

**Greater Cambridge Local Plan**

South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 6EA

7<sup>th</sup> March 2025

**Lanpro Project Number: 4800**

By Call for Sites Electronic Submission

Dear Sir/Madam

## **Greater Cambridge Local Plan Call for Sites Submission: Land at Beach Road, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire**

### **Introduction**

This letter has been prepared by Lanpro Services on behalf of Croudace Homes in relation to its land interest at land at Beach Road, Cottenham, Cambridgeshire. A location plan of the Site accompanies this call for sites submission. A proportion of this Site was originally submitted to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service as part of its initial call for sites process for the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan and was given the reference number:59409. Since then, Croudace Homes has acquired additional land, and the revised site boundary significantly increases the area of the site. A full list of the HELAA reference numbers is set out in the e-form.

This letter is submitted alongside the dedicated sites e-form and provides further information as to why the Site should be considered as a sustainable location for future growth in Greater Cambridge.

Croudace has an option agreement on the land with all the landowners (detailed below) to which they have all signed up:

*Table 1: List of Titles and Landowners*

Title Detail	Landowner Detail
CB429411	Michael Todd, Betty Douglas, Jean Jarvis, Richard Currington
CB454913	Robert Badcock
CB453039	Janet Hartwell
CB427203	Michael Dallas, Richard Currington, Michael Todd, Susan Roe
CB144362	Ivan Woodhouse and Susan Woodhouse
CB485843	Robert Abraham
CB453185	William Mappedoram
CB74644	William Mappedoram
CB73039	Barry Palmer and Ann Palmer

## Site Context

The Site is located to the east of Cottenham. Cottenham is defined as a Rural Centre in South Cambridge District Council (SCDC's) current Local Plan (Policy S8). Cottenham is situated approximately 9km to the north of Cambridge. There is a regular ½ hourly bus service (Citi 8) into Cambridge, with the first morning service leaving at approximately 06:30hrs and the last bus returning at approximately 23:00hrs.

The accompanying text to Policy S8 confirms that they are the most sustainable villages of the district and have good access to a number of services and facilities. These services and facilities include but are not limited to shops, public houses, restaurants, a primary and secondary school, community buildings, fire station, and medical services. The Site is situated approximately 500m to the south-east of a number of these services and facilities.

The Site itself extends to approximately 13.4 hectares. It currently comprises agricultural fields. The agricultural fields nearest to the existing residential dwellings are classified as urban according to Natural England's provisional Agricultural Land Classification.

There are a number of trees and hedgerows onsite. The Site is situated in Flood Zone 1, and therefore at the lowest risk of potential flooding. Small pockets of land within the Site are at a low to high risk from surface water flooding. These pockets of land are focused on the existing small watercourses onsite. The north-east corner of the Site is adjacent to the Cottenham Conservation Area. Within the Cottenham Conservation Area, there are a number of Listed Buildings. In the middle of the Site there is a line of telegraph poles.

The Site is bound by trees and hedgerows, particularly to the north-west and west and also residential dwellings to the north, a few residential dwellings to the east and Beach Road and Short Drove to the south.

The Site is located within the Cambridge Green Belt.

### **Update to Site Reference: 4809**

The Site was subject to a number of submissions to the initial call for sites process from Barratts David Wilson Homes. Since the initial call for sites process, Croudace Homes has taken over the Option agreement with the landowners and increased the Site area. Therefore, the Site has been resubmitted as part of this updated Call for Sites process.

The Site submitted as part of these call for sites representations has included an additional field to the west and therefore is larger than the previous submissions.

### **Future Housing Need for Greater Cambridge**

#### ***Government's Vision for Greater Cambridge***

The Labour Government is placing considerable emphasis on growth in and around Cambridge. In the Autumn Budget, the Chancellor referenced the need to fund Cambridge so that it realises its full potential. In the Budget, the Chancellor committed £10 million to enable the Cambridge Growth Company (a body set up to facilitate growth) to develop a plan for housing, transport, water and wider infrastructure.

In January 2025, the Chancellor reiterated her commitment to deliver the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor as a driver to boost the UK economy by up to £78 billion by 2035. This includes the provision of housing as she acknowledged that Oxford and Cambridge are two of the least affordable locations to buy in the country, and the delivery of East West Rail, a new mainline railway linking Cambridge with Bedford, Bletchley, and Oxford.

As the Site is situated on the edge of a Rural Centre, which has several facilities and amenities, it is considered a suitable and sustainable location to help Greater Cambridge meet the Government's ambitions for growth.

#### ***Housing Need***

In previous versions of the Greater Cambridge emerging Local Plan, draft Policy (S/JH) stated that the Authorities would need to provide 44,400 homes between 2020 and 2041, which reflected an annual objectively assessed need of 2,111 homes per annum.

