Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

TETRA TECH

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Quality Management					
Version	**Status**	**Authored by**	**Reviewed by**	**Approved by**	**Review date**
P01	For Planning	A. Iqbal	C.Demmar	C.Demmar	28.03.26

Approval for issue		
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1. INTRODUCTION

General

1.1. Tetra Tech has been commissioned by Terra Strategic Limited ('the Applicant') to prepare a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) pertaining to the proposed residential development of 96 homes encompassing an area of approximately 4.88 ha on land off Oakington Road (the 'Application Site'), Cottenham, Cambridgeshire. The objective of the LVA is to inform the design of the new residential area and to identify the likelihood or otherwise of the proposed development giving rise to significant landscape and / or visual effects.

1.2. This appraisal, informed by desktop study and field survey, summarises the key landscape characteristics and likely visual influence associated with the Application Site and the Proposed Development with respects to the Site and its contextual relationship with the surrounding landscape and visual resources.

1.3. The approach set out within this document aligns with the GLVIA3 recommendations (page 12) which emphasises that appraisals should be 'proportionate' to the type of development and focus on the impacts that are likely to be material in planning terms. Given the Site's relatively enclosed character, its location on a settlement edge and the residential nature of the scheme, it is unlikely that the Proposed Development would result in any material effect on the surrounding landscape and visual receptors. Therefore, an LVIA is not considered necessary in this instance.

1.4. The primary purpose of this appraisal (coupled with a high level review of the opportunities for visual screening) is to safeguard any identified landscape features within and around the Application Site, which would then in turn inform the development of an appropriate Landscape Strategy for the Proposed Development. This would then allow for an iterative approach to landscape design for the overall scheme that takes into consideration the existing features while also delivering landscape enhancements.

Baseline Methodology

1.5. For this LVA, a desktop review of published information, such as landscape character assessments, OS data, online mapping data (Google Maps and Street View), aerial photography and local planning documents was undertaken. Figures have been produced to support the LVA, including Figure 1: Landscape Planning Designations, and Figure 2: ZTV and Viewpoint Locations. These have been used to identify potentially sensitive landscape and visual resources that are likely to be affected by the proposal.

1.6. To further inform the LVA, eight representative views looking towards the proposed development site have been selected. A site visit was carried out in March 2026 in order to record the views and gain a better understanding of the local landscape, its potential capacity to accommodate the changes proposed, potential sensitivities of the receiving landscape and possible visual receptors.

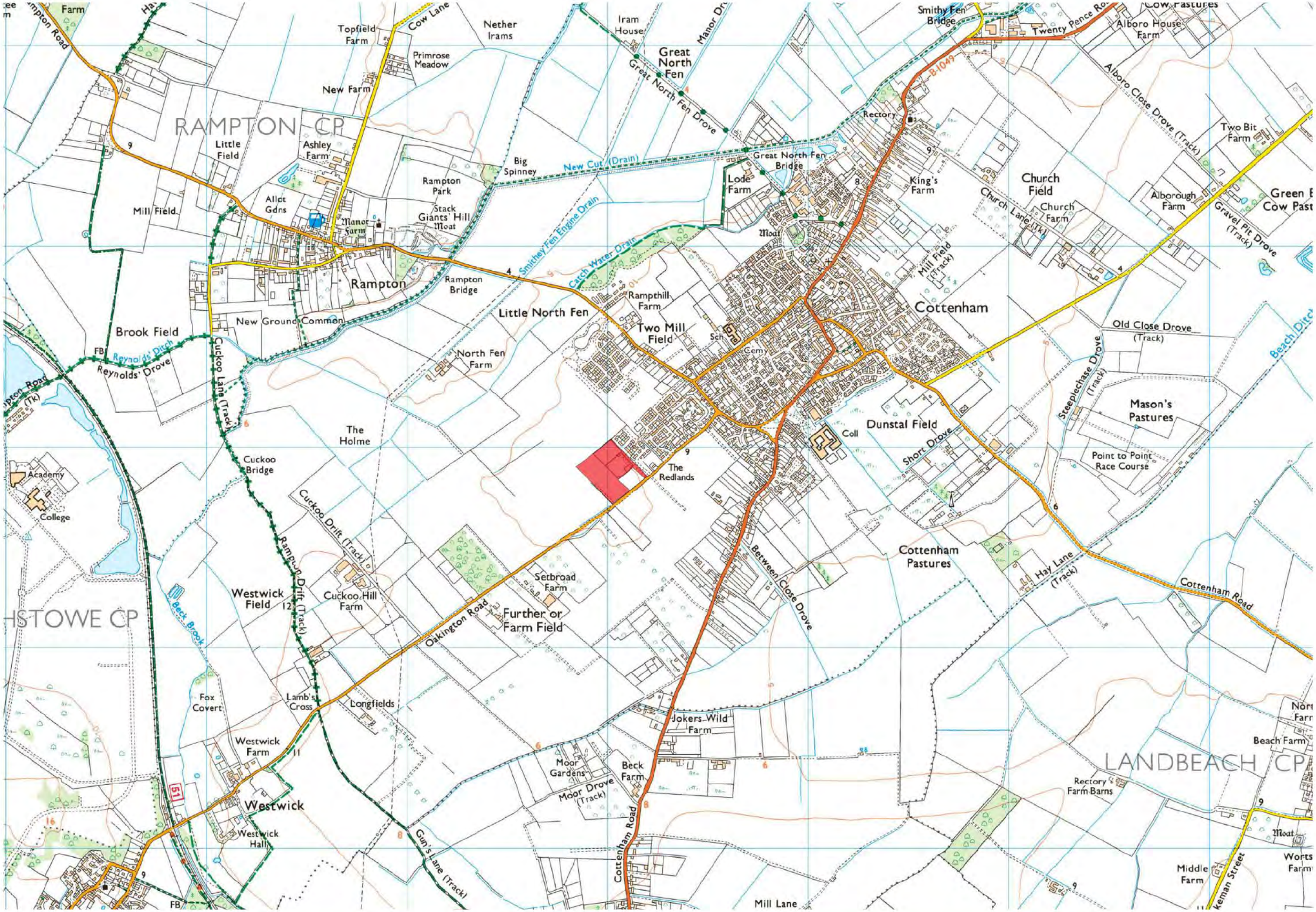
Assessment Methodology

1.7. The methodology used to undertake this LVA follows that set out in:

- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013), Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (GLVIA), and
- Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02 21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside of National Designations.

1.8. The LVA describes the existing or baseline conditions, and then provides an overview of potentially significant landscape and visual effects at a high level. The LVA does not give an assessment of sensitivity to the proposed development, magnitude of change or a judgement on likely significance of effects .

1.9. In accordance with GLVIA the introduction of built form to a site without buildings is necessarily likely to result in landscape or visual change at a range of scales, notwithstanding the previous disturbance of the Application Site.


RAMPTON CP
HSTOWE CP
LANDBEACH CP
Rampton
Cottenham
Westwick
Little Field
Ashley Farm
Topfield Farm
Cow Lane
Primrose Meadow
New Farm
Nether Irams
Iram House
Great North Fen
Great North Fen Drove
Manor Dr
Smithy Fen Bridge
Twenty Pence Ro
Cow Pastures
Alboro House Farm
B1049
Alboro Close Drove (Track)
Rectory
Two Bit Farm
Big Spinney
New Cut (Drain)
Great North Fen Bridge
Lode Farm
King's Farm
Church Field
Church Lane (Tk)
Church Farm
Alborough Farm
Gravel Pit Drove (Track)
Green E
Cow Past
Mill Field
Allot Gdns
Manor Farm
Rampton Park
Stack
Giants' Hill
Moat
Smithey Fen Engine Drain
Catch Water Drain
Rampton Bridge
Mill Field (Track)
Brook Field
New Ground Common
Little North Fen
Rampthill Farm
Two Mill Field
Sch
Cemy
North Fen Farm
Old Close Drove (Track)
Steeplechase Drove (Track)
Mason's Pastures
Point to Point Race Course
Dunstal Field
Short Drove
Coll
The Redlands
Reynolds' Ditch
Reynolds' Drove
Cuckoo Lane (Track)
Beach Ditch
The Holme
Cuckoo Bridge
Academy
College
Cuckoo Drift (Track)
Rampton Drift (Track)
Westwick Field
Cuckoo Hill Farm
Setbroad Farm
Further or Farm Field
Oakington Road
Between Close Drove
Cottenham Pastures
Hay Lane (Track)
Cottenham Road
Beck Brook
Fox Covert
Lamb's Cross
Longfields
Westwick Farm
Westwick Hall
Jokers Wild Farm
Moor Gardens
Moor Drove (Track)
Beck Farm
Rectory Farm Barns
Beach Farm
Middle Farm
Mill Lane
Gun's Lane (Track)
Moat
Worts Farm
Ikeman Street

Site Location

1.10. The Application Site (see the plan on the opposite page) is situated on the southwestern edge of the settlement of Cottenham in Cambridgeshire.

1.11. Within its immediate context, the Application Site is bounded by the adjacent residential fringe of Cottenham to the northeast and the Oakington Road that forms part of the southeastern boundary of the Application Site. To the southwest and northwest, the Site abuts the adjacent agricultural fields, bound by field boundary vegetation which includes hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The Site resides on a shallow plateau along with the settlement of Cottenham, within a gently undulating landscape.

