

Land at Teversham Road, Fulbourn: Appendix 3 - Landscape Planning Policy Extracts

Prepared on behalf of Castlefield International Ltd

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1.0 LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012 (CD A1)

1.1 The NPPF, issued in March 2012, promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, providing that it is in accordance with the relevant up-to-date local plan and policies set out in the NPPF, and confirms in Paragraph 14 that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be seen as a ***"golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking"***.

1.2 Paragraph 14 states that:

"For decision-taking this means:

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted."*

1.3 Footnote 9 to Paragraph 14 set out where development should be restricted, stating that:

"For example, those policies relating to sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives (see paragraph 119) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or within a National Park (or the Broads Authority); designated heritage assets; and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion."

1.4 The NPPF identifies that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. The environmental role is set out as, at Paragraph 7:

"– contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy."

1.5 Twelve Core Planning Principles are set out in the NPPF, at Paragraph 17, of which the following are of relevance to the Appeal Site and landscape and visual matters, recognising that planning should:

- *"not simple be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
- *always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
- *take account of the different roles and character of different areas promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*
- *contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;*
- *promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production); and*
- *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations."*

1.6 The NPPF then identifies and describes thirteen aspects contributing to the delivery of sustainable development that should be considered in developing local plans and reviewing planning applications. Those of relevance to the landscape and visual considerations of the Appeal Site and the Proposed Development are included within Section 7 (Paragraphs 56 to 68).

1.7 Paragraph 58 states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *"will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*

- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping."*

1.8 Paragraph 60 states that:

"Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles of particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles. It is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness."

1.9 Paragraph 64 states that:

"Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions."

1.10 Paragraph 65 states that:

"Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design."

1.11 In relation to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, paragraph 109 notes that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

1.12 Paragraph 110 states that:

"in preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework."

1.13 Paragraph 114 requires planning authorities to plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), March 2014 (CD A2)

- 1.14 To the support the policies of the NPPF, the Government has prepared the online PPG covering a number of topics.
- 1.15 Under the heading of Natural Environment, sub-heading Landscape, Paragraph 1, the PPG supports the use of landscape character assessment as a tool for understanding the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identifying the features that give it a sense of place, as a means to informing, planning and managing change. The PPG makes reference to the Natural England guidance on landscape character assessment.
- 1.16 Under the heading of Design, sub-heading Planning, Paragraph 7, the PPG promotes an understanding of local character (including landscape settings), and supports the successful integration of new development with its surrounding context, responding to land form, natural features and local heritage resources, to reinforce and sustain local distinctiveness, reduce its impact on nature and to contribute to a sense of place. The PPG also promotes consideration of views into and out of larger sites.

County and District Planning Policy Context

South Cambridgeshire Development Control Policies DPD (adopted July 2007) (CD B2)

- 1.17 The South Cambridge Development Control Policies DPD forms part of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework and guides decision on planning applications within South Cambridgeshire. Chapter 2 of the DPD, 'Development Principles', sets out the overarching framework and objectives for managing development.

"DP/d: To ensure high quality new development that protects and enhances the character of the district and local distinctiveness through careful integration with the existing built form." (page 7)

- 1.18 Policy DP/1 Sustainable Development states:

"Development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development, as appropriate to its location, scale and form. It should...:

p) conserve and wherever possible enhance local landscape character."

- 1.19 Policy DP/2 Design of New Development states:

"All new development must be of high quality design and, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, should:

- a) preserve or enhance the character of the local area...;***
- j) Include high quality landscaping compatible with the scale and character of the development and its surroundings."***

1.20 Policy DP/3 Development Criteria states:

"...Planning permission will not be granted where the proposed development would have an unacceptable adverse impact...:

- l) On village character; and***
- m) On the countryside, and landscape character."***

1.21 The majority of the Appeal Site lies outside the area covered by Policy DP/7 Development Frameworks, as illustrated within the Adopted Proposals Map. This policy states That:

Policy DP/7 Development Frameworks

- 1) Outside urban and village frameworks, only development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will permitted.***
- 2) Development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks will be permitted provided that:***
 - a) Retention of the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character; and***
 - b) Development would be sensitive to the character of the location, local features of landscape, ecological or historic importance, and the amenities of neighbours; and***
 - c) There is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support the development; and***
 - d) Development would not result in the loss of local employment, or a local service or facility, protected by Policies ET/6: Loss of Rural Employment to Non-Employment Uses: SF/1: Protection of Village Services and Facilities and SF/9: Protection of Existing Recreation Areas.***

