

# Representations to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan - The First Proposals Regulation 18 Consultation

Land off Shelford Road, Fulbourn

On Behalf of Miller Homes

December 2021

**Turley**

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**Client**

Miller Homes

**Our reference**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 These representations are submitted by Turley on behalf of Miller Homes (herein referred to as Miller), in response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan – First Proposals Regulation 18 Consultation (September 2021). Miller has an interest in a 6.1ha site, located immediately to the south of Fulbourn, off Shelford Road. The aim of this document is to assist the Council in formulating their Local Plan, having particular regard to new proposed housing development within and around Fulbourn. The land within control of our client encompasses the site as shown on the Location Plan attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 The Site promoted by Miller Homes is identified in the Greater Cambridge Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (2021) as ‘Land off Shelford Road’ (HELAA Ref: 51610). In February 2020, Wallace Land Investments (now part of Miller Homes) submitted representations, including an Illustrative Draft Masterplan to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan – First Conversation Regulation 18 Consultation.
- 1.3 To accompany these representations, a Vision and Delivery Statement has been prepared for the Site. The Vision and Delivery Statement sets out the core placemaking principles for the Site and includes an Illustrative Masterplan showing how the Site capacity to accommodate around 150 new homes within its landscape setting. The site is available immediately and free from any technical constraints, flood risk (it is within Flood Zone 1), ecology, highways, heritage etc, which would preclude the early delivery of the proposed scheme. A copy of the Vision and Delivery Statement is provided at **Appendix 2**.
- 1.4 Further land immediately adjacent to the east of the Site is also being promoted for housing through the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. Together these two sites can come forward as a comprehensive extension to the south of Fulbourn, which would deliver a range and number of dwellings in a highly sustainable location. A scheme of this scale can deliver significant public benefits including new areas of public open space, ecological enhancements and wider links to the countryside.
- 1.5 We have set out below responses to the questions raised in the Draft Consultation Document in the order in which they appear.
- 1.6 The remaining part of this document is structured as follows:
  - Chapter 2 – Vision and Development Strategy
  - Chapter 3 – Rest of the Rural Area
  - Chapter 4 – Protection and Enhancement of the Cambridge Green Belt
- 1.7 Miller would be pleased to discuss any aspect of these representations in more detail if this would be of assistance to the Council and we look forward to engaging positively with the Council and other stakeholders in the ongoing preparation of the emerging Local Plan

## 2. Vision and Development Strategy

### Vision

- 2.1 The proposed Vision for Greater Cambridge is set out at page 20 of the Draft Local Plan and states that:

*“We want Greater Cambridge to be a place where a big decrease in our climate impacts comes with a big increase in the quality of everyday life for all our communities. New development must minimise carbon emissions and reliance on the private car; create thriving neighbourhoods with the variety of jobs and homes we need; increase nature, wildlife and green spaces; and safeguard our unique heritage and landscapes.”*

- 2.2 Whilst Miller supports the Council’s objectives with regards to climate changes and protecting the environment, it is disappointing that the Vision as currently drafted makes no reference to the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

- 2.3 The Oxford-Cambridge Arc is an area covering Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge, identified by the Government as a unique opportunity to become an economic asset of international standing. In July the Government held a 12 week consultation which closed on 12 October 2021 seeking views on the vision for the Arc. The consultation document ‘Creating a vision for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc’ (July 2021) confirmed that it is still the Government’s intention to prepare a ‘Spatial Framework’, which will provide a national planning policy framework for the Arc.

- 2.4 As set out at paragraph 1.1 of the Government’s consultation document the Oxford-Cambridge Arc ‘is a national economic priority area’. Its world-class research, innovation and technology can help the UK prosper in a changing global economy. But success cannot be taken for granted. As advised by the National Infrastructure Commission, without urgent action, a chronic under-supply of homes could jeopardise growth, limit access to labour and put prosperity at risk.

- 2.5 If the Arc to reach its full potential local authorities will need to plan positively in their areas to deliver the transformational growth required. On this basis we would suggest that the Vision is revised as follows:

*“Greater Cambridge is a leading UK and global hub of innovation, which plays a key role in the internally recognised Oxford-Cambridge Arc. We want Greater Cambridge to be a place of great prosperity and innovation where a big decrease in our climate impacts comes with a big increase in the quality of everyday life for all our communities. New development must minimise carbon emissions and reliance on the private car; create thriving neighbourhoods with the variety of jobs and homes we need; increase nature, wildlife and green spaces; and safeguard our unique heritage and landscapes.”*

## Policy S/JH: New Jobs and Homes

- 2.6 Policy S/JH of the Draft Local Plan proposes to meet the following objectively assessed needs for development in the period 2020-2041:
- 58,500 jobs
  - 44,400 homes, reflecting an annual objectively assessed need of 2,111 homes per year
- 2.7 For housing, Paragraph 60 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Local Plans should support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, providing, as a minimum, the number of homes informed by a local housing need assessment, using the standard method in national planning guidance. National guidance says that there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than that indicated by the standard method.
- 2.8 For Greater Cambridge the housing need using the Standard Method would equate to 1,743 homes per annum. However, rather than planning for the minimum calculation using the Standard Method, the Councils' strategy is to propose a higher housing figure of 2,111 homes per annum. This higher figure is based on the medium growth scenario identified in the Greater Cambridge Employment Land and Economic Development Evidence Study, published in 2020. This study also set out a higher growth scenario placing greater weight on the high historic growth rate between 2001- 2017. Based on the higher growth scenario the modelling predicted that 78,700 jobs would be required over the plan period.
- 2.9 Whilst Miller is supportive of the Councils' decision to plan for higher levels of growth than the standard method, it is disappointing that the Councils' have decided to base their strategy on the medium rather than the higher growth scenario. The Greater Cambridge economy is dynamic and does not readily align with national or regional forecasts for jobs growth. It has a world-renowned life sciences cluster which has the potential to drive growth beyond typical regional or national rates.
- 2.10 We would strongly advise the Councils' to ensure that their objectively assessed is more aligned with the higher jobs growth aspirations. An indicative calculation based on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review suggests that if the jobs growth is achieved, around 2,900 homes a year would need to be built in Greater Cambridge, an indicative total of 66,900 homes over 2020-2041.
- 2.11 As set out in the Government's most recent consultation document the Arc has the potential to be one of *'the most prosperous, innovative and sustainable economic areas in the world'*. However this transformational growth will only be achieved if local authorities truly plan positively for the housing and economic needs of the area. On this basis we would strongly urge the Council to plan for the higher growth scenario which is more aligned with past growth rates in the Greater Cambridge area.

## **Policy S/DS: Development Strategy**

- 2.12 At page 29 of Draft Local Plan the Councils' set out the proposed development strategy for Greater Cambridge. The Plan states that the top priority is to reduce carbon emissions and to that end provide jobs and homes in close proximity to one another and major public transport routes.
- 2.13 To provide for these new homes in the Plan period, the proposed development strategy for Greater Cambridge is to focus the majority of development on larger scale sites within and around the edge of Cambridge and at new settlements as follows:
- North East Cambridge – redevelopment of the existing waste water treatment works to deliver 8,350 new homes.
  - Cambridge East – development of the Marshalls airport site to deliver approximately 7,000 new homes.
  - Intensification of Development at North West Cambridge – review of the site wide masterplan to deliver between 1,000 and 1,500 additional new homes.
  - Expansion of Cambourne to around 2,000 new homes; and
  - Continuing development at the new settlements of Northstowe, Waterbeach and Bourn – but at faster housing delivery rates so that more homes are provided by 2041.
- 2.14 South Cambridgeshire is a rural district council with no large towns, rather, a number of rural centres (classified within the Plan as either rural centres or minor rural centres) together with a distribution of smaller village centres. A soundly based spatial strategy for such a district should therefore primarily seek to strengthen and enhance all these existing rural centres as part of any district-wide or wider Cambridge growth strategy. The submitted spatial strategy however fails to do this as it primarily focuses growth towards strategic sites and new settlements and is therefore completely inflexible.
- 2.15 Paragraph 11(a) of the NPPF states that plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change. Miller do not object in principle to the inclusion large strategic sites and new settlement as part of the development strategy. However, it should also be recognised that due to the significant infrastructure requirements and lead in times associated with new settlements and strategic sites, it is critical that a range of smaller and medium sized sites, such as Land off Shelford Road, Fulbourn are brought into the spatial mix of the Plan. Such sites provide the opportunity to deliver more homes earlier in the Plan period and thus complement the longer-term delivery that can be achieved at the larger strategic sites and new settlements.
- 2.16 The need for greater flexibility is particularly important given the unresolved concerns around the deliverability of Cambridge East and North East Cambridge. The Site at Cambridge was identified in the Cambridge Structure Plan (2003) for a new community of 10,000 – 12,000 dwellings. Following the adoption of the Cambridge East AAP in 2008,

Marshalls then announced in 2010 that they did not have a deliverable relocation option and that they intended to remain at Cambridge Airport for the foreseeable future, which at the time they confirmed to be not before 2031.

- 2.17 Following the previous consultation on the Local Plan in January 2020, Marshalls then announced in October 2020 that the firm had signed an option agreement for the potential relocation to Cranfield University's proposed airport development, which was granted outline planning permission by Central Bedfordshire Council in April 2018. The Council anticipate that the site can start delivering housing from 2031. However, the relocation of the airport is a significant undertaking and an 'option agreement' in our view, does not provide sufficient justification that the site will be available for the development of housing by 2031.
- 2.18 North East Cambridge is a large brownfield opportunity identified to deliver 8,350 new homes and 15,000 additional jobs. The development is predicated on the relocation of the existing Waste Water Treatment Works, a process being led by Anglian Water. The deliverability of this scheme is therefore very dependent on the outcome of the Development Consent Order proposals for the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant Relocation Project. The project is currently in the pre-application phase for a Development Consent Order (DCO) and it is not anticipated that the application will be submitted till late 2022/early 2023.
- 2.19 Despite the fact that the application for the relocation of the waste water treatment works has not even been submitted, the Councils' have estimated that from 2026 the site can deliver housing at a rate of 100 dwellings per annum and at its peak deliver 350 dwellings per annum by 2033. In view of the average length of time it takes to achieve a DCO consent is around 2 years from submission and the significant remediation that will be required prior to the construction of housing, we have strong reservations with regards to the draft trajectory set out in the Development Strategy Topic Paper.
- 2.20 Although Miller has no objection to these two sites in principle, there are existing impediments to development which will likely take a considerable amount of time to overcome. On this basis, we would strongly urge the Council to take a more pragmatic approach in relation to the housing land supply over the plan period and provide for a greater mix of sites, specifically smaller and medium sized sites, which can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly.
- 2.21 Notwithstanding our concerns with regards to the deliverability of some of the larger strategic sites, regardless of these larger sites coming forward we do not consider that the development strategy as currently drafted will promote sustainable development in rural areas and maintain the vitality of rural communities. Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that:
- "Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services."*
- 2.22 Contrary to national planning guidance, the Councils development strategy states at page 39 that their evidence shows that the villages 'should play only a limited role in meeting future development needs'. Firstly it is not clear what 'evidence' the Councils'

are referring to which justifies proposing very little and in many cases no growth in Greater Cambridge's most sustainable villages. At page 122 the Council state that:

*"We want our rural villages to continue to thrive and sustain their local services, but we don't want to encourage lots of new homes in places where car travel is the easiest or only way to get around. We therefore propose some development in and around villages that have good transport links and services, while in smaller villages, we propose that only small-scale infill development and affordable housing would be permitted."*

- 2.23 Despite having excellent public transport links and dedicated cycle routes into the City Centre and Cambridge Biomedical Campus, including Addenbrooke's Hospital, the Councils have not proposed any new site allocations around Fulbourn. It is critical that the Councils' revise their strategy to provide the correct balance of housing. The development of small to medium scale sites can benefit existing communities through the provision of new facilities and green infrastructure that will benefit both new and existing residents. As currently drafted the development strategy is not responsive to the local circumstances of its rural areas and as such is considered inconsistent with national planning policy and 'unsound'.

#### **Policy S/SH: Settlement Hierarchy**

- 2.24 It is proposed in the Draft Local Plan that the village of Fulbourn remains a Minor Rural Centre rather than being upgraded to a Rural Centre.
- 2.25 Rural Centres are described in the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan as the most sustainable villages of the district and are described as having:

*"...good access to a secondary school (either within the village or accessible by good public transport), employment opportunities, a variety of services and facilities and have good public transport services to Cambridge or a market town"*

- 2.26 In terms of population, the 2011 Census confirmed the population of Fulbourn to be 4,673.
- 2.27 Fulbourn has a wide range of services and facilities. These are located across the village as a whole. The village has a High Street, where a number of retail outlets and other facilities are grouped, and this is located close to the library, health centre, primary school and St Vigor's with All Saints Church.
- 2.28 In addition to a functioning High Street, there is also a 24hr Tesco superstore on the edge of the village, which is located approximately 3km from the village centre. This facility is well served by public transport to and from Fulbourn, and can be easily accessed by bicycle. This is a valuable facility for the residents of the village.
- 2.29 In terms of promoting sustainable modes of transport, Fulbourn has excellent bus links and dedicated cycle routes to the city of Cambridge. The Citi 1 and Citi 3 link Fulbourn to the major local employment destinations such as Capitol Park, ARM, Addenbrookes



and the city centre. They also provide routes to Cambridge Station, retail destinations such as Tesco's and Cambridge.

- 2.30 In addition to being within a reasonable distance of a wide range of employment opportunities in Cambridge the village has historically had a positive work population: employment ratio. This includes Fulbourn Hospital and Capital Park, as well as various units throughout the village.
- 2.31 Bottisham Village College provides the secondary education for the residents of Fulbourn. A direct private bus services serves Fulbourn, allowing safe and consistent access to the College.
- 2.32 In conclusion, Fulbourn scores highly on the factors assessed and should not reasonably fall within the category of Minor Rural Centre. Such villages are described as having '*a lower level of services, facilities and employment than Rural Centres*'. The high service provision, high quality public transport and the employment opportunities clearly demonstrates that Fulbourn should be re-classified as a Rural Centre.

### 3. Rest of the Rural Area

3.1 The Draft Local Plan identifies Fulbourn as falling within the policy area ‘Rest of the rural area’.

3.2 As previously mentioned the Councils’ state at page 122 of the Draft Local Plan that the strategy for this area is as follows:

*“.....propose some development in and around villages that have good transport links and services, while in smaller villages, we propose that only small-scale infill development and affordable housing would be permitted. Any development in and around villages needs to be well-designed for the rural setting, with a strong relationship to landscape”*

3.3 Policy S/RRA of the Draft Local Plan sets out the site allocations in the rest of the rural area. For the entire area, which covers 3 rural centres and 12 Minor Rural Centres, the Council have identified only four sites for housing as follows:

- The Moor, Moor Lane, Melbourn – 20 homes
- Land to the west of Cambridge Road, Melbourn – 120 homes
- Land at Mansel Farm, Station Road, Oakington – 20 homes
- Land at Highfields (phase 2), Caldecote – 64 homes

3.4 As previously stated, despite having excellent public transport links and dedicated cycle routes into the City Centre and Cambridge Biomedical Campus, including Addenbrooke’s Hospital, the Councils’ have not proposed any new site allocations around Fulbourn. Miller object to this strategy, which is contrary to national guidance and does not promote sustainable development in rural areas.

3.5 Under Policy ST/4 of the previously adopted Core Strategy (January 2007) Fulbourn was identified as a ‘Rural Centre’, by virtue of its superior range of facilities and excellent public transport services to Cambridge. In terms of local amenities there are a number of shops located within a 5 minute walk of Miller’s Site off School Road including; Cooperative convenience store and Post Office, takeaway restaurant, butchers, beauticians, clothes shop, and a green grocers.

3.6 There is a further range of services within walking distance of the Site including Fulbourn Primary School, Village Library, Community Centre and Health Centre. The Site is also within walking distance of existing bus stops on Cambridge Road, which provides direct services (Citi 1 and Citi 3) to the major local employment destinations such as Capitol Park, ARM, Addenbrookes and the city centre. They also provide routes to Cambridge Station, retail destinations such as Tesco’s and Cambridge.

3.7 In contrast to alternative growth options promoted north of Fulbourn, the Site provides direct access onto Cambridge Road. As a result vehicles travelling towards Cambridge from the Site can avoid passing through the historic core of the village, close to the main

services and facilities. From an environmental perspective, the Site will not only minimise additional transport movements through the village centre, but will promote sustainable modes of travel by virtue of its proximity to existing bus stops and dedicated cycle routes. Therefore sequentially the Site is considered the most favourable location for a sustainable extension to Fulbourn.

3.8 As previously stated a Vision and Delivery Statement has been prepared for the site, a copy of which is provided at **Appendix 2**. The Vision and Delivery Statement sets out the core placemaking principles for the Site and includes an Illustrative Masterplan showing how the Site could be delivered to provide a long lasting positive addition to Fulbourn. The Site is available immediately and free from any technical constraints which would preclude the early delivery of the proposed scheme. The new community will be based upon sustainable and healthy lifestyles and designed for climate resilience and adaptation. The benefits for bringing the scheme forward include the following:

- Approximately 34% of the Site will be green space to provide a network of multi-functional green infrastructure that supports a range of informal and formal activities for everyone's participation. Activities include new play spaces, a forest garden and edible landscapes, such as an allotment glade
- A substantial biodiversity net gain can be delivered on the Site by converting existing arable fields of low ecological value to a mosaic of species-rich grasslands, new flood meadow, hedgerow enhancements and new native tree and shrub planting across the Site. Proposed planting and long term management will create new and enhanced habitats;
- Incorporate sustainable drainage systems which will discharge surface water in line with the SuDS hierarchy and national and local planning policy;
- A community that is designed to meet the changing needs of an ageing population to promote both independence and provide opportunities for social interaction;
- A high quality scheme that complements the character of Fulbourn through the identification of its unique characteristics and sensitive integration with the existing settlement pattern of the village;
- New and improved footpaths, cycleways, connecting people and places with a scheme that is designed around promoting active travel (cycling and walking) over car-based travel;
- Provision of electric vehicle charging points to all homes;
- Approximately 150 high quality homes, including affordable and market homes including homes designed to meet the needs of first time buyers and an ageing population;

- New homes that will be highly sustainable and designed to meet the Future Homes Standard 2025 and contribute towards achieving zero carbon by 2030; and
- A wide variety of house types and tenures to suit a wide range of households looking to start on the housing ladder, buy a family home or downsize.

- 3.9 Beyond the Cambridge urban area, the largest and most sustainable settlements, within close proximity of the City and along key public transport corridors, are within the Green Belt. A Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Belt Review, including an appraisal of the site's contribution towards Green Belt purposes, has been undertaken by Pegasus. A copy of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal and GB Review is provided at **Appendix 3**.
- 3.10 The analysis undertaken by Pegasus considers the potential impact of changes on the site in terms of introducing built form and the impact of removing the site from the Green Belt. This is undertaken on the basis of determining to what extent the site can accept residential development without an undue degree of impact on the landscape.
- 3.11 The findings of the appraisal demonstrate that the potential conflict of proposed development on the Site with aspects of Green belt policy will be limited to the site level. Notwithstanding some conflict with the purposes of Green Belt, the impact of a potential development on the wider site area would be very limited due to the containment of the Site by existing and established physical features, including the existing settlement edge as well as other elements such as the road network, landform and green infrastructure.
- 3.12 For the reasons stated above, the Site is considered worthy of being an allocation. It can deliver up to 150 dwellings on the edge of Fulbourn, one of South Cambridgeshire most sustainable villages, with excellent links to nearby services and the city of Cambridge. In accordance with national planning guidance the inclusion of the Site will help the village to 'thrive and grow', whilst also ensuring a more appropriate balance of sites, specifically smaller and medium sized sites which can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area.

## 4. Protection and Enhancement of the Cambridge Green Belt

- 4.1 The proposed development strategy, set out in the Draft Local Plan, does propose the release of land from the Green Belt for housing, where there is good access to public transport, including a site for 100 new homes at Great Shelford. However, despite its sustainable location and excellent transport links Land off Shelford Road, Fulbourn has not been identified for release from the Green Belt.
- 4.2 The Site encompassing Land off Shelford Road, Fulbourn provides the opportunity to deliver much needed market and affordable housing in a highly sustainable location with minimal Green Belt harm. As stated previously a Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Belt Review, including an appraisal of the site's contribution towards Green Belt purposes, has been undertaken by Pegasus. A copy of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal and GB Review is provided at **Appendix 3**.
- 4.3 The findings of the appraisal demonstrate that the release of the site would result in only 'low' harm to the Green Belt, or 'moderate' at worst. In the context of National Green Belt policy, it can be demonstrated that the site has a limited role and function in relation to each of the five purposes of Green Belt (defined by the NPPF) and it is considered that potential development can come forward on the site that would not result in sprawl, merging or encroachment, nor would there be any material impact on the character of Fulbourn.
- 4.4 Consequently, potential development of the site would give rise to only limited landscape and visual impacts at a local level and release of the site from the Green Belt would be acceptable in landscape and visual terms.
- 4.5 To inform the emerging Local Plan the Council appointed LUC to under a Green Belt Assessment, published in August 2021. The Site is defined by the study as being predominantly in parcel FU16, with the southern edge of the site being within parcel FU14 (n.b. each parcels includes additional land to the east, and FU14 in particular extends further south and south-east around the settlement edge).
- 4.6 Pegasus undertook a comprehensive review of the LUC GB Assessment to inform their Study. Overall, while the Green Belt study includes a detailed methodology, criteria and subsequent analysis, Pegasus were of the view that there is a clear disconnect between that analysis and a robust conclusion on 'harm' in respect of land parcel FU16, and that the judgment on the 'harm' of release of FU16 from the Green Belt has been overstated.
- 4.7 In respect of land parcel FU16 (which includes the majority of the site), the Green Belt study concludes a 'moderate' contribution to Cambridge purposes 1 and 2, and 'no/limited' contribution to Cambridge purpose 3. In itself, this suggests that the site does not make a strong contribution to the Cambridge purposes of Green Belt.
- 4.8 Furthermore, the LUC Green Belt study goes on to judge a 'minor to moderate' impact on adjacent land, which is at the lower end of the scale defined by the Green Belt study methodology.

- 4.9 However, the conclusion of the LUC Green Belt study judges the land parcel is judged to have a 'high' degree of harm from its potential release (and assumed development). The study uses a five-point scale to determine harm, with 'high' at the upper end and only second to 'very high'.
- 4.10 It is not clear how the balance of judgements between contribution and impact (which are both at the lower end of the methodological scale) then equate to the second highest degree of harm.
- 4.11 With reference to the definitions of harm set out in the LUC Green Belt study (Green Belt study, Table 3.6, page 106) a more logical and justifiable conclusion would be that the release of FU16 (and therefore the site) should be judged as only giving rise to 'low' or 'moderate' harm (or potentially an interim grade of minor to moderate).
- 4.12 This is a more reasonable and consistent conclusion based on the definitions for each category of harm defined in the methodology (whereby low and/or moderate harm refers to 'moderate contribution' and/or 'minor to moderate impact').
- 4.13 Conversely, and in strong contrast to the analysis for FU16, the levels of harm for 'moderate' (or above) only refer to land that is considered to make a 'strong' or 'particularly strong' contribution, which land parcel FU16 clearly does not.