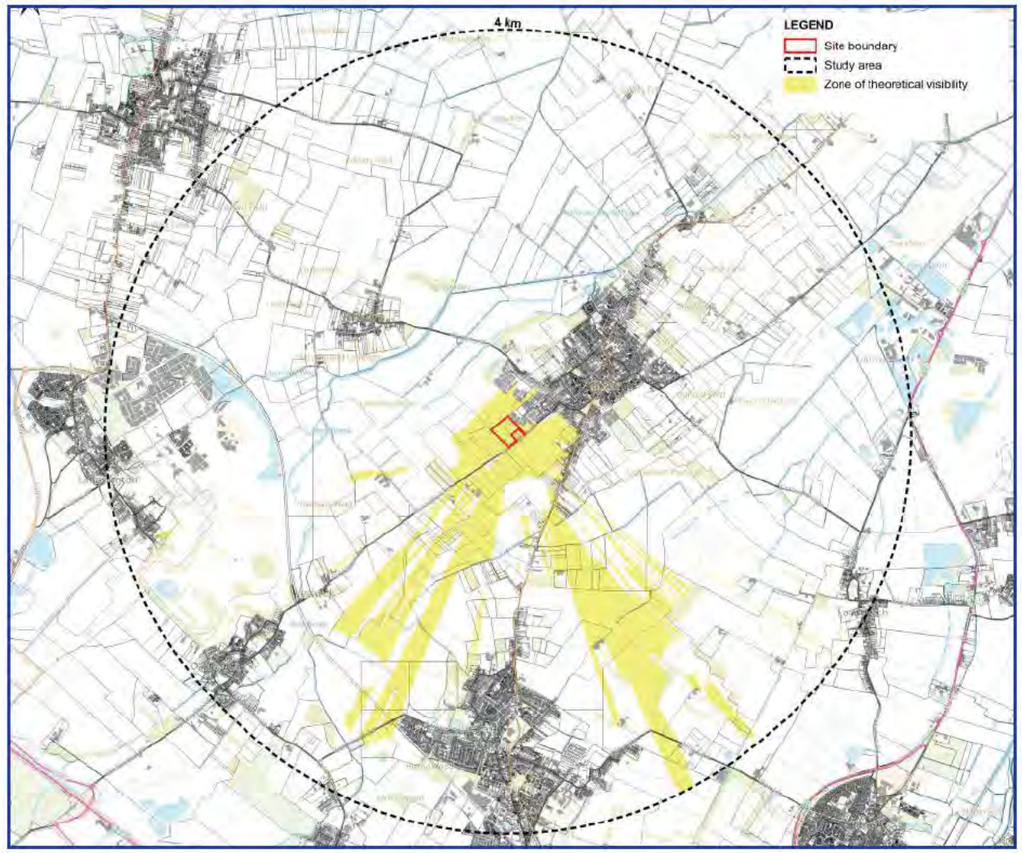
Study Area

1.12. In order to establish the baseline and potential limits of the notable effects, it is necessary to view the study area within two geographical scales.

1.13. For the purposes of this LVA, the Study Area extends to a broad study area of up to 4km from the outer edges of the Application Site. This has been adopted in the initial stages and desk study in order to ascertain the geographical scope of the assessment and to be defined and provide the wider geographical context of study.

1.14. Within this area, the search focuses on identifying the local planning context (with respects to policies that reference and outline strategies aligned to landscape matters), identifying national and local landscape designations and providing general geographical understanding of the Application Site and its broader context. Sensitive landscape and visual receptors within the study area as defined by the extent of the ZTV have been included.

1.15. Following initial analysis and subsequent field work, the Study Area was refined to focus on those character areas, landscape features and visual receptors that have the potential to be most significantly affected by the Proposed Development. The extent area of this study area is 3km from the Application Site boundary, although occasional reference may be made to features beyond this area where appropriate. The detailed study area is illustrated on **Figure 1**, and provided within the inset below. This figure is further detailed with respects to the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and viewpoint locations later on in the LVA.



Inset : Study Area and ZTV

2. PLANNING POLICY BASELINE

Local Development Framework

Local Plan

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan -adopted September 2018

2.1. The currently adopted local planning policy applicable to the Site is the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (adopted September 2018). This plan updates and replaces the South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework which was adopted between January 2007 and January 2010and covered a period of up to 2016. The Local Plan's policies and proposals cover the period of 2011 to 2031, which aims to set out the strategic objectives and policies relating to the future spacial strategy of the district in response to the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012 at the time of the adoption of the document).

2.2. It is noted that the new Local Plan (The Greater Cambridge Local Plan) is currently still in the consultation stage, with the latest version to be consulted during Summer 2026 ahead of the submission to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination in December 2026. This new local plan will replace the district plan to provide a wider vision for the sustainable development, social, environmental and economic policies for the Greater Cambridge area.

2.3. The landscape related planning policies relevant to the Proposed Development are as follows:

Policy HQ/1 : Design Principles

2.4. This policy states that:

2.5. '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. As appropriate to the scale and nature of the development, proposals must:

2.6. *Preserve or enhance the character of the local urban and rural area and respond to its context in the wider landscape;*

2.7. *Conserve or enhance important natural and historic assets and their setting;*

2.8. *Include high quality landscaping and public spaces that integrate the development with its surroundings, having a clear definition between public and private space which provide opportunities for recreation, social interaction as well as support healthy lifestyles,biodiversity, sustainable drainage and climate change mitigation.'*

2.9. An adherence to the design principles outlined within this policy should be considered when approaching the design of the residential dwellings and units within the Proposed Development, which is also outlined within the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) document.

Policy NH/2 : Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character

2.10. This policy outlines that:

2.11. *'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 is it located.'*

2.12. This policy outlines the importance of how a development should sit in the surrounding landscape character, which can be achieved through on site landscape mitigation measures as well as working in synergy with existing embedded landscape features.

Policy NH/4 : Biodiversity

2.13. The following aspects of this policy outline the need for consideration of Biodiversity:

2.14. *'Development proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity will be permitted.*

2.15. *New development must aim to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity. Opportunities should be taken to achieve positive gain through the form and design of development. Measures may include creating, enhancing and managing wildlife habitats and networks, and natural landscape. The built environment should be viewed as an opportunity to fully integrate biodiversity within new development through innovation. Priority for habitat creation should be given to sites which assist in the achievement of targets in the Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and aid delivery of the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy.*

2.16. If significant harm to the population or conservation status of a Protected Species, Priority Species1 or Priority Habitat resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission will be refused.

2.17. *Where there are grounds to believe that a proposal may affect a Protected Species, Priority Species or Priority Habitat, applicants will be expected to provide an adequate level of survey information and site assessment to establish the extent of a potential impact. This survey information and site assessment shall be provided prior to the determination of an application*

2.18. *Previously developed land (brownfield sites) will not be considered to be devoid of biodiversity. The reuse of such sites must be undertaken carefully with regard to existing features of biodiversity* interest. *Development proposals on such sites will be expected to include measures that maintain and enhance important features and appropriately incorporate them within any development of the site.*

2.19. *Planning permission will be refused for development resulting in the loss, deterioration or fragmentation of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.*

2.20. *Climate change poses a serious threat to biodiversity and initiatives to reduce its impact need to be considered.'*

2.21. This policy requires the Proposed Development to also consider matters of biodiversity and ecological matters, to ensure any features or elements that are to be affected are adequately mitigated for, or were possible enhanced.

Policy NH/6 : Green Infrastructure

2.22. *'The Council will aim to conserve and enhance green infrastructure within the district. Proposals that cause loss or harm to this network will not be permitted unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably and substantially outweigh any adverse impacts on the district's green infrastructure network.*

2.23. The Council will encourage proposals which:

a. Reinforce, link, buffer and create new green infrastructure; and

b. Promote, manage and interpret green infrastructure and enhance public enjoyment of it.

2.24. *The Council will support proposals which deliver the strategic green infrastructure network and priorities set out in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, and which deliver local green infrastructure.*

2.25. *All new developments will be required to contribute towards the enhancement of the green infrastructure network within the district. These contributions will include the establishment, enhancement and the on going management costs.'*

2.26. This policy ensures that strong landscape links can be achieved and maintained between the proposed mitigation measures employed within the Proposed Development. For example, this could be achieved by creating functional links between surrounding field

boundary hedgerows and trees.

Policy NH/8 : Mitigating the Impact of Development In and Adjoining the Green Belt

2.27. *'Any development proposals within the Green Belt must be located and designed so that they do not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt.*

2.28. *Where development is permitted, landscaping conditions, together with a requirement that any planting is adequately maintained, will be attached to any planning permission in order to ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.*

2.29. *Development on the edges of settlements which are surrounded by the Green Belt must include careful landscaping and design measures of a high quality.'*

2.30. This policy outlines the importance of the Green Belt and how it may be potentially impacted by a development. Though the Application Site is not situated within the Green Belt, it is close to its boundary, which lies just south of Oakington Road. The location of the Application Site at the settlement edge however would still require and adherence to careful landscape design and mitigation measures in order to better integrate to the surrounding visual character.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.31. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, was revised in response to the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes the Planning System consultation on December 2024 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

2.32. Further revisions and amendments were made to the NPPF on 7 February 2025, with the latest revision from the initial reforms to the NPPF made in December 2024. A fuller, more definitive update was made to the National Planning Policy and provided within the NPPF December 2025. The consultation of this draft ended on 10 March 2026. As such, the December 2025 NPPF is the most current and up to date document outlining National Planning Policy.

2.33. The main policy changes to the NPPF in relation to the type of development proposed as part of the LVS include a permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development, revised presumptions in favour of sustainable development, underpinning the way new policies direct different forms of development the most appropriate locations.

2.34. Additionally, further support will be provided for small and medium sites making it easier to bring them forward and offer a more streamlined a proportionate planning process for such sites.

2.35. The key relevant policies from the December 2025 NPPF are outlined below.

2.36. Within Section 4, 'Achieving sustainable development', Policy S5: Principle of development outside settlements the NPPF emphasises that only certain forms of development should be approved outside of settlements, which it states in part j (i) that developments be *'...well related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure;..'*

2.37. Section 14, 'Achieving well designed places', sets out the objectives for development which includes strategies for design, plan making as well as an adherence to Local Design Codes. Policy DP1: A strategy for design, part a states *'Ensuring the vision for the plan reflects the desired design and placemaking outcomes. This should be informed by an evaluation of the area's existing characteristics and potential.*' Policy DP2: Local Design Guides, Local Design Codes and Masterplans states :

2.38. *'1. Where design guides, design codes and masterplans are necessary, these design tools should:*

2.39. *a. Reflect a clear understanding of and address the character of the site or area which they cover, the wider context and opportunities to strengthen existing character;...'*Policy DP3: Key Principles for well designed Places states in paragraph 1 part d: Nature, that development should *'incorporate and/or connect to a network of high quality, accessible, multi functional green infrastructure to provide opportunities for recreation and healthy living, strengthen habitats, improve climate resilience...'*

2.40. Section 19, 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' sets out objectives and policies that help to drive nature recovery and contribute to wider environmental outcomes and the importance of natural capital with respects to development. Policy N1:Identifying environmental opportunities and safeguards, explains in part 1 that *' Development plans should safeguard and enhance the natural environment, and reflect the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services..'* and in part b *'Identify opportunities for the conservation, enhancement and recovery of landscapes.'*

2.41. Policy N2: Improving the natural environment, states in part 1 and paragraph a that *'To contribute positively to the natural environment and support nature's recovery development proposals should:*

2.42. *a. Consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced (including through requirements for biodiversity net gain where these apply);.'*

2.43. Paragraph d states that development should *'Conserve and enhance existing natural features of visual, historic or nature conservation value (such as established trees and hedgerows) wherever possible; and use appropriate landscaping to help create a well designed place and integrate the development into its surroundings.'*

National Planning Practice Guidance

2.44. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (DCLG, 2014) is a web based guidance resource that was introduced in 2014 in order to bring together existing planning practice guidance for England in an accessible and usable way.