1.22 The Green Belt surrounds the settlement of Fulbourn. The northern edge of the Appeal Site adjoins the Green Belt but does not lie within the Green Belt. Policy GB/3 Mitigating the Impact of Development Adjoining the Green Belt states:

- 1) "Where development proposals are in the vicinity of the Green Belt, account will be taken of any adverse impact on the Green Belt; and***
- 2) Development on the edges of settlements which are surrounded by the Green Belt must include careful***

landscaping and design measures of a high quality in order to protect the purposes of the Green Belt."

1.23 Objectives set out within Chapter 7 'Natural Environment' include:

"NE/b: To protect and enhance the character and appearance of landscapes and natural heritage" (page 67)

1.24 Policy NE/4 Landscape Character Areas states:

"Development will only be permitted where it respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the individual Landscape Character Area in which it is located."

1.25 Policy NE/6 Biodiversity of Chapter 7 'Natural Environment' states that new development should aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity.

1.26 Policy NE/14 Lighting states that development proposals that include external lighting should ensure, inter-alia, that there is no unacceptable adverse impact on nearby properties or the surrounding countryside.

1.27 Policies NE/9, NE/10, NE/11 and NE/12 of Chapter 7 'Natural Environment' relate to the management of water, flood risk, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and water conservation. Managing water through SuDS is identified on page 81 to provide environmental, biodiversity and aesthetic benefits, and may take the form of swales, lagoons, permeable paving, green roofs, and sensitively re-engineered channels or reed beds.

1.28 Objectives set out within Chapter 8 'Cultural Heritage' include:

"... CH/c: To maintain the character of villages including important open areas

CH/d: To protect and enhance Conservation Areas and their settings

CH/e: To protect Listed Buildings and their settings ..." (page 89)

1.29 The following policy within Chapter 8 'Cultural Heritage' is of relevance:

"Policy CH/5 Conservation Areas:

Planning applications for development proposals (including applications for Conservation Area Consent for demolitions) in or affecting Conservation Areas will be determined in accordance with legislative provisions and national policy (currently in PPG15) and guidance contained in specific Conservation Area Appraisals (where they exist) and the District Design Guide."

- 1.30 Policy CH/6: Protected Village Amenity Areas and CH/7: Important Countryside Fringes refer to Village Character, stating:

POLICY CH/6 Protected Village Amenity Areas

"Development will not be permitted within or adjacent to Protected Village Amenity Areas if it would have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village."

POLICY CH/7 Important Countryside Frontages

"1. Important Countryside Frontages are defined where land with a strong countryside character either:

a. Penetrates or sweeps into the built-up area providing a significant connection between the street scene and the surrounding rural area; or

b. Provides an important rural break between two nearby but detached parts of a village framework.

2. Planning permission for development will be refused if it would compromise these purposes."

Proposed Submission Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire (July 2013, unadopted) (CD C1)

- 1.31 The Proposed Submission Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire (hereafter referred to as the draft Local Plan) will update and replace the documents forming the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework. The draft Local Plan will set out the planning policies to guide the development and use of land in the district up to 2031. My colleague Mr Kosky will address the planning weight attached to the draft Local Plan and emerging policies.
- 1.32 Emerging Policy NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character states:

"Development will only be permitted where it respects and retains, or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and of the Individual National Character Area in which it is located."

- 1.33 Policy CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems states that development proposals must incorporate sustainable surface water drainage systems (SuDS) appropriate to the nature of the site, and that development proposals must inter-alia, comply with forthcoming SuDS standards, SuDS must be integrated within the development, create amenity, enhance biodiversity and contribute to a network of green (and blue) open space.

- 1.34 Emerging Policy NH/12 Local Green Space allows for the identification of green areas of particular importance to local communities, thereby prevent new development other than in very special circumstances. The Appeal Site is proposed as a Local Green Space, with Emerging Policy NH/12 stating:

"Local Green Space identified on the Policies Map will be protected from development that would adversely impact on the character and particular local significance placed on such green areas which make them valued by their local community. Only in exceptional circumstances and in discussion with the local community would development be permitted."