#### **The Case for Exceptional Circumstances**

- 4.14 The NPPF does not provide a strict definition on what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'. However, paragraph 141 of the NPPF sets out a number of matters that should be identified and dealt with in order to ascertain whether 'exceptional circumstances' exist to justify releasing land from the Green Belt.

Paragraph 141 of the NPPF states

*“Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph, and whether the strategy:*

*a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;*

*b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and*

*c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground”.*

4.15 Paragraph 141 of the NPPF requires a local planning authority to examine fully all other reasonable options for meeting its development needs prior to concluding that exceptional circumstances exist. The wording of NPPF, paragraph 137 strictly speaking requires the local planning authority to demonstrate only that it has examined all other reasonable options. This does not, in terms, state that the local authority cannot amend the boundary of the Green Belt, notwithstanding whatever conclusion it reaches about the reasonable options; put another way, it might amend the Green Belt even if there are reasonable alternatives. However, in considering whether to amend the boundaries of the Green Belt, or to take one of the other reasonable options for meeting need, the local planning authority would need to be clear that the test that they were applying remained one of exceptional circumstances.

4.16 The release of Green Belt land does not need to be a last resort. This was confirmed by Patterson J in I.M. Properties Development Ltd v Lichfield DC [2014] EWHC 2440 (Admin). Whilst this judgment pertained to the NPPF 2012, it remains relevant:

*“[96] What is clear from the principles distilled in the case of Gallagher is that for revisions to the green belt to be made exceptional circumstances have to be demonstrated. Whether they have been is a matter of planning judgment in a local plan exercise ultimately for the inspector. It is of note that in setting out the principles in Gallagher there is no reference to a falsification doctrine [that the basis on which land was excluded from the Green Belt has been falsified] or that any release of green belt land has to be seen as a last resort.”*

4.17 Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states:

*“When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land”.*

4.18 This paragraph means that where exceptional circumstances have been found, the local planning authority ought to apply a sequential approach of first considering land that is previously developed land or well-served by public transport.

4.19 There are eight clear factors that contribute to a finding that there are exceptional circumstances for the release of the Site ‘Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn’ from the Green Belt through the Emerging Plan. These factors are set out below:

1. The Site would contribute to the Councils’ market and affordable housing provision and contribute to, ‘the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes’ (per paragraph 60 of the NPPF). Greater

Cambridge is area of high jobs growth and significant housing demand. The Councils' have recognised that they need to plan for more than the minimum housing need identified by the Government's Standard Method and have proposed a figure of 44,400 homes, based on a medium jobs growth scenario. However the Council are mindful that their own evidence base identified a higher growth forecast of 78,700, placing greater weight on fast growth in the recent past, particularly in key sectors. As highlighted in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Economic Review the need could very well be higher at around 66,700 homes over the plan period if jobs growth continues at recent historic rates. As noted in *Compton Parish Council v Guildford BC* (per paragraph 105 of the judgment), the provision of housing even in excess of the objectively assessed housing need (and by comparison the standard method) can be an exceptional circumstance given the Government's housing policy to boost supply, especially within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.

2. Given the immediate proximity of the Site to the local centre and schools at Fulbourn, the Site is in a sustainable location for development. Fulbourn is one of South Cambridgeshire's largest villages, which is in close proximity to Cambridge city centre. Indeed, the sustainability credentials of the Site, as set out previously show that the Site is in reasonable walking distances to a number of shops, services, schools and facilities – including bus stops along Cambridge Road, which provides frequent 30 minutes services to Cambridge City centre via Capitol Park, Cambridge Biomedical Campus including Addenbrookes Hospital and the Rail Station among other destinations.
3. The development would not extend beyond the existing southern extent of Fulbourn. This is relevant in that one of the Green Belt purposes (per paragraph 134(b)) is to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another. In this instance, the site remains subservient to the current settlement pattern on this edge of Fulbourn and potential development on the site would not extend further south than the current limits, whilst also restricts matters of coalescence.
4. In landscape terms the existing settlement edge to the north is relatively prominent in the local landscape and residential development on the Site would not form a new component. The wider site is physically and visually contained by the alignment of Shelford Road to the west and the combined influence of landform and vegetation patterns to the south and east. Mitigation provides opportunities for new green infrastructure to reinforce the emerging settlement edges and thus the development of the site would provide a good defensible Green Belt boundary and would offer limited impacts upon the Green Belt.
5. The southern boundary of the scheme would provide a buffer of public open space and defensible boundary. This would provide opportunities



for amenity and recreational resources/public access, landscape and biodiversity enhancements within the Green Belt.

6. The Site does not lie next to a large built up area, and thus it cannot offend against the purpose of checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas (per paragraph 138(a) of the NPPF). In the local landscape context, the Site does not extend further west, east or south than the existing settlement pattern, effectively containing any perception of spread that might otherwise arise from development on the Site.
7. Whilst the Site is an arable field, it is adjacent to an existing built edge and is partially enclosed by development along Cambridge Road. Further, owing to the existing framework of vegetation around the Site, alongside the limited number of receptor locations in the wider vicinity, the development of the Site will have a limited impact upon the visual dimension of openness in the Green Belt. These factors also result in it having a limited impact upon encroachment into the countryside.
8. There are no technical obstacles to the development of the Site, in terms of flood risk (it is within Flood Zone 1), ecology, highways, heritage etc. Furthermore, the development would seek to enhance the existing network of tree and hedgerow planting for the benefit of local flora and fauna, leading to ecological net benefits.

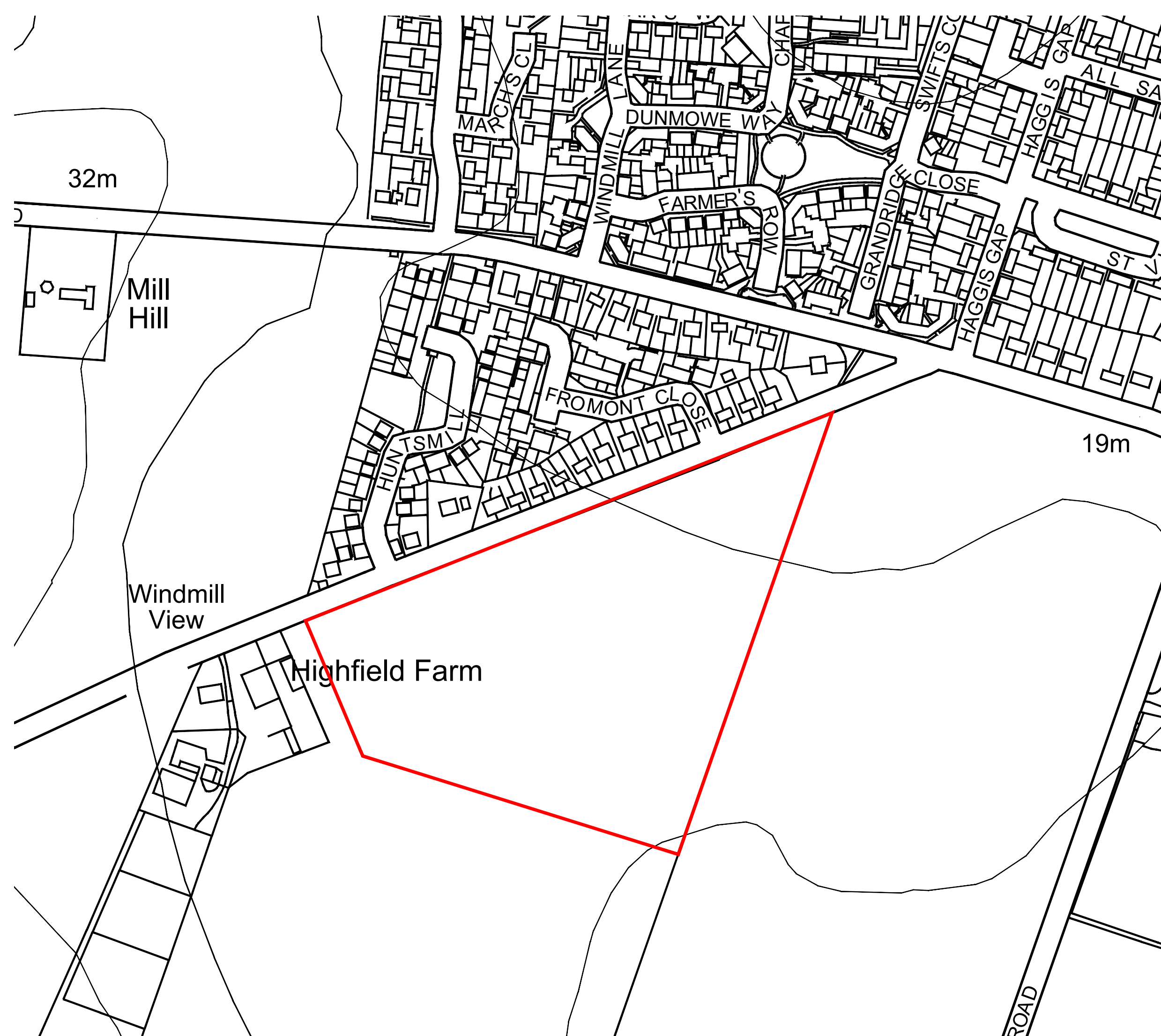
4.20 For all these reasons, therefore, it is clear that exceptional circumstances do exist to justify the release of the Site from the Green Belt.

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 These representations are submitted by Turley on behalf of Miller Homes, in response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals – Regulation 18 Consultation (September 2021). Miller has an interest in a 6.1ha site, located immediately to the south of Fulbourn, off Shelford Road. A Site Location Plan is provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 5.2 The promoted scheme can deliver a new sustainable urban extension to Fulbourn, and has the capacity to accommodate around 150 new homes, including new areas of public open space and a high quality landscaping scheme with significant additional planting of native and new specimen trees and hedgerow.
- 5.3 In terms of future housing requirements, the need across Greater Cambridge is significant. The Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford arc is a national priority. Indeed, to deliver the transformational growth required, the two authorities should be planning for a much greater need than the figure of 40,400 based on the medium growth scenario set out in the Greater Cambridge Employment Land and Economic Development Evidence Study.
- 5.4 The Council are mindful that their own evidence base identified a higher growth forecast of 78,700, placing greater weight on fast growth in the recent past, particularly in key sectors and that the Study suggested providing flexibility in employment land in case the market delivers more jobs than anticipated. We would strongly advise the Council to ensure that their objectively assessed is more aligned with the higher jobs growth aspirations. An indicative calculation based on Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review suggests that if the jobs growth is achieved, around 2,900 homes a year would need to be built in Greater Cambridge, an indicative total of 66,900 homes over 2020-2041.
- 5.5 South Cambridgeshire is a rural district council with no large towns, rather, a number of rural centres (classified within the Plan as either rural centres or minor rural centres) together with a distribution of smaller village centres. A soundly based spatial strategy for such a district should therefore primarily seek to strengthen and enhance all these existing rural centres as part of any district-wide or wider Cambridge growth strategy. The submitted spatial strategy however fails to do this as it primarily focuses growth towards strategic sites and new settlements and is therefore completely inflexible.
- 5.6 To meet the housing needs of Greater Cambridge, it is imperative that the spatial strategy provides flexibility between large strategic sites, including new settlements, and those intermediate sites, such as land off Shelford Road, Fulbourn , which can come forward much earlier in the plan period. The need for greater flexibility is particularly important given the unresolved concerns around the deliverability of Cambridge East and North East Cambridge.
- 5.7 Beyond the Cambridge urban area, the largest and most sustainable settlements, within close proximity of the City and along key public transport corridors, are within the Green Belt.

- 5.8 Fulbourn is one of the largest villages in South Cambridgeshire and benefits from a wide range of services and facilities that caters for the day to day needs of residents. The Site itself is within a 5 minute walk of the village centre, which includes a range of shops, the primary school, health centre and village library. The Site is also within walking distance of existing bus stops on Cambridge Road, which provides direct services (Citi 1 and Citi 3) to the major local employment destinations such as Capitol Park, ARM, Addenbrookes and the city centre.
- 5.9 In contrast to alternative growth options promoted to the north of Fulbourn, the Site provides direct access onto Cambridge Road. As a result vehicles travelling towards Cambridge from the Site can avoid passing through the historic core of the village, close to the main services and facilities. From an environmental perspective, the Site will not only minimise additional transport movements through the village centre, but will promote sustainable modes of travel by virtue of its proximity to existing bus stops and dedicated cycle routes. Therefore sequentially the Site is considered the most favourable location for a sustainable extension to Fulbourn.
- 5.10 A Preliminary Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Belt Appraisal, including an appraisal of the site's contribution towards Green Belt purposes, has been undertaken by Pegasus. A copy of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal and GB Review is provided at Appendix 3. The findings of the appraisal demonstrate that the potential conflict of proposed development on the Site with aspects of Green belt policy will be limited to the site level.
- 5.11 Paragraph 141 of the NPPF sets out a number of matters that should be identified and dealt with in order to ascertain whether 'exceptional circumstances' exist to justify releasing land from the Green Belt. As set out at Section 4 of these representations, it is clear that exceptional circumstances do exist to justify the release of the Site from the Green Belt, including a real need for market and affordable housing in a growth location of national importance to the UK economy.
- 5.12 A Vision and Delivery Statement, a copy of which is provided at **Appendix 2**, has been prepared in support of these representations, showing how the site could be developed. The southern boundary of the scheme would provide a buffer of public open space, which can remain open in perpetuity. This would provide opportunities for amenity, landscape and biodiversity enhancements and provide a good defensible Green Belt boundary.
- 5.13 For the reasons stated above, we would strongly urge the Council to allocate Land off Shelford Road, Fulbourn for housing. It can deliver up to 150 dwellings on the edge of Fulbourn, one of South Cambridgeshire's most sustainable villages, with excellent links to nearby services and the city of Cambridge. In accordance with national planning guidance the inclusion of the Site will help the village to 'thrive and grow', whilst also ensuring a more appropriate balance of sites, specifically smaller and medium sized sites, which can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area. As previously stated, such sites provide the opportunity to deliver more homes earlier in the Plan period and thus complement the longer-term delivery that can be achieved at the larger strategic sites and new settlements.

## **Appendix 1: Site Location Plan**



— Site boundary



Project  
Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn

Drawing Title  
Location Plan

Date 24/02/2020	Scale 1:2,500 at A3	Drawn by ML	Check by ML
Project No 1158	Drawing No 001A	Revision	-

## **Appendix 2: Vision Document**



LAND AT  
SHELFORD ROAD  
FULBOURN

VISION DOCUMENT  
DECEMBER 2021

millerohomes

## Project Team

**millerhomes**

House builder



Masterplanning and  
graphic design

**Turley**

Town planning



Landscape design

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**01**

# **Introduction**





# Introduction

Mosaic has prepared this Vision Document on behalf of Miller Homes, for the development of the Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn (the site).

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The purpose of this document is to demonstrate how the site supports the vision and aims of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan and Fulbourn Neighbourhood Plan as an inherently sustainable and technically unconstrained location for new homes.

This document explains the design and rationale behind the proposals to deliver 150 much-needed new family and affordable homes as part of the sustainable growth of Fulbourn.

The site presents an exciting opportunity to deliver a high quality, sustainable, landscape and design-led scheme on the southern edge of Fulbourn. The scheme will provide extensive areas of publicly accessible green space, offering a significant village-wide benefit and new homes within a high quality landscaped setting. The Land at Shelford Road will be based upon sustainable and healthy lifestyles and designed for climate resilience and adaptation.

In light of this submission, Miller would request that the Council's include Land of Shelford Road, Fulbourn as an allocation in the emerging Local Plan. The scheme presents a unique opportunity to deliver significant enhancements to local green space for the existing and future residents of Fulbourn, providing new and enhanced connections to the wider countryside and landscape.

Furthermore, the scheme will assist the Council's in meeting their housing needs at a highly sustainable location. A mix of homes will be designed to suit a range of households including first time buyers, growing families and downsizers, encouraging social cohesion by allowing residents to stay in Fulbourn and maintain community networks.

# The Opportunity

The site represents an appropriate and sustainable opportunity for growth to help Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council meet the vision and aims of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan

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## OUR APPROACH

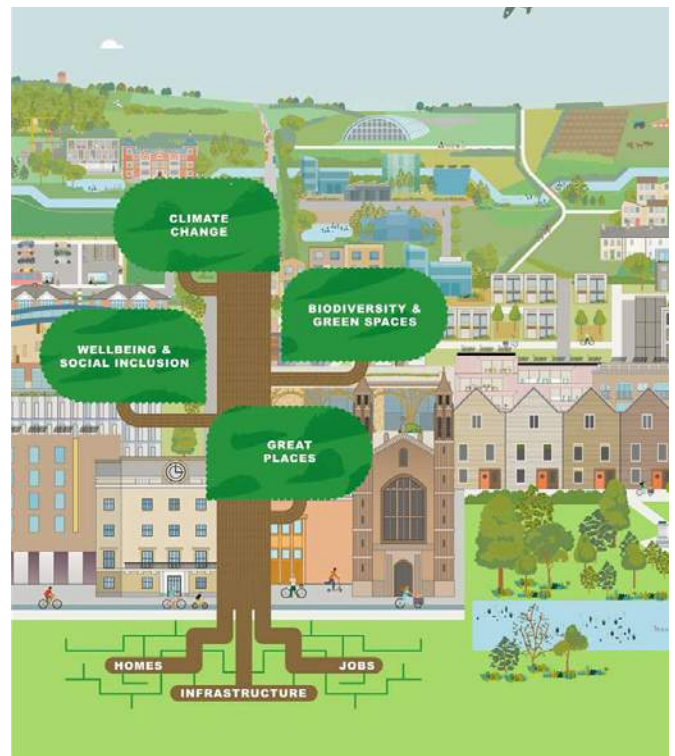
Our approach creates a development that is landscape and ecology led, promotes health and wellbeing and puts placemaking at the heart of development.

The creation of homes that are **in keeping with the rural environment and protect the character of Fulbourn** will create a place that belongs. Furthermore, we would seek to work alongside the parish and **adhere to the objectives set out within both the emerging Fulbourn Neighbourhood Plan and the Fulbourn Village Design Guide.**

Variety in the housing mix and tenure will accommodate the needs of all ages from first time buyers to families and downsizers looking to stay in the village.

An **accessible edible landscape belt** including an allotment glade will provide an opportunity to set the development within a mature and attractive landscape setting, offering an idyllic character that will contribute to placemaking and **promote health and wellbeing.** It is our aim to retain and enhance high quality hedgerows and create new public open space for residents of the village. This approach services to reconnect residents with nature on a daily basis.

Our aim is to achieve a sustainable development that strives for best practice, innovation and exemplar design standards that **put climate change at the forefront** of the design process.



The Greater Cambridge Local Plan themes



# About Miller Homes

Miller Homes is one of the nation's most respected homebuilders. For over 85 years, we have established a reputation for building outstanding quality family homes.

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In 2020, Miller Homes completed a total of 2,620 homes. We operate across three divisions - Scotland, North of England and Midlands & South England.

We have established a heritage for building high quality family homes and our success has been built on solid strategic foundations and high calibre employees operating at all levels within our business. We also have a reputation for quality and excellent customer service and have been awarded five stars in the Home Builders Federation National New Home Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Our disciplined approach to enhancing shareholder value is supported by the relationships we have developed as part of our philosophy. The Miller Difference. This is embedded within all parts of our business and ensures we have fully engaged and committed employees and subcontractors.





# National design guidance

The following policies and guidance are relevant in shaping the information contained in this Vision Document.

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## NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on 27 March 2012 and updated on 24 July 2018, 19 February 2019 and most recently on 20 July 2021.

The National Planning Policy Framework states developments should take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents.

## BUILDING BETTER, BUILDING BEAUTIFUL COMMISSION

The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission (BBBBC) is an independent body that advises government on how to promote and increase the use of high-quality design for new build homes and neighbourhoods.

The Commission recommends practical measures to help to ensure new housing developments meet the needs and expectations of communities, making them more likely to be welcomed, rather than resisted, by existing communities.

The Commission published its final report, 'Living with Beauty', on 30 January 2020.

This report proposes a new development and planning framework that will:

- Ask for Beauty
- Refuse Ugliness
- Promote Stewardship

The creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Those three aims must be embedded in the planning system and in the culture of development in such a way as to incentivise beauty and deter ugliness at every point where the choice arises.

In particular, the BBBBC promotes the following two principles that are particularly relevant to the placemaking principles of the **Land at Shelford Road** site.

- 1. Neighbourhoods:** Create places not just houses. Develop homes within mixed-use real places at 'gentle density' thereby creating streets, squares and blocks with clear backs and fronts.
- 2. Nature:** Re-green our towns and cities. Urban development should be part of the wider ecology. Green spaces, waterways and wildlife habitats should be seen as integral to the urban fabric. Create new community orchards. This is both right and aligned with the Government's aim to eradicate the UK's net carbon contribution by 2050. Green spaces should be enclosed and either safely private or clearly public.



### THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO BBBBC

Beauty, design quality and placemaking are a strategic theme in proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy.

Several other aspects of the National Planning Policy Framework have also been updated to reflect the Commission's recommendations.

**Street trees** are a core part of the vision for enhancing the quality of urban development, making our urban environments **greener, healthier and more sustainable**.

Regarding street trees specifically, revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework make clear that new streets should be tree lined unless there are very clear, justifiable and compelling reasons not to.

### NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE

The National Design Guide (NDG) sets out the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of 10 characteristics. The 10 characteristics are based upon Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places of the NPPF. They are as follows: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

Well-designed places have individual characteristics that work together to create their physical character. The 10 characteristics help to nurture and sustain a sense of community. They work to positively address environmental issues affecting climate. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

**The principles of the NDG have been embedded in the vision for the Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn site.**

### NATIONAL MODEL DESIGN CODE

The purpose of the National Model Design Code is to provide detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It expands on the 10 characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide which reflects the government's priorities and provides a common overarching framework for design.