2.45. The NPPG set out details in relation to protected landscapes and the need for local planning authorities to undertake landscape character assessments.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)- District Design Guides

2.46. Design Codes and District Design Guides can be a useful tool for delivering high quality, coordinated development for major development sites. Though the Application Site is of a smaller scale and extent than the typical schemes where design codes are applicable, an awareness of the inherent characteristics and criteria within the design code is helpful for design development. By taking an active approach to incorporate aspects of the code within the design of the Proposed Development, it can show the relevant competent authority that the proposals have applied elements of good design and a scheme that intends to integrate better with the surrounding urban visual character.

District Design Guide SPD - Adopted March 2010

2.47. The South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) District Design Guide SPD builds on the national policy of the National Design Guide (NDG, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Jan 2021) and the NPPG 'Planning for well designed places' (Paragraph 001 Reference ID:26 001 20191001).

2.48. Within the SPD, Part E. The Fen Edge, which includes the parish of Cottenham, provides baseline landscape character descriptions and outline design principles for development within the area.

2.49. The key defining attributes of Landscape Character of the Fen Edge, detailed within paragraph 3.37 of the document, are noted as follows:

- *A mostly flat, low lying landscape with open views;*
- *Scattered clumps of trees, poplar shetlerbelts and occasional hedgerows;*
- *Straight running 'lodes, drains and north south droves are distinctive features;*
- *Rivers a typically enclosed by raised banks (such as the Great Ouse River), often marked by lines of Willows;*
- *Low sand and gravel fen 'islands' rise above the flat landscape and provide historic focus for settlements;*
- *Large skies create drama, and*
- *Small scale, irregular medieval field patterns are still present around the edge of settlements.*

2.50. Paragraph 3.39, under Settlement Character, outlines the key aspects of the visual character and structure of the settlements within the area, including Cottenham.

2.51. The following key characteristics of the settlements within the Fen Edge are noted as follows:

- *Villages characterised by strong linear form, often developed outwards from crossroads along approach roads;*
- *Historic linear form is retained despite modern estate development;*
- *Some village edges, such as Cottenham, present a well wooded character, with hedgerows and mature trees concealing buildings;*
- *On village edges buildings are often more set back, with low walls and hedges fronting the streets.*
- *Tree and hedgerow species present within the Fen Islands include: Ash, oak, field maple, crab apple, wild cherry, white willow, goat willow, hawthorn, hazel, dogwood, blackthorn and wild privet.*



Extract from District Design Guide SPD (Adopted March 2010), P42

Other Material Considerations -cont.

2.52. Some of the key design principles noted in paragraph 3.43 for development in the area are listed as follows:

2.53. *'Based on the above analysis of landscape settlement and built character, the following key design principles are set out:*

- *Ensure any village extensions are located on the high ground of the Fen Islands, avoiding incremental development on the flat, low lying fen.*
- *Ensure new developments on the edges of villages are integrated by thick hedgerows, copses and shelterbelt planting reflecting the local mixes. Ensure a transition between Fen and Fen Island by retention and creation of small hedgerowed paddocks.*
- *Conserve and enhance existing orchard and hedgerowed paddocks.*
- *Maintain linear or rectilinear form of the settlements and avoid closes and cul de sacs where possible.*
- *Ensure buildings are mostly set on the back edge of pavements, or face the street with small front gardens in the village cores.*
- *Ensure new developments reflect the form, scale and proportions of the existing vernacular buildings of the area and pick up on the traditional building styles, materials, colours and textures of the locality.*
- *Enclose boundaries facing onto roads by low brick walls and/or simple iron railings, timber picket fences and hedges as appropriate in the village cores.*
- *Retain hedges and introduce them as boundaries alongside roads outside village cores.*
- *Integrate water features, such as ditches dykes and ponds, into new developments as part of open spaces.*

2.54. *Avoid the use of standardised and intrusive urban materials, street furniture, lighting and signage as part of traffic calming measures wherever appropriate.'*



Extract from District Design Guide SPD (Adopted March 2010), P43

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3. BASELINE ENVIRONMENT

Landscape Baseline

Application Site Description

3.1. As noted above in the section 'Site Location', the Application The Site is situated in the periphery of the settled edge of Cottenham, located southwest, aligned with Oakington Road, and at approximately 7.6km north of the centre of the city of Cambridge. The main access to the Application Site is served from the Oakington Road. The Application Site is comprised three medium to small rectilinear agricultural fields, bound by a mix of boundary hedgerows, shrubs and hedgerow trees. There is very little variance in topography within the Application Site, with a maximum AOD of 12m in the most northerly corner, to an approximate minimum AOD of 9m in the most southerly corner of the Site.

3.2. There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the Application Site,



and the boundary of the area designated for the Cambridge Green Belt is located to the immediate southeast, along the Oakington Road. The immediate context and character of the Application Site is partially influenced by the built form and residential properties at the southwestern fringe of the village of Cottenham, as well as the surrounding wider rural context.

Landscape Value

3.3. GLVIA3 Box 5.1 sets out a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes, which include: Landscape quality (condition); scenic quality; rarity; representativeness; conservation interests; recreation value; perceptual aspects (including tranquillity); and associations. In addition, TGN 02 21, 'Assessing landscape value outside of national designations provides further details and criteria designed to supplement existing guidance and advice.

3.4. Regarding landscape value, the Application Site is comprises four



medium scale rectilinear field parcels, with fragmented areas of boundary shrub vegetation and mature trees. The southewestern boundary of the Application Site presents sporadic low boundary shrubs. The boundary of the Application Site that lie adjacent to Oakington Road features a line of large, mature trees. Centrally within the Application Site, a strongly vegetated field boundary is present that consisting of dense trees and shrubs. The landscape quality and condition is therefore of medium value. The occasional individual trees around the perimeter of the Application Site are low to medium value. Pasture farmland and vegetation blocks within the surrounding area are an attractive feature of the study area and provide a link to the wider landscape.

3.5. Distant views over the site of this agricultural landscape are an attractive feature of the study area. Views of farms, dwellings and agricultural buildings are common in the local area and the settled nature of the landscape is integral to the scenic quality of the study area.

3.6. The grassland and trees of the proposed development site are typical features associated within the wider rural landscape and character of the Study Area, and cannot be defined as rare locally. The vegetation within the site is sparse and comprises numerous boundary trees associated with the site and are not particularly important. The enclosed field pattern comprising of open, low lying topography of the surrounding land is noted as distinctive to this part of the county. The Application Site is situated on a linear tract of land on slightly raised topography that extends from the southwest along Oakington Road toward Cottenham.

3.7. There are no ecological or heritage designations on the Application Site to increase its value, nor are there any cultural associations. There is no recreational access to the Application Site.

3.8. The landscape of the proposed development site is rural, but not wild as it is part of a settled agricultural landscape. The site is open in areas to the north but contained on three boundaries by boundary vegetation. The wider pastureland extends downslope to the north affording open view from the Application Site. The site is seen in the context of the surrounding settled character and rural fringe of Cottenham. The site itself does not exhibit specific aesthetic appeal.

3.9. Overall, it is considered that the proposed development site is of Low to Medium landscape value.

Designated Landscapes

3.10. The Application Site is not located within any landscape designation of national importance, such as National Landscapes (formerly AONB). There are numerous Listed Buildings associated with the historic settlement centres of the surrounding villages within the study area, such as Cottenham, Oakington and Impington. These settlement areas also contain the associated conservation areas. However, these features are not assesesed as part of the LVA and a matter for a heritage assesment.

3.11. Similarly, the Green Belt boundary is located southeast of the Application Site (Figure 4 opposite). As this is a spatial planning constraint, it is also not considered as part of this LVA.

