

Greater Cambridge Local Plan

South Cambridgeshire Hall
Cambourne Business Park
Cambourne
Cambridgeshire
CB23 6EA

6th March 2025

Lanpro Project Number: 4025

By Call for Sites Electronic Submission

Dear Sir/Madam,

Greater Cambridge Local Plan Call for Sites: Scotland Farm, Scotland Road, Dry Drayton, Cambridgeshire

Introduction

This letter has been prepared by Lanpro Services on behalf of P.X. Land Ltd in relation to its land interest at Scotland Farm, Scotland Road, Dry Drayton, Cambridgeshire.

The 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 numbers: 51608, 56252, 40318, 40317. Since then, Scotland Farm has produced an updated Vision Document, building on the publication of the 'Case for Cambridge' by the previous Government and the current Government's emphasis on the growth of Cambridge, to increase the number of homes originally proposed at the Site to a minimum of 10,000. A sustainable new settlement proposed on the Site, on the edge of Cambridge, supports the Government's vision.

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 new settlement on the edge of Cambridge, supporting future growth and providing much needed services and facilities within Greater Cambridge. Its location adjacent to the strategic highway network, with a proposed new 2,000 car parking space travel hub, and just 3km from the proposed new Cambourne railway station makes the site ideally suited for a large new settlement.

Site Context

P.X. Land Ltd was established in response to the previous Conservative Government's 'Case for Cambridge' proposals to deliver an uplift in housing in the Greater Cambridge Area. The land is owned and farmed by P.X. Farms Ltd and is in single ownership.

The Site extends to approximately 400 hectares. It is situated to the north of the A428 Trunk Road. The Site currently comprises agricultural fields and agricultural buildings within the ownership of the landowner.

The Site is located to the south of Dry Drayton and to the north of Hardwick, across the A428 Trunk Road. The Site is dissected by Scotland Road, which runs from the A428 Trunk Road to Dry Drayton.

The Site is located within Flood Zone 1, although there are pockets of land within Flood Zone 3 to the north of the Site. Areas around Callow Brook to the east of the Site are at a low risk from surface water flooding. There are also pockets of land within the Site which are at risk of surface water flooding. Throughout the Site, there are footpaths, linking Hardwick to Dry Drayton and a bridleway from Scotland Road to Childerley Hall.

There are a number of Listed Buildings within Dry Drayton. In addition, the Site is situated approximately 500m to the west of the Grade II Registered parks and Gardens. The Site is also situated approximately 2km to the north-west of the nearest environmental designation, the Madingley Wood SSSI.

The eastern portion of the Site to the east of Scotland Road is located within the Cambridge Green Belt. In total, 70% of the Site is located outside of the Green Belt.

Update to Site References: 51608, 56252, 40318, 40317

The Site was subject to a submission to the initial call for sites process from Hallam Land Management. Since the initial call for sites process, Hallam Land Management no longer have the option agreement with the landowner. The number of homes proposed at the Site has also increased to support the Government's vision for Greater Cambridge (see the section below).

Furthermore, in November 2024, the Greater Cambridge Partnership applied for a Transport and Work Act Order to the Department for Transport for a new busway, travel hub and path, linking Cambourne to Cambridge. The travel hub is proposed at Scotland Farm as shown by the proposed Site Plan below:

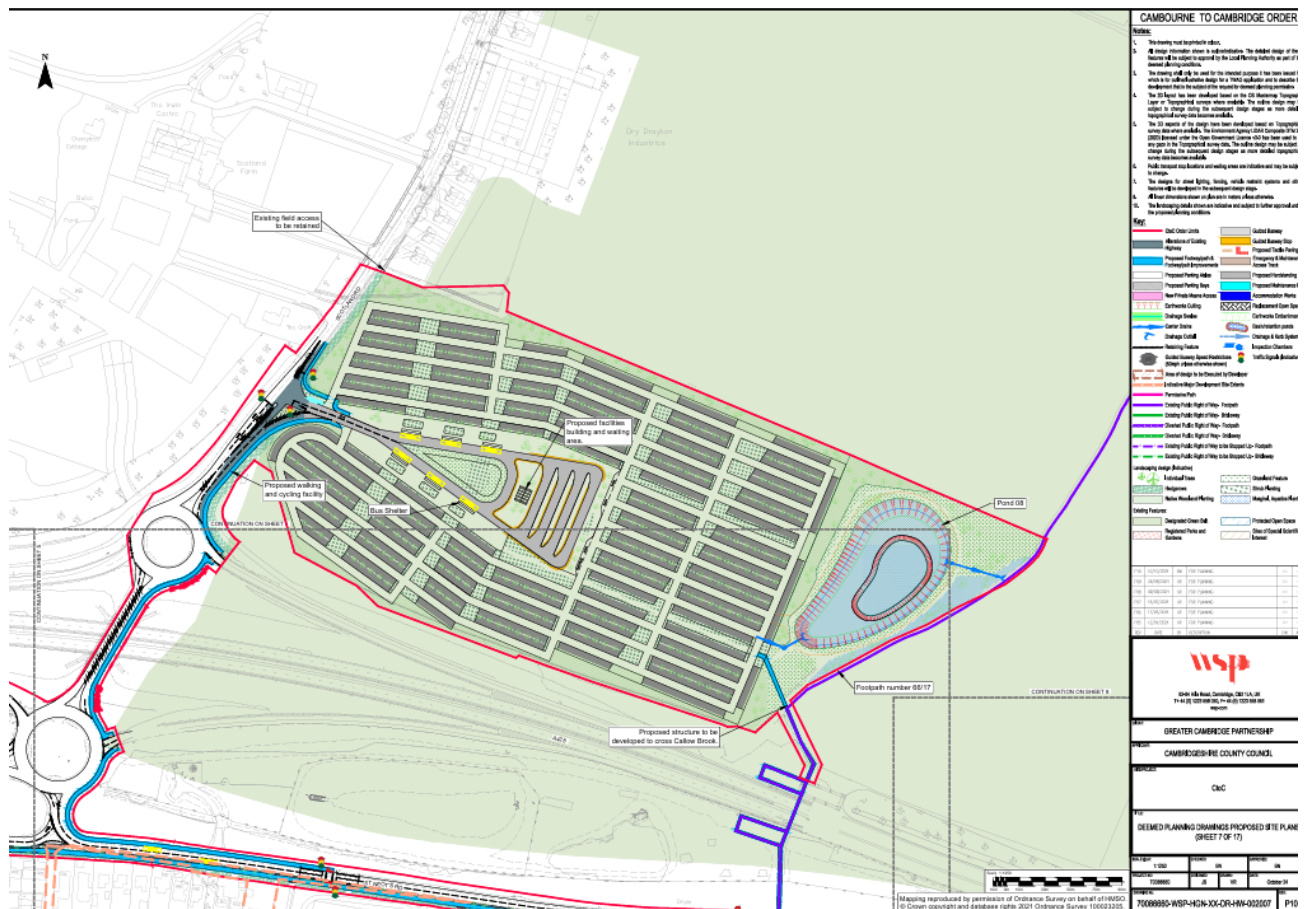


Figure 1: Proposed Site Plan of Scotland Farm (reference: 70086660-WSP-HGN-XX-DR-HW-002 Rev P10 – Cambourne to Cambridge Busway Application Submission)

In addition to the above, the landowner is working with the Greater Cambridge Partnership to provide a roadside services facility alongside the proposed travel hub and if this proceeds the layout will be amended to accommodate this.

The proposed route was selected to provide services for existing and proposed new settlements, such as Bourn Airfield and West Cambridge. Scotland Farm was chosen as the appropriate location for a Travel Hub given its easy access to the A428 and its low environmental sensitivity. The Travel Hub has been designed to accommodate 2,000 car parking spaces, 300 cycle parking spaces, and other facilities, such as a building and specialised LED lighting. Once completed, it is anticipated that there will be buses every 10 minutes from Cambourne to Cambridge. These could be extended to Cambourne railway station as and when it opens.

Given that the proposed travel hub is situated on P. X. Farms Land, it is logical that a new settlement takes advantage of this proposed sustainable transport access. This is demonstrated in the Vision Document, which accompanies this call for sites submission.

Therefore, the Site has been resubmitted as part of the updated call for sites process.

Future Housing Need for Greater Cambridge

Government's Vision for Greater Cambridge

The Labour Government is placing additional 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. This is being chaired by Peter Freeman and, following our request, agreed to meet with P.X. Land Ltd to discuss the merits of the Site.

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 part of the latest East West Rail consultation, it was proposed that the Cambourne to Cambridge Busway could connect with the new Cambourne railway station to increase the sustainable connectivity of the region.

