



# **GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN: FIRST PROPOSALS PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION 2021**

## **Land to the North-West of Balsham Road, Linton**

Prepared by Strutt & Parker on behalf of Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd

December 2021

Site Name:	Land to the North of Balsham Road, Linton
Client Name:	Countryside Properties
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This representation has been prepared by Strutt & Parker on behalf of Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd to support the promotion of land to the north-west of Balsham Road, Linton as part of the Greater Cambridge First Proposals Consultation 2021.
- 1.2 In September 2021 Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service published the Greater Cambridge Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), which provided an initial assessment of the sites put forward for consideration for allocation as part of the Call for Sites consultations within Greater Cambridge.
- 1.3 This representation provides a response to the 'First Proposals' Preferred Options Consultation and has been structured to respond to relevant questions as set out within the First Proposals Consultation. In addition, a detailed assessment is provided in respect of the HELAA Proforma for the site.
- 1.4 The HELAA excludes the Balsham Road site from allocation primarily on the basis of landscape issues, notably that the proposed development "*would have substantial and unacceptable landscape and visual impacts that would not be sufficiently mitigated by the proposed landscape treatments*".
- 1.5 The site was submitted as part of the Call for Sites for circa 300 dwellings and a rural business park. In response to the HELAA consultation, an updated Landscape Technical Note and Opportunities and Constraints Plan has been prepared by Barton Willmore to respond to the landscape and townscape comments regarding the sensitivity of the site. As a result, it is proposed to set development back from the northern boundary and provide key landscape corridors through the site. The site is considered to have capacity for the provision for up to 300 dwellings and up to 1 hectare of employment land. The Technical Note by Barton Willmore on the landscape and visual impact has been provided within appendix A of this response.
- 1.6 The Opportunities and Constraints Plan demonstrates where the most and least sensitive areas within the site are. This has been produced in conjunction with the Technical Note on landscape and visual impact and the Council's Landscape Character Assessment (2021). This has informed a reduced developable area. The revised scheme has been set back from the north, with clear landscape corridors, to allow clear landscape views to the Grade II Listed Water Tower to be fully maintained. The proposed development area represents a logical rounding off and extension to the large Minor Rural Centre of Linton which is a well-served village with a number of existing services and facilities.

1.7 Therefore, in view of the above, it is considered that several of the assessments criteria, particularly regarding the landscape impact should be re-categorised. It has been demonstrated in the supporting information provided that the allocation of this site would not have a significant adverse impact the landscape and townscape such that the site should be considered as a suitable, achievable and deliverable site for housing and should therefore be put forward for allocation in the emerging Local Plan. Further analysis of this is set out within section 7 of this report.

1.8 In support of this report, the following documents have been prepared;

- Landscape and Visual Technical Advice Note – Barton Willmore; and
- Opportunities and Constraints Plan – Barton Willmore.

1.9 In addition to the above documents, where relevant reference is also made to documents prepared and submitted previously as part of earlier rounds of consultation on the Local Plan.

**2. QUESTION: Do you agree that we should plan for an extra 550 homes per year, so that housing keeps up pressure with increased jobs in our area?**