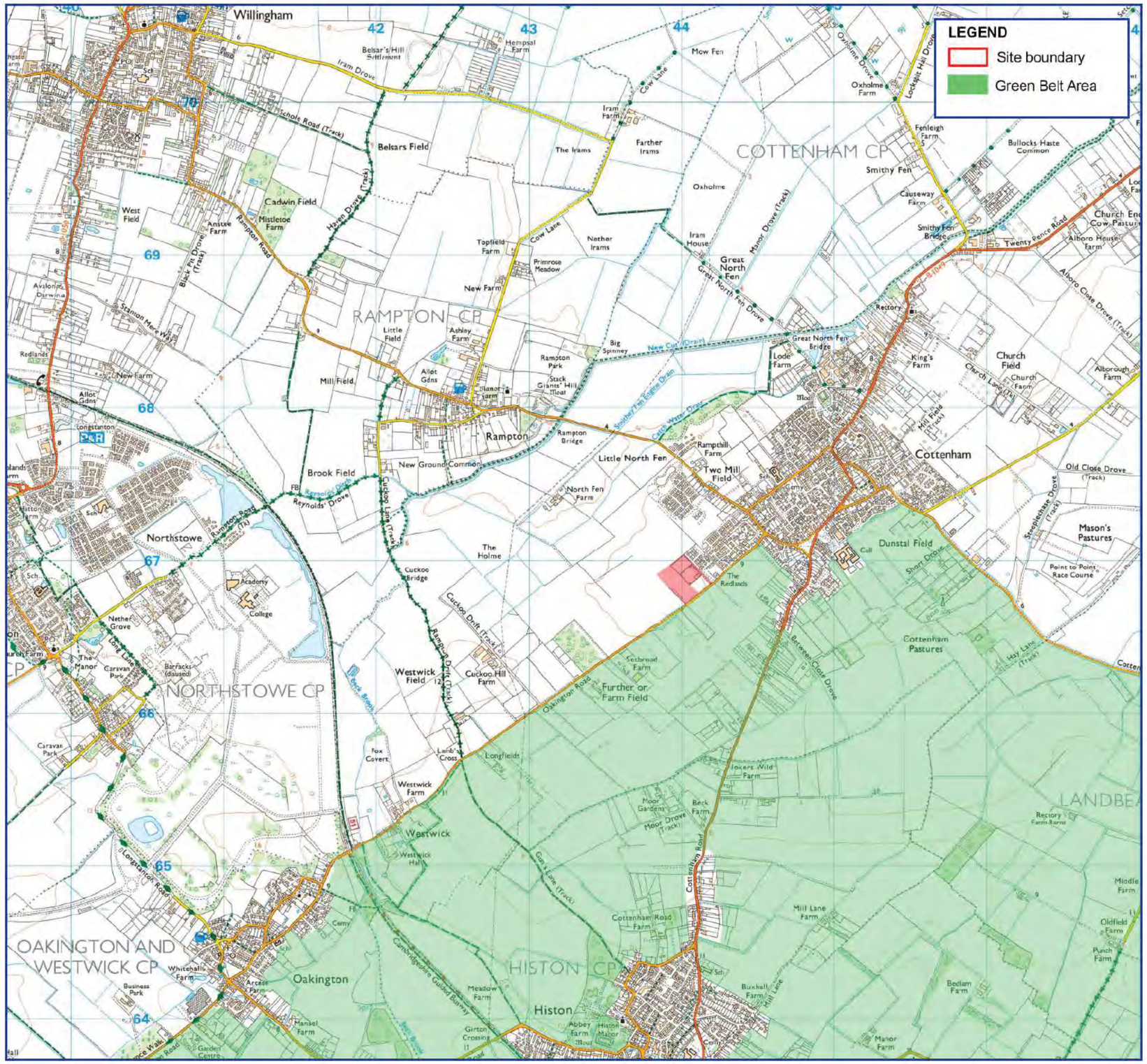


Figure 4 : Green Belt Plan

Topography

3.12. The following plan illustrates the variance in topography of the Application Site and the 3 km Study Area. Notable is the distinctive raised 'island' of elevation on which the linear and broad tract of the settlement of Cottenham lies, which extends further southwest. As noted on P11 previously, the Application Site itself features gentle variations in landform, and does not exhibit any prominence within the surrounding landscape. Areas of higher elevation are present predominantly in the south and southwest, with lower lying areas and features north and east.

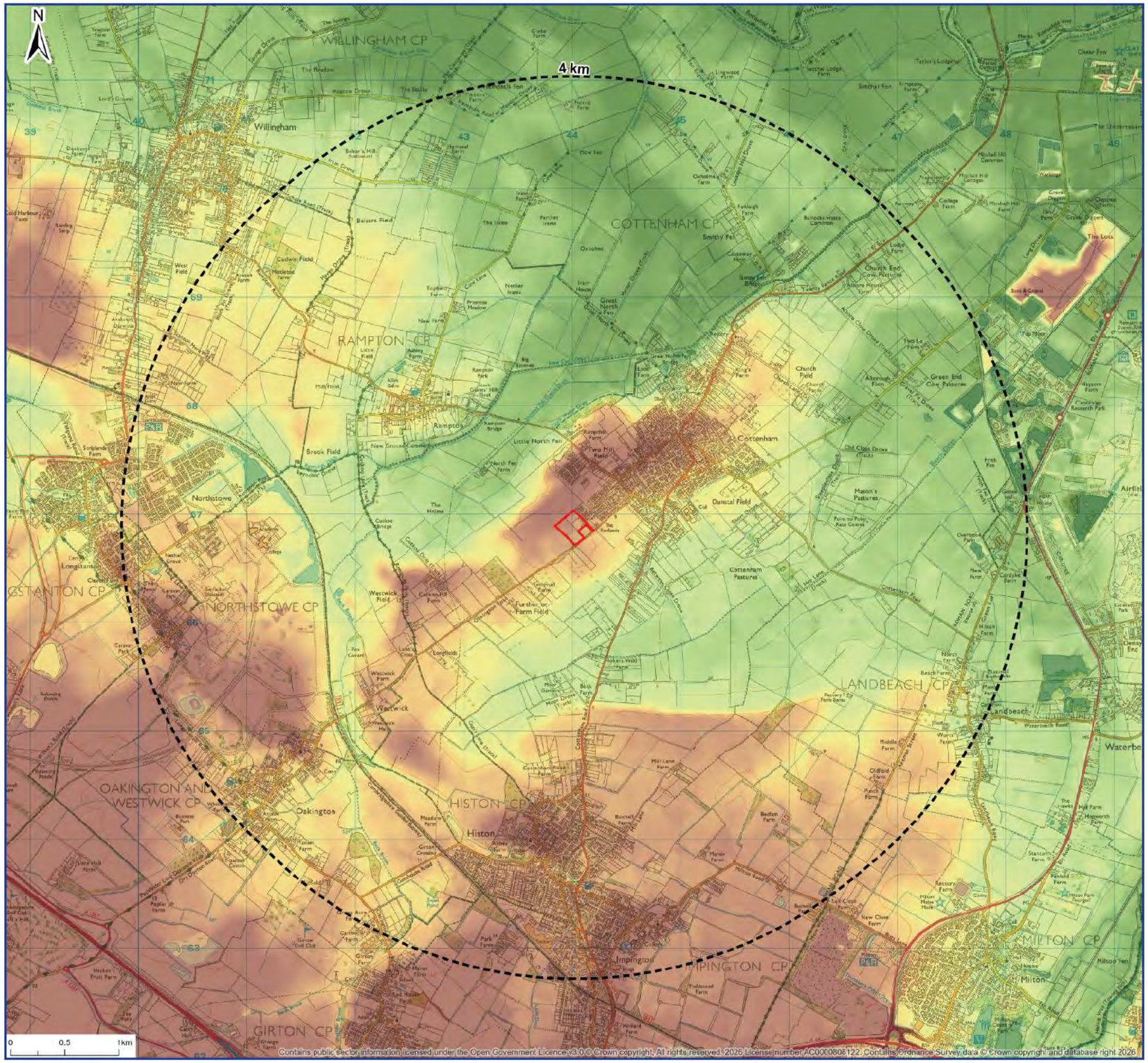


Figure 2 : Topography

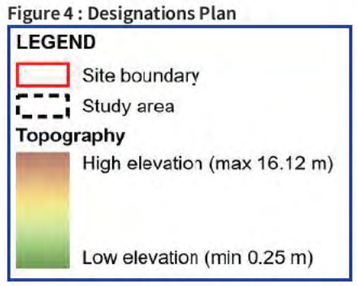


Figure 4 : Designations Plan

National Landscape Character

3.13. At the national level, the Application Site is located wholly within the National Character Area (NCA) 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands. The key characteristics of this NLA area attributed to the Application Site and Study Area are as follows:

- *'Gently undulating, lowland plateau divided by shallow river valleys that gradually widen as they approach The Fens NCA in the east;*
- *Variable, scattered woodland cover comprising smaller plantations, secondary woodland, pollarded willows and poplar along river valleys, and clusters of ancient woodland, particularly on higher ground to the north west representing remnant ancient deer parks and Royal Hunting Forests;*
- *Predominantly open, arable landscape of planned and regular fields bounded by open ditches and trimmed, often species poor hedgerows which contrast with those fields that are irregular and piecemeal;*
- *Settlements cluster around major road and rail corridors, with smaller towns, villages and linear settlements widely dispersed throughout, giving a more rural feel. Small villages are usually nucleated around a church or village green, while fen edge villages are often in a linear form along roads; and*
- *Major transport routes cross the area, including the M1, M11, A1, A6, A5 and A14 roads, the East Coast and Midlands mainline railways, and the Grand Union Canal.'*

