



# Landscape and Visual Technical Note

## Land south west of Cambourne

January 2026

### a. Introduction

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1. Icen Projects has been instructed by Richborough to consider the landscape and visual character of the land south west of Cambourne (the 'Site'), in order to consider its suitability to accommodate residential-led development. This note also considers the key landscape opportunities and constraints to development of the Site. A Site Location Plan, also showing the location of photographs, is contained in **Appendix A1**, and photographs are included in **Appendix A2**.

### b. Site Description and Context

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2. The Site lies to the south west of Cambourne, with the Cambourne Nature Reserve bounding the Site to the north east, and the settlement of Great Cambourne located beyond. To the north of the Site is Lower Cambourne, and West Cambourne is currently under construction to the north west of the Site.
3. To the west, the Site is bound by the A1198 which bypasses the village of Caxton which is located to the west of the road. This road lies in a cutting with densely vegetated banks to both sides.
4. To the south, the Site is bound by Bourn Road/Caxton Road, with the Site incorporating the farm yard and buildings at Grange Farm, within the far south west of the Site. Several small holdings and houses on large plots along Bourn Road are indented into the southern boundary of the Site. One of these properties, Mill Farm, incorporates the Grade I Listed Bourn Windmill, which is also a Scheduled Monument. The south eastern boundary of the Site is formed by Caxton Road (which is the continuation of Bourn Road).
5. To the east, the Site boundary follows a local valley, with the land beyond comprising arable fields to the south east, and a solar farm to the east.
6. Caxton and the Conservation Area within its historic core, is clearly separated from the Site by the route of the A1198, which is located in a cutting and which includes densely vegetated embankments to both sides. A bridleway provides physical links between the Site, Cambourne, and Caxton, under the A1198. For the most part, Caxton is further separated from the A1198 by arable fields, except in the far south of the village along Bourn Road. There are views from parts of the Site towards the tower of the Grade II Listed Church of St Andrew, which is located a short distance south west of the main settlement at Caxton.

7. South of the Site, the land falls down towards the Bourn Brook, before rising again on the opposite valley side to a series of local ridges. The main settlement at Bourn is located within the valley around 1km to the south east of the Site, and is densely vegetated, although scattered and linear development associated with the village extend north westwards towards the Site's south eastern boundary, along Caxton End and Caxton Road. There are some instances of winter views from the Site towards the tower of the Grade I Listed Church of St Helena and St Mary within the south of Caxton, although the dense vegetation within Caxton is likely to mean that only limited views of the very top of the tower are available in the summer.
8. There may be limited views from the northern edges of the Registered Park and Gardens at Longstowe Park, around 1.8km south of the Site, although views within the Park and orientated towards the west, with woodland bounding it to the north. Views from the Registered Park and Garden at Bourn Hall, west of Bourn, are likely to be screened by the intervening higher land and vegetation, although there may be limited views from the Grade II\* Listed Bourn Hall within the Park.
9. The land east of the Site comprises arable fields which rise to the ridge east of Broadway (road), with views from beyond contained by the ridge.
10. The Site comprises six arable fields, and two grassland fields, as well as an area of ponds and woodland, and the farm yard at Grange Farm. The fields are divided by hedgerows and tree lines, although the eastern part of the Site is more open, with hedgerows removed or gappy. The western part of the Site is visually more enclosed due to the denser field boundaries in this area.
11. Two public footpaths cross the Site in roughly north-south directions: one leading from Caxton Road in the south past the Bourn Windmill and roughly centrally within the Site towards the bridleway on the southern edge of Cambourne Nature Reserve; and one leading north from Caxton Road at the eastern edge of the Site towards Upper Cambourne.
12. Cambourne is located on the plateau along the A428, and along the gently sloping land to the south, with the Site located on the southerly extension of this plateau and gentle southward slope. The land beyond Bourn Road/Caxton Road slopes down more steeply towards Bourn Brook, before rising again relatively steeply to more undulating land. Caxton lies lower than the Site and Cambourne, along the upper valley sides of the Bourn Brook, with Bourn located on the lower, steeper slopes of the brook further south east.

### **c. Designations**

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13. The Site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape or heritage character of quality. We have noted the presence of the Grade I Listed Bourn Windmill.

14. Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, including Listed churches where the towers and spires are visible from the Site, occur at Caxton and Bourn, and we have noted the presence of the Registered Parks and Gardens beyond to the south.
15. Cambourne Nature Reserve is designated under Policy NH/12 as a Local Green Space within the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

**d. Background studies**

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16. The Site is located within Landscape Character Area 4a ('LCA'), Caxton to Conington Wooded Claylands, within the Greater Cambridgeshire Landscape Character Assessment (2021). It is described as a settled rural landscape where small woodlands, shelterbelts and tree clumps combine to create a well treed character. The LCA includes Cambourne, and notes that it is the largest settlement in South Cambridgeshire.
17. The study notes in relation to LCA 4a: *'The villages tend to have well defined edges provided by mature trees, thick hedgerows, shelterbelts and woodland. Small fields and paddocks at village edges contribute to their landscape setting and provide a transition to the surrounding countryside. Views over undulating arable fields between settlements are long, framed by trees and look towards treed or wooded horizons. Vertical features interrupting the skyline include telegraph poles, pylons, lines of poplar trees, windmills at Bourn and Elsworth, and church steeples which are occasionally visible above the trees. The busy A1307, A14, A428 and A1198 roads are localised detractors from the rural tranquillity elsewhere within the LCA.'*
18. Specific landscape sensitivities of LCA 4a are noted as:
  - Parkland features at Conington Hall and Croxton Park including woodland blocks, shelterbelts, clumps of trees and a pond;
  - Village edges generally well defined by small fields, orchards, mature trees, thick hedgerows, shelterbelts and woodland;
  - Ermine Street Roman Road is a distinctive linear feature.
19. Specific landscape guidelines for LCA 4a are:
  - Conserve parkland and enhance the specific features that give character and its context within the wider landscape in areas where it has been fragmented;
  - Conserve and enhance the regular small-scale small fields, orchards, mature trees, thick hedgerows, shelterbelts and woodland at village edges;
  - Maintain distinctive linear features.
20. The Greater Cambridge Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (November 2021) considers the relative sensitivity of the land around settlements, to development scenarios. It considered the sensitivity of the landscape around Cambourne in relation to residential development typically between 2-3

storeys, and commercial development of 1-2 storeys. An extract of the study is contained in **Appendix A3**.

21. The Site comprises a smaller, central-northern part of the wider CAM09 study parcel, as shown on the plan at Figure 1 below.

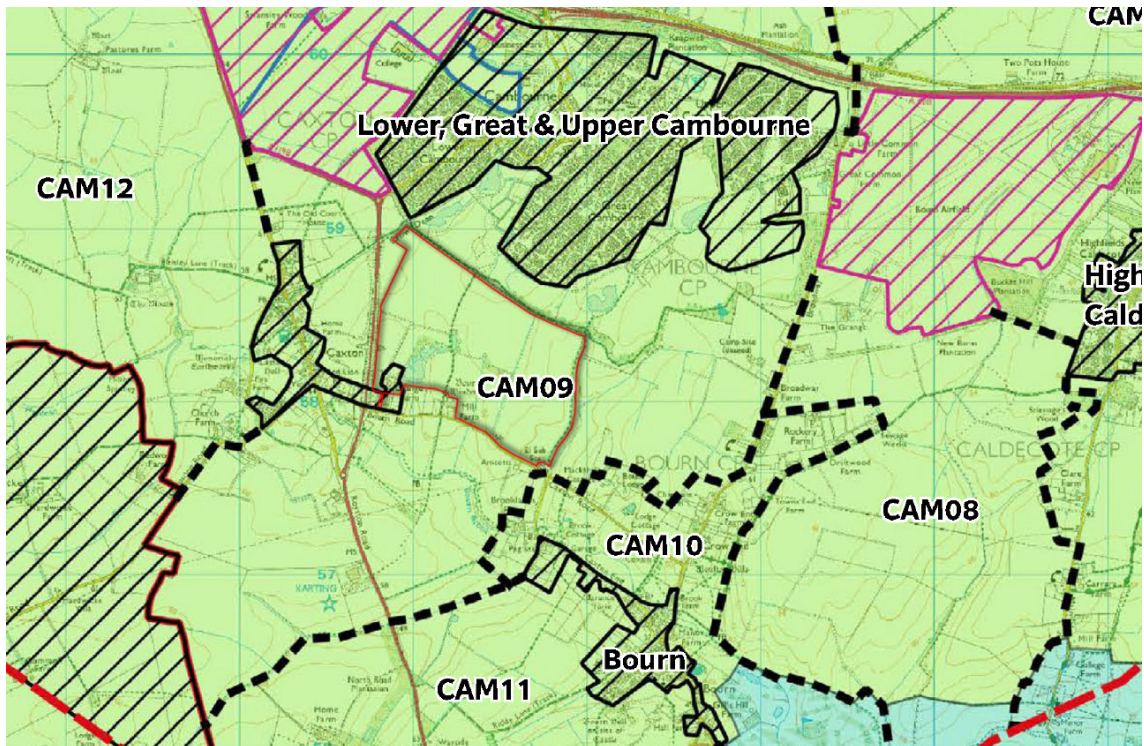


Figure 1 – Site shown in red outline, on map extract from Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.