- 2.1 We agree that it is very important that housing delivery keeps up for demand for increased jobs within the area.
- 2.2 As part of the preparation of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, the Shared Planning Service has identified a need for 2,321 dwellings to be built per year. A significant proportion of this growth is made up of existing allocations within the Local Plan.
- 2.3 The initial evidence base and spatial options assessment for the emerging Local Plan, set three growth options; 'minimum' (40,300 dwellings - based upon standard methodology); 'medium' (46,200 dwellings- based upon economic forecast based upon long term historic employment) and 'maximum' (67,700 dwellings – based upon fast economic growth in the recent past). In view of this, the housing delivery target of 44,400 new homes over the plan period alongside 58,500 new jobs would fall between the 'minimum' and 'medium' growth scenarios previously suggested.
- 2.4 The Development Strategy Topic Paper, that accompanies this consultation acknowledges that the Greater Cambridge economy is dynamic and does not readily align with national or regional forecasts for job growth. In particular, it has a world-renowned life sciences cluster which has the potential to drive growth beyond typical regional or national rates. It is also acknowledged that in the recent past employment growth within the region has been significantly higher than predicted.
- 2.5 Accounting for the evidence set out within the Development Strategy Topic Paper, it is not clearly justified why only 44,400 new homes and 58,500 new jobs are proposed over the plan period. It is considered that this approach should be re-visited to increase both housing and employment allocations within the Local Plan. It is considered that the delivery of housing should be significantly increased, in line with the 'maximum' growth forecast, to align with economic growth within the recent past. The case for maximum growth forecast is further supported by significant transport investment within the area over the plan period. This includes schemes such as East-West Rail, Cambridge South Station and the delivery of a number of Rapid Transit Routes proposed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership.
- 2.6 The provision for lower growth scenarios does also not appear to be consistent with the Government's objectives for the Ox-Cam Arc as a focus for housing and employment growth with associated infrastructure

**3. QUESTION: Do you agree that new development should mainly focus on sites where car travel, and therefore emissions, can be minimised?**

- 3.1 Yes, in principle the proposal to focus development on sites where car travel can be minimised is supported. Consistent with this strategy, it is considered to be very important that some growth is delivered in the larger more sustainable villages that are located outside of the Green Belt, such as Linton. National policy is clear within paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) that planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where they will support local services. The updated NPPF (2021), also provides additional emphases on the suitability of providing significant extensions to villages, provided that they are well located and designed.
- 3.2 The CPIER report, which is referenced as a key document within the evidence base provides a detailed analysis regarding the potential benefits of focusing growth along key transport corridors. The proposed Cambridge South-East Transport Project (CSET), proposes significant sustainable transport improvements between Cambridge and Haverhill. This includes significantly improved public transport, including an off-road rapid transit bus route, along with significant cycleway improvements along the A1307, some of which have already been implemented. For ease of reference appendix D of this representation provides accessibility plans, prepared by Richard Jackson Partnership, which were previously submitted as part of the Issues and Options Consultation. The Accessibility Plans demonstrate the significant transport improvement measures within Linton and in between Linton and Cambridge.
- 3.3 In addition, Linton, benefits from being a sustainable settlement in its own right. As referred to within our previous representation at Issues and Options Stage (refer to Appendix C), Linton is the largest Minor Rural Service Centre (As defined within the adopted and emerging Local Plan) that is not situated within the Green Belt. It is also benefits from both primary and secondary education facilities and a large range of services, including shops, pubs, restaurants and community facilities.
- 3.4 Linton did also not receive any allocations within the 2018 Local Plan and therefore provision for additional growth as part of the Local Plan 2041 would be appropriate and assist with maintaining viability and vibrancy of the village by sustaining and enhancing rural services.
- 3.5 For the above reasons, it is considered that additional growth within Linton would be consistent with the objective of the Local Plan, which seeks to minimise car travel. Of the

sites submitted within Linton as part of the Call for Sites process, land to the north-west of Balsham Road, is considered to be a particularly sustainable and suitable site for residential development.

- 3.6 It is suggested that the provision for increasing the range of sites modestly to include smaller and medium sites in the rural area would provide significant benefits. For example, they could be delivered more quickly without requiring additional infrastructure, provide choice and flexibility in the housing market and secure affordable housing more immediately. This is a point recognised by the Inspector that examined the 2018 Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire as referenced within paragraph 31 of the report:

*“In order to arrive at a sound strategy, we consider that as a primary consideration, the Council would need to allocate more small and medium sized sites that could deliver homes in the short to medium term and help to bolster the 5-year HLS, until the Garden Communities begin to deliver housing. This would have the benefit of providing flexibility and choice in the market and the earlier provision of more affordable housing” (paragraph 114).*