National Design Guide 10 characteristics





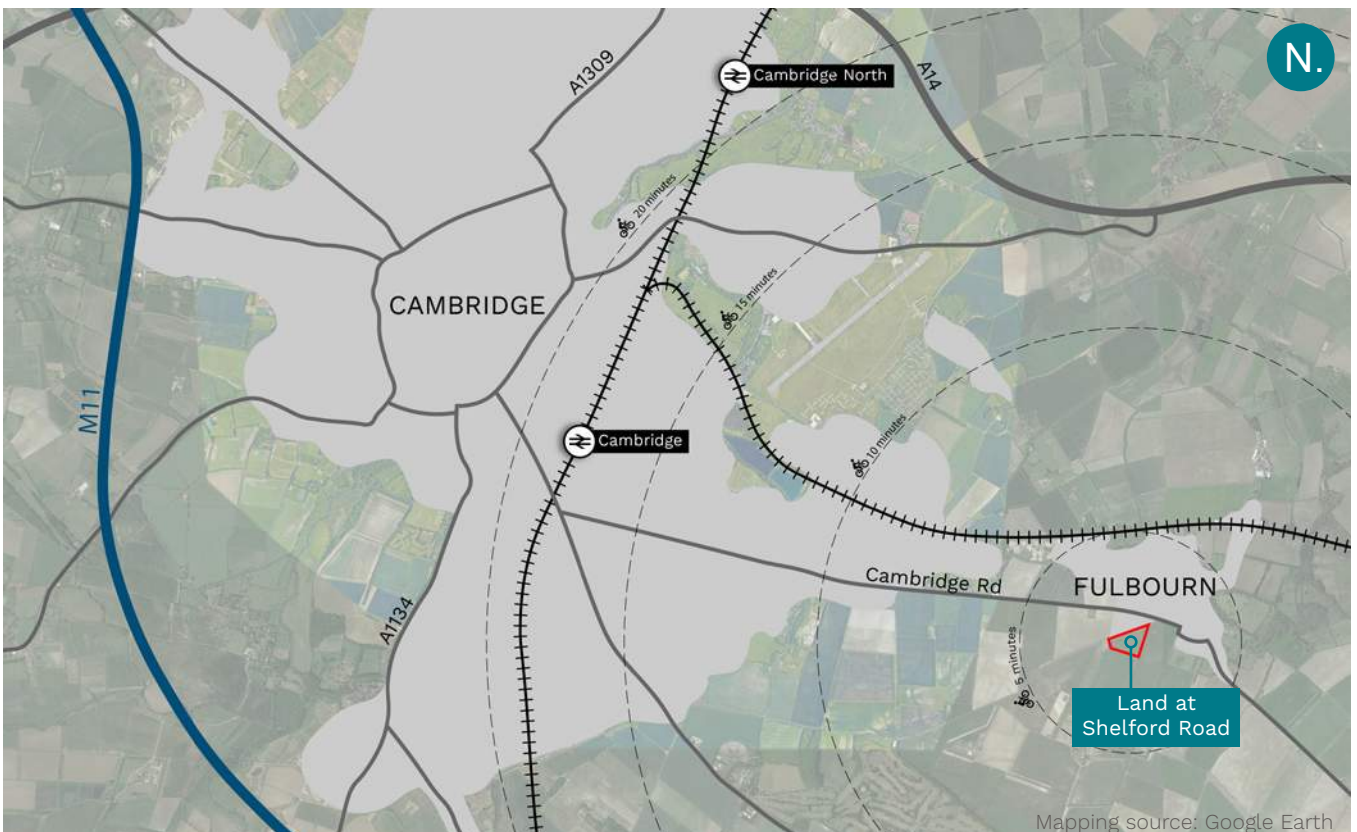
# Site Introduction

The site is within a single ownership and presents an excellent opportunity to deliver new homes close to the village centre.

The site is located adjacent to the settlement of Fulbourn and 6.5km (a 20 minute cycle) east of Cambridge. The site benefits from easy access to a range of facilities to support daily needs being just a 12 minute walk from the village centre. The site extends to some 5.87 hectares and is comprised of one arable field.

The site is bound:

- to the north-west by Shelford Road and existing homes
- by existing farm buildings to the south-west
- to the east by an existing field hedgerow
- by arable land to the south



Site in strategic context. NTS



Site and Fulbourn. NTS



The site. NTS



View looking north-east across the site



View looking to the east across the site



View looking north-east along Shelford Road



Existing field access from Shelford Road into the site



View looking east towards boundary hedgerow



Existing hedgerow boundary to Shelford Road with site beyond



View looking east along Shelford Road.



**02**

**A Logical Location for  
New Development**





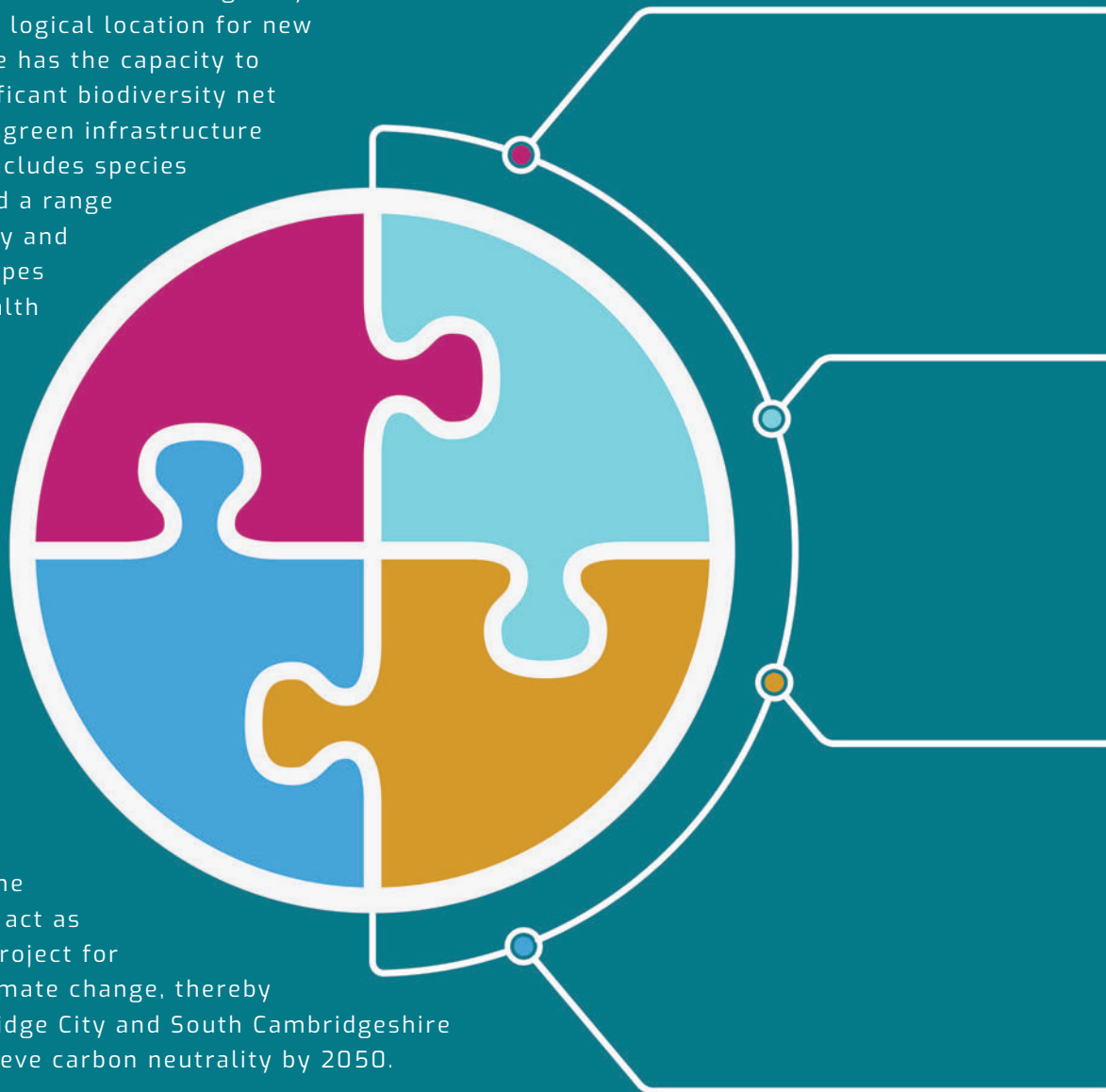
# Why choose to locate new development at the Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn?

The village of Fulbourn is strategically positioned as a logical location for new homes. The site has the capacity to provide a significant biodiversity net gain through a green infrastructure network that includes species rich habitat and a range of growing, play and leisure landscapes to promote health and wellbeing.

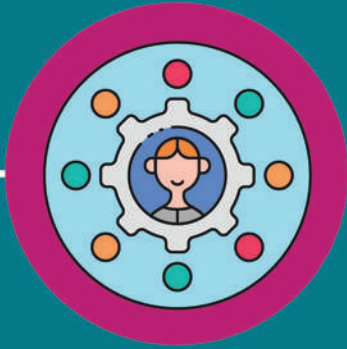
The Land at Shelford Road is technically unconstrained and provides the opportunity to act as a benchmark project for adapting to climate change, thereby helping Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Council to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Four key themes for siting development at this location are set out above and right. Each theme is explored in detail throughout this section of the document.

The Vision (see page 36) in the next section of this document weaves together the four themes to set out a well-considered, placemaking-led and deliverable design proposal.

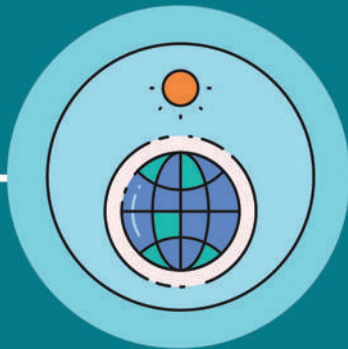






## 01 SUSTAINABLY LOCATED

An opportunity to enhance the liveability of an inherently sustainable location



## 02 ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

A benchmark project for adapting to climate change and carbon neutrality by 2050



## 03 UNCONSTRAINED DELIVERABLE

The site is unconstrained and deliverable with no insurmountable constraints to development



## 04 SUPPORTING BOTH THE LOCAL PLAN AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The site supports the vision and aims of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan alongside the emerging Fulbourn Neighbourhood Plan objectives



# Sustainably Located

Land at Shelford Road is sustainably located within 6.5km of Cambridge via cycle and a 12 minute walk from Fulbourn village centre.

The Sustainability Audit is a comprehensive analysis of the site and the wider area encompassing assessment of the site's access to local facilities, landscape and open space and connectivity.

Access to local facilities is fundamental to the concept of locating sustainable development. New development needs the full range of social, retail, educational, health, transport and recreational facilities to allow people, especially those of limited means or mobility, to go about their daily lives without over reliance on a private car.

## FULBOURN: A SUSTAINABLE VILLAGE

The site is at a highly sustainable location due to its relationship with Fulbourn local centre and strategic connections to Cambridge city centre and the wide range of services, facilities and employment opportunities.

## BUILDING FOR A HEALTHY LIFE

Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) is a tool to assess and compare the quality of proposed neighbourhoods. It has been written by Design for Homes in partnership with Homes England, NHS England and NHS Improvement. Whilst BHL is usually awarded to completed schemes, the site selection criteria have been applied to Land at Shelford Road to demonstrate the sustainability of the design proposals.



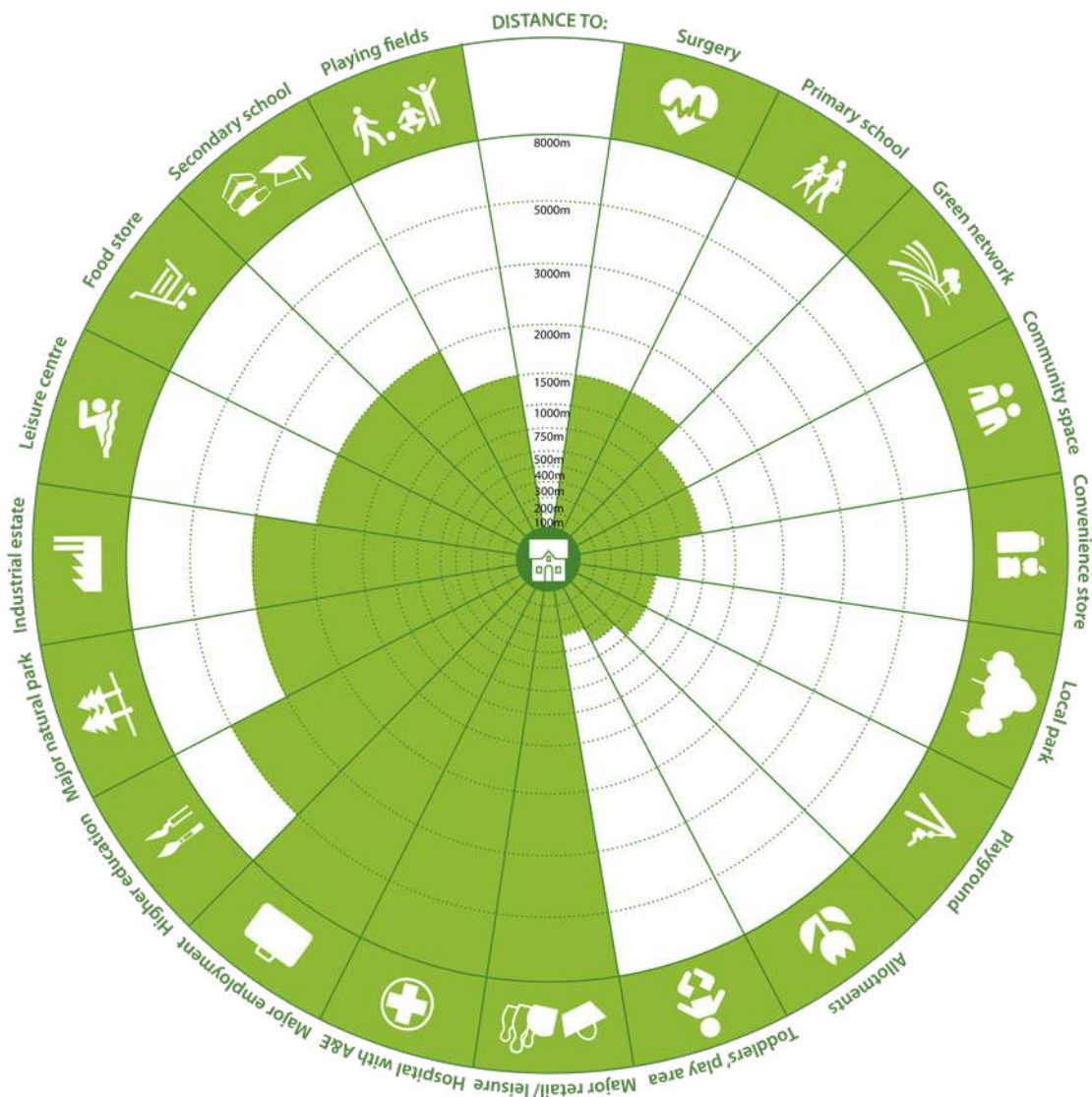
Building for a Healthy Life principles advise places should **'offer social, leisure and recreational opportunities a short walk or cycle from their homes'** and that developments

should provide or be near to **'community facilities, such as shops, schools, workplaces, health facilities, co-working spaces, parks, play spaces, cafés and other meeting places that respond to local community needs'**.

The facilities audit on the following pages demonstrates that Land at Shelford Road is a sustainable location and fully meets the Building for a Healthy Life principles through existing local facilities and the opportunity to provide facilities missing in the area. Shaping Neighbourhoods, a best practice neighbourhood design guide, also suggests the site scores highly as a sustainable location for neighbourhood extensions.

## FACILITIES AUDIT

**Figures one, two** and **three** assess the site against the accessibility criteria benchmark for new neighbourhoods established by Shaping Neighbourhoods. **Figure one** demonstrates the ideal distances of local facilities for a sustainable neighbourhood. **Figure two** illustrates how accessible local facilities are from the site today and **Figure three** illustrates the accessibility of local facilities when the site is built out.



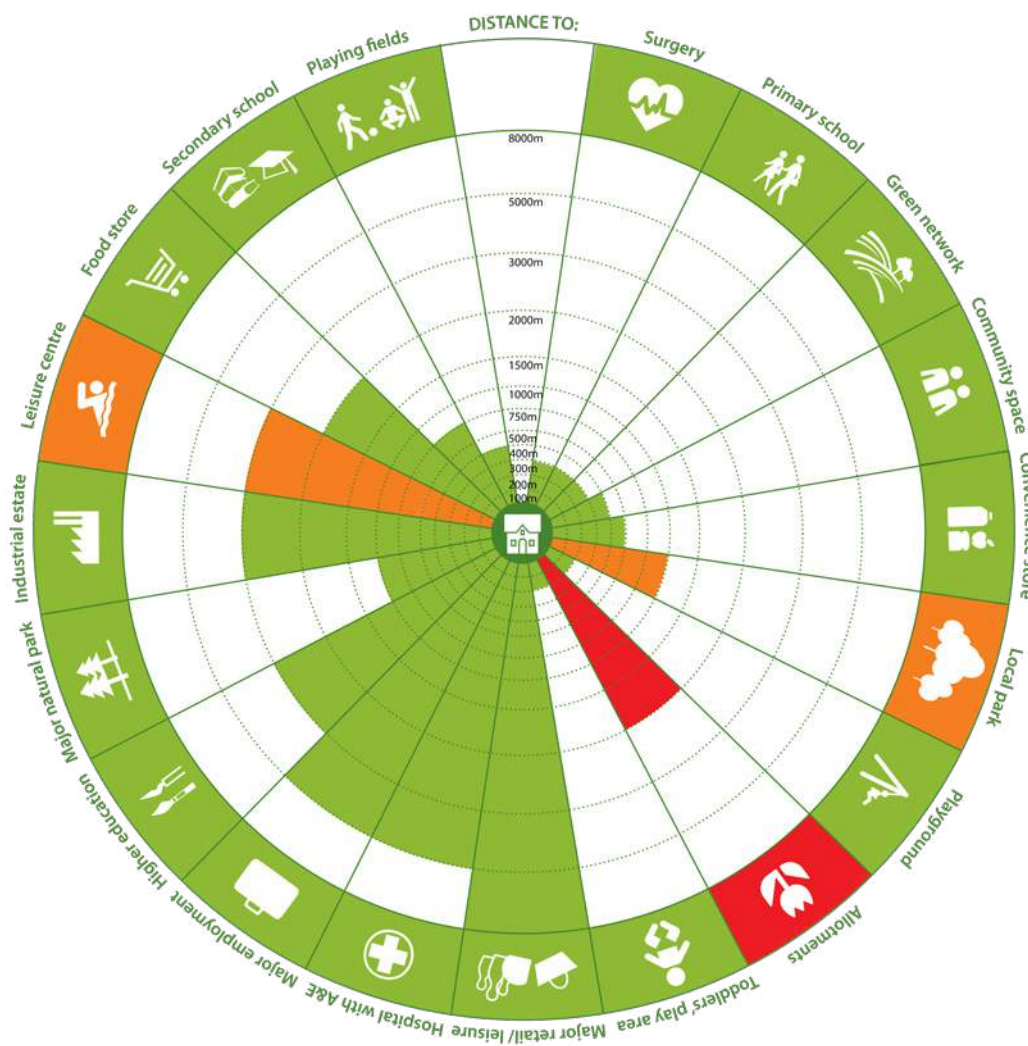
**FIGURE ONE: DESIRED**

Illustrative ideal accessibility criteria, adapted from 'Shaping Neighbourhoods, for Local Health and Global Sustainability'.

■ Ideal Accessibility

The 'Actual' (Figure two) facilities audit has highlighted mostly 'ideal' access to the majority of facilities from the site. Access to local park and allotment facilities are 'good' and "weak" respectively and could be improved through new open space and allotment provision provided as part of the proposed scheme.

Figure Two demonstrates the site is already a highly sustainable location prior to any development, with mostly 'ideal' and some 'good' access to a range of facilities. Allotments is the only 'weak' accessibility but this facility could be provided as part of future design proposals.



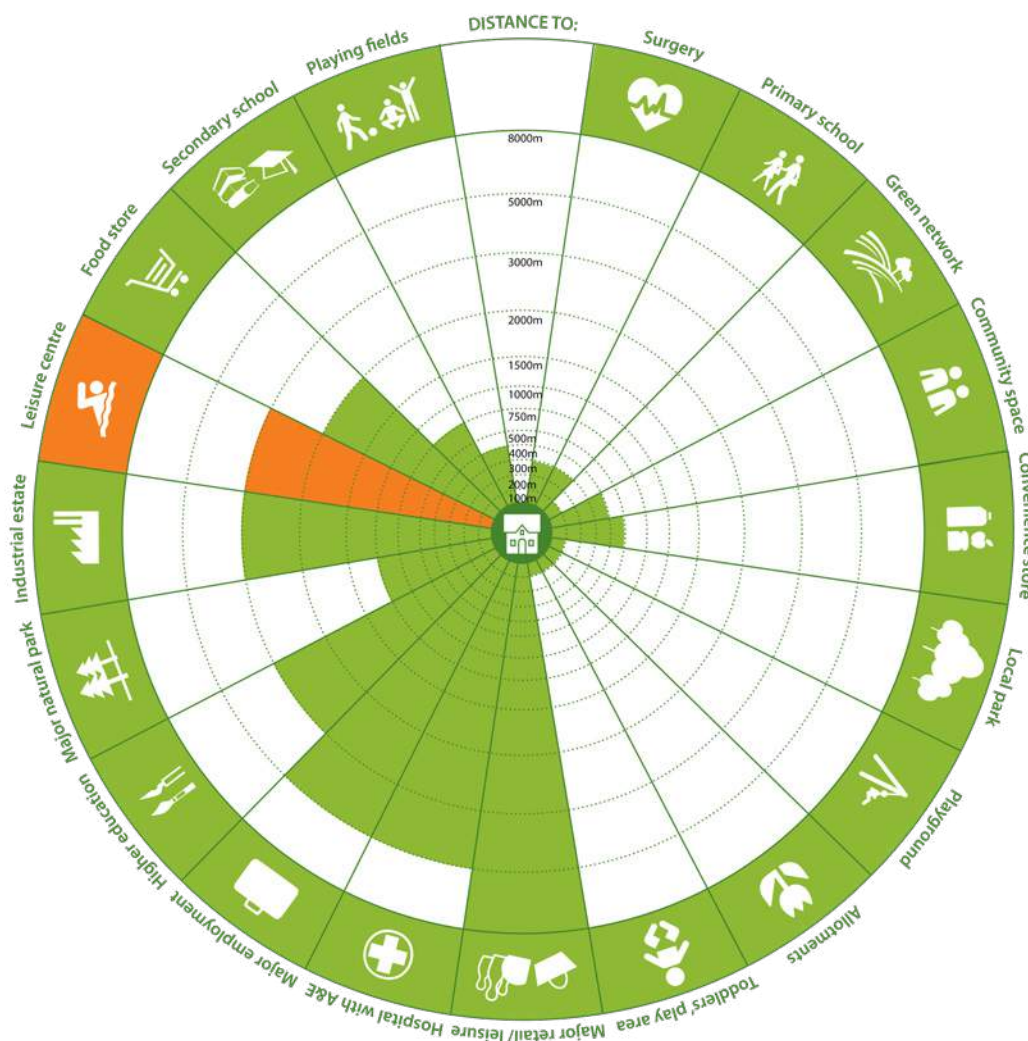
**FIGURE TWO: ACTUAL**

Illustrative actual accessibility criteria to relevant local facilities from the Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn

- Ideal Accessibility
- Good Accessibility
- Weak Accessibility

However, **Figure three** illustrates that, once the site is built providing a new parkland including allotments and play spaces, access to facilities is even better.

**In summary, the Land at Shelford Road is a sustainable choice for new development and exceeds expectations of access to facilities as identified by 'Shaping Neighbourhoods: a best practice design guide for new neighbourhoods' when fully built out.**



**FIGURE THREE: FUTURE POTENTIAL**

Illustrative actual accessibility criteria once the Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn is built.

- Ideal Accessibility
- Good Accessibility
- Weak Accessibility

## FACILITIES

Fulbourn provides a variety of local facilities within 12 a minute walking distance to the site including shops, Fulbourn Primary School, Co-op Food, The Village Pharmacy as well as community and leisure facilities. The Capital Park Business Park and Fulbourn Hospital are located 1.5 miles (a 10 minute cycle) from the site on Cambridge Road. Further facilities, employment, health and education opportunities can be found in Cambridge a 20 minute cycle to the west.