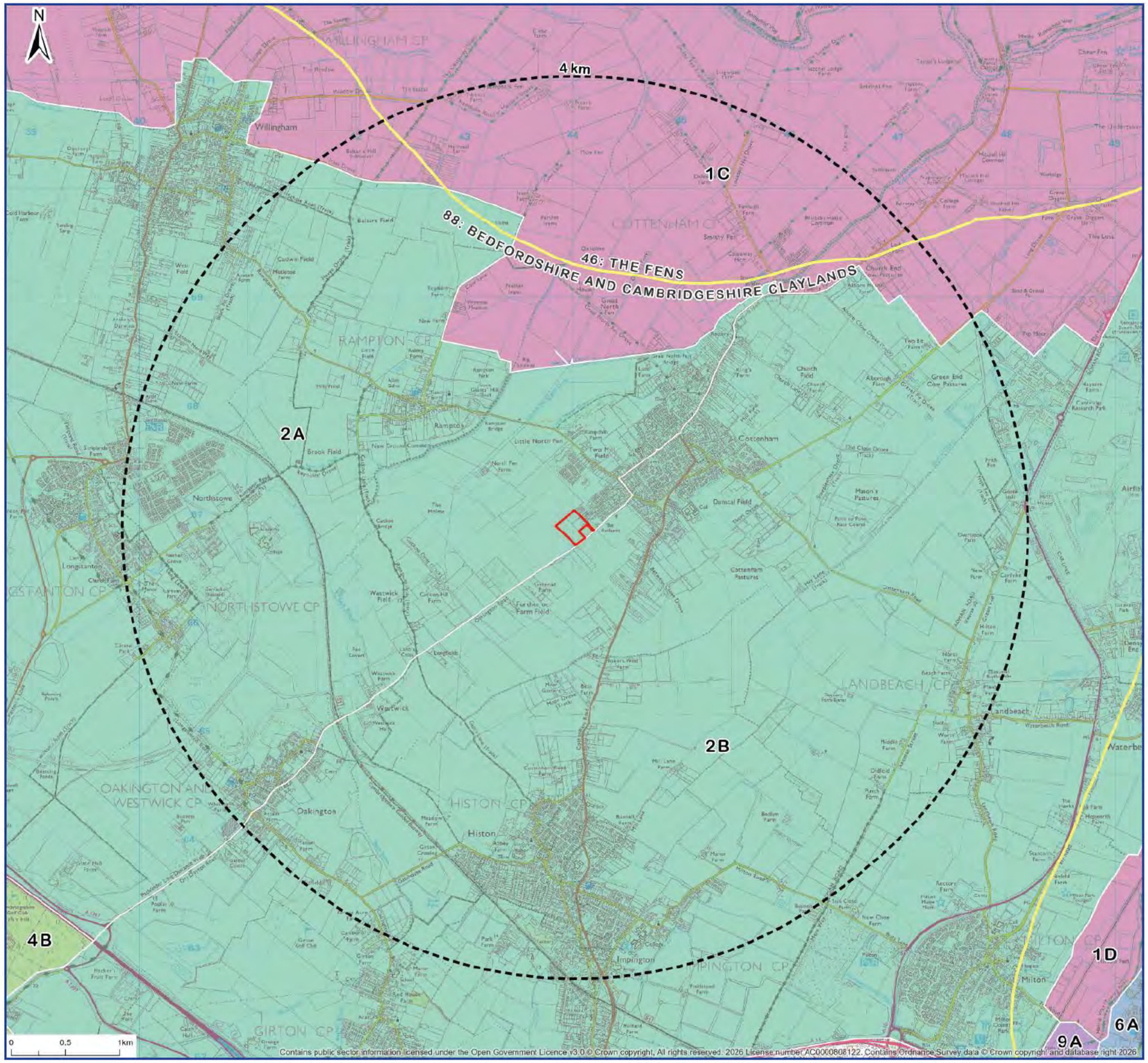


Figure 3 : Landscape Character

LEGEND

- Site boundary
- Study area
- National Character Areas

Landscape Character Types

- 1C: Bare Fen to Fidwell Fen
- 1D: Northern Fen to Milton Fen
- 2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands
- 2B: Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands
- 4B: Lolworth to Longstowe Wooded Claylands
- 6A: Fen Ditton Fen Edge Chalklands
- 9A: Cam River Valley - Cambridge

County / District / Local Landscape Character

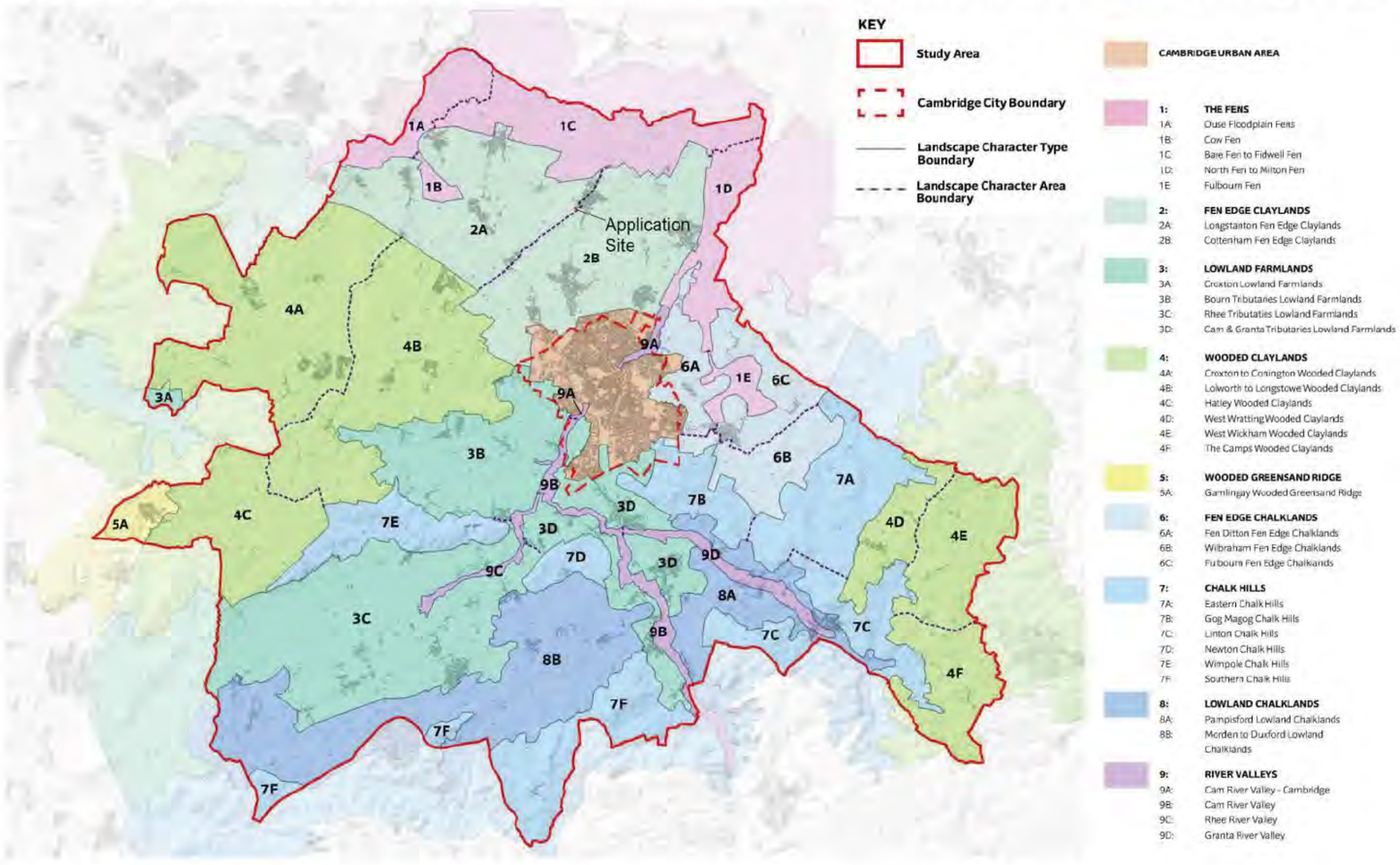
- A small portion of the northern part of the Study Area is encompassed by the NCA 46: The Fens. This NCA generally extends into the northern edge of Greater Cambridge, and is a distinctive, historic and human influenced wetland landscape, noted for its large scale, flat, open landscape with extensive vistas toward level horizons. The key applicable features and attributes of this NCA for the Application Site and Study Area are noted below:
- *'Expansive, flat, open, low lying wetland landscape influenced by the Wash estuary, and offering extensive vistas to level horizons and huge skies throughout, provides a sense of rural remoteness and tranquillity.*
- *Overall, woodland cover is sparse, notably a few small woodland blocks, occasional avenues alongside roads, isolated field trees and shelterbelts of poplar, willow and occasionally leylandii hedges around farmsteads, and numerous orchards around Wisbech. Various alders, notably grey alder, are also used in shelterbelts and roadside avenues.*
- *The predominant land use is arable wheat, root crops, bulbs, vegetables and market gardening made possible by actively draining reclaimed land areas. Associated horticultural glasshouses are a significant feature. Beef cattle graze narrow enclosures along the banks of rivers and dykes and on parts of the salt marsh and sea banks.*
- *Open fields, bounded by a network of drains and the distinctive hierarchy of rivers (some embanked), have a strong influence on the geometric/rectilinear landscape pattern. The structures create local enclosure and a slightly raised landform, which is mirrored in the road network that largely follows the edges of the system of large fields. The drains and ditches are also an important ecological network important for invertebrates, fish including spined loach, and macrophytes.*
- *Settlements and isolated farmsteads are mostly located on the modestly*
- *elevated 'geological islands' and the low, sinuous roddon banks (infilled ancient watercourses within fens). Elsewhere, villages tend to be dispersed ribbon settlements along the main arterial routes through the settled fens, and scattered farms remain as relics of earlier agricultural settlements.'* The landscape character of the Application Site and Study Area falls under the Greater Cambridge area, and in turn the South Cambridgeshire District.

3.14. The Greater Cambridge Shared Partnership Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) identifies and records patterns, features and distinctive elements and character in the Greater Cambridge area.

3.15. The landscape character of the Greater Cambridge area is divided into various levels, with the regional landscape context the first level below the NCA areas, seven of which are featured within the Greater Cambridge Area. This is followed by the County level landscape context that identifies five broad areas that include: 1 South East Clay Hills, 2 Chalklands, 3 Western Claylands,4 Ouse Valley and 8 Fenlands.

3.16. The Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment Classification broadly nests within this framework. Following on from the broad classifications noted above, further, refined and more detailed Landscape Character Types (LCT's) have been detailed, which then are subsequently further sub divided into Landscape Character Areas (LCA's), that provide unique, individual geographical areas that share common characteristics.

3.17. The following diagram below, Fig 4.1, from the Landscape Character Assessment, illustrates the wider relationship and geographical scale of the LCTs and LCAs within the wider Greater Cambridge Area. The



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LCT's and LCA's, The Greater Cambridge Shared Partnership - Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Assoc. 2021), Fig 4.1 . Location of the Application Site shown for scale and reference.

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applicable LCTs and LCAs have also been applied to the Study Area for this assessment, illustrated on Figure 3 within this document previously.

3.18. The Application Site lies entirely within the LCT 2 : Fen Edge Claylands, and the LCA 2A of Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands. The southeastern boundary along Oakington Road likes adjacent to the LCA 2B of Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands. The LCT 1: The Fens lies to the north of the Study Area, of which the LCA of 1C: Bare Fen to Fidwell Fen is situated.

