Land South of St Neots Road, Hardwick (Site ID 115234; HELAA ID 40273)

Updated RAG Site Review and Promoter Comments 2026

Criteria (with latest assessment date in brackets)	RAG Rating	HELAA Comments	Promoter Response
Adopted Development Plan Policies RAG (2026)	Amber	Development of the site has some potential policy constraints, but these could be overcome through the planning application process.	A planning application has been submitted in relation to the Land South of St Neots Road (26/01263/OUT) On the basis that the planning submission is compliant with local and national policy, it is considered that the assessment should be updated to **Green**.
Flood Risk RAG Assessment (2026)	Amber	Flood Zones: Site is wholly within Flood Zone 1. Climate Change: Site is not within a climate-change-adjusted flood zone. Surface Water: 1% lies in a 1-in-1,000-year event.	The Site is located wholly in Flood Zone 1, which has the lowest probability of flooding. The Site also has very low chances of flooding from surface water. A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared as part of the planning application which confirms this position. Given the Council's comment associated with the RAG rating, it is not clear why the site is not 'Green'. Accordingly, Pigeon contend that the rating should be updated to **Green**.
Landscape RAG Assessment (2026)	Amber	2026 Comments: Having considered the updated information submitted, the site assessment remains the same. The site lies outside but adjacent to the village framework. Despite relative enclosure, it retains some rural edge qualities. **We consider the site has some capacity for development, but proposals must be LVIA-led to minimise harm to countryside character and visual receptors**. Even with mitigation, some landscape and visual effects are unavoidable given the site's greenfield, rural location. 2025 Comments: A written, unillustrated landscape and visual appraisal has been submitted along with a proposed masterplan. The additional information does not change the RAG assessment. The location of the site on the edge of Hardwick and the open landscape to the south mean that previous comments on the requirements for landscape enhancements and mitigation still apply.	The update comments are welcomed. Pigeon have brought forward an LVIA and landscape-led scheme for the site which addresses its location and landscape sensitivity. The LVIA accompanies this response to provide further information in this regard. The LVIA and application materials demonstrate that the development will not result in an unacceptable landscape impact. It is therefore considered that the assessment should be updated to **Green**.

		Also of relevance are comments from 2023 and 2021: 2023 – Additional comments reply to the previous assessment scoring. As previously noted, mitigation measures would need to be introduced to ensure development of the site does not have an adverse impact on the landscape character of the area. Therefore no change the RAG assessment of this site is proposed as additional landscape enhancements would be required to overcome development impacts. 2021 – The key constraints are that the site is outside of the development, and not adjacent to it either where a village extension may be justified. The woodland adjacent to the site proposes an opportunity for neighbouring amenity space or pleasant views. Development to be sited close to the existing built area to maintain open views of the landscape. Landscape mitigation needed to minimise adverse impacts.	
Biodiversity and Geodiversity RAG Assessment (2023)	Amber	No additional information has been provided in relation to ecology impacts, mitigation and Biodiversity Net Gain and therefore there is no change to the site assessment scoring. Development of the site may have a detrimental impact on a designated site, or those with a regional or local protection but the impact could be reasonably mitigated or compensated. Also of relevance are comments from 2021: All new housing developments will require assessment of increased visitor pressure on nearby SSSI. There are no apparent priority habitats within the site; however, there are grasslands, woodland areas, hedges, and wooded boundaries on site that are likely to have an ecological value. Applications may find provision of a 10% net gain in biodiversity difficult within their red line boundaries and may need to find offsite compensation to comply with up-coming National legislation and developing local policies. Development of the site may have a detrimental impact on a designated site, or those with a regional or local	It is considered that this assessment is out of date. Pigeon have conducted extensive technical investigations on the site which have been submitted in support of the Outline Planning Application, in accordance with legislative requirements, the proposed scheme will deliver a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain through a combination of on- and off-site measures. Full details of the proposed biodiversity enhancements will come forward at any Reserved Matters stage.