Fulbourn Health Centre

- Site boundary
- A Domino Pre-school
- B Fulbourn Pre-school
- C Fulbourn Primary School
- D Landmark International School
- E Cambridge Steiner School
- F Pilgrim Pathways School
- G The Village Pharmacy
- H Fulbourn Health Centre
- I Co-op Food
- J Six Bells public house
- K The White Hart public house
- L Hat and Rabbit public house
- M The Fulbourn Centre
- N Fulbourn Village Library
- O Fulbourn Hub
- P Cheeky Monkey's Playbarn
- Q Capital Park
- R Fulbourn Hospital
- S Sotham Engineering
- T Saint Vigor's with All Saints Fulbourn
- Fulbourn village centre



Facilities plan



The Fulbourn Centre including sports facilities, allotments, a skate park and children's play



Fulbourn High Street



## CONNECTIVITY

### Road Network

The site benefits from excellent access to the strategic road network. Shelford Road, adjacent to the site, directly links to Cambridge Road providing access to Cambridge city centre within 10 minutes by car. To the east, the A11 also directly connects to the M11.

### Pedestrian and cycle network

There are no public rights of way on the site.

A pedestrian/cycle route runs along the majority of Cambridge Road, linking the site via Huntsmill to Capital Park, a major employment area (an eight minute cycle) and Cambridge city centre (a 20 minute cycle), making the site sustainably located, encouraging active travel.

### Public transport

The nearest bus stop, located on Cambridge Road, is a five minute walk from the site. This stop provides access to Cambridge via the Citi 1 service, operating every 15 minutes. Cambridge Train Station is 3.9 miles away and can be reached within a 20 minute cycle or a 34 minute bus ride.



Existing bus stop located on Cambridge Road



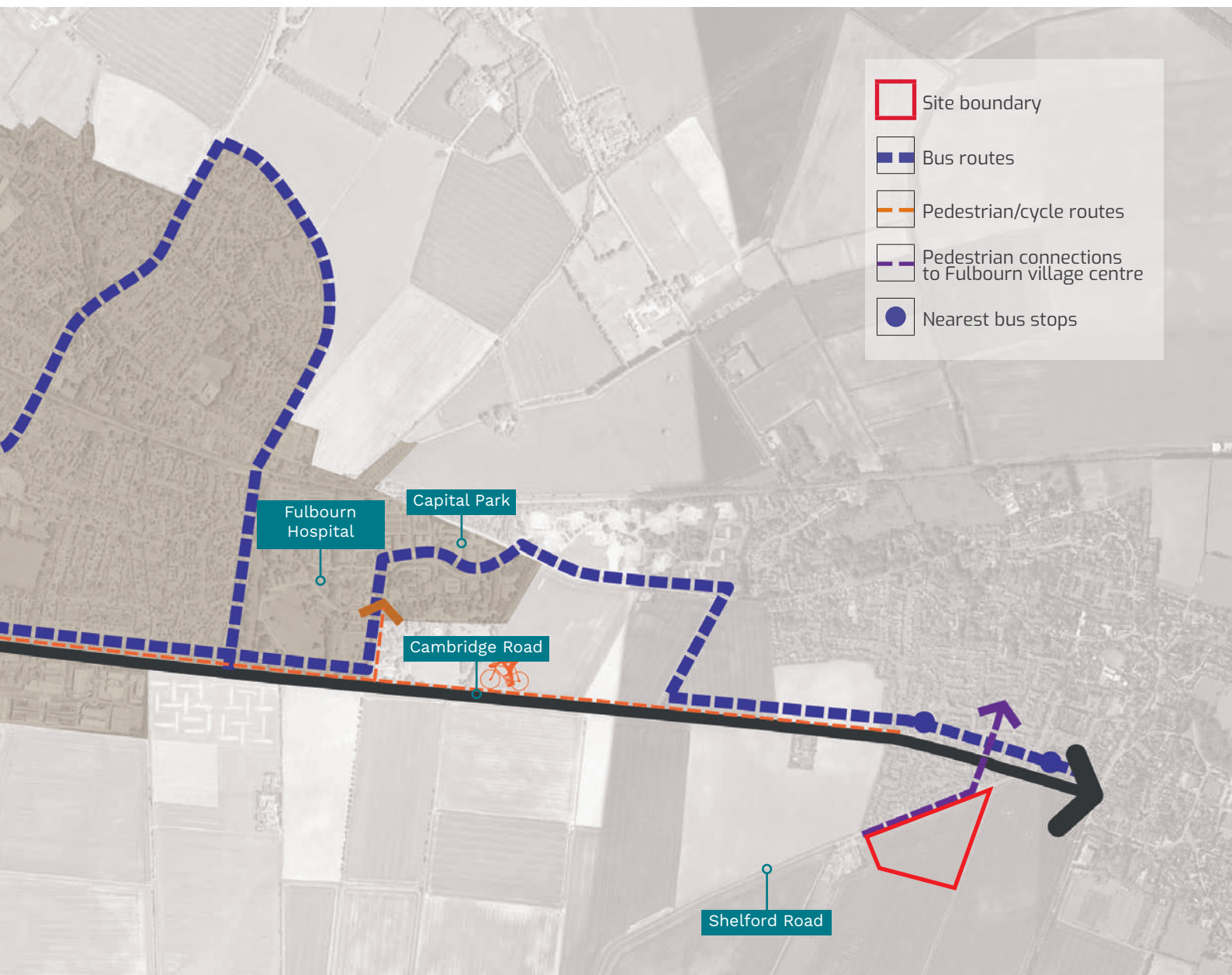




Existing pedestrian footpaths connecting Cambridge Road to Shelford Road



Existing pedestrian/cycle route on Cambridge Road





# Adapting to Climate Change

We believe the Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn should strive for best practice, innovation and exemplar sustainability standards in order to adapt to climate change.

## CLIMATE EMERGENCY

South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council have pledged to take local action to prevent a climate and ecological catastrophe with an aim of achieving net-zero carbon status by 2050.

## OUR PROPOSALS

We take our sustainability responsibilities seriously and therefore put this at the forefront of our proposals. A variety of measures can be taken to address sustainability.

**Firstly**, we have embedded holistic **Social and Economic** site wide strategies that embrace sustainable lifestyles such as walking, cycling, greening the public realm and local food growing into our proposals.

**Secondly**, our design includes site wide **Environmental Protection and Enhancement** solutions to mitigate the effects of climate change – such as sustainable urban drainage systems, woodland planting and habitat creation.

**Thirdly**, our approach to sustainable energy production, **Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change**, is reflected in individual plots and homes through energy reduction technologies.



## ENERGY AND CARBON MANAGEMENT

The energy strategy for the proposals will follow the energy hierarchy; that is to reduce energy demands, provide energy

efficiently and incorporate renewable and low carbon technologies.

Energy demand reduction measures currently available that could be incorporated subject to further design, technical and cost implications include:

- Passive solar design measures that optimise heat losses and gains and maximise natural light penetration.
- Natural ventilation and solar shading which helps prevent overheating and reduces cooling demand.
- New and emerging technology, including heat recovery from waste heat, and façade design as well as using insulation, heat recovery and low energy systems.
- Winter gardens can be used to provide thermal buffering, allow daylight penetration and allow the use of natural ventilation strategies.
- Construction details to be carefully considered to ensure thermal bridging and air permeability is minimised.

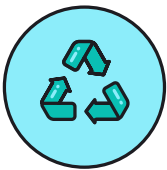


### **WATER RESOURCES AND FLOOD RISK**

The proposals would protect the quality and quantity of water resources and minimise water consumption. This could be achieved by:

- Developing a sustainable water strategy for the site which includes both rainwater and greywater recycling.
- Residential dwellings to include water saving devices.
- Introduction of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

The most appropriate way to manage surface water runoff is through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) which aim to mimic the drainage of greenfield sites.

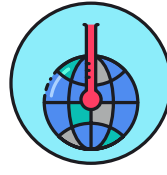


### **MATERIALS AND RESOURCES**

Ensure the materials used on site are of a sustainable nature and aim to minimise resource use.

The selection of materials and components would also consider performance over their design life and their environmental impact, with reference to the BRE's Green Guide to specification. For example, timber products could be obtained from sustainable sources (FSC or equivalent accredited sources). The use of locally and ethically sourced materials would be investigated and used where possible.

We would explore earthworks on the site and aim for a cut and fill balance. All materials excavated will be reused on-site or locally where possible.



### **CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION**

The proposals will be designed to adapt to future climate change including hotter drier summers, wetter warmer winters as well as more extreme cycles of flooding and drought. The masterplan design shall have consideration to the following:

- Orientation of buildings and streets to reduce excessive solar gain and catch breezes.
- The use of green infrastructure, greenspace and bluespace, developed as part of a masterplan and landscape framework, to minimise the urban heat island effect, provide shading and places of refuge and promote evaporative cooling.
- The use of shading to reduce excessive solar gain (e.g., through narrow streets, canopies of street trees, façade design and advanced glazing systems). Efforts to maximise shade in summer will need to take account of the need for light and warmth in winter.
- Passive ventilation through orientation and morphology of buildings and streets. Efforts to catch breezes and increase canyon ventilation paths must also consider the need for winter warmth.
- Consideration in building design to prevent overheating and promote night-time cooling, for example when selecting ventilation and cooling strategies.
- Flood risk management measures and drainage strategies shall take into account increased rainfall events and flooding as a result of climate change.
- Designing drainage systems and water consumption for buildings and landscape with consideration to increased drought conditions and water restrictions.
- Designing buildings for higher wind speeds and driving rain with resilient structures and façades.




# Unconstrained and Deliverable


Our emerging technical and environmental work concludes that there is relatively little to constrain development.


Key considerations include:


- Potential site access to be explored from Shelford Road
- A Sustainable Drainage System (SuDs) should be located at the lowest part of the site and could form part of an ecologically themed semi-wetland parkland landscape
- Existing boundary hedgerows and mature trees should be retained where possible
- There are no views to the Grade II listed Fulbourn Windmill from the site
- The masterplan interface with the surrounding countryside should be considered. The ecology of this area could be enhanced as part of a wider strategy to create a biodiversity net gain across the site and provide an edible landscape buffer
- Responding to the Green Belt to create a 'well rounded', comprehensively planned and green interface with the countryside.

 Site boundary

 5m contours

 Potential vehicular access/egress locations to be explored

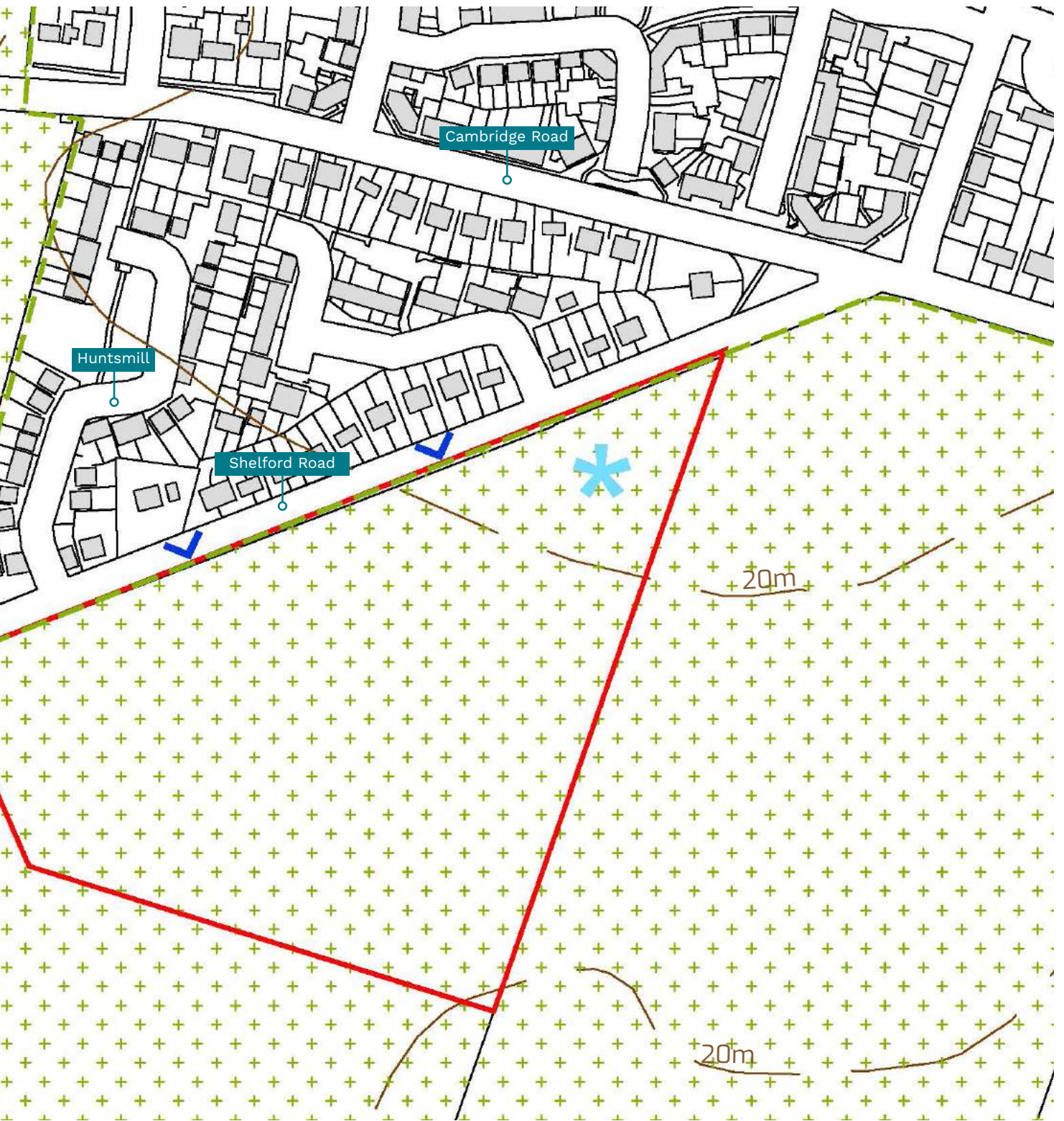
 Indicative location of attenuation features

 Grade II listed buildings

 Green Belt



Existing urban edge of Fulbourn



Existing urban edge of Fulbourn

## LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

A preliminary Landscape and Visual Assessment has been undertaken by Pegasus Ltd. It identifies the key constraints and opportunities in respect of the site and surrounding landscape context. The analysis considers the specific nature of the type of development being considered and informs the proposals for a preliminary development strategy.

Given the scale of development required, any location for growth in the area is likely to result in some impact in relation to landscape and visual matters and also likely to require release of Green Belt land.

However, the site could accommodate a sensitively designed residential scheme with only limited landscape and visual effects at a localised level and such impacts can successfully be avoided or reduced through effective mitigation.

In relation to Green Belt matters, the site has a limited role and function in terms of each of the five purposes and it is considered that potential development can come forward on the site that would not result in sprawl, merging or encroachment, nor would there be any material impact on the character of Fulbourn.

Consequently, potential development of the site would give rise to only limited landscape and visual impacts at a local level and release of the site from the Green Belt would be acceptable in landscape and visual terms. The use of existing landscape components to guide the landscape strategy and subsequent augmentation of these components can set an appropriate, robust and enduring boundary to the Green Belt.



View looking south-east from Cambridge Road at Mill Hill



View looking south-west from School Lane on the settlement edge of Fulbourn



Landscape and Visual Analysis Plan





# Supporting both the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan

Greater Cambridge’s vision for the Local Plan will be secured through the achievement of four 'big themes'. These four themes will shape the future direction of change over the years to 2041.

The proposed four big themes and our response for the site are set out below. The development principles and masterplan set out in the following pages demonstrate how the objectives are woven into our design proposals.



**'Climate change: Help Greater Cambridge transition to net zero carbon by 2050, by ensuring that development is sited in places that help to limit carbon emissions, is designed to the highest achievable standards for energy and water use, and is resilient to current and future climate risks.'**

**Response:** Our aim is to achieve a sustainable development that strives for best practice, innovation and exemplar design standards that put climate change at the forefront of the design process.



**'Biodiversity and green spaces: Increase and improve our network of habitats for wildlife, and green spaces for people, ensuring that development leaves the natural environment better than it was before.'**

**Response:** Our approach creates a development that is landscape and ecology led to provide a significant net biodiversity gain. It is our aim to retain and enhance high quality landscape features and create new public access for residents of the village. Green corridors will connect landscape assets, thus maintaining views to open countryside and the rural character of the village.



**'Wellbeing and social inclusion: Help people in Greater Cambridge to lead healthier and happier lives, ensuring that everyone benefits from the development of new homes and jobs'**

**Response:** Placemaking is more than just housebuilding, it is about creating great places where people are proud to live. As part of our 20-minute neighbourhood approach, we propose a strong focus on health and wellbeing and sociable spaces through the design of public open space to improve the quality of life for all who live in Fulbourn.



**'Great places: Sustain the unique character of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and complement it with beautiful and distinctive development, creating a place where people want to live, work and play.'**

**Response:** Even at this early stage, it is our aim to ensure any future designs will have a strong sense of belonging to Fulbourn through a design process that has carefully considered the ingredients, such as history and character, that make the village so unique.

Furthermore, we would seek to work alongside the parish and adhere to the principles set out within the Fulbourn Village Design Guide. A variety of housing densities will be established across the site to create a variety of new homes and respond to built and landscape context.



The Fulbourn Neighbourhood Plan (FNP) vision states **'New development will ensure the ongoing success of Fulbourn providing suitable housing whilst protecting and enhancing its natural and built assets for future generations.'** The FNP has identified eight planning objectives to achieve this vision and tie in with the policies of the emerging Local Plan. The objectives and our responses are set out below:

**'Retain the character of Fulbourn as an individual village, separate from Cambridge'**

**Response:** We would seek to retain Fulbourn's individuality as a village set within its rural landscape by working alongside the parish and adhering to the Fulbourn Village Design Guide. The site provides a logical final piece of the village at this location with no future possible expansion westwards towards Cambridge.

**'Enhance the rural environment surrounding the village'**

**Response:** We would protect and enhance the natural environment by embedding green infrastructure and biodiversity gains in designs and layouts. This includes the creation of a green edge and allotment glade for the benefit of all who live in Fulbourn. Our proposals also create a network of green corridors and spaces to help to mitigate the effect of climate change, link existing green infrastructure on-site and connect with surrounding neighbourhoods. The green corridors serve as 'active travel' pedestrian and cycle arteries, wildlife habitat creation and movement routes and space for sustainable drainage systems.

**'Maintain and improve the character and distinctiveness of the village'**

**Response:** We want to create a place that belongs to Fulbourn by creating a seamless character that sustains the unique character of the village. We believe housing is the single most important building type in terms of influencing the quality of people's day to day lives and high-quality design and architecture will be key to the project's success.

**'Have a mix of housing that is affordable, available and suitable for all ages and appropriate to the village location'**

**Response:** We envisage a new neighbourhood for Fulbourn that offers a large variety of house types and tenures to suit a wide range of households looking to get on the housing ladder, buy a family home or to downsize. In addition to meeting the minimum requirements for affordable housing, we would explore local needs to provide for an informed mix of house types and tenures that align with local incomes.

**'Support business development and employment opportunities'**

**Response:** The site provides new homes near to regionally significant employment areas including Cambridge, the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, the UK Innovation Corridor and the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor. Our proposals aim to reduce commuting distances by supporting growth in locations close to existing business areas and transport connections.

Homes will also be designed to facilitate comfortable home working and be future-proofed for flexible working arrangements.

**'Improve amenities and community facilities'**

**Response:** The site presents a unique opportunity to deliver landscapes that are missing locally, including an allotment glade, as part of promoting the health and wellbeing of Fulbourn residents. Based on the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood, the site is sustainably located to access a range of facilities to meet daily needs within a 20 minute walk, cycle or public transport ride.

**'Increase the safety of local streets and lanes and enhance access to public transport services'**

**Response:** Designing roads and pavements in such a way that prioritises walking and cycling is key to our proposals, making active travel appealing from the outset. We would explore the potential for off-site highway upgrades to better connect the cycle and public transport corridor at Cambridge Road.

**'Recognise the challenges of climate change and promote the application of appropriate measures through all aspects of development'**

**Response:** As mentioned previously, our aim is to achieve a sustainable development that strives for best practice, innovation and exemplar design standards that put climate change at the forefront of the design process.



# 03 The Vision





# Our Vision: Living Locally

‘Living locally’ seeks to meet everyday needs, nearby.

The world has changed, and change presents a once in a generation opportunity to reconsider the way we live, work and play to promote sustainable placemaking and support the Councils' vision, themes and aims.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed a different way of living and working that will echo long into the future. We now enjoy and expect a different and more balanced way of living and working, with part of the week spent in the home and the remainder in the workplace. People have rediscovered the enjoyment of ‘living locally’ with doorstep access to parks, green spaces and other facilities including shops and schools now high up the agenda.

The concept of ‘living locally’ is at the heart of our proposals and is designed to meet the shifting needs in a post-pandemic world. Put simply, the ‘living locally’ concept seeks to create ‘20-minute neighbourhoods’, places where residents do not have to travel far to meet their daily needs. The Land at Shelford Road will allow people of all ages and abilities to grow their own food, enjoy opportunities outdoors to promote health and wellbeing, walk to the local shop and school, work comfortably from home, participate in local social networks and groups, converse with neighbours and conveniently and sustainably travel further afield for work, learning or leisure.

## ‘LIVING LOCALLY’: THE 20-MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The idea of the 20-minute neighbourhood (also known as 15-minute cities) has grown with interest around the world, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic put a spotlight on the importance of the liveability of where we reside.

Another way of describing a complete, compact and connected neighbourhood, where people can meet their everyday needs within a short walk or cycle, the idea of the 20-minute neighbourhood presents multiple benefits including boosting local economies, improving people's health and wellbeing, increasing social connections in communities and tackling climate change.



As a 20-minute neighbourhood, the Land at Shelford Road is a sustainable location for new development and benefits from a wide range of local facilities. Fulbourn village centre is within a short walk and provides a range of facilities to meet the day to day needs of its residents sustainably.



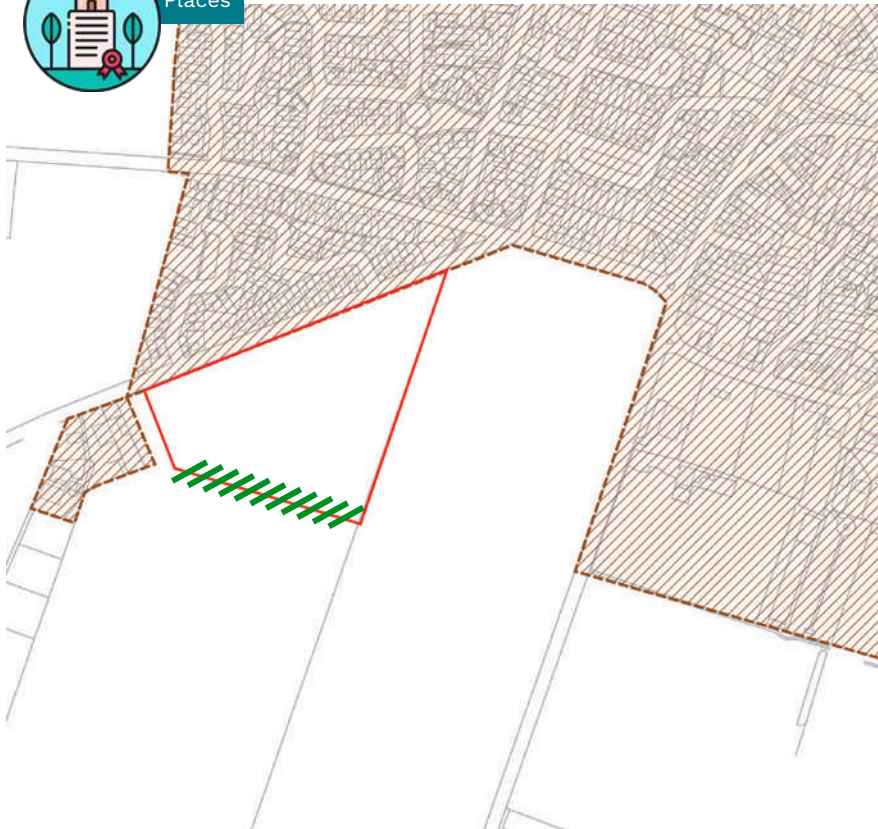
# Development Principles

The following pages set out a sequence of diagrams to show the key organising principles for the proposed development at the Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn.