- LCA 2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands is a gently undulating, settled, open landscape with several villages located on raised 'islands' above The Fens. The following key characteristics of the LCA 2A of Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands applicable to the Application Site are as follows:
- *Settled rural landscape including villages with historic linear cores on elevated fen 'islands' buildings as well as small, isolated farms.*
- *Fragmented pockets of ecological value include grazing marsh at Swavesey and Oakington, dispersed pockets of deciduous woodland and traditional orchards*
- *Arable fields of generally medium size are arranged in a slightly haphazard rectilinear pattern, defined by a mixture of fragmented hedgerows and distinctive straight historic drainage ditches and droveways, built to connect villages in this area with the common pastures on The Fens.*
- *Vegetation is sparse, but scatterings of tree clumps, shelterbelts around isolated farms and occasional hedgerows sometimes merge together to give the sense of a more densely treed horizon, notably on the edge of villages and farms where they provide localised visual enclosure.*
- *Orchards and small scale paddocks and pastoral fields are found close to the edge of villages, adding variety and intimacy to the landscape.*
- *This is a settled landscape, with a number of small to moderate sized commuter villages including Fen Drayton, Swavesey, Longstanton, Northstowe, Over, Willingham and Rampton. Villages are located on low sand and gravel fen 'islands', elevated from The Fens and generally have an historic linear core following the main road.*
- *Robust hedgerows to paddocks, copses, groups of mature trees and orchards often screen settlement, so that built form is only intermittently visible in open views across the LCA. Farm buildings tend to be low barns and well integrated in the landscape.*
- *The largely flat landscape and sparse vegetation combine to offer long, open views between settlements, in which large, dramatic skies are a prominent feature. Occasional vertical features stand out on the skyline, including masts and poles related to the communications network, church spires and lines of willow trees.*
- *The straight A14 dual carriageway, which forms the southwestern boundary to the LCA, detracts locally from the tranquillity experienced elsewhere.*
- The key characteristics of the LCA 2B: Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands applicable to the Application Site are as follows:
- *Well settled rural landscape comprising a number of large villages with historic linear cores located on elevated 'islands'.*
- *Pockets of remnant parkland alongside orchards, hedgerows and shelterbelts create a distinctive, localised vegetation pattern in proximity to the village.*
- *Urban influences associated with the urban edge of Cambridge and major road network in the south which are discordant with the otherwise rural character.*
- *The proximity of this rural LCA to Cambridge means that there are a number of localised urban influences particularly in the south and east of the area that locally are discordant and detract from the tranquillity experienced elsewhere within the LCA.*

3.19. For the LCA of 1C: Bare Fen to Fidwell Fen, the key characteristics applicable to the Application Site are as follows:

- *Open, low lying, flat floodplain landscape with expansive, panoramic views to distant horizons.*
- *Regular, rectilinear enclosure pattern defined by drains, dykes and lodes that are evidence of historic occupation of The Fens.*
- *A landscape with sparse woodland cover, in which fragmented hedgerows, isolated trees and shelterbelts are visually prominent.*
- *Settlement is limited to isolated farms, with occasional small, linear settlements along the roads.*







LCT's and LCA's, The Greater Cambridge Shared Partnership - Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Assoc. 2021), LCT 2 and LCA 2A and 2B

Visual Baseline

3.20. Visual receptors are 'the different groups of people who may experience views of the development' (GLVIA3, Paragraph 6.3). Whilst it is the people living, working, passing through or enjoying recreational activities in the area who actually see the view and enjoy the visual amenity, it is the places they may occupy that are mapped and described as the 'receptors' of the views. In order to identify those receptors which may be significantly affected, ZTV studies, a baseline desk study, and field based observations have been carried out.

3.21. The key visual receptors of the Proposed Development are assessed under the following categories:

3.22. Residential Receptors: residents within settlements and scattered individual properties, including farmsteads;

3.23. Recreational Routes: people using the countryside for outdoor recreation; and

3.24. Road Users: people travelling through the area on major and minor roads.

Residential Receptors

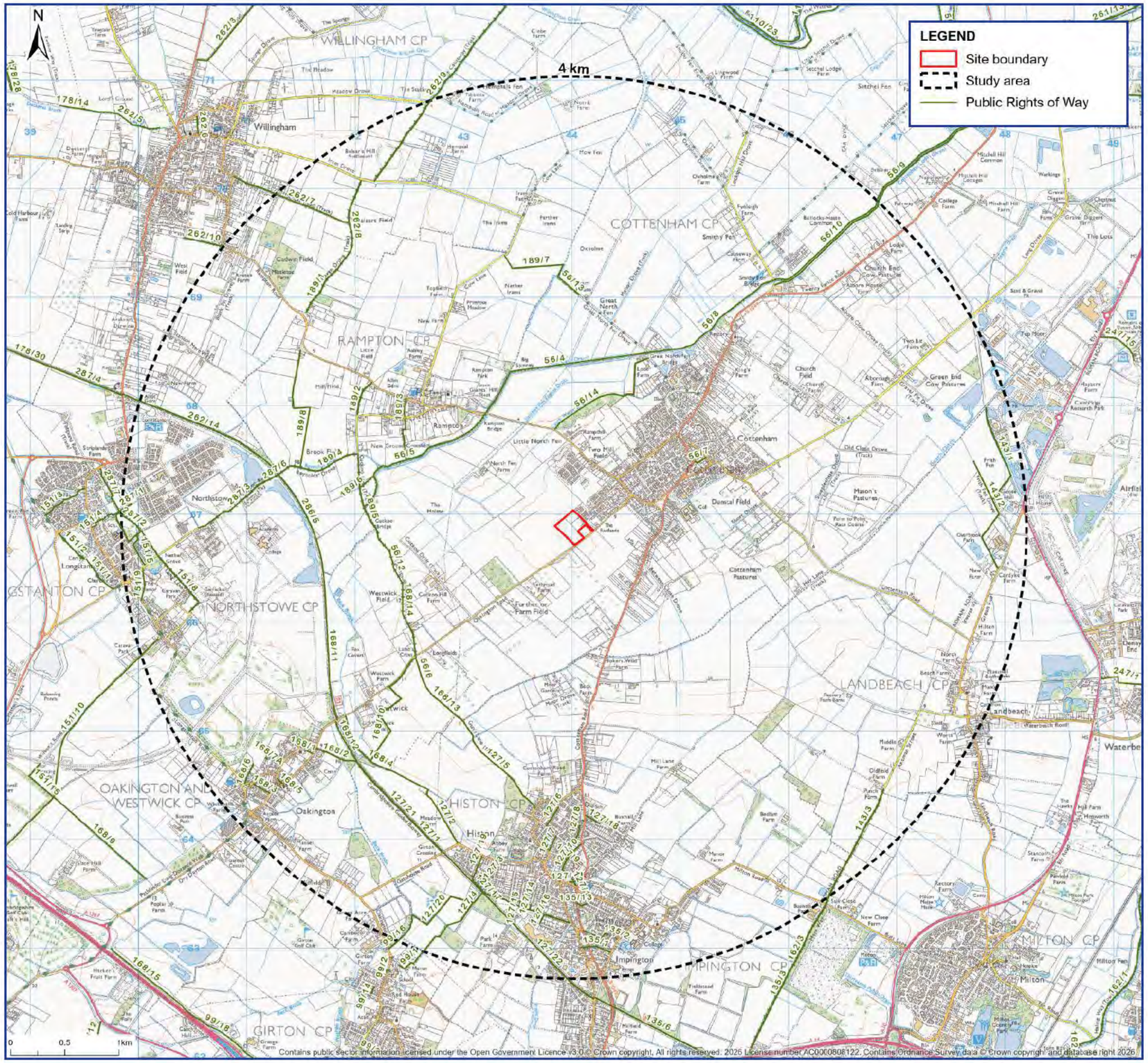
3.25. The closest residential properties are the cluster of properties situated along Clarke Close approximately 15 m from the northeast boundary. The residential property of The Redlands is also situated approximately 52 m northeast of the Application Site, beyond the intervening tall windbreak Leylandii trees. Further to the south and southwest, sparse clusters of individual farmhouses and properties are located within the wider rural landscape

Access Network and Public Rights of Way

3.26. The following plan illustrates the limited Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the 3 km Study Area, with a majority of the access network clustered toward the southwest and north of the Study Area. There is no public access to the Application Site. The nearest PRoW to the Application Site is Bridleway 56/14, located approximately 767 m north of the Application Site.

Local Road Network

3.27. There are numerous main access road arteries that span outwards from the settlement of Cottenham, connecting to the wider road infrastructure between the various small to large village settlements in the Study Area and further south toward the city of Cambridge. The Application Site borders the Oakington Road in the southeast, which connects the village of Cottenham to Oakington in the southwest. The Histon Road links Cottenham to Histon and Impington in the south, and the B1049 'Twenty Pence Road' extends in a general northeasterly direction from Cottenham.



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Figure 5 : Access Network

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

3.28. Areas from which views of the proposed development would theoretically be possible were determined by means of the ZTV analysis (**Figure 1**). Selected visual receptors located within the ZTV and likely to experience visual change were identified through field work. An overview of those views, sensitive visual receptors and the approximate, potential visibility of the Application Site have been noted on page 17.

Overview of Visual Receptors

3.29. As noted on page 16, visual receptors include local residents, people using public rights of way, people travelling along roads, people involved with other recreational activities, people at their place of work, people using commercial and public facilities. These groups are deemed to have different sensitivities to the Proposed Development. Viewpoints were selected from publicly accessible locations to represent sensitive visual receptors.

3.30. Of the eight viewpoints selected three are from locations on the PRoW network as people using the footpaths or bridleways in the countryside would be considered receptors of high sensitivity. Two locations are from Oakington Road adjacent to the Application Site where road users would be considered as low sensitivity receptors.

