

RESPONSE TO THE GREATER CAMBRIDGESHIRE SHARED PLANNING 'CALL FOR SITES (MARCH 2025)' CONSULTATION

Site Location:	Land at The Causeway, Bassingbourn Kneesworth
Site Promoter:	Cambridgeshire County Council - in the capacity of Landowner Only
JDI no:	40203
Date:	7th March 2025

1. These representations look to update Carter Jonas' previous submission (2019) on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council (Rural Assets Team) in its capacity as **landowner only**, relating to JDI Number 40203 for the proposed residential development of Land south of the Causeway, Kneesworth 'the Site'.
2. This update is made on the grounds that 'there are other material changes to the site', namely the granting of outline planning permission on land to the north-east for 9 self-build homes (22/04153/OUT), via an appeal decision (/3322754) where the Inspector drew a number of conclusions that could help inform the assessment of the Site's credentials for allocation:
 - a. Concern was expressed by the Council about the sustainability of the location related solely to access to employment opportunities and raised no objection to access to other services and facilities.
 - b. Kneesworth and Bassingbourn together contain schools and a range of shops and facilities that are within a reasonable walking distance of the site.
 - c. Access to employment was available at the nearby hospital, schools, barracks, via existing pavements. The Wireless Station Industrial Estate is also in walking distance and is an appreciable source of employment. It is therefore not unreasonably deficient for employment opportunities for a rural location.
 - d. limited strength can be given to the argument that development would lead to a coalescence between the two villages – the row of housing in the centre of the gap along the Causeway has already limited the value of the gap, and an almost continuous built-up area exists along the northern side of The Causeway.
 - e. Development would likely result in landscape harm; but harm was outweighed by the benefits of development.
 - f. Whilst grade 2 agricultural land, the NPPF requires that two tests are satisfied to justify loss: (1) if the site is allocated (2) sustainability considerations and the need for development to override the need to protect land. It has been found that the site would be sustainable owing to its access to shops, services, employment, schools and other facilities. On balance, it was concluded that there was justification for the loss of grade 2 agricultural land for development.
3. The Site lies to the NE of land that is also being promoted for residential development (Form ID 40228). This has been proposed to deliver 75 – 80 homes, along with 1.14ha of public open space and landscaping that would provide a visual separation between Bassingbourn and Kneesworth, whilst still ensuring a comprehensively-planned and connected development. The technical information submitted for this site concluded that:

- a. Development could provide improved pedestrian safety along the Causeway with new pavement along the northern boundary linking the existing pavements to the east and west and crossing point
 - b. A simple priority junction with carriageway width of 5.5m and 6m corner radii would be sufficient to serve the proposed development. A Traffic Regulation Order would be sought along The Causeway to extend the existing 30mph zone to the west of the site. A 1.8m wide footway is proposed.
 - c. Topography is relatively flat
 - d. The site is at a low risk of flooding (Flood Zone 1)
 - e. The site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory wildlife site designations and not fall within any SSSI impact risk zone
 - f. Noise disturbance from road traffic could be mitigated
4. A concept plan (**Appendix 1.**) has been prepared to illustrate how land fronting The Causeway could be comprehensively developed for new homes, identifying where opportunities exist to help mitigate/minimise impact of coalescence and landscape harm, and what benefits might be achieved through a wider land allocation. The assumptions that have informed this concept plan are effectively of a composite of the 40228 promotion documents ('Vision') and the 22/04153/OUT planning permission (Illustrative Site Layout). Comprehensive allocation would enable:
- a. the delivery of approximately 210 homes, including self-build homes, in a sustainable location
 - b. the opportunity to create an extended 1.8m pedestrian footpath along the frontage of The Causeway
 - c. the preservation of a gap (approx. 60m) between the built areas of Bassingbourn and Kneesworth, for open space / landscaping
 - d. the provision of green infrastructure, biodiversity habitat, water attenuation and connections to Public Rights of Way, in a coordinated manner across the three sites.

APPENDIX 1 – CONCEPT PLAN