**4. QUESTION: We feel that we should support the development of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, with space for more healthcare facilities, research and housing. What housing, facilities or open spaces should be created around the campus?**

- 4.1 We strongly agree that supporting the development and further expansion of Cambridge Biomedical Campus should be one of the key principles of the new Local Plan. To support this objective, it is imperative therefore that a proportion of new housing growth is located along sustainable transport corridors from the Biomedical Campus, to support the objective of the Local Plan outlined above (in section 3 of this statement), which seeks to minimise car travel.
- 4.2 It is also very important that the emerging Local Plan 2041 aligns housing and employment growth, with major transport schemes that are being promoted in and around Cambridge. The First Proposals provide a number of references to East-West Rail and the provision for Cambridge South Station, both of which are important new transport infrastructure projects. However, additional focus needs to be given the major infrastructure projects being promoted by the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Of particular relevance to the Biomedical Campus expansion, is the Cambridge South East Rapid Transit Route (CSET), which is proposed to provide a rapid transit route from the Biomedical Campus to the market town of Haverhill, the majority of which will be provided as an off-road bus way route. It is considered important that substantial housing growth is provided to the south-east of Cambridge along this rapid transit route, to ensure ease of access to the Biomedical Campus by sustainable transport means.
- 4.3 It is understood that the CSET Project has progressed significantly since the Issues and Options Consultation in 2020. It is understood that the Greater Cambridge Partnership are intending to submit a Transport for Works Order in early 2022. It is also an identified route within the current Local Transport Plan.
- 4.4 Linton is one of the largest settlements with South Cambridgeshire that will be served by the CSET route. Therefore, growth in this settlement would be consistent with one of the key objectives of the Local Plan, which seeks to minimise car travel by focusing growth on locations with good transport infrastructure. Linton is situated outside of the Green Belt and therefore it is considered that Linton should be the focus for growth ahead of settlements that lie within this designation such as Sawston.

**5. QUESTION: What housing, jobs, facilities or open spaces do you think should be provided in and around these villages?**

- 5.1 It is important that a range of housing, jobs and facilities are provided within larger villages as part of new allocations to allow them to thrive and remain vibrant. Countryside Properties are responsible for the promotion of land to the north-west of Balsham Road, Linton and have a track record of delivering high quality housing developments, which provide a mix of dwellings and tenures to meet objectively assessed housing needs. Countryside Properties are fully committed, to engagement with the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service and Linton Parish Council regarding the mix and type of housing to be delivered on land to the north-west of Balsham Road. The proposals also include the provision for the delivery of a substantial area of public open space with associated landscaping and Countryside Properties are flexible on the proposed use of this open space.
- 5.2 The submission of the site, also includes the provision for a Rural Business Centre of up to 1 hectare in size. This Rural Business Centre has the ability to ensure that jobs are provided within the application site and to support smaller start-up businesses within the local area. This further strengthens the sustainability case for development of this site.
- 5.3 It should however be noted that Linton is strategically well located to provide housing growth in close proximity to large employment generators and jobs such as the Genome Campus, Granta Park, Haverhill, the Biomedical Campus as demonstrated by the attached accessibility plan, prepared by Richard Jackson Partnership, that is provided within Appendix D.

**6. QUESTION: Are there any sites which you think should be developed for housing or business use, which we haven't got on our map so far?**