3.31. The following locations are included as Representative Views in Figure 1:

- Viewpoint 1a/b: Oakington Road from proposed access looking north/ northeast.
- Viewpoint 2a/b: Oakington Road opposite junction with Clarke Close
- Viewpoint 3: Adjacent 33 and 51, Clarke Close, looking southwest / west
- Viewpoint 4: View from Public Open Space within Cottenham Grove
- Viewpoint 5: PRoW View from Byway 168/14/Rampton Drift
- Viewpoint 6: Bridleway. View from 168/11, Cycle Route 51
- Viewpoint 7: Bridleway. View from 127/5 looking northeast

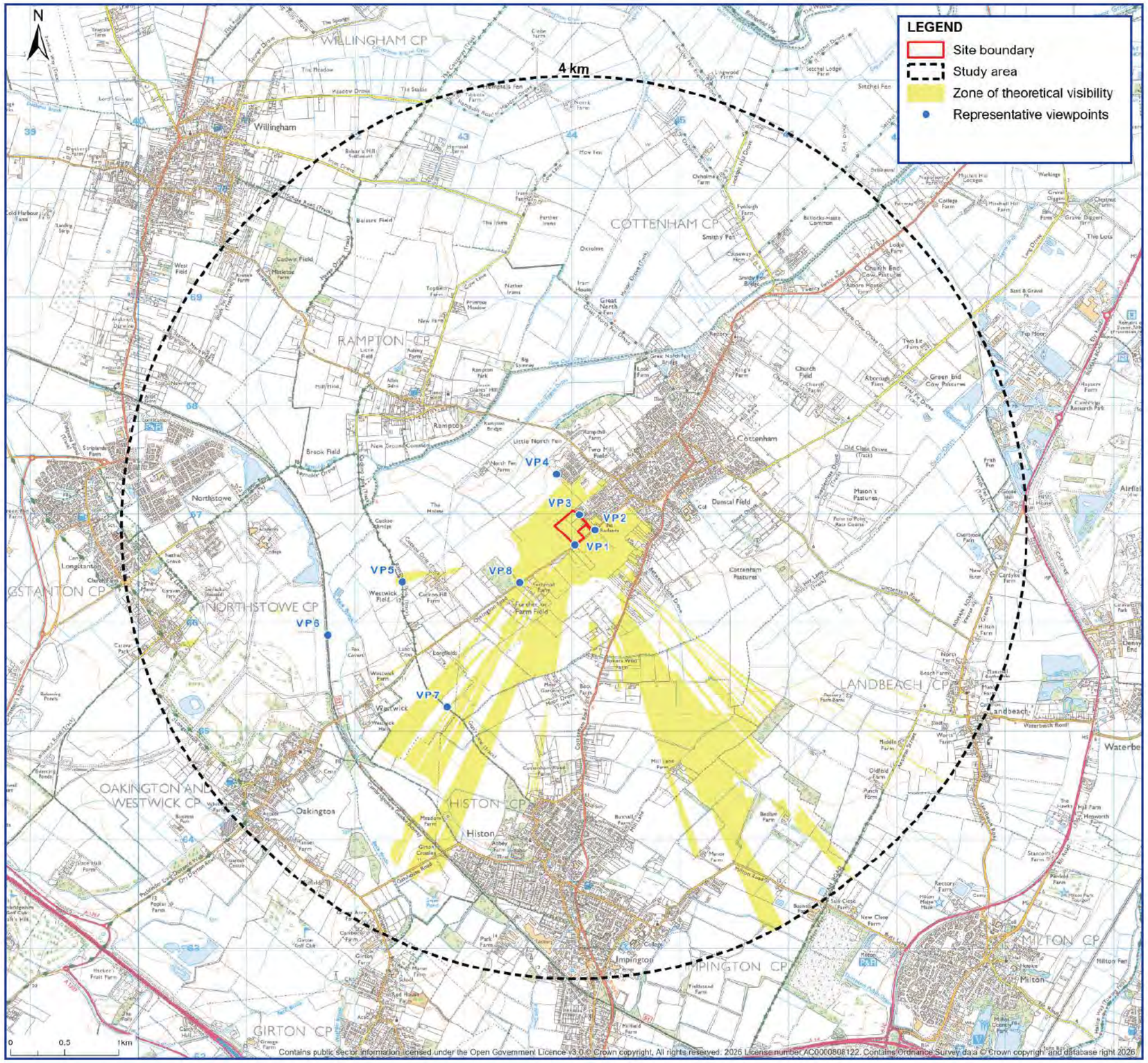


Figure 1 : ZTV and Representative Viewpoints

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Site Photos



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Notes:
View at a comfortable arms length

Visualisation Type	Type 1
Projection	Cylindrical
Camera and Lens Type	Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS
Height of Camera Lens above ground	1.5 m
Horizontal Field of View	90°
Photography Date and Time	13/03/2026 10:29
Viewpoint Location	544033 , 266720
Viewpoint Ground Height	9 m AOD
Direction of View	North
Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	<5 m

Client	Terra Strategic Ltd
Project	Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs
Project Number	794-ENV-ECO-23134

Title: Representative Viewpoint 1A: View from Oakington Road looking north towards the Site from the proposed Site Access.

Existing View

Figure Number: 5.1



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Notes:
View at a comfortable arms length

Visualisation Type	Type 1
Projection	Cylindrical
Camera and Lens Type	Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS
Height of Camera Lens above ground	1.5 m
Horizontal Field of View	90°
Photography Date and Time	13/03/2026 10:29
Viewpoint Location	544033 , 266720
Viewpoint Ground Height	9 m AOD
Direction of View	Northeast
Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	<5 m

Client	Terra Strategic Ltd
Project	Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs
Project Number	794-ENV-ECO-23134

Title: Representative Viewpoint 1B: View from Oakington Road looking northeast along southern boundary from proposed Site Access.

Existing View

Figure Number: 5.2



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Notes:
View at a comfortable arms length

Visualisation Type	Type 1	Photography Date and Time	13/03/2026 10.18	Client	Terra Strategic Ltd	Title	Representative Viewpoint 2A: View from Oakington Road opposite the junction with Clarke Close looking towards the Site.
Projection	Cylindrical	Viewpoint Location	544217 , 266855	Project	Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs		Existing View
Camera and Lens Type	Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS	Viewpoint Ground Height	10 m AOD			Figure Number	5.3
Height of Camera Lens above ground	1.5 m	Direction of View	North-northwest	Project Number	794-ENV-ECO-23134		
Horizontal Field of View	90°	Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	<5 m				



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Notes:
View at a comfortable arms length

Visualisation Type	Type 1	Photography Date and Time	13/03/2026 10.18	Client	Terra Strategic Ltd	Title	Representative Viewpoint 2B: View from Oakington Road opposite the junction with Clarke Close looking towards the Site.
Projection	Cylindrical	Viewpoint Location	544217 , 266855	Project	Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs		Existing View
Camera and Lens Type	Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS	Viewpoint Ground Height	10 m AOD			Figure Number	5.4
Height of Camera Lens above ground	1.5 m	Direction of View	North	Project Number	794-ENV-ECO-23134		
Horizontal Field of View	90°	Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	11m				



TETRA TECH	Notes: View at a comfortable arms length	Visualisation Type Projection Camera and Lens Type Height of Camera Lens above ground Horizontal Field of View	Type 1 Cylindrical Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS 1.5 m 90°	Photography Date and Time Viewpoint Location Viewpoint Ground Height Direction of View Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	13/03/2026 10:47 544073 , 266996 10 m AOD Southwest <5 m	Client Project Project Number	Terra Strategic Ltd Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs 794-ENV-ECO-23134	Title Figure Number	Representative Viewpoint 3A: View from adjacent 33 and 51 Clarke Close looking southwest towards the Site Existing View 5.5



TETRA TECH	Notes: View at a comfortable arms length	Visualisation Type Projection Camera and Lens Type Height of Camera Lens above ground Horizontal Field of View	Type 1 Cylindrical Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS 1.5 m 90°	Photography Date and Time Viewpoint Location Viewpoint Ground Height Direction of View Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	13/03/2026 10:47 544073 , 266996 10 m AOD West <5 m	Client Project Project Number	Terra Strategic Ltd Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs 794-ENV-ECO-23134	Title Figure Number	Representative Viewpoint 3B: View from adjacent 33 and 51 Clarke Close looking west towards the Site Existing View 5.6



23154-RPS-XX-XX-DR-L-0001_P01-Viewpoints

TETRA TECH

Notes:
View at a comfortable arms length

Visualisation Type	Type 1
Projection	Cylindrical
Camera and Lens Type	Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS
Height of Camera Lens above ground	1.5 m
Horizontal Field of View	90°

Photography Date and Time	13/03/2026 11:01
Viewpoint Location	543863 , 267371
Viewpoint Ground Height	11 m AOD
Direction of View	South
Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	370 m

Client	Terra Strategic Ltd
Project	Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs
Project Number	794-ENV-ECO-23134

Title: Representative Viewpoint 4: View from Public Open Space within Cottenham Grove development to the north-west of the Site.

Existing View

Figure Number: 5.7



23154-RPS-XX-XX-DR-L-0001_P01-Viewpoints

TETRA TECH

Notes:
View at a comfortable arms length

Visualisation Type	Type 1
Projection	Cylindrical
Camera and Lens Type	Canon 5D MKIV 50mm FFS
Height of Camera Lens above ground	1.5 m
Horizontal Field of View	90°

Photography Date and Time	13/03/2026 12:06
Viewpoint Location	542436 , 266378
Viewpoint Ground Height	13 m AOD
Direction of View	Northeast
Distance to Application Site (nearest point)	1.5 Km

Client	Terra Strategic Ltd
Project	Land at Oakington Road, Cottenham, Cambs
Project Number	794-ENV-ECO-23134

Title: Representative Viewpoint 5: View from Byway 168/14/Rampton Drift looking northeast towards the Site

Existing View

Figure Number: 5.8

4. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Proposed Development

4.1. The concept of the Proposed Development has been currently devised to include 96 dwellings of up to two storey in height organised within the rectilinear layout of the Application Site (including an allocation for affordable housing) which has created a discreet group of buildings organised in an informal arrangement. The proposals would likely include a mix of one, two, thee and four bedroom properties. The Proposed Development would include areas of landscaping and amenity space, Local Area Equipment for Play (LEAP) as well as areas of infrastructure and connections to the wider public access network.

4.2. The landscape proposals would aim to retain the trees within the Application Site. The landscape proposals would been designed to provide a sensitive treatment and landscape integration for the development and include native tree and shrub planting, and wildflower grassland appropriate to the local area. For the integration of the proposed building and hard landscape design the surface treatments materials would be chosen to blend with the setting of the surrounding residential development and nearby conservation area of Cottenham, and the use of vernacular and locally materials is encouraged to achieve sensitive / appropriate treatment.

4.3. The landscape strategy would focus on reflecting the existing pattern by:

4.4. Retention of trees within the site where possible and adjacent to the site boundary to the southeast along Oakington Road and to the south to retain the character and ecological quality of the surroundings;

4.5. Tree and shrub planting to enhance the site and provide integration with the landscape;

4.6. Use of wildflower grassland to provide a scheme of landscape and ecological value appropriate to this location in the parish of Cottenham; and

4.7. Inclusion of attenuation pond(s) with appropriate native marginal species.





(left) Typical eighteenth century house details
(right) Typical nineteenth century house details





(left) Dutch gable
(right) Brick and clay pantile

Inset below and below left : Extracts from the District Design Guide SPD (March 2010) Illustrating the typical material and colour palette of the surrounding properties in the area contextually related to the settlement of Cottenham, as well as the design elements and heritage aspects of the historic village cores and centres.