- 1.35 Emerging Policy HQ/1 Design Principles states:

"All new development must be of high quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to its local and wider context."

- 1.36 Emerging Policy HQ/1 goes on to states that proposals must, inter-alia, preserve or enhance the character of the local urban and rural area and respond to its context in the wider landscape; conserve or enhance important natural and historic assets of the site; be compatible with its location and appropriate in terms of scale, mass, form, siting, design, proportion, materials, texture and colour; and provide safe and convenient access for all users.

Development affecting Conservation Areas, SPD (January 2009) (CD D5)

- 1.37 The Appeal Site adjoins the north-eastern edge of the conservation area within Fulbourn.
- 1.38 This SPD provides additional guidance on developments affecting conservation areas and expands on broad policy set out in the Development Control Policies of the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework.
- 1.39 Paragraphs 2.11 to 2.16 set out guidance relating to the scale, massing, form and detailing of development proposals, where the guidance states that the overall scale of any new development is to be proportionate to the size of the village, and for individual buildings within a development to reflect the predominant scale of buildings found adjacent and/or across a particular conservation area. In addition, the guidance states that new properties should have an appropriate mass and form and should relate positively to the predominant, traditional built form in the vicinity of the wider conservation area. In relation to contemporary designs, the guidance states that materials should be of good quality and appropriate.

Landscape in New Developments, SPD (March 2010) (CD D6)

- 1.40 Within the chapter 'Delivering High Quality Landscape', objectives include the following:

- **Respecting Landscape Character;**
- **Appropriate Design**, where the selection of materials should vary according to their location and how they should be used;
- **Landscape Maintenance and Management;**
- **Encouraging Biodiversity**, where green spaces should be well designed and multi-functional, offering habitats for wildlife as well as human uses; and
- **Sustainable Landscape Schemes**, where the landscape scheme should seek to conserve and enhance the quality, character and amenity of the natural and built environment. In addition, schemes should aim to establish a robust network of Green Infrastructure, and appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be included within landscape schemes.

Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (June 2011) (CD D8)

- 1.41 This Strategy was prepared for the purpose of assisting in the shaping of and coordinating of Green Infrastructure in Cambridgeshire. It states that ***"the diversity of the Cambridgeshire landscape is a result of the complex interplay of a wide range of physical and cultural influences"***.
- 1.42 The Strategy identifies 6 strategic areas. Fulbourn and the Appeal Site are located within Strategic Area 6: Cambridge and Surrounding Areas, which is a broad scale map that identifies various 'themes' of green infrastructure. The 'Heritage Theme' and 'Sustainable Movement Theme' encompass the Appeal Site. Reversing the decline in biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change, promoting sustainable growth and economic development and supporting healthy living are all considered important objectives relevant to the area. Habitat enhancement and creation, and maintaining the historic character of villages and the rural character of the countryside are also considered important issues. Opportunities for green infrastructure include climate change adaptation (such as flood storage and alleviation), contributing to landscape character and improving the PRow network to allow access to the wider countryside.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (August 2013) (CD D1)

- 1.43 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is one of a number of evidence base documents and supporting studies produced or commissioned by South Cambridgeshire District Council to inform the preparation of their emerging Local Plan.
- 1.44 Appendix 7i of the SHLAA assess all the sites included within the study. Each site is allocated a reference number and comments relating to each site are set out within proformas. The two fields of the Appeal Site are identified as Site Number 162 of the SHLAA. Comments within the proforma for Site Number 162 relate to a range of considerations including heritage, landscape

and townscape. Constraints listed include its proximity to the adjoining conservation area, presence of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and the high water table locally.

1.45 The Appeal Site is noted as being *"two enclosed fields"*, and that *"there is limited opportunity to view the [Appeal] Site from the surrounding area"*.

1.46 With regard to Townscape and Landscape Impact the following is noted:

"There are limited opportunities to view the site from the surrounding area...A dense treed hedgerow divides the site...Development on the Site would have a neutral effect on the landscape setting of Fulbourn..."

1.47 In relation to Townscape and Landscape Impact, the study concludes that:

"Development on the Site would have a neutral effect on the landscape setting of Fulbourn because the site is so well screened from the residential and commercial buildings that surround it on three sides with the railway forming a barrier to the north."