The latest standard methodology figures for Greater Cambridge are 1,135 dwellings per annum for Cambridge City and 1,174 dwellings per annum for SCDC. This brings the standard method total for Greater Cambridge to 2,309 dwellings per annum, an increase of 198 dwellings per annum. The 2,309

dwellings per annum is defined as a minimum requirement for the Authorities to meet in their new Local Plan.

As both their current Local Plans are over five years old, Greater Cambridge has recently confirmed that it cannot currently achieve a five-year housing land supply. Therefore, Greater Cambridge is at risk of speculative development permissions as national planning policy has a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

In order for the Councils to help meet its standard methodology targets, it is essential that an up-to-date Local Plan is adopted.

## Site Promotion

### **Green Belt**

The Site is considered to be situated in a sustainable location as it is situated on the edge of a Rural Centre, which is confirmed by SCDC as being a sustainable location for future growth, as it has a number of services and facilities within walking distance.

Although the Site is situated in the Green Belt, the recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) gives more power for Local Authorities to deliver development in the Green Belt.

Paragraph 145 does allow for Authorities to review Green Belt boundaries in the development of their local plans should there be exceptional circumstances. Paragraph 146 defines exceptional circumstances as instances where an Authority “*cannot meet its identified need for homes, commercial or other development.*”

It is considered that the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service will have to review its evidence to demonstrate whether they are exceptional circumstances to alter Green Belt boundaries within Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. It is the opinion of Croudace Homes that there will be a need to alter the Green Belt boundaries to help meet Greater Cambridge’s growth ambitions.

As the Site is situated adjacent to an existing Rural Centre, it is considered a highly sustainable location and should be considered as potential area of land to be removed from the Green Belt.

Croudace acknowledges that any future design will consider how to minimise the impact on the remaining Green Belt. This will be achieved through high quality landscape design to mitigate the impact of the development on the long-distance views.