The design rationale is developed in response to the contextual analysis and technical constraints work set out earlier in this document.



Great Places



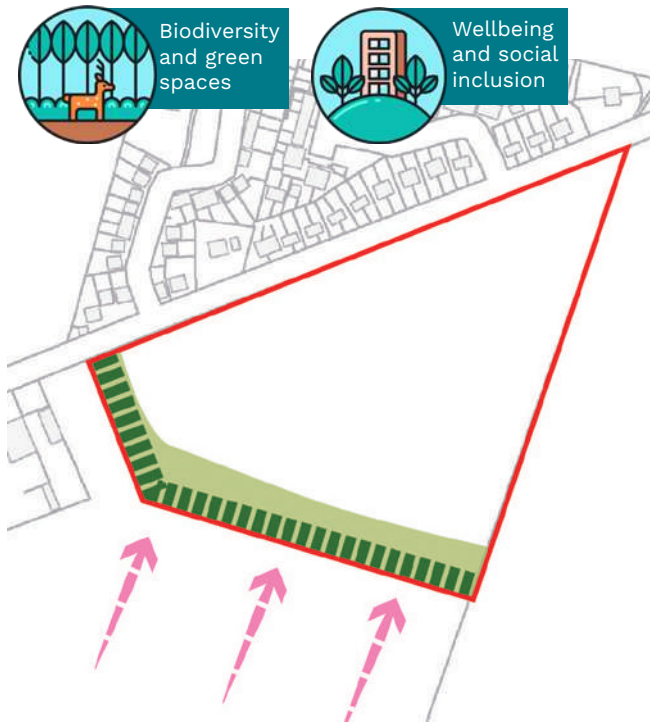
## 1.COMPLETING THE VILLAGE EDGE

The development of the site is the next logical step in the natural evolution of the village and completes the settlement edge at this location.

The site presents the opportunity to provide a comprehensively planned and green edge to the village.



The site presents a logical location for development and provides a comprehensively designed and green edge to the countryside



## 2. CREATE AN EDIBLE LANDSCAPE BELT TO MITIGATE THE POTENTIAL FOR VISUAL IMPACT, PROMOTE HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY

Our 'edible woodland' will be a carefully designed and maintained ecosystem of useful plants and produce-bearing trees. Drawing upon some elements of 'forest gardening', this approach is rooted in principles that were once commonplace around the world.

The creation of an edible woodland belt will:

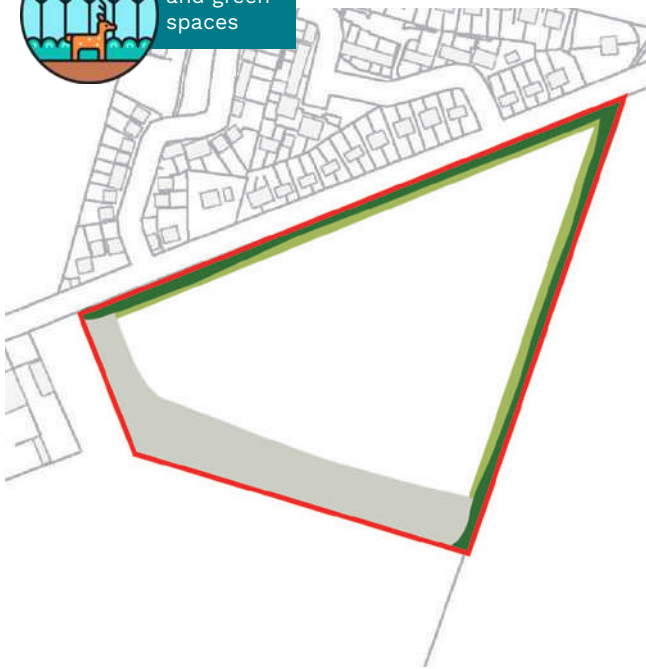
- help to mitigate views from the surrounding Green Belt
- create a landscaped edge between the site and open countryside
- promote health and wellbeing
- connect existing green infrastructure assets to enhance biodiversity and create a green network
- create an attractive outlook for new homes
- provide an allotment glade to meet an identified local need (see page 22 of this document)



Variety of edible landscape to enhance biodiversity and promote health and wellbeing



Biodiversity  
and green  
spaces



### 3. RETAIN EXISTING VEGETATION TO FORM A BIODIVERSITY NETWORK

Existing good quality hedgerows and trees are to be retained as part of a connected green infrastructure network that will contribute to the landscape character of the site and provide a significant biodiversity net gain. The retention of existing vegetation also creates an attractive outlook for new homes.



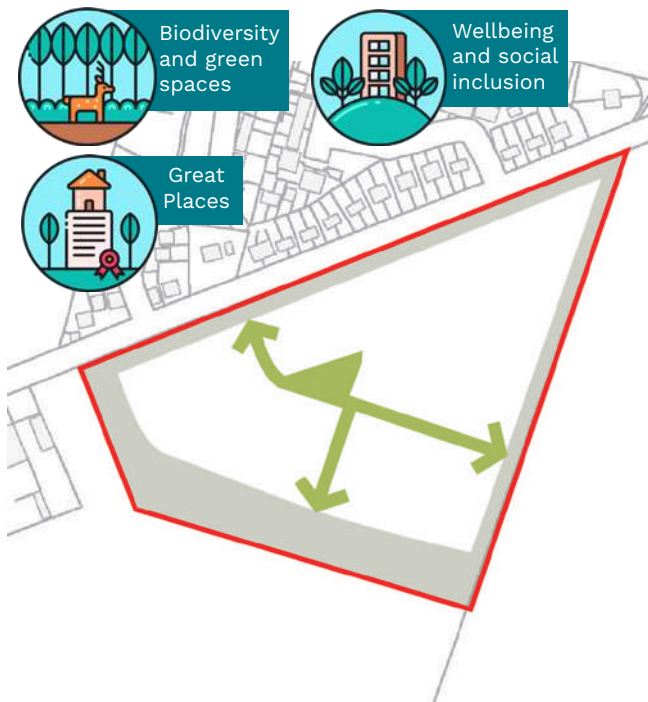
Existing hedgerow along the north-west site boundary to be retained as part of a green infrastructure network to provide a significant biodiversity net gain.



Opportunities include community orchards, gardens, woodland and wildflower meadows, providing edible landscapes for people and wildlife.



Provide net gain for species diversity and abundance, connect and extend the network of semi-natural habitats, make space for nature with a design led by biodiversity and return an arable landscape to a semi-natural landscape allowing habitats to develop naturally over time.



#### 4. CREATE A SERIES OF LANDSCAPE CORRIDORS AND A GREEN TO CONNECT TOGETHER EXISTING VEGETATION AND NATURAL ASSETS

The landscape network:

- creates a doorstep resource for growing food, children's play, exercise and relaxation
- creates a nature recovery network for net biodiversity gain
- promotes healthy lifestyles by encouraging walking and cycling
- provides corridors for wildlife movement
- provides an opportunity to reconnect residents with nature on a daily basis to promote wellbeing

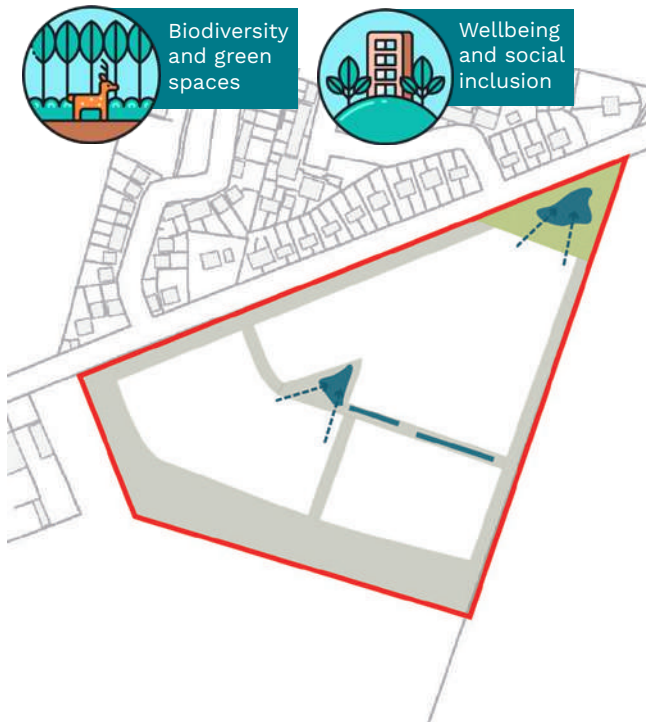


Example imagery of housing interacting with landscape corridors to reconnect residents with the natural world on a daily basis



Example imagery of landscape corridors to enhance biodiversity, promote health and wellbeing and encourage walking and cycling





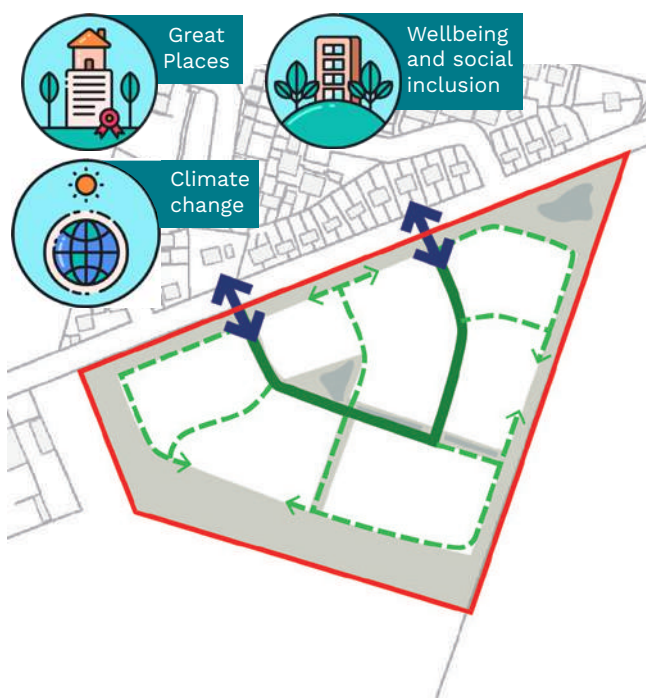
### 5. CREATE A WETLAND LANDSCAPE

The existing topography provides an opportunity to create a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) of swales and ponds to mitigate surface water as a landmark gateway feature at the site.

The creation of a SuDS network provides the opportunity for semi-wetland habitats to enhance biodiversity. Swales and ponds also provide a place for people to enjoy nature and relax.



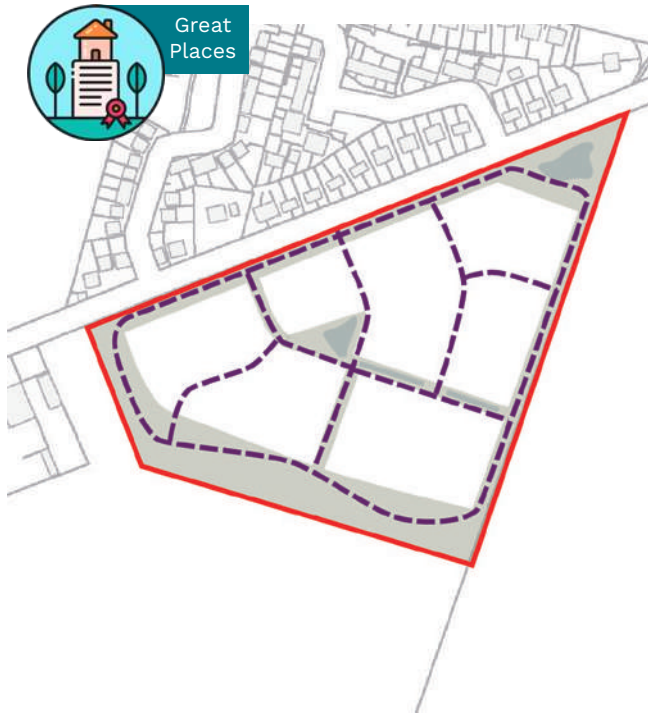
Opportunity for wetland spaces and attenuation swales to provide an education resource and reconnect residents with nature



### 6. CREATE TWO ACCESS POINTS AND A NETWORK OF HEALTHY STREETS

Streets will be designed in accordance with the principles of Manual for Streets and will be tree planted. Pedestrians will have priority over vehicles throughout the masterplan with reduced vehicular traffic speed.

Two access/egress points to the site are proposed at Shelford Road.



**7. CREATE A NETWORK OF SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES**

The provision of sustainable alternatives to the car are an important feature of our proposals to promote health and wellbeing and reduce carbon emissions as an alternative to the car for daily trips. A range of pedestrian and cycle routes provide safe and attractive routes to access Fulbourn within a 12 minute walk.



Opportunity to encourage walking and cycling throughout the scheme

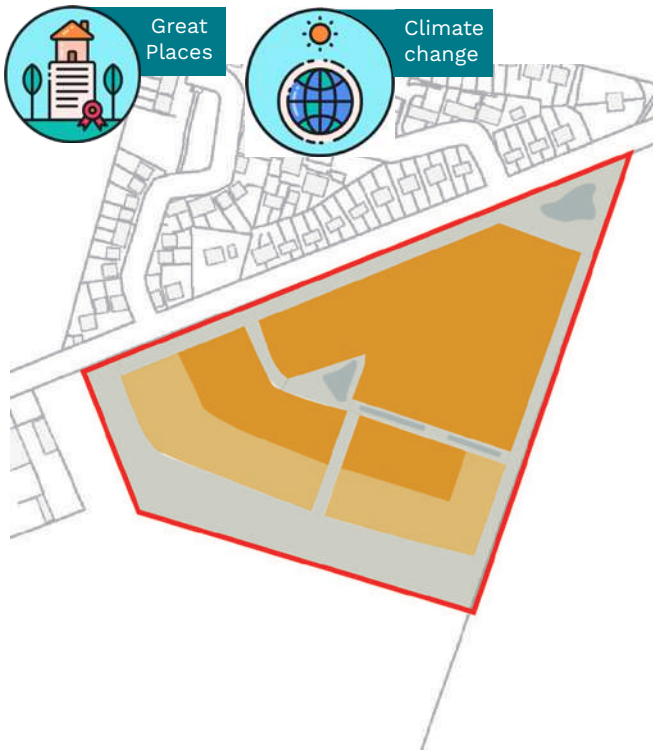


**8. CREATE OPPORTUNITY FOR FUTURE CYCLE CONNECTIONS**

The existing highway and pedestrian route (---) connecting the site along Huntsmill could be upgraded to include cycle provision, exploring the opportunity to better connect to the cycle and public transport corridor at Cambridge Road (---).



Existing footpath along Huntsmill



## 9. CREATE NEW, HIGH QUALITY HOMES THAT FULBOURN CAN BE PROUD OF

High quality design and architecture that is complimentary to the Green Belt will be at the heart of the Land at Shelford Road. A variety of housing densities will be established which is sensitive to the Green Belt character and our landscape led approach.

Lower density housing (●) will respond to parts of the site at the interface with the countryside that require a lesser intensity of development whereas medium/higher (●) density areas respond to parts of the site that are less visually sensitive and that are set in the context of existing development.

The development would offer a large variety of house types and tenures to suit a wide range of households looking to get on the housing ladder, buy a family home or downsize. This approach encourages social cohesion by providing the opportunity for residents to stay in Fulbourn and maintain all-important friend and family networks.



Example imagery of housing





# A vision framework for the Land at Shelford Road











Our design proposal delivers up to 150 new homes and addresses the four key themes set out in earlier chapters of this document.

The site has the potential to deliver new homes near to significant local facilities and employment opportunities with an emphasis on design, health and wellbeing, sustainability and addressing the climate crisis.

The development is provided in a generous landscape setting that offers a significant biodiversity net gain.

Our proposals include:

- up to 150 new homes
- extensive green infrastructure
- new play spaces
- opportunities for forest garden/edible landscapes, including an allotment glade
- a structural planting buffer on the southern boundary to help mitigate external views as part of a new and comprehensively designed green village edge.

-  Site boundary
-  Potential site access points to be explored
-  Strategic buffer planting along existing Highfields Farm boundary screening long distance views from Fulbourn Windmill
-  Approximate location for a Sustainable Urban Drainage System
-  Proposed play space
-  Development set back from open countryside/Green Belt.
-  Opportunity for forest garden/edible landscape including an allotment glade
-  Proposed green connection corridors
-  Pedestrian and cycle connection towards Cambridge Road
-  Nearest bus stop



Existing pedestrian/cycle route to Cambridge

Cambridge Road

Fulbourn Village Centre  
12 minutes walk

Low point

Huntsmill

Shelford Road

Highfields Farm

Planting buffer to views from the south



# 04 Conclusion



# Conclusion

This document has demonstrated that the Land at Shelford Road scheme being proposed by Miller Homes is a sustainable neighbourhood extension to Fulbourn.

The scheme as set out in this Vision Document will provide the following:



### MEETING HOUSING NEED

Approximately 150 high quality homes, including affordable and market homes including homes designed to meet the needs of first time buyers and an ageing population. A wide variety of house types and tenures will be provided to suit a wide range of households looking to start on the housing ladder, buy a family home or downsize.



### HIGHLY SUSTAINABLE

New homes that will be highly sustainable and designed to meet the Future Homes Standard 2025 and contribute towards achieving zero carbon by 2050. The scheme will provide of electric vehicle charging points to all homes.



### PROVISION OF MULTI-FUNCTIONAL GREEN SPACE

Approximately 34% of the site will be green space to provide a network of multi-functional green infrastructure that supports a range of informal and formal activities for everyone's participation. Activities include new play spaces, a forest garden and edible landscapes, such as an allotment glade.



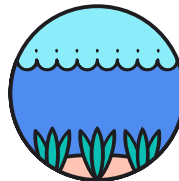
### PROPOSED COMMUNITY

A community that is designed to meet the changing needs of an ageing population to promote both independence and provide opportunities for social interaction.



### SUBSTANTIAL BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

A substantial biodiversity net gain can be delivered on the site by converting existing arable fields of low ecological value to a mosaic of species-rich grasslands, new flood meadow, hedgerow enhancements and new native tree and shrub planting across the site.



### SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

The site will incorporate sustainable drainage systems which will discharge surface water in line with the SuDS hierarchy and national and local planning policy.



### QUALITY HOMES

The scheme will provide high quality homes that complements the character of Fulbourn, through the identification of its unique characteristics and sensitive integration with the existing settlement pattern of the village.



### PROMOTE ACTIVE TRAVEL

New and improved footpaths and cycleways will discourage car-base travel and connect residents to Fulbourn village centre and to bus and cycle corridor on Cambridge Road promoting active travel.



Our framework articulates a design response to site-specific considerations and opportunities. However, this plan is intended to be a basis for further discussions with stakeholders and is expected to evolve to reflect the outcomes of further studies and consultation.

Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that:

**“Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.”**

Beyond the Cambridge urban area, the largest and most sustainable settlements, within close proximity of the city and along key public transport corridors, are within the Green Belt.

Fulbourn is one of the largest villages in South Cambridgeshire and benefits from a wide range of services and facilities that caters for the day to day needs of residents.

The site itself is within a 12 minute walk of the village centre, which including shops, Fulbourn Primary School, Co-op Food, The Village Pharmacy as well as community and leisure facilities. The site is also within walking distance of existing bus stops on Cambridge Road, which provides direct services (Citi 1 and Citi 3) to the major local employment destinations such as Capitol Park, ARM, Addenbrookes and the city centre.

The proposals for Land at Shelford Road are landscape-led with an emphasis on accommodating development in a manner which would not cause significant harm to

the wider countryside, in particular the visual amenity and purposes of the Green Belt. This approach has been guided by specialist landscape and Green Belt assessments. Through the assessments undertaken by Miller’s consultant team, no insurmountable environmental or technical constraints exist to the delivery of the scheme or that would restrict the development of the site in the short to medium term.

In terms of availability, the site is not under multiple ownership and Miller Homes hold the exclusive option to develop the land shown within the red line boundary. For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the site is deliverable and can make an important contribution to meeting South Cambridgeshire’s and Cambridge City’s housing requirement in the shorter term.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed a different way of living and working that will echo long into the future. The concept of ‘living locally’ is at the heart of our proposals and is designed to meet the shifting needs in a post-pandemic world.

In conclusion, the site will be a high quality, sustainable, landscape and design-led scheme that will provide real benefits to both future residents and the wider community of Fulbourn. The site is both suitable and achievable for this scheme and will provide a positive and meaningful contribution to this area.

In light of this submission, Miller would request that the Council’s include Land at Shelford Road, Fulbourn as an allocation in the emerging Local Plan.



## **Appendix 3: Pegasus Landscape Appraisal and Green Belt Review**

**LAND SOUTH OF SHELFORD ROAD, FULBOURN,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

**PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL  
APPRAISAL & GREEN BELT REVIEW**

**ON BEHALF OF MILLER HOMES**



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## **FIGURES**

Figure 1	Viewpoint Locations and PROW
Figure 2	Viewpoint Photographs 1 to 8
Figure 3	Landscape and Visual Analysis

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **Terms of reference**

- 1.1. Pegasus Group have been instructed by Miller Homes to undertake a preliminary appraisal of landscape and visual matters in relation to land to the south of Shelford Road, Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire, in support of representations being made to the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan Consultation.
- 1.2. The wider site area being considered comprises approximately 6.1 hectares (ha) of agricultural land, located on the southern edge of the settlement of Fulbourn, located in the administrative area of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC).
- 1.3. Fulbourn itself is located ca. 6.5km to the east of the centre of Cambridge, with the landscape surrounding the settlement generally forming part of the Cambridge Green Belt; the Green Belt extends up to the alignment of the A11 which, at its closest point, is approximately 2.5km to the south-east of the settlement.
- 1.4. This report sets out a brief preliminary appraisal of landscape and visual matters (PLVA) which has been undertaken to determine the various landscape and visual constraints and opportunities regarding the wider site area and its context.
- 1.5. The PLVA considers existing landscape and visual receptors in the study area, including physical landscape resources; landscape character; and, views/visual amenity experienced by residents, recreational users (including visitors and tourists) and road users.
- 1.6. Having determined the various constraints and opportunities, the PLVA proceeds to consider how these might serve to influence the 'development potential' of the wider site area and how this might relate to an appropriate Green Belt edge.
- 1.7. Principles and good practice for undertaking landscape and visual impact assessment are set out in the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013). The concepts and procedures set out in this guidance have been adopted where appropriate.