- 6.1 Yes, land to the north-west of Balsham Road, Linton should be allocated for development and would be a sound allocation as part of the emerging Local Plan being brought forward by a housebuilder that has a good track record for delivery. Countryside is a leading national housebuilder and has established a strong reputation for delivering high-quality mixed-tenure housing developments and award-winning places to live and are committed to delivering a landscape led development at Balsham Road, Linton.
- 6.2 The land to the north-west of Balsham Road, Linton is being promoted for a residential-led mixed use development which comprises an employment area. The proposals consist of up to 300 dwellings and a rural business centre of up to 1 hectare in size.
- 6.3 Having reviewed the settlement morphology, the area of proposed built form is now concentrated away from the northern boundary, thereby extending the village in such a way that respects the more sensitive landscape views in the northern part of the site.
- 6.4 The proposed development is focussed towards the south of the site which is the least visible from the surrounding landscape, and will comprise of up to 300 dwellings. To the east the site is well screened by the existing scrap yard and structural vegetation.
- 6.5 Medium to long distant views are available of only the northern parts of the site and as such these areas are proposed as open green space, in order to protect the character of the rolling Chalkland, as well as views of the listed Rivey Hill Water Tower, as a prominent feature on the horizon above Linton, as seen from the landscape to the south, which is identified in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment.
- 6.6 The opportunity and constraints plan also allows provision for clear views to the water tower, along green corridors within the site. This will also help protect views of the water tower to the north. The aim of integrating the settlement with the rural landscape is also furthered by the inclusion of lower density housing towards the northern parts of the area proposed for development, forming an outward-facing, transitional porous settlement edge.
- 6.7 Structural vegetation is proposed along the western extents of the southern boundary, in order to provide a buffer between the proposed development and the existing housing to the south, as well as the western boundary in order to reinforce and strengthen the existing vegetated buffer to the bridleway. Further structural vegetation is proposed along the northern boundary, following the natural contours of the land form in order to soften the artificially straight line of the hedgerow that cuts across the landscape. Belts of structural

vegetation running broadly east/west more centrally within the site similarly follow the existing contours in order to soften the proposed development and integrate it within the surrounding rural landscape - see The Landscape and Visual Opportunities and Constraints plan (LN-LP-04 Rev A).

### **Response to HELAA**

6.8 In addition to Landscape and Townscape matters, a detailed review of the HELAA in respect of the land to the north-west of Balsham Road are set out below. The issues identified 'green' were:

- Open Space/Green Infrastructure;
- Accessibility to Services and Facilities; and
- Noise, Vibration, Odour and Light Pollution

6.9 These issues have therefore not been assessed as part of this representation as they are considered acceptable.

### **Flood Risk**

6.10 The issue of Flood Risk has been identified as 'Amber' in the site assessment, despite being located wholly in Flood Zone 1, and at the lowest risk of surface water flooding; a 1 in 1,000-year event.

6.11 Only 1% of the site is within land at risk from surface water flooding in a 1 in 1,000-year event and this area will not be subject to development.

6.12 Similarly, to this, site 40554 (Land at south of Horseheath Road, Linton) is also wholly located within Flood Zone 1, but has been assessed as 'Green' regarding flood risk.

6.13 It is therefore considered that our site, within Zone 1 and only 1%, approximately 280 m<sup>2</sup> (0.028 hectares) of the site is at risk from a 1 in 1,000-year surface water flooding event, should be re-assessed and designated as 'Green' for flood risk. The masterplan for the site will evolve on drainage work completed on the site to date and will be supported by a drainage strategy and Flood Risk Assessment to demonstrate surface water runoff will be appropriately managed. The landscape led approach to the scheme offers a number of opportunities in green areas to introduce Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) features.

