site is typical of the landscape character.

Landscape Character Assessment (2021) Landscape Character Area - 4A: Croxton to Conington Wooded Claylands

Development of both sites would have a significant adverse impact to the settlement of Papworth Everard, its landscape character and the designated landscape sites and views within the Papworth Village Design Guide. It would be an encroachment into the countryside, an urbanisation of the rural landscape and remove valuable green spaces / gaps and views. Even with a reduction in residential units the harm would be adverse and permanent.

- 4.9 **VJF Response:** The masterplan strategy has been refined following the HELAA comments and a revised Vision and Delivery Study is enclosed which proposes a stronger landscape-led development which provides a sensitive and contextually appropriate addition to Papworth, responding to the site's sensitive heritage and landscape constraints. Developable Areas have been carefully considered, to ensure they sit well within the existing landscape features, sensitively extending the built form of Papworth Everard. Gaps and views would be maintained where appropriate and harm carefully managed to remain minimal.

- 4.10 It is not the intention to fully develop Parcel A and B, indeed the majority of the land would be for provided or retained landscaping to ensure a layout could respect the views in and out of the village, as well as the heritage settings. The HELAA should be an 'Amber' to reflect that, clearly, an amount of development is capable to the west side of the village; it is only a matter of how much and where that built development goes to bring a long-term and secure vision to the land parcel created by the route of the bypass road.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- 4.11 **HELAA Comment:** All new housing developments will require assessment of increased visitor pressure on nearby SSSI. There are areas registered on the 2014 National Forest Inventory and identified as priority habitat. There is a watercourse which runs both adjacent to the eastern boundary and through the eastern section of the site which will require survey and probably mitigation. There are several ponds on site and records of GCN in the close vicinity to the site. There are no other apparent priority habitats within the site; however, there are grasslands, woodland areas, hedges and wooded boundaries on site that are likely to have ecological value. Applications may find provision of a 10% net gain in biodiversity difficult within their red line boundaries and may need to find offsite compensation to comply with up-coming National legislation and developing local policies. Development of the site may have a detrimental impact on a designated site, or those with a regional or local protection but the impact could be reasonably mitigated or compensated.

- 4.12 **VJF Response:** VJF are committed to delivering a scheme which can achieve a 20% net gain or make the appropriate, beneficial off-site contributions and agree that the impact could be reasonably mitigated or compensated.
- 4.13 All other assessment criteria highlighted amber could reasonably be mitigated through the planning and design process.

5.0 Highway Access

- 5.1 An updated Access Appraisal has been undertaken by EAS to respond to the HELAA comments, highlighting these key issues:
- Vehicle access will be provided from a new fourth arm on the A1198/B1040 bypass roundabout. There is currently a spur where the new arm will be placed, however to meet the required design standards the ICD of the roundabout would need to be increased to facilitate access to the development site.
 - A second vehicle access point is proposed to the south of Papworth Everard on Ermine Street between the Business Park signal junction and the A1138/ Ermine Street roundabout. This second access will be a priority junction which may be required limited to left turn in and out only to avoid conflict with the signal junction, subject to future design and discussion with the highway authority.
 - Proposals to enhance the existing excellent footway and cycleway connections will be considered. These could include providing lighting for The School Walk along its northern most section to the north of Pendragon Primary School. This would be particularly appropriate if the existing Primary school were to be extended.
- 5.2 Sufficient new transport infrastructure can come forward as a part of any future development that would be appropriate for the level of development proposed and would not have an adverse impact on the village.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 VJF is an integral part of Papworth and wish to continue discussions with the local authority to establish and develop aspirations for the delivery of a beneficial legacy development for the village. All to be done in a manner with the involvement and contributions from key stakeholders and the community to best shape what the development could be and how it could optimise benefits to the village.
- 6.2 An assessment of the HELAA site assessment proforma has been provided along with responses to the Local Plan Strategic Development Policies. In particular, this representation directs that the entire Red Line site is not proposed for development, but rather the majority would be retained or provided landscape/ open space or ecology.
- 6.3 VJF support the general development strategy but also requests that further development be allocated to the villages, to provide for a more robust housing trajectory, as the First Proposals currently rely too heavily on a few sites to deliver the Council's housing needs; allied with an insufficient overall housing need identified by the First Proposals. In this context, part of the solution is for Sites A and B to be allocated for housing-led development, but with significant areas of landscape and an embedded approach to optimise the benefits that could be provided to the village.
- 6.4 A number of improvements are proposed to the A428 corridor which are expected to be built out over the next decade. This includes the East West Rail scheme and the Cambourne to Cambridge Public Transport Route and New Park and Ride Site. These major works would

provide a much greater degree of sustainable travel options for the new residents, particularly for access in and out of Cambridge; and would therefore further support development in Papworth Everard.

- 6.5 VJF is committed to working with stakeholders to ensure that an allocation can be delivered to a shared vision.