## 2. APPROACH

### Overview

2.1. The approach and methodology used for this PLVA has been developed using best practice guidance, as set out in the following documents:

- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition;
- Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment; and
- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 (September 2019) Visual Representation of Development Proposals.

2.2. Reference has also been made to additional sources of data and information, including desk study and field work (including site visits undertaken in February 2020).

### Level of assessment

2.3. Principles and good practice for undertaking landscape and visual impact assessment are set out in the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013).

2.4. The third edition of the Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) acknowledges that landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) can be carried out either as a standalone assessment or as part of a broader EIA. The GLVIA3 note that the overall principles and core steps in the process are the same but that there are specific procedures in EIA with which an LVIA must comply.

2.5. This report has been prepared as a preliminary appraisal of landscape and visual constraints and opportunities. Although Green Belt is primarily a planning matter, there are some overlaps with landscape and visual matters (in respect of physical landscape attributes and perception of countryside), consequently this report considers the current Green Belt evidence for the emerging local plan.

2.6. Landscape features and elements provide the physical environment for flora and fauna and the associated importance of biodiversity assets. This PLVA does not consider the value, susceptibility or importance on ecology and biodiversity, nor does it consider impacts from an ecological stance.

2.7. Heritage assets such as Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas all contribute to the overall present-day landscape character, context and setting of an area. These aspects have been given consideration in the PLVA in terms of physical landscape resources (for example trees and hedgerows) and landscape character. However, this PLVA does not address the historic significance, importance or potential impacts on heritage assets and designations; these assets are assessed in the context of landscape and visual matters only.



### **3. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT**

#### **Site Overview**

- 3.1. The site comprises part of a single agricultural field, currently in arable use. It sits immediately adjacent to the existing settlement edge of Fulbourn, south of Shelford Road. Where it borders the site, Shelford Road is characterised by a mix of late twentieth century residential dwellings which and is relatively prominent in the local landscape context.
- 3.2. The northern and eastern site boundaries comprise dense continuous hedgerow, with some occasional breaks and gaps, generally related to field gates and access into the enclosures. The hedgerows are generally well managed and currently limited in their overall height. The western boundary of the site comprises some broken hedgerows and buildings which form part of the adjacent farm complex (Windmill View). The southern boundary is not defined by any physical landscape feature on the ground and the remaining area of the arable enclosure (outside of the site) extends further south, to the east of Limepit Hill where the field is enclosed by further hedgerows.
- 3.3. The landform of the site is generally even, with a relatively gradual gradient that falls from the west to the east, with a low point in the north-eastern corner of the site. The whole of the site is situated between the +25m and +20m contours, and it forms a small part of a wider undulating landscape that transitions to the south and up toward the lower slopes of the Gog Magog Hills (to the south) which themselves serve to physically and visually contain the site.
- 3.4. There is currently no formal public access to the site and, aside from access to the local road network, recreational access to the local landscape via the formal public rights of way network is relatively limited. This includes a public footpath which is located over 1km to the south-east of the site (with access from the eastern edge of the settlement, off Balsham Road).
- 3.5. The site is broadly consistent with the wider landscape context in terms of its intensified arable land use, and the associated scale of the wider field patterns. However there is also a strong relationship between the site and the settlement pattern, given the proximity of the site to the wider settlement area (the pattern of which extends further east, west and south of the site) along with the prominence and influence on the local landscape character of the existing residential edge.

## **Site Context**

- 3.6. The site is located on the southern edge of the existing settlement of Fulbourn and is enclosed immediately to the north by the existing settlement edge. Notwithstanding an additional field enclosure immediately to the east of the site, the settlement pattern extends around this and provides further enclosure to the east.
- 3.7. The arable landscape is the dominant component of the rural landscape, extending across a wide area whereby the field pattern has been intensified and vegetation cover limited to strong linear patterns comprising hedgerows or avenues of trees. Woodland cover is limited to small scale copses or tree belts and these tend to be scattered sparsely across the area.
- 3.8. Combined with the undulating nature of the topography, and general rise up to the more pronounced chalk hills and scarps to the south, the wider landscape can feel exposed and large scale. The hills and ridgelines themselves often form larger scale features that separate different parts of the landscape and provide containment to some settlement areas.
- 3.9. Settlements tend to be clearly defined, and often exposed, in terms of the interface between the built and rural environments. As such the settlement edge of Fulbourn (where it is often characterised by residential built form) can be prominent in the local landscape.
- 3.10. Landscape components, such as local hills and landmarks provide reference points and present some legibility to the settlement approaches (for example, the windmill at Mill Hill and Limepit Hill).

## **Landscape Related Designations**

- 3.11. The wider site area is not subject to any specific statutory or non-statutory landscape designations, nor are these present in the immediate landscape context.
- 3.12. The site and wider landscape context is included in the Cambridge Green Belt which has some relevance to landscape and visual matters.
- 3.13. Other designations that have some relevance to landscape and visual matters that are present in the wider study area include:

- The Fulbourn Conservation Area extends across the northern and eastern parts of the settlement, however this is physically and visually separated from the site;
- A number of listed buildings, largely within the settlement of Fulbourn which tend to be physically separated by other parts of the settlement, but also including the Grade II Windmill on Cambridge Road;
- Several scheduled monuments across the wider landscape, including Wandlebury Camp (ca. 2.9km to the south) and the Bowl barrow on Copley Hill (ca. 2.5km to the south/south-east); and
- Wandlebury Country Park (ca. 2.5km to the south-west).

3.14. In general, whilst these have some relevance to considerations of sensitivity of the wider character of the landscape, they are only considered further in terms of the analysis of constraints and opportunities.

### **Landscape Character**

3.15. Reference has been made to published guidance on landscape character for the area. The site is located in the following landscape character types/areas:

- National level - NCA 87: East Anglian Chalk; and
- Regional level - The East of England Landscape Character Typology, 'Lowland Village Chalklands' landscape character area (LCA).

3.16. A summary of these profiles, relevant to the site and study area, is set out below.

### ***National Landscape Character***

3.17. At a national level, the site is situated within the National Character Area (NCA) 87: East Anglian Chalk<sup>1</sup>. Where relevant to the site and its landscape context, the key characteristics of NCA 87 are summarised as follows:

- The underlying and solid geology is dominated by Upper Cretaceous Chalk...the chalk bedrock has given the NCA its nutrient-poor and shallow soils;
- The rolling downland, mostly in arable production, has sparse tree cover but distinctive beech belts along long, straight roads. Certain high points have small beech copses or 'hanger', which are prominent and characteristic features in the open landscape. In the east there are pine belts;

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<sup>1</sup> NCA Profile 87: East Anglian Chalk (NE529), March 2015

- Archaeological features include Neolithic long barrows and bronze-age tumuli lining the route of the prehistoric Icknield Way; iron-age hill forts, including that at Wandlebury; impressive Roman burial monuments and cemeteries such as the Bartlow Hills; a distinctive communication network linking the rural Roman landscape to settlements and small towns, such as Great Chesterford; the four parallel Cambridgeshire dykes that cross the Chalk: the Anglo-Saxon linear earthworks of Devil's Dyke, Fleam Dyke, Heydon/Bran Ditch and Brent Ditch; ridge-and-furrow cultivation remains of the open field systems of the earlier medieval period; and large numbers of later moated enclosures, park lands created, sheepwalks, arterial routes and nucleated villages that emphasise the land use change of this period;
- Brick and 'clunch' (building chalk) under thatched roofs were the traditional building materials, with some earlier survival of timber frame. Isolated farmhouses built of grey or yellowish brick have a bleached appearance;
- Settlement is focused in small towns and in villages. There are a number of expanding commuter villages located generally within valleys...; and
- The NCA is traversed by the Icknield Way, an ancient route that is now a public right of way. Roads and lanes strike across the downs perpendicularly and follow historical tracks that originally brought livestock to their summer grazing. Today major roads and railways are prominent landscape characteristics of the NCA.

3.18. Given the scale of the NCA these physical components and characteristics are likely to be represented across the wider context of the NCA; therefore, in this context, changes at a site level will be small scale and not likely to impact upon landscape character as defined by the NCAs. The NCA guidance does however give an indication of key characteristics relevant to the surrounding landscape context.

3.19. Reference has also been made to the published landscape character assessment prepared at a finer grain and more local scale.

### ***Regional Landscape Character***

3.20. At a regional level, reference is made to 'The East of England Landscape Character Typology (EELCT). This draws on a range of data including local Landscape Character Assessment, Historic Landscape Characterisation, biodiversity, and rural settlement datasets as well as data generated through consultation.

3.21. The site is located in an area defined by the guidance as the 'Lowland Village Chalklands' but relatively close to the 'Chalk Hills and Scarps' which are located south of Fulbourn. The Lowland Village Chalklands is described by the guidance as:

3.22. *"Low lying, but gently rolling arable landscape, dissected by small streams, with a distinctive pattern of nucleated villages and a patchwork of woodlands and shelterbelts."*

3.23. The key characteristics of the Lowland Village Chalklands, relevant to the site and study area, are described within the EELCT as:

- Landform: A generally low lying, gently rolling topography, although some areas adjacent to lower lying levels can appear elevated;
- Primary land use: Arable land use predominates with some areas of pasture and orchards;
- Tree cover: Groups of trees, often around farmsteads and occasional small plantation;
- Enclosure pattern: Medium/large scale, regular field pattern, defined by well trimmed hedgerows. Field systems include a mix of rectilinear & sinuous patterns, reflecting the process of planned surveyor enclosure from common fields;
- Settlement pattern: A dense, largely nucleated, rural settlement pattern composed of small towns (e.g. Biggleswade), villages and outlying farmsteads. Larger towns (e.g. Bedford) often exert an urbanising influence on this landscape. Main building materials include Gault clay, brick, clay tile, render and thatch;
- Historic development: A landscape dominated by the late enclosure of common fields. Large pockets of earlier enclosure also exist, also created from common fields. All fieldscapes have experienced significant modification during the 20th century; and
- Views: Sparse woodland cover giving rise to open character and extensive views.

### ***District Landscape Character***

3.24. At the District level, landscape character is addressed by a more recent study, the 'Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment', prepared by Chris Blandford Associates on behalf of SCDC and Cambridge City Council (CCC) (August 2021).

3.25. The site is located in a landscape character type (LCT) defined by the study as '6 - Fen Edge Chalklands'. The key characteristics are described by the study as follows:

- Low-lying, gently undulating landform;

- Generally open landscape with long views across large fields;
- Predominantly arable landscape dominated by late enclosures, with limited woodland cover and low, hawthorn hedge or ditch boundaries;
- A variety of parkland landscapes in proximity to the historic villages;
- Vegetation comprises scattered woodland copses and shelterbelts across the higher landform, with a concentration of woodland around settlements forming part of remnant parkland landscape;
- Settlement comprises generally small villages with strong, historic, linear form and traditional vernacular; and
- Vertical features including the high voltage pylon lines to the northeast and east of the city, telegraph poles and masts are very prominent in the gently undulating landscape.

3.26. The landscape condition and strength of character of the LCT are both defined by the study as 'moderate' (noting that the entire study area is defined as either moderate or good, no lower graduations). The objectives for the LCT are defined as being to 'enhance and restore' which are described as having:

- To enhance, placing an emphasis on enhancing existing character, which may include improvements to current landscape management regimes and adopting best practice; and
- To restore, an emphasis should be on restoring elements of historic, ecological and amenity value that have been lost or decline and that this may include re-introduction of landscape elements/features in line with best practice.

3.27. The study also sets out detailed guidelines in respect of development and its integration into the landscape (refer to **Plate 1**).

## Plate 1: Development Guidelines for 'LCT 6 - Fen Edge Chalklands'

### Guidance for Integrating Development into the Landscape

- Conserve the overall rural character, with dispersed, linear Fen Edge villages, farms and long views across open fields
- Maintain the distinctive settlement pattern of the area and its local context
- Maintain the linear, or rectilinear form of the settlements
- Ensure density and pattern of new developments reflect that of existing villages and hamlets
- Avoid backland and cul-de-sac developments where possible
- Ensure buildings are arranged in continuous frontages within village cores and are arranged in loose knit patterns facing the street on more peripheral sites
- Ensure new developments are integrated with sufficient space for garden and street tree planting where applicable
- Enhance village gateways and, where appropriate, consider provision of appropriate planting on village approaches
- Take opportunities to create new village greens and/or wildlife areas within new developments.
- Ensure new developments integrate/connect with existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) within development layout.
- Ensure new developments reflect the form, scale and proportions of the existing vernacular buildings and pick up on the traditional local building styles, height, materials, colours and textures.
- Enclose boundaries facing the street in village cores by low, or high, flint walls with brick detailing, simple decorative railings, picket fencing or hedging
- Enclose boundaries facing the street on village peripheries with hedge and tree planting
- Avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials, street furniture, lighting and signage as part of traffic calming measures wherever appropriate
- Ensure new agricultural buildings, such as large storage sheds, are sited and designed to reduce their apparent mass, minimising their impact on the wider landscape by the appropriate use of texture, colour and planting

3.28. Where relevant, these guidelines can be used to inform the analysis of constraints and opportunities for the site and be used to guide a strategy for the design of potential development on the site.

3.30. The key characteristics of the LCA include reference to 'limited settlement comprising scattered isolated farms and cottages' however the LCA does not include Fulbourn itself, and consequently does not reflect the influence of the exposed southern edge of the settlement on this part of the landscape. However, the study does briefly note that the settlement of Fulbourn is present in localised views.

3.31. Specific landscape guidelines for the LCA are defined by the study as:

- Maintain the strong, regular field pattern;

- Maintain distinctive linear features; and
  - Maintain the distinctive regular field pattern and linear features.
- 3.32. It is possible to address scale and pattern of a landscape in respect of a suitable development envelope for any proposed development, consequently these guidelines can also be used to inform an appropriate strategy for potential development on the site.
- 3.33. Reference to these characteristics can inform the analysis of constraints and opportunities in relation to the site and such an approach will consequently respond appropriately to the context of the local landscape character.
- 3.34. The benefit of the more local level assessment of the EELCT and Greater Cambridgeshire LCA over the broader NCA guidance (from Natural England) is that it undertakes the assessment of landscape character at a more detailed level and the finer grain of analysis accounts for the context of the site in its wider landscape context.

## **Visual Baseline**

### ***Context of Views/Visual Amenity***

- 3.35. This section provides a description of the nature and extent of the existing views from, towards and between the site and the surrounding area. It also includes reference to specific locations that will have potential views of proposed development across the site.
- 3.36. Establishing the specific nature of these views provides an understanding of the context and setting of representative viewpoints and the nature of views in terms of distance, angle of view, and seasonal constraints associated with specific visual receptors. The identification of key sensitive receptors and links to the representative viewpoint are carried forward to the appraisal process (refer to **Figure 1: Viewpoint Locations and PROW** and **Figure 2: Viewpoint Photographs**).

### ***Visual Envelope***

- 3.37. The visual envelope is the area of landscape from which a site or a proposed development will potentially be visible. It accounts for general judgements on the theoretical visibility of a site or proposed development and sets a broad context for the study area within which to address landscape and visual impacts.
- 3.38. The extent of a visual envelope will be influenced by the physical landscape components of an area, such as hedgerows, woodlands or buildings and can also be influenced by



distance from a site. Given the scale of the wider site area, there is a greater or lesser degree of visibility subject to the location and context to the particular part.

3.39. As previously noted, the existing settlement edge, along with the nature of the local topography both influence local landscape context of the site and contribute to a degree of containment, both physically and visually. Consequently, the visual envelope of the site is defined as:

- to the north, limited to the road users and residential dwellings on the settlement edge (including Shelford Road and some oblique/filtered views from Doggets Lane);
- to the east, limited to the route of Babraham Road, with views further to the east generally screened by landform and layers of vegetation;
- to the south, limited to the extended length of Babraham Road (close to The Grange Farm) where landform and vegetation begin to form a more complete screen; and
- to the west, limited by landform and vegetation associated with the agricultural land across Limepit Hill (and the extended length of Shelford Road).

3.40. Overall, considering the that the wider landscape is has a general sense of openness, the site is both physically and visually well contained with the influence of potential development across the site limited to the site and its immediate context.

3.41. Proposals for some form of built development would introduce elements that are situated above the existing ground plane of the site and consequently may be more visible from the local landscape, whoever this is unlikely to be seen beyond the immediate landscape.

### ***Visual Receptors***

3.42. Based on the approximate visual envelope, the principal visual receptors may include:

- Local residents in close proximity to the site, including those along Shelford Road, oblique and filtered views from Cambridge Road and Doggets Lane to the north-east, plus any views from dwellings on Mill Hill (adjacent to the windmill);
- Users of PROW, generally limited, but including the distant public footpath to the east. Views from rights of way further to the south and to the north-east are generally screened; and
- Road users, including those on the settlement approaches to Fulbourn from the west, including Cambridge Road and Shelford Road. Babraham Road forms a minor route to the local farmsteads and to Copley Hill (and also appears to be used as an alternative route and Wandlebury Country Park).

3.43. The following viewpoints have been included as representative locations (refer to **Figure 1: Viewpoint Locations and PROW** and **Figure 1: Viewpoint Photographs**).

- Viewpoint 1: View looking south from Shelford Road, looking directly into the site;
- Viewpoint 2: View looking south-east from Cambridge Road, at Mill Hill;
- Viewpoint 3: View looking south-west from School Lane, on the settlement edge of Fulbourn;
- Viewpoint 4: View looking west from Babraham Road, close to the settlement edge of Fulbourn;
- Viewpoint 5: View looking north-west from Babraham Road, north of The Grange Farm;
- Viewpoint 6: View looking north-west from the public footpath, east of The Grange Farm;
- Viewpoint 7: View looking north-east from the 'E2 European Long Distance Route' south of Hill Farm; and
- Viewpoint 8: View looking north-east from the vantage point on the edge of Wandlebury Country Park Further analysis is set out in later sections of this appraisal.

3.44. Receptors of the highest sensitivity include residents; people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is likely to be focused on the landscape, for example, users of PROW in the open countryside; and visitors to heritage or tourist attractions where views of the landscape are important to their setting or experience.

3.45. Receptors of intermediate sensitivity include users of local roads and sign-posted scenic routes where views of the landscape are likely to be important.

3.46. Receptors of lowest sensitivity include people engaged in outdoor sport where an appreciation of the landscape is not important to the activity; office workers who are focused on their job; and road and rail users travelling through a landscape at speed.

## 4. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

### Overview

- 4.1. This section comprises an analysis of the landscape and visual attributes of the wider site area, including an analysis the role of the site in the local landscape context, highlighting pertinent points where relevant; and the subsequent identification of the key (development) constraints and opportunities in landscape and visual terms.
- 4.2. Green Belt matters are considered as part of the constraints and opportunities, however more detailed appraisal of the role of the site in respect of the Green Belt is provided in the following section of this report.
- 4.3. The contextual landscape and visual analysis can be summarised as follows:
  - Notwithstanding some consistency with the wider character, the site represents a relatively ordinary part of the landscape;
  - The site is situated directly adjacent to the existing settlement edge, which is characterised by relatively modern residential development, this provides a backdrop to the site from much of the surrounding landscape and development on the site would not constitute a new element;
  - There remains scope for development on the site to be consistent with the local pattern of the existing settlement. Particularly given that the settlement pattern currently extends further west, east and south-east than the limits of the site;
  - Landform is transitional between the lowland chalklands and chalk hills/scarps, consequently the rising slopes and hills that are present to the west and south of the wider site area will contribute to the physical and visual containment of potential development;
  - Although green infrastructure is not prevalent, comprising as it does as relatively thin layers formed by hedgerows and some linear tree belts, its combination with topography means that vegetation cover can often screen or filter views effectively;
  - In the context of the wider landscape, there are relatively few opportunities for recreational access via a formal network of PROW where these are close to/have views to the site;
  - In respect of development, there would be a need to 'create' an appropriate landscape edge and interface along the southern part of the site. Whilst it's purpose would be to provide screening/softening of the emerging settlement, it would also serve as a benefit in terms of providing new planting/green infrastructure.

4.4. Points in relation to the analysis described above are illustrated on **Figure 3: Landscape and Visual Analysis**.

### **Constraints and Opportunities**

4.5. Having undertaken an analysis of the landscape and visual baseline and considered the context of the site in this part of the landscape and Green Belt, the following section sets out the constraints and opportunities in respect of landscape and visual matters.

#### ***Constraints***

4.6. Landscape and visual constraints for the site are summarised as follows:

- Existing vegetation on the boundaries of the wider site area which contribute to the scale, pattern and green infrastructure network of the landscape and should, where possible, be retained;
- Approach to the settlement from the wider countryside, generally limited to the approaches from the west (including Cambridge Road, Shelford Road and Babraham Road) and the need to present an attractive and consistent settlement edge from these routes;
- Potential visibility (albeit variable) from nearby visual receptors, including the local PROW network and also residential receptors on the existing settlement edge – also some specific views such as view corridors to the listed windmill; and
- Notwithstanding the associated opportunity to ‘create’ new green infrastructure, the lack of an existing physical boundary on the south-western edge of the wider site area.

#### ***Opportunities***

4.7. Landscape and visual opportunities for the site are summarised as follows:

- The wider site area is contiguous with the existing settlement edge and potential development can come forward that is consistent with the scale, nature and pattern of the settlement;
- That the wider site area is both physically and visually contained by various landscape components that influence the local landscape character;
- The existing settlement edge is relatively prominent in the local landscape and residential development on the site would not form a new component in respect of either character or views;

- Opportunities for increasing green infrastructure exist through improved management and diversification of existing hedgerows as well as creating new hedgerows with hedgerow trees (particularly along the southern edge);
- Although primarily a heritage matter, views of the 'listed' windmill (which forms a local landscape feature), particularly from the east and south-east, are already framed by the existing prominent residential edge; and
- Views from the rights of way network (and from associated recreational receptors) are generally limited or screened.

### **Preliminary Development and Landscape Strategy**

- 4.8. Based on the analysis of landscape and visual constraints and opportunities, it is considered that there are two important issues in respect of strategic development potential for the site.
- 4.9. Firstly, is the need to identify the extent of an appropriate 'development envelope' that can accommodate built form and infrastructure. Secondly, there is a need to establish a robust and enduring green infrastructure framework to balance with that. Both elements can develop in response to the local landscape context which will in turn help to avoid or reduce impacts.
- 4.10. Adopting this approach ensures that potential development on the site incorporates appropriate mitigation and avoids or reduces potential adverse effects, including potential impacts on the Green Belt.
- 4.11. This approach is also consistent with the aims of the SCDC 'Landscape in New Developments SPD (March 2010), which notes that:
- 4.12. *"Landscape will not be peripheral to the development but will be fully integrated into the design. A good landscape scheme is not about 'planting a few shrubs' or an 'afterthought' or about 'left-over land'. What is needed is a creative approach which recognises a well designed landscape as an essential element in the delivery of a successful development."*
- 4.13. The components of a preliminary development and landscape strategy that can be incorporated into emerging proposals include:
- retain hedgerow boundary vegetation, wherever possible, including siting access points toward existing breaks and/or weaker points in the hedgerow;

- include an appropriate stand off to existing hedgerows to ensure retention, also providing a 'layer' of landscaping and opportunities to incorporate additional planting either as planting within the linear public open space and/or as hedgerow enhancements;
- creating new hedgerow along the south-western boundary of the site, including a wider proportion of linear public open space to provide a suitable buffer;
- provisions for public open space and attenuation toward the lower parts of the site; and
- inclusion of public open space centrally within the overall layout to break down 'massing and scale'.