### **Landscape and Townscape**

- 6.14 As outlined above, the Landscape and Townscape assessment is a 'red' issue in the HELAA on the ground the development of the site would have a substantial and unacceptable impact on the landscape and visual impacts. This assessment was based upon the original opportunities and constraints and development layout, which has now been reviewed to set development back from the northern boundary.. Developing the north side of Balsham Road, would provide a logical termination of the village, but will be visually contained in relation to the existing pattern of development. The developable area has also been set further south, to give additional space for the setting of the water tower.
- 6.15 As referred to above, a Landscape and Visual Technical Note ('note') has been prepared by Barton Wilmore which provides an updated landscape impact assessment of the reduced scheme. The note acknowledges that the site is 'a good example of the landscape character identified in NCA 87: East Anglian Chalk' and that the Chalk land landscape is a key characteristic of this landscape. The note contends that the southern part of the site has the capacity to accommodate development that would not result in substantial adverse effects on the identified landscape features such as Rivey Hill due to the southern edge of the site being immediately adjacent to the existing settlement. The development area has been focused away from the higher parts of the site and more important views of Rivey Hill. A large part of the northern edge of the site would be retained as open space and, combined with structural landscaping, would help to reduce the landscape impact of any development and create a soft edge to Balsham Road – See Opportunities and Constraints Plan which accompanies the note. Landscaping and areas of open space would significant contribute towards assimilating the any development into the existing settlement.
- 6.16 The reduction in the scale of development and locating the development adjacent to the southern boundary would protect the character of the rolling Chalk land as well as views of Rivey Hill Water Tower.
- 6.17 When considering the revised proposals, the HELAA's concerns regarding the lack of proposed landscape mitigation, these are no longer applicable, with the location for residential being amended to areas of the site least visible from the surrounding landscape and all by providing large areas of open space to create softer edges to Balsham Road and the northern edge. It is requested that the HELAA Proforma is revisited for this site on Landscape and Townscape grounds in light of the proposed amendments.
- 6.18 It is noted that the majority of the sites put forward at Linton have been discounted in the HELAA as they have scored red in the Council's landscape assessment identifying that

development of the sites are deemed to have a significant negative impact which cannot be mitigated. Of the fourteen sites that have been put forward thirteen have scored a red rating including one site which already has Reserved Matters Approval for 42 dwellings, but it is understood in this instance the landscape concerns relate to a larger scheme of 120 dwellings that has been put forward. The one site that has scored an amber rating rather than red in the HELAA has been subject to a recently refused application. The application was refused on grounds of not providing sufficient information on traffic generation from the proposals or sufficient information in relation to the impact of the proposal upon features of archaeological interest. No reasons for refusal were advanced relating to the landscape impact of the scheme (LPA Ref: S/2650/17/OL).

- 6.19 The National Character Area 87 – East Anglia Chalk comprises over 100,00 hectare and individual sites are likely to account for a very small proportion of that. The broad brush approach taken to the landscape assessment of sites at Linton in the HELAA and to discount them due to their location within the National Character fails to appropriately assess the suitability of the sites on a site by site basis and site specific landscape evidence that has been put forward by site promoters which demonstrates that the landscape of individual sites does not elevate it beyond the ordinary.

### **Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

- 6.20 The HELAA considers the impact on biodiversity and geodiversity to be 'amber' on the basis that the development may have a detrimental impact on the Ancient Woodland, which is within 400 metres of the site and increase visitor pressure on the SSSI. The location of development has been focused along the southern edge of the site so that it relates to the existing settlement. The site offers a large area of onsite open space where dog walking routes can be created within the site to minimise the need for visits to offsite areas. There may also be scope through Section 106 planning contributions to help mitigate impact to this area if it is necessary to do so. There is also the Roman Road from Wandlebury Country Park to Haverhill that can be used by walkers. This can be accessed from Balsham Road to the north of the site.
- 6.21 In addition to this, the high levels of use of Rivey Wood for both hikers and runners is of significance, with approximately 4 'official' hiking routes and 2 'official' running routes situated within or immediately adjacent to Rivey Wood.

- 6.22 It is also popular with mountain bikers and thereby is subject to considerable cycle traffic throughout the year.
- 6.23 The considerable increase in the area of proposed open space with structural vegetation proposed, increases the space and opportunity for biodiversity to be enhanced locally, and will reduce any visitor pressure on Rivey Wood as a result of the proposed development.
- 6.24 Accounting for the substantial area of open space now proposed within the site, it is considered that this assessment should be amended to green.