As the Site is proposed as a new settlement, comprising a minimum of 10,000 new homes, new business hub, educational facilities, community neighbourhood hub and substantial environmental benefits, including public open spaces and a network of greenway corridors, on the edge of Cambridge, it is considered a suitable and sustainable location to help Greater Cambridge meet the Government's ambitions for growth. This is due to its proximity to the travel hub proposed as part of the Busway and the fact that the provision of services and facilities within the Site, which can be accessed by sustainable modes, reduces the number of external trips out of the Site, increasing sustainability.

Housing Need

In previous version 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 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 South Cambridgeshire District Council. 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

Proposed New Settlement

The Site is considered to be situated in a sustainable location as it is located on the edge of Cambridge. It is strategically located with a junction directly onto the A428 Trunk Road. It benefits from:

- Proximity to Scotland Farm travel hub/Park & Ride providing multi-modal interchange facilities;
- The proposed Cambourne to Cambridge Busway, providing a direct rapid transit link to Cambourne, potentially the proposed new Cambourne railway station on East West Rail, West Cambridge and Cambridge city centre;
- Good access to Cambourne railway station on East West Rail providing fast train services to Cambridge South, Cambridge, Tempsford/St Neots, Bedford Bletchley/Milton Keynes, and Oxford when it is delivered;
- Linkage into Comberton/Hardwick Greenway; and
- A network of high-quality active travel corridors linking all parts of the proposed new community without the need for a car.

As the Site is a proposed new sustainable settlement, it is seeking to provide other facilities and services, not just much needed homes, including affordable housing. These services and facilities include a new business hub, sites for a new secondary school and up to four primary schools, a new community neighbourhood hub and substantial new areas of public open space. This reduces the need for new residents in Scotland Farm and existing residents in Dry Drayton and Hardwick to make vehicular journeys to these services and facilities. These services and facilities are also accessible via sustainable modes, increasing the sustainability of the Site.

Further details on the proposed new settlement, including the proposed masterplan is at shown in the Vision Document, which accompanies this call for sites submission.

Green Belt

Although the land to the east of Scotland Road is located within the Cambridge Green Belt (approximately 30% of the total area of the Site), the recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) gives more power for Local Authorities to deliver development in the Green Belt.

Paragraph 145 of the NPPF 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 inevitable 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 P.X. Land Ltd that there will be a need to alter the Green Belt boundaries to help meet Greater Cambridge’s growth ambition.

As the Site is being proposed as a sustainable new settlement, providing services and facilities to reduce the need for travel and is adjacent to the highway network and the travel hub to support the Cambourne to Cambridge busway, it is a highly sustainable location and should be considered as a potential area of land to be removed from the Green Belt.

The NPPF does highlight the potential for new settlements to help contribute towards a Local Authority’s supply of homes. Paragraph 77 states that “*the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements..., provided they are well located and designed and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes)*”. The Vision Document sets out the indicative masterplan, which demonstrates that the Site adheres to the criteria set out in the NPPF. It is well located and offers a genuine choice of transport modes and is supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.

The Vision Document also sets out substantial new areas of semi-natural blue/green spaces (greenway corridors) within the indicative masterplan, minimising the impact on the remaining Green Belt and minimising the coalescence of the Site with Dry Drayton to the north and Madingley to the east.

Conclusion

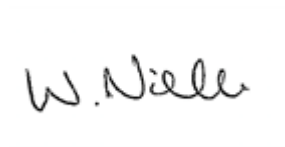
In conclusion, this Site has been resubmitted to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service’s ‘call for sites’ exercise as the number of homes proposed is larger (a minimum of 10,000) than what was originally proposed. This is due to the Site responding to the Government’s Vision for growth in Greater Cambridge.

The Site is for a proposed new settlement where existing residents in Hardwick and Dry Drayton and future residents will benefit from sustainable access to a number of services and facilities. The Site is also adjacent to the proposed travel hub area, which is being proposed for the Cambourne to Cambridge Busway. The Busway is seeking to link up with Cambourne railway station when it comes forward, further enhancing the overall sustainability of the Site to the wider region.

Although approximately 30% of the Site is within the Cambridge Green Belt, its location and Greater Cambridge's need for housing, employment and other uses makes the Site an ideal future allocation for a new settlement, comprising a minimum of 10,000 new homes. The Vision Document outlines how the impact on the remaining Green Belt and the views towards Dry Drayton and Maddingley have been mitigated through careful design of public open spaces and greenway corridors.

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

Yours faithfully,



Will Nichols

Regional Director

Encs. Vision Document

Cc: James Peck (PX Land Ltd), Victoria Yeandle (Lanpro)