4.14. In the context of the overall need for greenfield development, a degree of landscape and/or visual impact is an inevitable consequence for most, if not all, sites that come forward.

4.15. In relation to landscape and visual matters, for appropriate sites to come forward it is necessary to consider those where impacts are limited and where mitigation can be incorporated that can successfully minimise residual impacts.

4.16. It is considered that, with an appropriate approach to mitigation and the implementation of a robust landscape and green infrastructure strategy, a residentially led masterplan for the wider site area will be physically contained and show clear defensible boundaries.

4.17. Green infrastructure and open space as part of the proposals can also complement the existing pattern and scale of the local landscape and present an appropriate transition to the wider landscape and that development at this location would be considered acceptable in landscape and visual terms.

4.18. Taking this approach would also be consistent with the following aspects of the relevant landscape character guidance:

- Enhancement and restoration of the landscape, by maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure in the form of hedgerows and by creating new hedgerow links;
- Conservation of rural character, by placement of the development envelope against the existing settlement edge which is already influential on the local landscape;
- Maintaining appropriate patterns and linear features, which would be retained by the restriction on the development envelope, maintaining the scale and pattern of the landscape at a local level (noting that the land use within that pattern would change); and

- Use of green infrastructure (and proposed open spaces) to contribute to wildlife areas within the site, and to enhance the settlement edge and village gateway.
- 4.19. Other aspects in respect of local landscape character can be addressed through further more detailed design stages, including use of vernacular materials and architecture to reflect positively on the local character and appearance of the settlement and its interface with the landscape.

## 5. GREEN BELT MATTERS

### Overview of Green Belt Matters

- 5.1. Previous sections consider the constraints and opportunities of the site and its surrounding landscape context in order to inform the development of a masterplan for the site. This includes consideration of relevant strengths and weaknesses of the site and consequent options for mitigation.
- 5.2. This section considers Green Belt matters in terms of the role and function of the site and its contribution to Green Belt purposes. It also considers how an appropriate Green Belt boundary can be defined using robust and enduring features within the landscape.

### The Site in the Green Belt

- 5.3. It is recognised that Green Belt designation is one of land use control, with policy designed to retain the essential characteristics of Green Belts: their openness and their permanence (NPPF, 2021, para. 137). Green Belt is not a designation that seeks to protect a landscape of any particular quality or amenity value.
- 5.4. Notwithstanding the differentiation, the PPG on Green Belt (updated July 2019) recognises a connection between landscape and visual matters. The PPG addresses three areas in respect of Green Belt, including factors to be considered for potential impacts on openness, potential for compensatory measures to offset impact of removing land from the Green Belt; and mechanisms for securing such measures. The PPG states that:
- 5.5. *"...openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects - in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume..."*
- 5.6. The previous sections of this PLVA have dealt with the issues of landscape resources (i.e. elements and features), character and visual amenity. This section considers the site and its landscape context in relation to openness and the purposes of the Green Belt.

### Background to the Cambridge Green Belt

- 5.7. The NPPF sets out the five functions of the Green Belt (under paragraph 138<sup>2</sup>), as:
- a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;

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<sup>2</sup> MHCLG, NPPF (July 2021)



- 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.

- 5.8. The evidence base for policy within South Cambridgeshire includes several documents in relation to Green Belt matters, including studies undertaken in 2002, 2012, 2015 and more recently in August 2021.
- 5.9. These studies each focus on the Inner Green Belt (an area immediately around Cambridge) and the site is generally not included in their scope, instead being located outside of the eastern extent of the study limits.
- 5.10. Notwithstanding this exclusion, the current baseline studies have some relevance and provide context.

***Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (Cambridge City Council, 2002)***

- 5.11. An initial study was completed in 2002 by a member of the Planning Department for the Council. This high-level study considered the five purposes of Green Belt, but retained a landscape character based approach.
- 5.12. The results of the study notes that the City edge is sub-divided into Sectors and each Sector is further sub-divided into land parcels. Subsequent analysis is then tabulated. In the absence of related plans showing the extent of the Sectors, it is not possible to accurately identify those relevant to the site and its context. Consequently, reference is made to more detailed, later studies.

***Cambridge Green Belt Study, A Vision of the Future for Cambridge in its Green Belt Setting (LDA, 2002)***

- 5.13. This more detailed study, undertaken by Landscape Design Associates (LDA) on behalf of the Council, also adopts a landscape character-based approach, focussing initially on the setting and special character of the landscape, before going on to consider qualities to be safeguarded.
- 5.14. Although the study focusses on the 'inner green belt' (i.e. an area immediately surrounding the City) the following findings in respect of the site and its local landscape context are considered relevant:

- The site is located on the transitional boundary between the Eastern Edge Fen and Wimpole Ridge Chalk Hills character areas, as defined by the study;
- The site is situated within an area defined as ‘Connective townscape/landscape’ which are described as being ‘areas of townscape / landscape which are an integral part of the city and its environs, but lack individual distinction, or do not play a significant contribution to the setting of the city’;
- The site is located close to the boundary of the adjacent area defined as ‘Outer Rural Areas of the Green Belt’ which are described as ‘areas of landscape from which distinct views of the city are scarce or absent. The function of this landscape is in providing a backdrop to views of the city, and in providing a setting for approaches to connective, supportive and distinctive areas of townscape and landscape’; and
- Separately, the site is located in an area defined as ‘Rural land within Green Belt/Open countryside separating inner necklace villages’ – essentially this relates to the large (ca. 4.9km) gap between Fulbourn and Great Shelford (to the south-west and separated by the local Magog Hills).

5.15. The LDA study also sets out some high-level guidelines for the Green Belt, noting that these are ‘strategic’ and that ‘There might be scope for some small-scale development in limited locations in areas not identified on this plan. All guidelines on development would need to be verified by more detailed survey and analysis)’.

5.16. In respect of guidelines for land within the Green Belt, those relevant to the site and study area include:

- For the wider landscape to the west of Fulbourn (within the Inner Green Belt) No development to take place on elevated land. The open elevated setting to the city must be retained. Potential for new access routes linking the city with Wandlebury Country Park and Magog Down’; and
- For the site within the Outer Green Belt, ‘Maintain and enhance the quality of the open, rural landscape, the diversity of character, and the qualities of views, approaches and villages. Improve access and recreational facilities.

5.17. However, the LDA study is limited in its assessment in respect of an overarching assessment against the five purposes of Green Belt, stating that:

5.18. *“The brief requires the study to focus on the fourth purpose of including land in Green Belts as set out in PPG2 which is “To preserve the setting and special character of historic*

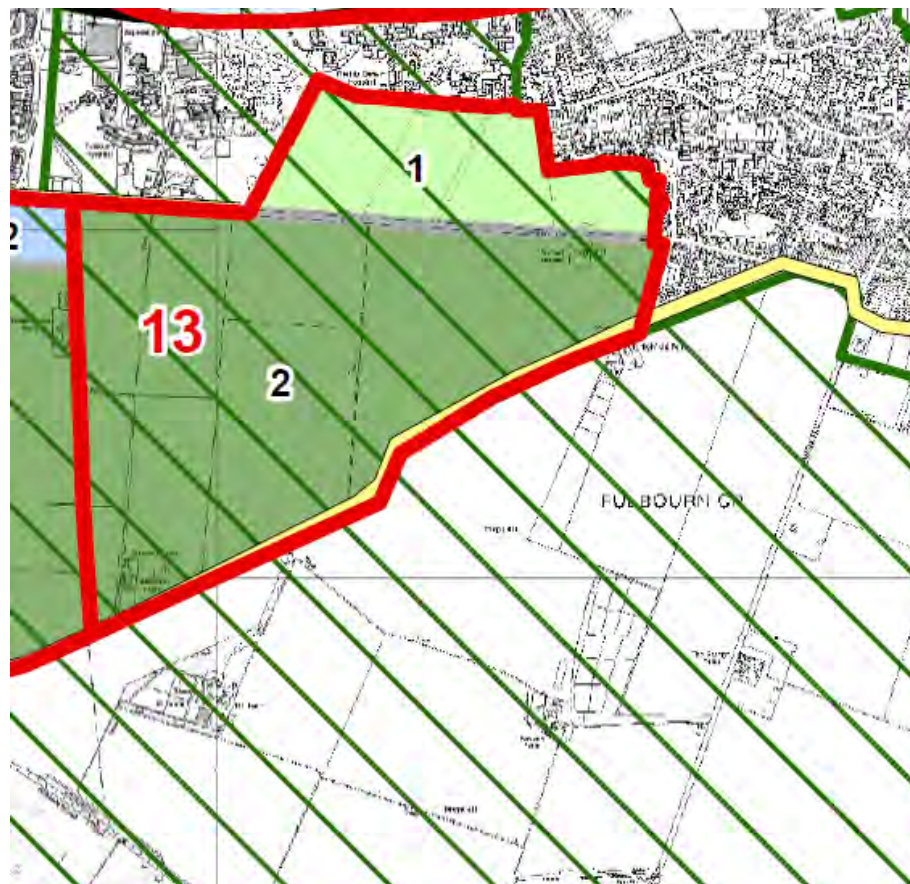
*towns.” (DETR 1995, Para 1.5). This purpose is of particular relevance to the historic city of Cambridge.*

- 5.19. *This study, therefore, describes and illustrates the factors that contribute to the setting and special character of Cambridge. It then focuses on the qualities to be safeguarded to preserve this setting and special character, before setting out a vision of the city. The vision is a strategy for safeguarding and enhancing the setting and special character of Cambridge while recognising that there is likely to be a need for some urban expansion, through Green Belt releases, in order to contribute to the development targets of RPG6.”*
- 5.20. In this context there remains a need to consider other relevant purposes of the Green Belt.

***2012 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, 2012)***

- 5.21. This study was completed as an update and broad appraisal of the Inner Green Belt, as with previous studies, it adopts a landscape character based approach (using the principles of landscape and visual assessment), rather than bespoke methodology tailored to assessing the role and function of an area in respect of the five purposes of Green Belt.
- 5.22. The site is located to the east of ‘Sector’ 13 (2) as defined by the 2012 study (refer to **Plate 2**).
- 5.23. The study concluded that the ‘significance of development on the Green Belt’ for area 13.2 would be ‘Very High’ but that there are opportunities to enhance the Green Belt edge by enhancing hedgerows.
- 5.24. This overall conclusion is based on a somewhat flawed matrix (Appendix 1 of the study) that sets ‘sensitivity for immediate setting and character of Cambridge’ against ‘magnitude of effect of a development proposal’. Clearly this approach makes sweeping judgements against broad areas, and does not factor in site specific issues.

**Plate 2: Extract from Cambridge inner Green Belt Boundary Study (2012)**



5.25. Given the distinction between the site and the wider area of Sector 13, along with the flawed application of the LVIA matrix, it remains necessary to consider the role and function of the site specifically against the purposes of Green Belt.

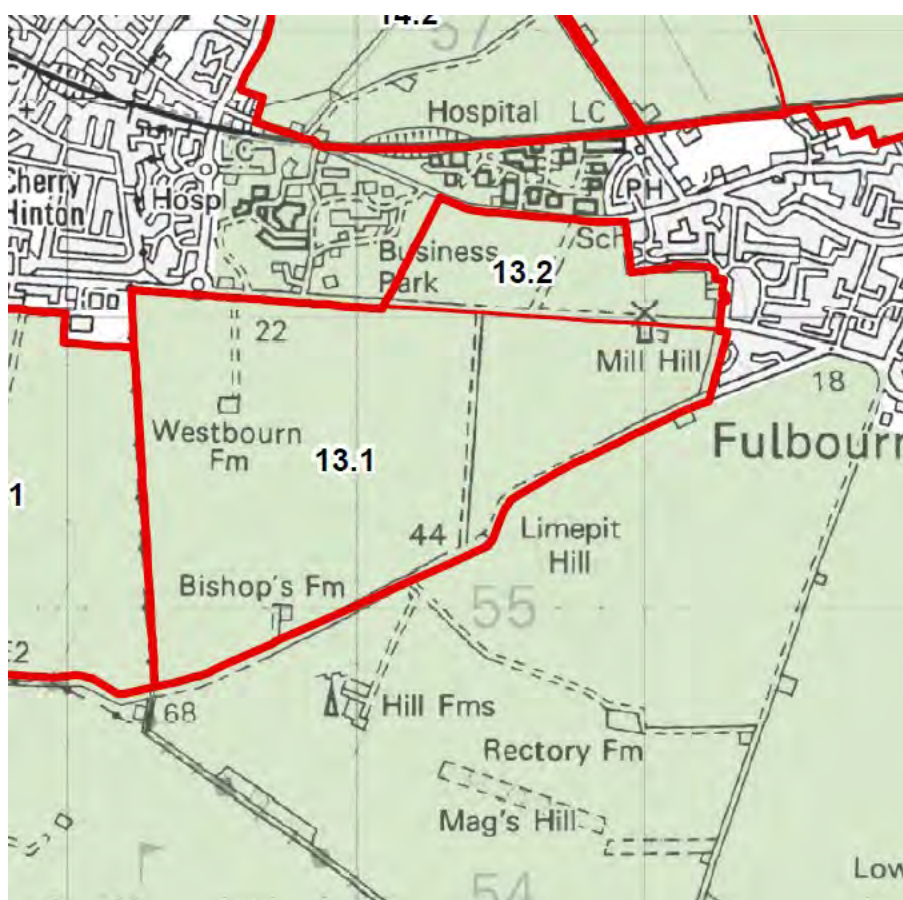
***Cambridge Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (LDA, November 2015)***

5.26. This study undertakes an assessment of the Inner Green Belt Boundary, and (as an appendix to the study) a review of the methodologies put forward by objectors in relation to the Inner Green Belt Boundary.

5.27. The study notes that ‘...the study does not employ a scoring system. Rather, having assessed each area of land within the study area for its importance to Green Belt purposes, consideration is given as to whether there is potential to release land for development without significant harm to Green Belt purposes.’

- 5.28. The 2015 study draws on the previous 2002 Green Belt Study undertaken by LDA, adopting a similar approach of identifying qualities in order to understand the role played by the Green Belt around Cambridge. However, the study also notes that the approach differs substantially from the 2012 study undertaken by the Council, although the conclusions are broadly similar (2015 study, section 6.3).
- 5.29. The site is located outside of, but immediately to the east of, a 'Sector' defined as 13, and subsector 13.1 (refer to **Plate 3**).

**Plate 3: Extract from the Cambridge Inner Green Belt Study (2025)**



- 5.30. As can be seen from the scale and extent of the parcel, many of the issues in respect of Green Belt will relate to the settlement edge of Cambridge (including encroachment and/or setting) and maintaining separation between Cambridge and Fulbourn. The site is located outside of this area and to the south of Fulbourn (including being to the east of a localised ridgeline and high ground at Mill Hill) and as such is considered to be physically and visually separated from much of the wider Sector.

5.31. Notwithstanding the physical variance of the site from the adjacent sector, the following findings in respect of the site and its local landscape context are considered relevant (in addition to those commonly identified in the 2002 study):

- The site is located outside of an approximate area of the Green Belt from which Cambridge may be seen; and
- The site forms part of a much wider landscape area defined as the 'rural setting with scattered villages'.

5.32. As with previous studies, these conclusions only relate partly to the context of the site and not the site itself, with many of the issues in respect of Green Belt focussed on the landscape between Cambridge and Fulbourn, to the west of the site and beyond the physical delineation of the hills and ridgelines.

***Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment (LUC, August 2021)***

5.33. This study, prepared by LUC on behalf of SCDC and CCC, undertakes an assessment of the performance of all Green Belt land across Greater Cambridge.

*Green Belt Study approach*

5.34. The aims of the study include the identification of variations in 'openness' of land and the extent to which land contributes to the purposes of the Green Belt, and reference to these findings to determine variations in the potential harm to Green Belt in respect of the potential release of land from the Green Belt.

5.35. In contrast to previous Green Belt studies, this study covers the whole of the Green Belt in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, rather than just the 'inner' Green Belt area.

5.36. The study does not directly address the five purposes of Green Belt, as set out by the NPPF. The study defines its own purposes, specifically in respect to Cambridge and its context, however the study does link the Cambridge purposes to those of the NPPF. These are summarised as:

- Cambridge purpose 1 - relating to the compact nature of the city - and linked to NPPF purpose 1;
- Cambridge purpose 2 - relating to rural character - and linked to NPPF purposes 3 and 4); and
- Cambridge purpose 3 - related to merging - and linked to NPPF purpose 2.

- 5.37. The study also defines potential Green Belt 'harm', taking judgements on this by considering the contribution of land to the Cambridge purposes, along with the 'impact' on adjacent land.
- 5.38. The process is set out in Figure 3.2 of the study. In respect of defining the contribution of land to the Cambridge purposes 'Step 4' sets out how this should consider matters of relevance, openness and distinction. In respect of defining impact on adjacent land, 'Step 5' sets out how this should consider the potential affect the distinction of adjacent land and the relevance of adjacent land. These judgements are combined as 'Step 6' as defining 'harm'.
- 5.39. In terms of defining land parcels, is important to note that the Green Belt study notes that parcels were not defined individually, but rather as part of the analysis undertaken for the study. The study states that (page 39, para 3.7):
- 5.40. *"Rather than considering pre-defined parcels, parcels were defined by applying an analysis process that works outwards from each inset settlement until parcels with a strong distinction (that is a strong perceived level of separation) from the inset settlement have been identified. This recognises that with distance from these edges the level of distinction from the inset settlement only increase, not diminish. This approach was based on the assumption that any growth was most likely to take place extending out from the main urban area of Cambridge and existing inset villages, or villages adjacent to the outer Green Belt boundary."*
- 5.41. The consequence of this approach is that it parcels will be defined that 'overlap' different parts of the landscape that are defined by different aspects of landscape character.
- 5.42. For example, on the southern edge of Fulbourn, no differentiation is given to the difference in local landscape character between the field patterns to the east of Babraham Road which are small scale and more balanced in pattern, to the fields to the west of the road which are more extended, and narrow rectilinear enclosures. In the same area (both related to FUL14) there is a greater degree of enclosure (by vegetation and settlement) closer to the settlement edge at the cemetery and along Balsham Road, than there is to the more open arable land west of Babraham Road, yet both are included in the same parcel.
- 5.43. This approach to defining parcels is not necessarily fundamentally flawed, but it does leave a 'gap' in determining judgements at a more site specific scale, where a given land parcel (as defined by the Green Belt study), may not accurately reflect the attributes of

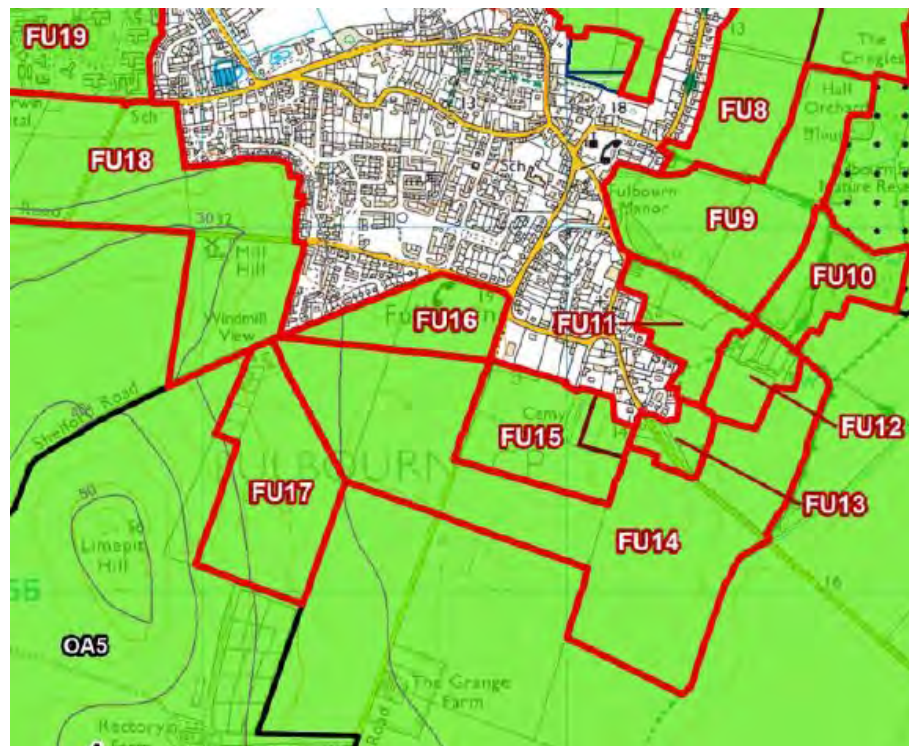
the landscape which are present on the ground, and where those attributes might contribute to the capacity of the landscape to accommodate some form of development.

*Green Belt Study analysis*

- 5.44. As described earlier in this report, the site is physically defined on its western, northern and eastern boundaries, but is not physically delineated on its southern edge. Consequently, the site forms part of a much longer, relatively narrow rectangular parcel of land that extends to the south/south-west. Around the site, other field parcels are similarly delineated as long, thinner rectangular land parcels, with some smaller scale rectangular parcels to the east.
- 5.45. In contrast to the local landscape context, on the southern edge of Fulbourn (and both on and surrounding the site), despite the overriding field pattern and land use being effectively the same 'on the ground', the Green Belt study defines a series of land parcels that comprise irregular land areas, crossing various field boundaries.
- 5.46. The site is defined by the study as being predominantly in parcel FU16, with the southern edge of the site being within parcel FU14 (n.b. each parcels includes additional land to the east, and FU14 in particular extends further south and south-east around the settlement edge) (refer to **Plate 4**).
- 5.47. There are no physical landscape components which define the southern edge of parcel FU16, and the line could equally have been drawn across both fields, further south, between the settlement edge at Shelford Road and the edge of the urban fringe landscape of the caravan park and cemetery to the west of Balsham Road.



**Plate 4: Extract from LUC Green Belt Study showing Fulbourn Land Parcels**



5.48. The Green Belt study analysis for '**contribution**' of the land parcels on this edge of Fulbourn to Cambridge purposes are summarised as follows:

- *Cambridge purpose 1: FU16 - moderate*  
- In the context of Fulbourn and Cambridge purpose 1, there are mixed judgements for land around the settlement, with some areas judged to be 'relatively significant' to the north and east (including Parcel FU14 adjacent to FU16), and 'significant' to the west (and small area to the east), with some relatively 'limited' (including FU3 and FU19). On balance, FU16 is one of several areas of land around the settlement that is judged as 'moderate'.
- *Cambridge purpose 2: FU16 - moderate*  
- For this purpose, the site is essentially indistinct from the landscape surrounding Fulbourn, with all areas generally judged to make 'moderate' contribution, with the exception of a few small parcels to the north-east and south-east and one to the west.
- *Cambridge purpose 3: FU16 - limited/no contribution*  
- Other than FU3, a small parcel between the settlement and railway and small parcels on the very western edge, this is the lowest scoring part of the settlement edge at Fulbourn, with all other directions judged to be 'moderate' or above.