### **Historic Environment**

- 6.25 Rivey Hill Water Tower (Grade II) is located 0.6 kilometres to the north of the site. As stated above, quantum of development has been significantly reduced and focused along the south western edge of the site providing opportunities of structural landscaping to the north.
- 6.26 The landscape technical note indicates that any adverse impact associated with the development can be sufficiently mitigated against. The note states that the Rivey Hall Water Tower is located towards “*the more elevated part of the Site*”, meaning that this heritage asset and immediate area surrounding the Water Tower would not experience “*substantial adverse effects*”. This also means that clear and uninterrupted views of the water tower can be maintained following development of the site.
- 6.27 Furthermore, the area of proposed built form is now concentrated against the existing settlement edge, thereby extending the village in such a way as to achieve a rational settlement boundary profile by aligning the northern and eastern boundaries of the proposed development with the existing northern and eastern boundaries of the village.
- 6.28 Therefore, the impact on the development on the setting of the listed water tower and its heritage significance would not be adversely impacted by any future development. The development would be located a significant distance from the water tower at a lower level.

### **Site Access**

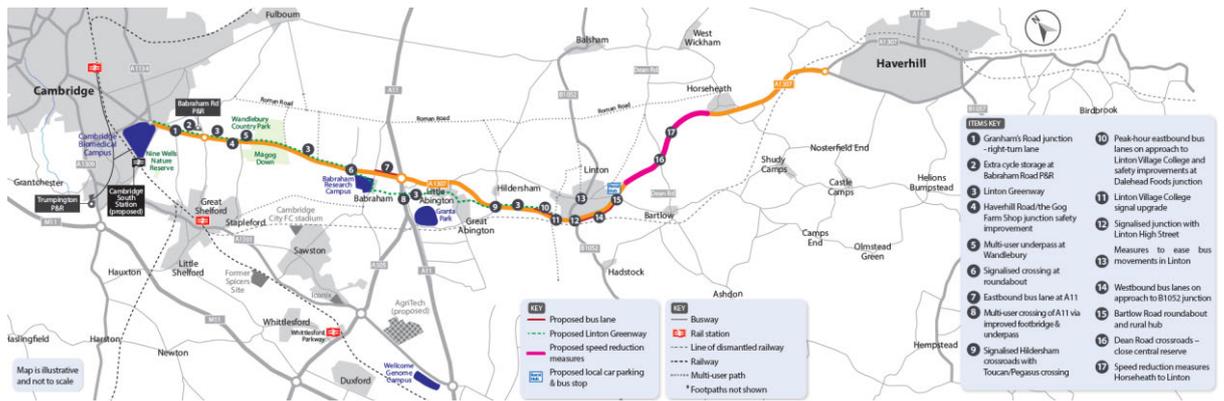
- 6.29 The Site Access is identified as ‘Amber’ but is described as ‘acceptable in principle, subject to detailed design’ in the HELAA 2021.
- 6.30 At this stage in the evaluation of sites submitted in the 2019 Call for Sites Consultation, ‘acceptable in principle’ is as positive as it can be as detailed access proposals are yet to be confirmed. A Transport Appraisal (by Richard Jackson) was submitted with our Call for

Sites representations which advised that all highways matters such as site access has been satisfactorily accommodated with mitigation.

- 6.31 The creation of an access onto Balsham Road would not cause any highway safety issues and would achieve the relevant visibility splays due to the alignment of the section of Balsham Road. It is therefore a matter of agreeing the details of the junction arrangements.
- 6.32 The principle of the proposed access is established, and should therefore be categorised as 'Green' until such time detailed access proposals are made available.