		protection but the impact could be reasonably mitigated or compensated.	
Policy RAG Rating (2026)	Green	Site is not on protected open space designation. Any impact of the proposed development could be reasonably mitigated or compensated.	The assessment is welcomed. It is deemed that there is no change on site that would alter this assessment, and therefore the assessment should remain **Green**.
Historic Environment RAG Assessment (2023)	Green	The additional information has not changed the RAG rating which was green. There will be no detrimental impact on any heritage assets as there are none close to the site.	The assessment is welcomed. It is deemed that there is no change on site that would alter this assessment, and therefore the assessment should remain **Green**.
Archaeology RAG Assessment (2025)	Amber	The assessment for the site remains unchanged as amber. Investigations will be necessary in advance of development. Also of relevance are comments from 2021: Iron Age settlement recorded to the north of the site.	Pigeon have commissioned the completion of a Desk-Based Heritage Statement which concludes that there are no heritage constraints that would preclude the site's proposed development, but it is anticipated that further archaeological works are required to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains. As per the consultation response from Conservation Officers, further archaeological investigation should be undertaken following the grant of planning permission due to current site constraints. It is therefore deemed acceptable that the assessment is **Amber**.
Accessibility RAG Assessment	Amber	Adequate accessibility to key local services, transport, and employment opportunities. Proposed development would not require delivery of accompanying key services.	The Site is a highly sustainable location, readily accessible to a range of essential shops, services and employment within Hardwick and beyond. In particular, we wish to highlight the opportunity for further enhancement of Hardwick, especially in the context of the now-approved C2C scheme, planned East-West Rail and station at Cambourne. Therefore, the RAG assessment should be updated to **Green.**
Site Access RAG Assessment (2026)	Amber	Based on the additional information provided within the Proposed Site Access Plan, the site assessment has been amended to amber. The proposed site is acceptable in principle subject to detailed design.	The LPA's updated assessment revises the RAG rating to Amber. This is welcomed. The Outline Planning Application includes full detail of Access which the County Council have no objections to. The assessment should be updated to **Green**.

Transport and Roads RAG Assessment (2026)	Amber	2026 Comments: Having considered the updated information, the site assessment rating remains amber. Any potential impact on the functioning of trunk roads and/or local roads will need to be mitigated. There are also potential impacts on the A428 which may require mitigation. The development would need to provide mitigation to reduce the vehicle impact and encourage active travel and public transport use. It will need to provide high-quality local non motorised user routes linking to C2C and Cambridge to Cambourne cycleway 2025 Comments: Based on the additional information provided there is no change to the assessment score as it will need to provide high quality local non motorised user routes linking C2C and Cambridge to Cambourne cycleway. There are also potential impacts on the A428 which may require mitigation. Also of relevance are comments from 2021: Any potential impact on the functioning of trunk roads and / or local roads could be reasonably mitigated.	The proposals provide enhanced footpath and cycle connections onto St Neots Road which would potentially link in with the proposed C2C footpaths to the north and ensuring integration with these proposed public transport and active travel enhancements. Other pedestrian and cycle routes are proposed within the site with potential to link with surrounding networks. This Transport Assessment also concludes that the proposed development is not considered to have detrimental impact on the operation or safety of the local highway network. The acceptability of the Transport and Roads has been demonstrated through the Outline Application. Therefore, the RAG assessment should be updated to **Green.**
Noise, Vibration, Odour and Light Pollution RAG Assessment (2023)	Amber	New information provided has not changed the assessment. Detailed site-specific assessments will be required for any future planning applications at this location. Also of relevance are comments from 2021: The site is capable of being developed to provide healthy internal and external environments in regard to noise / vibration / odour / Light Pollution after careful site layout, design and mitigation.	Detailed technical work relating to noise, vibration, odour, and light pollution has been prepared in relation to the Outline Application. The assessment identifies no significant issues subject to incorporation of standard mitigation including adherence to a CEMP during the construction phase. Therefore, the RAG assessment should be updated to **Green.**
AQMA RAG Assessment (2023)	Green	The additional information provided does not significantly affect air qualities issues or mitigation. Therefore, the assessment of the site remains unchanged since the original assessment. The site does not lie within an AQMA and there will be minimal impact on AQMA.	The assessment is welcomed. It is deemed that there is no change on site that would alter this assessment, and therefore the assessment should remain **Green**.
Contaminated Land RAG Assessment (2023)	Amber	The additional information provided does not significantly affect environmental health issues or mitigation. Therefore, the assessment of the site remains unchanged since the original assessment as this is a site	Based on the findings of a preliminary risk assessment, no significant contaminant sources have been identified. A Contaminated Land Assessment has been conducted which

		previously in agricultural use with the potential for historic contamination and planning conditions will be required.	recommends that a Discovery Strategy is implemented during any development. It is anticipated that this can form the basis of a planning condition. Therefore, the RAG assessment should be updated to **Green.**
Available RAG	Green	Updated to Green in 2026.	The updated rating is welcomed. The Site is available now and can deliver new housing within 12 months of detailed permission – within the first 5 years of the new Local Plan adoption.
Achievable RAG	Green		The assessment is welcomed. It is deemed that there is no change on site that would alter this assessment. The site is achievable and therefore the assessment should remain **Green**.