(left) Typical street scene
(right) Central village green

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5. APPRAISAL OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Potential Landscape Effects

Effects upon the Application Site

5.1. Using a combination of objective evidence and professional judgement, the potentially significant effects on the landscape resource and the visual effects experienced by people living in and travelling through the landscape during the operational phase of the proposed development are outlined below.

5.2. The Proposed Development is a contained landholding with defined boundaries and is characterised by the wider agricultural landscape and the existing urban edge of the village settlement. Although the Application Site lies within agricultural land situated in the existing fringe of the settlement of Cottenham, the proposed scheme would form a low key change in the context of the rural land use when viewed in relation to the associated residential properties immediately adjacent to northeast.

5.3. The Proposed Development would include a linear arrangement of dwellings within the Application Site and would likely include landscape features in the context of trees and grassland typical of the surrounding landscape. The buildings would be of a similar arrangement and be of a similar scale of other local dwellings and buildings in Cottenham. The domestic scale, layout of the scheme and distinctive and vernacular use of materials would reflect the existing character of residential development nearby. Effects during construction are likely to be higher than those perceived during the operation phase of the development, however would be relatively contained within the Application site.

5.4. Minimal clearance of existing vegetation would be lost due to the proposed development. The landscape proposal could potentially indicate that native trees and wildflower grassland be provided within the Proposed Development site. Areas of planting would reinforce the boundary treatment and proposed planting would provide a soft edge to the Proposed Development providing some level of enclosure to enhance the local landscape context. The use of native trees and shrubs would achieve integration and connection with the surrounding landscape and maintain characteristic features of the area.

5.5. The level of the land within the proposed development site is slightly sloping to the south. The Proposed Development would introduce the height of built elements within the Application Site, however would be of a similar scale and quantum of the surrounding built form and features and therefore not result in any prominence within the wider landscape.

5.6. Given the nature of the Proposed Development, it is inevitable that the character of the Application Site would change from a typical rural pastureland to that of a more developed outlook. However, on balance, such a change should not be considered detrimental in the wider experiential scale of the area due to the numerous detracting features such as the surrounding infrastructure and human influence.

Effects upon Landscape Character Areas

5.1. Due to the relatively small scale and extent of the Proposed Development, it is unlikely to result in any effects on the National Landscape Character Area of (NCA) 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands or that of NCA 46: The Fens. Similarly, the larger, broader regional LCTs within the Greater Cambridge area are also unlikely to be affected by the Proposed Development.

5.2. Direct effects on landscape character relate to LCA of 2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands. The Application Site contains landform that is typical of the wider host character, in that it is generally lower lying, and contains a limited degree of landscape features of the LCA 2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands. As such, any change in the landscape within the Application Site as a result of the Proposed Development are likely to be well contained and framed within the existing surrounding urban settlement context, and of a scale that is acceptable within the wider, larger LCA.

5.3. The Proposed Development would introduce numerous dwellings and associated development features and landscape within a rural location of good condition. Any perceived losses of landscape features as a result of the introduction of the Proposed Development would be on balance with the implementation of landscape mitigation and enhancements including native trees, shrubs and wildflower grassland. As noted above, a proportion of the overall character area the change in landscape character of the proposed development site is relatively small. Any changes would maintain the overall existing quality of the wider character area.

5.4. The most perceivable and noticeable change within the LCA would be during the construction phase of the Proposed Development. The introduction of construction vehicles, material stores and movement, cranes and welfare facilities would likely be discordant with the overall fringe rural character, with perceptual aspects being effected outside of the confines of the Application Site. However, any such effects would likely be short term, reversible and predominantly experienced in the local context, and construction activities are likely to be only in effect during the daylight working hours.

5.5. The proposal would likely include minimal external domestic type lighting or street lighting. The lighting strategy would seek to minimise energy use and light pollution, while supporting safely and accessibility. The site is not currently lit therefore any proposed lighting would result in the introduction of additional light sources, however this would be not noticeable within the surrounding urban development or road infrastructure.

5.6. The Proposed Development is unlikely to result in any significant landscape effects.

Potential Visual Effects

5.1. During the operational phase visual effects would predominantly be from receptors within close proximity of the Proposed Development, and likely to be perceived from a limited visual envelope within 1 km. Beyond this, the perceived level of change would not be noticeable due to the existing surrounding residential buildings to the north. In the wider Study Area, distance, slight topographical variations and vegetation context, either embedded or proposed, are likely to reduce the level of visual effect.

5.2. Close views of the Proposed Development are available from some orientations towards the site (Representative Viewpoints 1 to 3, 8). From the approach to the Proposed Development at Oakington Road (Representative Viewpoint 1), intermittent views through gaps in vegetation would be available through the existing vegetation and screening that borders the road corridor. Existing blocks of vegetation and individual trees punctuate the view. People travelling on Oakington Road would gain close range views of the new dwelling within a landscape setting in context with other adjacent built form.

5.3. However, people in vehicles moving along the road are likely to be focused on the direction of travel. As such, views are likely to be oblique, transient and fleeting. Similarly, receptors travelling along the road corridor in a southeasterly direction (Representative Viewpoint 2) are likely to receive transient views of the Proposed Development on approach to the development site. Such views would likely not be incongruous to the overall visual experience for the road users, as they would have emerged from the settlement of Cottenham. Therefore, any further views of residential development would be considered in keeping with the visual character of the area.

5.4. Residents at Clarke Close, to the north northeast, are likely to also experience a change in view from a predominantly rural outlook to that of a more developed one (Representative Viewpoint 3). The effects for these residents would be viewed in context of the existing boundary vegetation and trees present, and could result in greater visual effects during Year 1 when the mitigation planting has not matured. The effects would be judged to be lower as the mitigation planting matures. The effects on the views and amenity of the residents would be framed by the existing context and surroundings of the properties along Clarke Close and their orientation toward the Proposed Development. The design and approach to the mitigation planting would be sought to ensure the change in views for those residents affected would be within acceptable parameters when considering residential amenity. Therefore, it is anticipated that the resulting level of effect would be less than significant and permanent, to those residential properties that may experience a change in views. It should also be noted that in planning terms, no individual or resident has a 'right to a view', and as such any competent authority should not refuse planning permission on those grounds if the Proposed Development does not severely impact residential amenity.

5.5. No PRoWs exist within close range of the Proposed Development. For people using the surrounding footpath network, there would be limited areas in which the proposal would be noticeable and perceived as an extension of the existing built form in the view. Other existing visual detractors that are visible include telegraph poles and power line across the views together with large farmsheds, as well as the intervening trees and vegetation (Representative Viewpoints 4, 5 and 6). Clusters of buildings and farmsteads are characteristic visual features of views, particularly throughout the southwest and wider immediate rural landscape between settlements in the Study Area.

5.6. Middle to longer distance views are potentially available from the southwest, and west of the Proposed Development site (Representative Viewpoints 5 and 6). However, views of the Proposed Development from more distant locations such as these would be more difficult to distinguish due to the influence of intervening built form and vegetation which provides some level of screening of the site and would contribute to integration of the new features within the wider landscape. In most instances where the new buildings would be visible, this would be a visually integrated feature in part of a view often seen in context with adjacent or intervening buildings. Individual or clusters of buildings that are visible set within the undulating topography would be punctuated by vegetation within most views towards the Proposed Development.

5.7. Similarly, to landscape effects, it is anticipated that any visual effects would be predominantly confined to those visual receptors closest to the Proposed Development.

5.8. Views of the Proposed Development are also likely to be greater during the construction phase, decreasing during Year 1 of operation, with the effects potentially reducing further once the proposed mitigation measures mature thus help the further integrate within the surrounding landscape. The Proposed Development is unlikely to result in any significant visual effects.

6. SUMMARY

6.1. The Proposed Development, of approximately 96 residential dwellings, would entail the design and integration of additional landscape and infrastructure features on the receiving landscape of the Application Site. This which would result in a marked change from that of a green field to that of a developed site. However, it is anticipated that the proposed mitigation measures would work in conjunction with the retained vegetation to assimilate the development, and as such, any perceived changes, though adverse, would not be considered incongruous when viewed within the wider context and landscape setting.

6.2. The host LCA of 2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands is also unlikely to be detrimentally affected by the Proposed Development, due to its relatively small scale and extent in relation to the wider LCA. In additional, the proximal relationship of the existing residential properties and developed outlook and character from the nearby settled edge of Cottenham would help to better integrate the Proposed Development.

6.3. Within the larger landscape scale, either national or regional, are unlikely to be affected or any impacts that would be perceivable due to the small scale and coverage of the Proposed Development in relation to the large LCTs or NCA in which it sits.

6.4. Visual effects would also be limited and predominantly affect receptors within 1km of the Proposed Development. There are a limited number of high sensitivity receptors within the Study Area such as PRoWs, with the residential receptors along Clarke Close being the closest in the north. Effects on residential receptors would likely be greater during the construction phase and the initial operation of the Proposed Development, however would also be likely to reduce once the mitigation planting measures mature. Residents along Clarke Close are also oriented in positions that often look away from the Proposed Development. If any such views were possible from these properties, they would be available predominantly from the rear aspects of the buildings, and only available where the fencing and garden vegetation allows.

6.5. As noted above, recreational receptors are limited within the Study Area, with views typically from medium and long range toward the Proposed Development. Any views available would be intermittent, glimpsed, or highly filtered by intervening vegetation and viewed in relation to the existing surrounding built form.

6.6. Therefore, it is judged as part of this LVA that the Proposed Development is unlikely to result in undue effects or any significant visual or landscape intrusion to the surrounding open countryside, nor would it materially harm the or affect the character of the setting of the host LCA of 2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands. The Proposed Development is constrained by the existing settled edge of Cottenham and would not extend incongruously into the open countryside. Consequently, it is considered that the effect of the Proposed Development would not be harmful to visual amenity, rather it would have a benign effect (due to the softening of the hard edge of the village extent and boundary) once the proposed landscape mitigation measures have matured.

6.7. Overall, it is anticipated that the landscape and visual effects as a result of the Proposed Development are unlikely to be significant in nature.

REFERENCES

Publications

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