### **Transport and Roads**

- 6.33 As stated above, the Transport Appraisal was prepared based upon 300 dwellings and a rural business centre on the site. In the appraisal, it was considered that the impact on transport and road infrastructure could be satisfactorily accommodated with mitigation. Furthermore, the site scored 'Green' in the HELAA for access to local services and facilities due to its proximity to the existing settlement.
- 6.34 Despite being labelled as 'Amber', it is our view that the proposed site is located in one of the most sustainable areas in South Cambridgeshire, and would not increase pressure on existing highways infrastructure, and would not require new highway and transport infrastructure other than within the site and the access to Balsham Road. It is also acknowledged that any potential impact from the development on the site could be reasonably mitigated.
- 6.35 As referred to within earlier section and as can be seen on the Greater Cambridge Partnership South East Transport Phase 1 extract, Linton is located along a corridor between Cambridge and Haverhill, identified for a comprehensive transport scheme.
- 6.36 Connectivity between Linton and Cambridge will benefit from new and improved active travel links; this active travel path is shown below, identified as the green dotted line.
- 6.37 Further to this, peak hour eastbound bus lanes on approach to Linton Village College and safety improvements at the Dalehead Foods junction are proposed.



6.38 The categorisation of Transport and Roads as ‘Amber’ in the HELAA is based on ‘capacity and junction issues adjacent to the A1307 and need for increased transport infrastructure’.

6.39 However, improvements identified under Phase 1 of the CSET categorised as ‘active’, with some actions, including a new bus lane on the A1307 towards Haverhill on the approach to the Linton Village College Junction, and junction safety improvements for the Grain Store and Dalehead Foods.

6.40 Considering this, Linton is considered to become one of the most sustainable villages surrounding Cambridge due to the infrastructure improvements brought forward by the CSET project, and is therefore an ideal location for achieving and delivering sustainable development.

6.41 Therefore, this criterion should be amended to ‘Green’ as the proposed development on the site as there would be sufficient highway capacity to accommodate the development without causing any adverse impact.

### Archaeology

6.42 According to the HELAA, an enclosed area has been identified as ‘probable’ late prehistoric or Roman land.

6.43 To support the site promotion, RPS were commissioned by Countryside Properties to complete, both a desk- based archaeology assessment and magnitude surveys, were instructed to produce a Geophysical Survey Report. The results of these surveys identify some archaeological areas of interest within the site however nothing that would preclude the development of the site being delivered. In addition, the report also concluded that the site will not have any impact upon designated archaeological impacts.

6.44 Additionally, significant landscaping mitigation / buffers can be designed in to the site proposal and layout.

6.45 Considering this, Archaeology should be amended to 'Green' on the basis that the geophysical survey and desk based assessment demonstrate that the site is suitable having regard to archaeological matters.

### **Air Quality**

6.46 The site is not located either within, or in proximity to an Air Quality Management Zone.

6.47 Further to this, the site is located in the furthest point from the A1037 within Linton; the surrounding area of which is most likely to have issues associated with air quality.

6.48 The scheme have also been subject to significant amendments; with a reduction in proposed residential units by approximately 100, as well as the increased provision of public open space included within the proposal, all which will assist in terms of air quality mitigation.

### **Contamination and Ground Stability**

6.49 The current use of the site for agricultural purposes, and this resulting in the 'potential' for contamination is not sufficient justification for this site to be designated as 'Amber'.

6.50 The majority of available land surrounding villages in Cambridgeshire is designated as either active or previously used as agricultural land. Therefore, there is no evidence to demonstrate the land is contaminated.

6.51 Sites should be assessed on a site by site basis, not categorised as 'Amber.' Accounting for the arable use of the site, it is considered that a score of 'green' would be more appropriate.

### **Summary**

6.52 The revised proposal presented in the Landscape and Visual Opportunities and Constraints Plan, in addition to the Technical Note produced by Barton Willmore, provide a sufficient response to the enable the areas of concern to be reassessed in favour of the site being considered for allocation in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The site can come forward early in the plan period and can assist in maintaining a five year supply of housing

land. This bolstered by the fact that the site is being promoted by a national housebuilder that is focussed on delivery.