- 5.49. Further detailed analysis on each land parcel is presented in Appendix B of the Green Belt study, including additional written analysis in terms of the contributions to each Cambridge purpose.
- 5.50. In respect of '**impact** of release on adjacent Green Belt land', the Green Belt study rates FU16 as 'minor to moderate' noting that development of this land would 'weaken the boundary distinction' and 'increase urbanising visual impact' on land to the south (Green Belt study, Appendix B, page FU-76).
- 5.51. In terms of the Green Belt study methodology, the classification of **impact** includes higher categories of 'moderate', 'moderate to major' and 'major'.
- 5.52. Consequently, it is reasonable to note that 'minor to moderate' (applicable to FU16) sits toward the lower end of the **impact** scale.

*Green Belt Study conclusions*

- 5.53. Overall, while the Green Belt study includes a detailed methodology, criteria and subsequent analysis, there is a clear disconnect between that analysis and a robust conclusion on 'harm' in respect of land parcel FU16, and that the judgment on the 'harm' of release of FU16 from the Green Belt has been overstated.
- 5.54. In respect of land parcel FU16 (which includes the majority of the site), the Green Belt study concludes a '**moderate** contribution to Cambridge purposes 1 and 2, and '**no/limited** contribution to Cambridge purpose 3.
- 5.55. In itself, this suggests that the site does not make a strong contribution to the Cambridge purposes of Green Belt.
- 5.56. Furthermore, the Green Belt study goes on to judge a '**minor to moderate** impact on adjacent land, which is at the lower end of the scale defined by the Green Belt study methodology.
- 5.57. However, the conclusion of the Green Belt study judges the land parcel is judged to have a '**high** degree of harm from its potential release (and assumed development). The study uses a five-point scale to determine harm, with 'high' at the upper end and only second to 'very high'.

- 5.58. It is not clear how the balance of judgements between contribution and impact (which are both at the lower end of the methodological scale) then equate to the second highest degree of harm.
- 5.59. With reference to the definitions of harm set out in the Green Belt study (Green Belt study, Table 3.6, page 106) **a more logical and justifiable conclusion would be that the release of FU16 (and therefore the site) should be judged as only giving rise to 'low' or 'moderate' harm** (or potentially an interim grade of minor to moderate).
- 5.60. This is a more reasonable and consistent conclusion based on the definitions for each category of harm defined in the methodology (whereby low and/or moderate harm refers to 'moderate contribution' and/or 'minor to moderate impact').
- 5.61. Conversely, and in strong contrast to the analysis for FU16, the levels of harm for 'moderate' (or above) only refer to land that is considered to make a 'strong' or 'particularly strong' contribution, which land parcel FU16 clearly does not.

#### **Green Belt Analysis of the Site**

- 5.62. Notwithstanding the historic and more recent evidence base studies for the landscape and Green Belt around Fulbourn, it remains useful to consider whether the site is suitable for release from the Green Belt on its own merits, at a scale relevant to the site in its local landscape context and considering the potential for mitigation of impacts which may lessen the influence on adjacent or wider land.
- 5.63. Consequently, it is necessary to understand the 'role or function' of the site in Green Belt terms, when considered against landscape and visual issues.
- 5.64. This is important because there is an inherent link between the perception of 'openness' and the physical components of a landscape, its character, and views to, from and within a landscape.

#### ***Purposes of the Green Belt***

- 5.65. The following strategic analysis provides an appraisal of the site's contribution towards Green Belt purposes (at a National level, rather than the bespoke Cambridge purposes), as defined by paragraph 138 of the NPPF, in respect of landscape and visual matters.
- 5.66. The analysis considers the potential impact of changes on site in terms of introducing built form and the impact of removing the site from the Green Belt. This is undertaken

on the basis of determining to what extent the site can accept residential development without an undue degree of impact on the landscape and what/where mitigation can be applied to avoid or minimise potential impacts.

5.67. Each of the purposes is considered in the following table.

**Table 1: Appraisal of Green Belt functions and the wider site area**

Green Belt Purpose	Site Appraisal
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To the north and north-west, the site is physically contained by the alignment of Shelford Road and associated built form of the settlement edge;</li> <li>• In the local landscape context, the site does not extend further west, east or south than the existing settlement pattern, effectively containing any perception of spread that might otherwise arise from development on the site;</li> <li>• Views of the site (and potential development) tend to be limited to locations to the east and south/south-east (largely from Cambridge Road and/or Babraham Road) and from these locations will be set against the existing prominent residential edge, consequently minimising perception of the scale of change or addition to the settlement pattern;</li> <li>• The site is physically and visually contained to the west and, slightly more distant, top the south and east, by the combined influence of landform and vegetation patterns; and</li> <li>• Mitigation provides opportunities for new green infrastructure to reinforce the emerging settlement edges and provide a suitable edge to the Green Belt.</li> </ul>
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matters of merging are limited in terms of nearby settlements;</li> <li>• To the west, the site is physically and visually contained by landform and potential development on the site, restricted to the lower slopes as it will not contribute to merging with Cambridge;</li> <li>• To the south/south-west, the closest settlement is Great Shelford (nearly 5km distant) and is separated by the landform and woodland across the Magog Hills; and</li> <li>• The site remains subservient to the current settlement pattern on this edge of Fulbourn and potential development on the site would not extend further south than the current limits, whilst also restricts matters of coalescence.</li> </ul>
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current settlement edge is prominent in the landscape and has an influence on the landscape immediately adjacent to settlement; and</li> <li>• The landscape context would remain as 'countryside', however this is considered to be relatively 'ordinary' in landscape and visual terms.</li> </ul>

<p>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant matters in respect of setting and character relate to the listed windmill, the conservation area and the various scheduled monuments in and around Wandlebury Country Park;</li> <li>• From many vantage points, the windmill is experienced against a foreground of the modern residential edge of Fulbourn and potential development on the site would not materially alter this;</li> <li>• The Fulbourn Conservation Area remains physically and visual separated from the site and potential development area;</li> <li>• There is a substantial distance and extensive area of countryside between the site and Wandlebury to the south, with limited views/inter-visibility due to the intervening topography and vegetation; and</li> <li>• The character and appearance of the settlement edge currently is defined by the modern built form of residential dwellings and this reflects a relatively ordinary character in terms of the appearance of the settlement.</li> </ul>
<p>To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</p>	<p>This purpose, and the principles behind it, are applicable to all sites within the Green Belt.</p>

***Openness and Visual Aspects***

5.68. Openness is not defined in the NPPF. It is commonly taken to be “an absence of development”. Development can mean built form of many types, to include buildings of various function, style, scale and merit; engineering operations; infrastructure to include roads and the highways network in general together with supporting infrastructure including lighting and signage; and utilities including electricity pylons and line, or telegraph poles and lines.

5.69. The overall scale and presence/absence of these elements, and how they present themselves in any particular part of a Green Belt, serves to generate an understanding of the spatial dimension of openness.

5.70. Visual connectivity, view corridors, and public views can also contribute to the visual dimension in terms of what can be seen from specific locations, including public viewpoints, and how this serves to influence the openness of the Green Belt.

5.71. In the vicinity of the site, the spatial dimension of the openness of the Green Belt is influenced locally by:

- The existing settlement edges, which are more or less prominent to varying degrees, but particularly prominent at locations close to the site and, furthermore, are generally defined by late twentieth century or modern housing development;
- Transport infrastructure of the local road network;
- The lack of public access to a large part of the landscape where the site might otherwise be visible from, reducing the opportunities for visual perception;
- By the natural landform in the area which rises to a series of localised hills and ridgelines, including varying undulations, all of which serve to contain the existing settlement (and site) physically and screen many views to it; and
- The larger scale field patterns which present a large scale landscape overall, in which the site would be perceived as a much smaller component and subservient to the wider arable context.

5.72. In the vicinity of the site, the visual dimension is enclosed by virtue of the various combinations of landform and vegetation which serve to screen or foreshorten views to the site.

### **Green Belt strategy**

5.73. In accordance with the NPPF, Green Belt boundaries should be defined clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

5.74. This PLVA, and the process of its preparation, have informed emerging proposals for the site. The approach includes incorporated mitigation that addresses the interface between the emerging settlement edge and the wider countryside and how this can influence prospective amendments to the Green Belt boundary.

5.75. Consequently, the use of existing landscape components to guide the landscape strategy and subsequent augmentation of these components can define an appropriate, robust and enduring boundary to the Green Belt.

### **Summary**

5.76. The potential conflict of proposed development on the site with aspects of Green Belt policy will be limited to the site level.

5.77. Where there is a potential influence beyond the site, this will be experienced in a similar context to that which characterises the current interface between the settlement edge

and existing landscape, and also these can be mitigate through the application of a robust landscape strategy.

- 5.78. Notwithstanding some conflict with the purposes of Green Belt, the impact of a potential development on the wider site area would be very limited due to the containment of the site by existing and established physical features, including the existing settlement edge as well as other elements such as the road network, landform and green infrastructure.

## 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

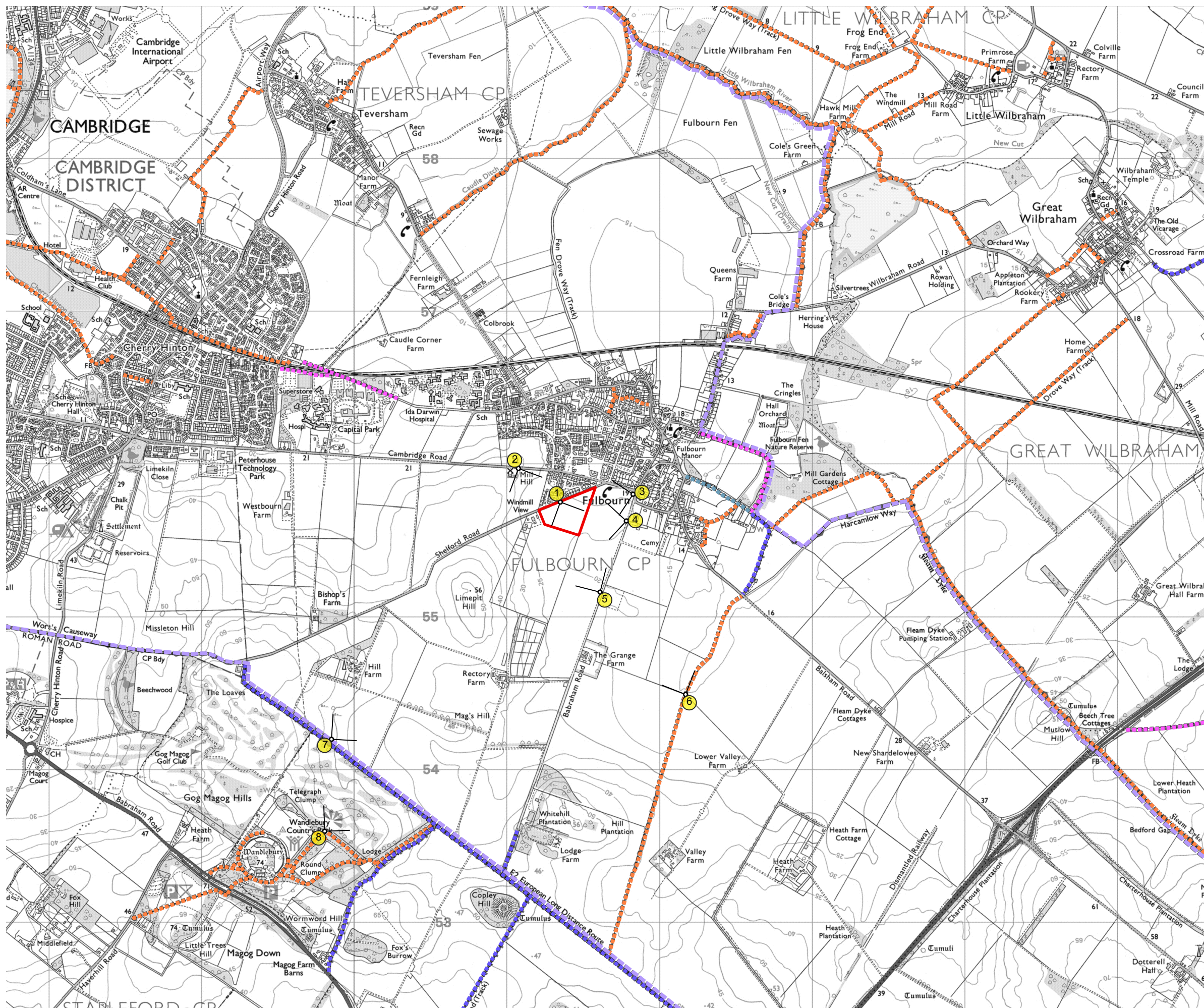
### Overview

- 6.1. This report has been prepared to consider constraints and opportunities of land to the south of Shelford Road, Fulbourn, in respect of landscape and visual matters.
- 6.2. The PLVA identifies the key constraints and opportunities in respect of the site and surrounding landscape context. The analysis considers the specific nature of the type of development being considered and informs the inherent proposals for a preliminary development strategy. The indicative development consequently incorporates a landscape mitigation strategy which will avoid, reduce or remedy adverse impacts.
- 6.3. Given the scale of development required, any location for growth in the area is likely to result in some impact in relation to landscape and visual matters and also likely to require release of Green Belt land.
- 6.4. However, this analysis shows that the site can accommodate a sensitively designed residential scheme with only limited landscape and visual effects at a localised level and that such impacts can successfully be avoided or reduced through effective mitigation.
- 6.5. The preliminary landscape strategy responds to local landscape characteristics such as landform, field boundaries, tree belts etc; all physical features in the landscape.
- 6.6. In relation to Green Belt matters, considered in respect of the Cambridge Green Belt purposes, the site (and wider land parcel) has only a moderate contribution to two purpose, and no/limited contribution to the third purpose. Together with the 'minor to moderate harm, a reasonable conclusion to draw is that the release of the site (and wider parcel FU16) would result in only 'low' harm to the Green Belt, or 'moderate' at worst.
- 6.7. In the context of National Green Belt policy, it can be demonstrated that the site has a limited role and function in relation to each of the five purposes of Green Belt (defined by the NPPF) and it is considered that potential development can come forward on the site that would not result in sprawl, merging or encroachment, nor would there be any material impact on the character of Fulbourn.
- 6.8. Consequently, potential development of the site would give rise to only limited landscape and visual impacts at a local level and release of the site from the Green Belt would be acceptable in landscape and visual terms.










- 6.9. Consequently, the use of existing landscape components to guide the landscape strategy and subsequent augmentation of these components can set an appropriate, robust and enduring boundary to the Green Belt.

## FIGURES



**KEY**

-  Site boundary
-  Representative viewpoints
-  Public footpath
-  Public bridleway
-  Byway open to all traffic
-  Other routes with public access
-  National trail

Land south of Shelford Road,  
Fulbourn, Cambridge  
Client: Miller Homes Ltd

**Fig. 1: Viewpoint Locations and Public Rights of Way**

Drawing no. : P21-3364\_01  
Date : 10/12/2021  
Drawn by : NF  
Checked by : JA  
Scale : 1 : 25000 @ A3



Eastern boundary hedgerow



Viewpoint 1 | View looking south from Shelford Road, looking directly into the site

Prominent residential edge (dwellings off 'Huntsmill')

Farm complex at Windmill View



Viewpoint 2 | View looking south-east from Cambridge Road, at Mill Hill

Land South of Shelford Road, Fulbourn, Cambridge

**Fig. 2: Viewpoint Photographs**

Drawing Ref: P21\_3364\_02  
Client: Miller Homes Ltd

Date : 10/12/21  
Drawn by : NF  
Checked by : JA






Viewpoint 3 | View looking south-west from School Lane, on the settlement edge of Fulbourn



Viewpoint 4 | View looking west from Babraham Road, close to the settlement edge of Fulbourn

Land South of Shelford Road,  
Fulbourn, Cambridge  
**Fig. 2: Viewpoint Photographs**  
Drawing Ref: P21\_3364\_02  
Client: Miller Homes Ltd  
Date : 10/12/21  
Drawn by : NF  
Checked by : JA





Viewpoint 5 | View looking north-west from Babraham Road, north of The Grange Farm



Viewpoint 6 | View looking north-west from the public footpath, east of The Grange Farm

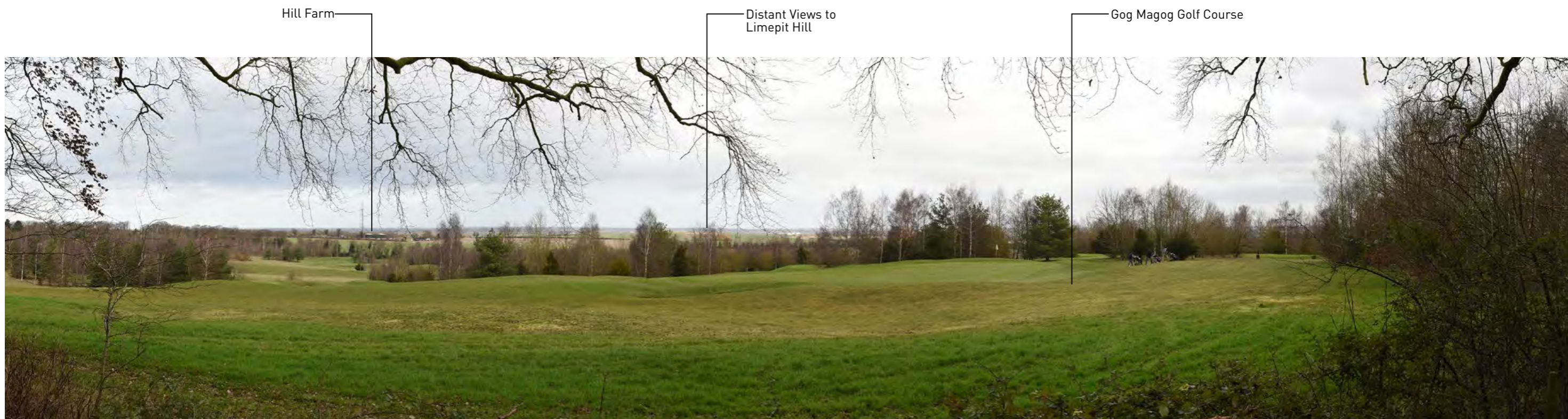
Land South of Shelford Road,  
Fulbourn, Cambridge  
**Fig. 2: Viewpoint Photographs**  
Drawing Ref: P21\_3364\_02  
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Date : 10/12/21  
Drawn by : NF  
Checked by : JA





Viewpoint 7 | View looking north-east from the 'E2 European Long Distance Route' south of Hill Farm



Viewpoint 8 | View looking north-east from the vantage point on the edge of Wandlebury Country Park

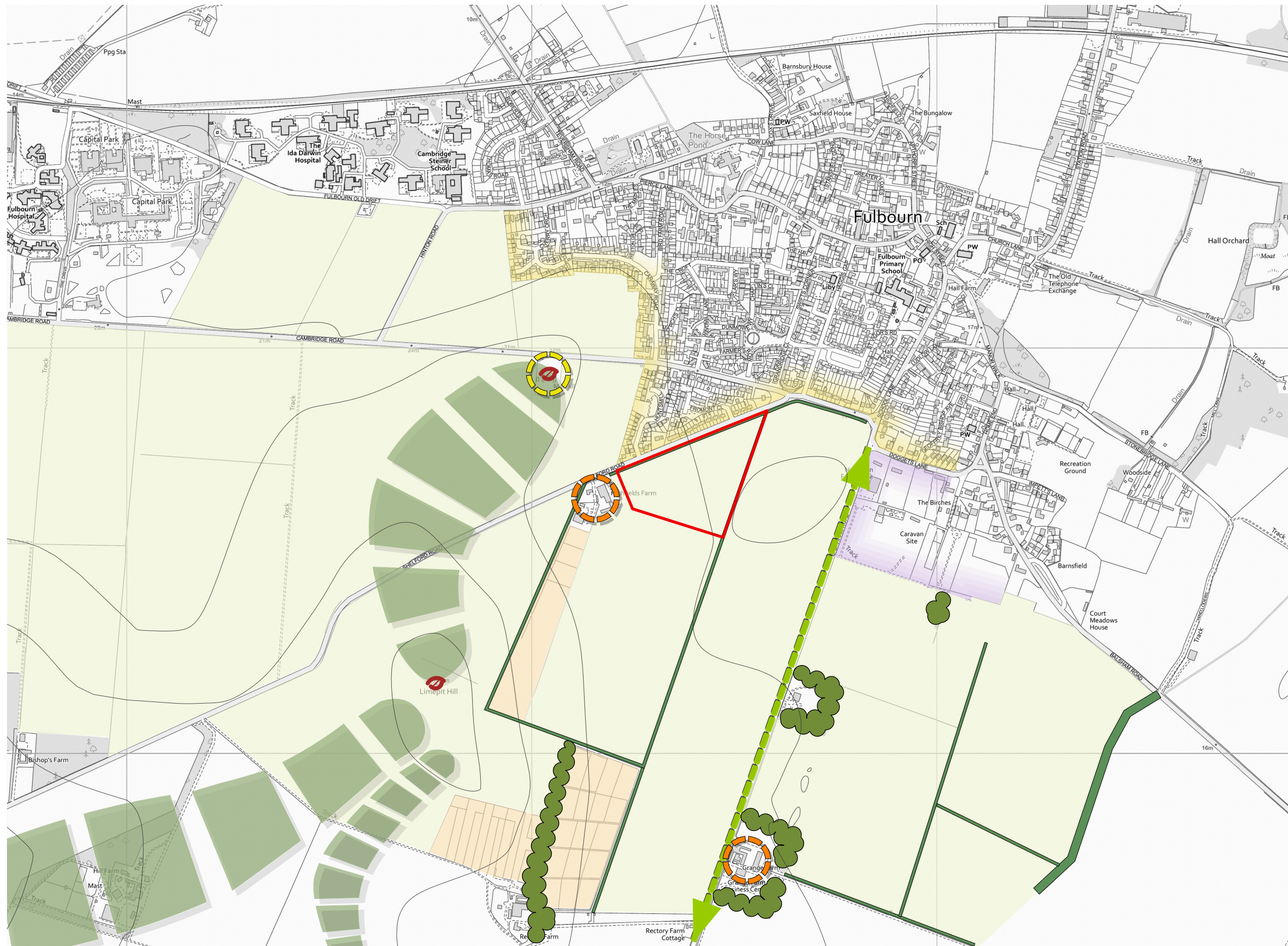
Land South of Shelford Road,  
Fulbourn, Cambridge














**Fig. 2: Viewpoint Photographs**

Drawing Ref: P21\_3364\_02  
Client: Miller Homes Ltd

Date : 10/12/21  
Drawn by : NF  
Checked by : JA





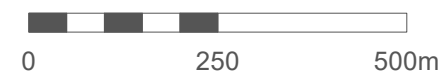
- KEY**
-  Site boundary
  -  Contours
  -  Prominent settlement edge
  -  Extended settlement edge
  -  Local landscape feature
  -  Larger scale prominent farm complex
  -  Localised high point
  -  Enclosure by local ridge lines
  -  Defined avenue planting
  -  Small scale woodland copses
  -  Hedgerows with hedgerow trees
  -  Small scale enclosures
  -  Large scale intensified arable enclosures

Land South of Shelford Road,  
Fulbourn, Cambridge

Client: Miller Homes Ltd

**Fig. 3: Landscape and Visual Analysis**

Drawing no. : P21-3364\_03  
 Date : 10/12/2021  
 Drawn by : NF  
 Checked by : JA  
 Scale : 1 : 10000 @ A3





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