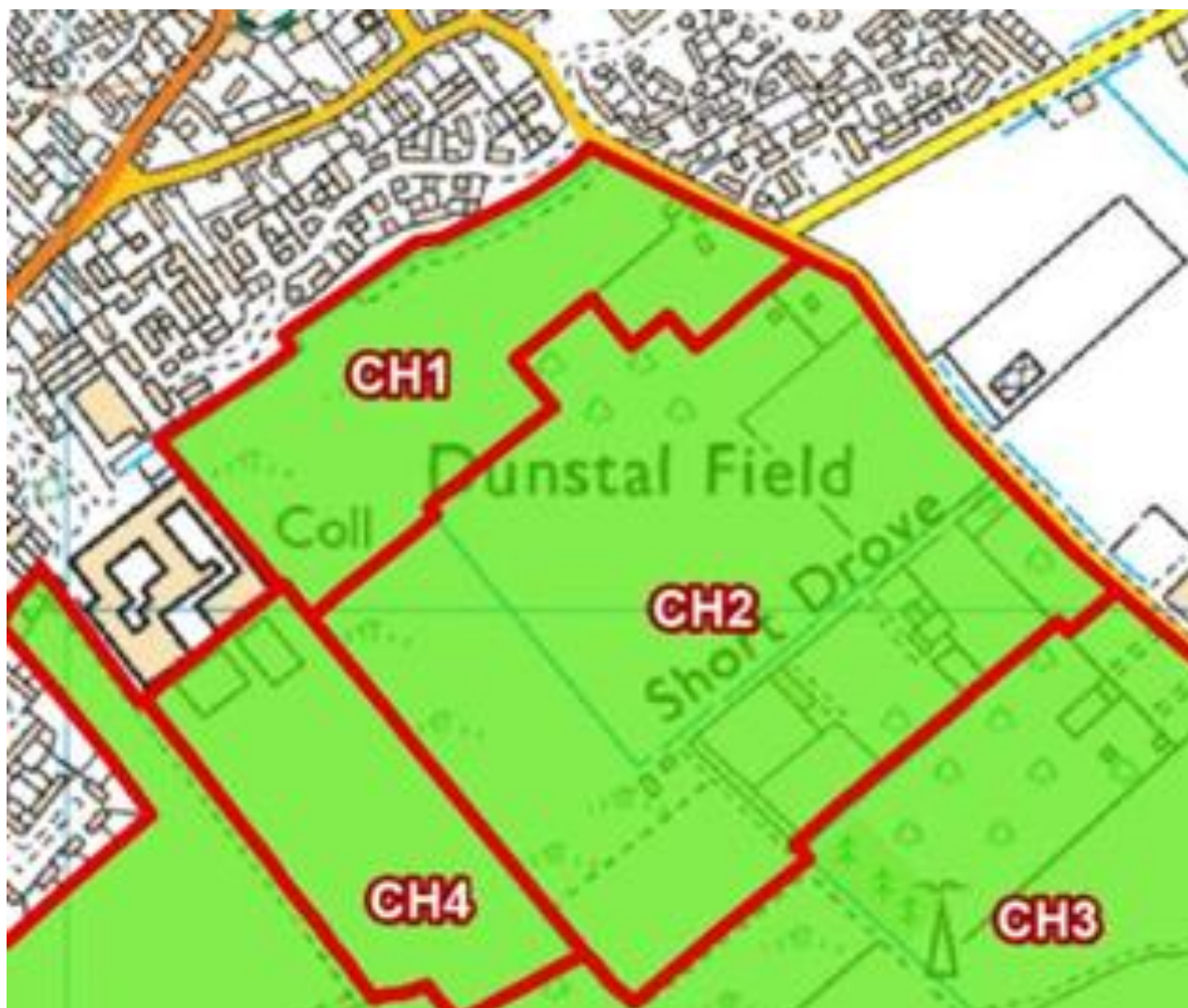
***Grey Belt***

As part of the evidence base to support the previous versions of the emerging Local Plan, Greater Cambridge instructed LUC to carry out a Green Belt Assessment, analysing parcels of the land in the Green Belt against the Cambridge specific purposes of the Green Belt.

The Cambridge specific Green Belt purposes as set out in the Council's Green Belt Assessment are:

- Cambridge Purpose 1: To preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic city with a thriving historic centre;
- Cambridge Purpose 2: To maintain and enhance the quality of Cambridge's setting.
- Cambridge Purpose 3: To prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the city.

The Site comprises all of the CH1 parcel (adjacent to the current boundary) and the majority of the CH2 parcel (to the south). The parcels are shown in the Plan overleaf:



The parcels' score against Cambridge's purposes of the Green Belt are the following:

*Table 2: Site Parcels against Green Belt Purposes*

Parcel CH1		Parcel CH2	
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Score</b>
Purpose 1	Limited/No contribution	Purpose 1	Limited/No contribution
Purpose 2	Relatively Limited	Purpose 2	Moderate
Purpose 3	Relative Limited	Purpose 3	Moderate

Overall, the Assessment concludes that the parcels make a 'moderate high' contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. The reasons for the score, particularly for parcel CH2 is a 'moderate', as it considered that the parcel would be perceived as narrowing the gap between Cottenham and Landbeach.



It should be borne in mind that Landbeach is over 2.5km from the Site, and its development would barely narrow the gap between the two settlements; there would remain a considerable gap comprising several large fields between the two villages.

The updated 2024 NPPF defines 'grey belt' as previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of the purposes a), b) or d) in Paragraph 143.

Paragraph 143 defines the purposes as:

- a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- d) To preserve the setting and specific character of historic towns.

As the Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment concludes that the parcels do not 'strongly contribute' towards the purposes, the Site could be defined as 'grey belt' and therefore should be delivered as sustainable development in the region.

### **Cottenham Neighbourhood Plan (2021)**

The Cottenham Neighbourhood Plan (2017-2031) was 'made' in 2021.

Policy COH/1-1 states that the development proposals should take account of certain vistas that contribute to the character and attractiveness of Cottenham. One of these vistas is from Short Drove across the Green Belt, towards the village (Viewpoint 6 in the Neighbourhood Plan).

Croudace Homes notes this policy and will seek to design the development, to minimise the development's impact, while contributing to the character of Cottenham village itself.

The Site is situated outside of the development framework. Policy COH/2-1 states that development proposals outside the development framework will be supported where they are designed to provide appropriate facilities for rural enterprise, agriculture, forestry, or leisure, or where they otherwise accord with national or local planning policies.

Although the Site is outside the development framework, it is within easy walking distance of the services and facilities in the village centre. There is a great need for housing, as demonstrated by the increased standard method figures for Greater Cambridge and that currently, Greater Cambridge cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. This also does not take into account the Government's national commitment for Cambridge growth. Therefore, the Site is considered a sustainable location and should be allocated for housing in the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan and the development boundary should be altered as a result.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this Site has been resubmitted to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service's 'call for sites' exercise as it is larger than the Site that was originally submitted. It is also now in the control of Croudace Homes (with a new option agreement) rather than Barratt David Wilson Homes, which is a change from what was originally submitted.

It has been established that the Site is in a sustainable location, within easy walking distance of an excellent range of shops, services and facilities within Cottenham, including a primary and secondary school, which is defined as a Rural Centre in the current SCDC Local Plan.

Although the Site is located within the Cambridge Green Belt, its location and Greater Cambridge's need for housing makes the Site an ideal future allocation for a minimum of 250 homes in the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The Site could also be defined as grey belt and therefore should be developed. The impact on the landscape and the views across towards Landbeach can be mitigated through careful design.

If you have any questions or comments related to the Site, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Will Nichols

Regional Director

Enc: Site Location Plan

Cc: Alasdair MacLean (Croudace), Victoria Yeandle (Lanpro)