6.53 It is therefore considered that with the re-assessment shown below, the site should be viewed as a suitable site for a residential led scheme and included as an allocation in the Greater Cambridgeshire Local Plan. We have set out our assessment on the table below:

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>Flood Risk</b>	Green	Flood zone: Wholly in Flood Zone 1. Surface water flooding: 1% lies in a 1 in 1000 year event
<b>Landscape and Townscape</b>	Amber	Barton Willmore Technical Note concludes that any adverse impacts can be sufficiently mitigated against through the proposal of a lower housing density on site, as well as the concentration of this development in less visible areas on site.
<b>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</b>	Green	Impact upon Rivey Wood will be fully mitigated by the substantial new area of open space.
<b>Historic Environment</b>	Green	Any adverse impact associated with development can be sufficiently mitigated against. Levels on site mean views to the water tower will not be interrupted, particularly as a result of the revised layout.
<b>Archaeology</b>	Green	Further investigation is required and potential for mitigation if necessary, pending outcome of investigative works.
<b>Site Access</b>	Green	The proposed site is acceptable, as has been demonstrated in the technical note prepared by Richard Jackson Partnership.
<b>Transport and Roads</b>	Green	The Technical Note prepared by Richard Jackson Partnership demonstrates that the road network is able to accommodate the additional traffic associated with this development.
<b>Air Quality</b>	Green	The site is not located within an Air Quality Management Zone.
<b>Contamination and Ground Stability</b>	Green	There is no evidence to suggest previous land uses has resulted in the land to be contaminated. As with any proposal development site, further site investigation work will be carried out to understand the land condition.



## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This representation has been prepared by Strutt & Parker, on behalf of Countryside Properties to support the allocation of a housing site for up to 300 dwellings and up to 1 hectare of land as a Rural Business Park, with associated open space and landscaping at Balsham Road, Linton.
- 7.2 The promotion of the site has sought to clearly respond to the HELAA Proforma of the site, with the quantum of the development on the site reduced and focussed away from the northern boundary of the site, to ensure that impact of the development upon the landscape around Linton is sufficiently reduced.
- 7.3 The site has a number of favourable attributes that would demonstrate it is a sound allocation for housing growth, within the emerging Local Plan:
- It is located in a highly sustainable location, at one of the largest Minor Rural Centres in South Cambridgeshire outside the Green Belt. The site is in an accessible location and sustainable location.
  - Linton is a very sustainable village to accommodate further growth and already has a range of services, community facilities such as excellent education opportunities. The site is located in close proximity to these facilities and with sustainable choices providing access to higher order services
  - The site is situated on the north-eastern side of Linton, which is less sensitive in landscape terms and less constrained in terms of highways and site access, than land to the west of the village. Growth can occur at the village at this site without needing to breach the A1307;
  - The site benefits from good access onto Balsham Road which is being enhanced as part of the CSET project;
  - The site is being put forward for residential development, with a landscape and heritage led masterplan that provides a substantial proportion of the site as open green space and landscaping.
  - The site is unconstrained and fully deliverable in planning terms. The site can provide a broad mix of dwelling types and tenures and can deliver affordable housing to meet local needs. As identified within the recent appeal decision at Payne's Meadow, there is an identified affordable housing need shortage of over 80 dwellings. The lack of housing delivery in Linton mean's that this unmet need

will not be addressed as a result of the emerging Local Plan. The site can come forward early in the plan period to meet these needs.

- There will also be economic benefits through construction jobs, additional spending power from the construction phase and expenditure in the local economy from the new residents.
- Allowing Linton to grow in a planned way will add to village vitality and sustainability by providing additional support and custom for existing services and facilities.
- Countryside Properties Ltd are committed to detailed engagement with both Planning Officers and statutory and non-statutory consultees, including working closely with the local community in the evolution of the vision for the site.
- Ability to provide biodiversity net gain on the site.

7.3 In light of the above, it there therefore considered that land to the north of Balsham Road, Linton provides an excellent location for development and would be a sound basis for allocation as part of the emerging Local Plan.