22. The full assessment of area CAM09 is reproduced in **Appendix A3**. The study assessed this area as being of medium sensitivity to residential and commercial development, defined as *'Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.'*
23. In relation to CAM09, it concludes: *'Overall, this is a simple arable landscape with several features which are less susceptible to the development scenario including some very large fields, pylons breaking the skyline, and the highway network. The PROW network, recreational and natural value of Cambourne Nature Reserve, sense of separation between Cambourne and Caxton and distinctive landmark of Bourn Windmill are all more susceptible to the development scenario. Overall this Assessment Unit is assessed as being of medium sensitivity to the development scenario.'*

## e. Visibility

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24. The Site is partially visible from the public footpaths which cross it, with full views of the Site curtailed by the intervening vegetation and landform.
25. Views from the A1198 adjacent to the Site are prevented by the banking and vegetation along it, which also prevent views of Caxton to the west and Cambourne to the north. From further south along the road, there are partial, heavily filtered views of Cambourne on the higher ground to the north east, and development at the Site would be similarly visible in these views, in the foreground of Cambourne.
26. The Site is not visible from the streets within Cambourne, however, there may be limited views from some of the houses within the southern parts of Cambourne, of proposed residential development within the Site in the winter, although the views will be screened in summer.
27. From the bridleways along the north and north east of the Site, heavily filtered views of the Site are available in the winter, but summer views will be screened by the intervening vegetation on the Site's northern boundary (as seen in photographs 1 and 2 in **Appendix A3**). The existing houses within Cambourne are also partially visible from parts of these routes in the winter (photograph 3). Most views from within Cambourne Nature Reserve are prevented by the intervening landform and vegetation, although there are wide-ranging views of and over the Site from Crow Hill, the localised, man-made high-point within the south of the Nature Reserve, including views towards Bourn Mill, the church tower at Caxton, and the spire at Bourn (photograph 4). Views from this hill north, east and westwards take in Cambourne. Walking route maps produced by the Wildlife Trust which manage this reserve, indicate a viewing point looking northwards from the hill, but not southwards. Development at the Site would alter the middle ground of southwards views from the hill, however, due to the height of the hill, views will remain over the proposed development at the Site towards the higher ground south of the Site, and the horizon seen in these views will not be altered. The layout of the proposed development could be designed to incorporate vistas and viewing corridors to the windmill and churches from the hill, which would also aid in grounding the development within its local setting.
28. Views from the east are contained by the higher ground around Broadway, although the properties and farms along this road will have filtered, middle to long distance views of development at the Site during the winter, with heavily filtered views in the summer (as seen in photograph 9).
29. Most views from Bourn to the south east will be prevented by the intervening topography and vegetation. However, there will be long distance, filtered winter views of development on the higher eastern and north eastern parts of the Site from a limited number of properties within Bourn, where they are located higher within the settlement and have windows facing towards the Site, including the upper floors of the Grade II\* Listed Bourn Hall (as seen in photograph 16).

30. The eastern parts of the Site are visible from Caxton Road from adjacent to the Site's south eastern boundary, as there is no hedgerow along the road in this area (photographs 13 and 14). The intervening ridge with the Site prevents views of the central and western fields of the Site, and the existing houses in Cambourne north of the Site are partially visible in filtered winter views. New structural planting along the southern parts of the Site will filter views of development at the Site in the winter, and screen them in summer, as the planting matures.
31. Moving further west along Caxton Road, adjacent to the central parts of the Site and just east of Mill Farm, the southern, central fields of the Site are visible through the limited tree cover along the road, with the northern eastern and eastern parts of the Site screened by the intervening topography and vegetation, and the western parts screened by intervening vegetation (photograph 12). Additional planting within this southern part of the Site would filter winter views of development, and screen summer views of development from this part of the road.
32. From further west along Caxton Road/Bourn Road, views of the Site are prevented by the intervening vegetation associated with the properties indented into the south of the Site.
33. In longer distance views towards the Site from the south, the Site is partially visible, with the existing development at Cambourne to the north visible in filtered winter views.
34. From publicly accessible locations within the Site, i.e. along the footpaths, Bourn Windmill is only visible from an approximately 150m section of the public footpath north of the Windmill, with views from further public rights of way on the Site prevented by intervening vegetation and topography (photographs 5 and 9).
35. From the immediate surroundings of the Windmill, filtered winter views are available into the field to the north and east of the Windmill through the intervening vegetation, but summer views of these fields will be screened (photograph 10). Development at the Site can be designed to maintain an area of open space within this field to the north and east of the Windmill, and additional planting can be incorporated within this area to heavily filter winter views of development at the Site, and screen summer views, whilst retaining an open landscaped area adjacent to the Windmill.
36. In conclusion, development at the Site will be visible from the near distance, but it will often be seen within the context of the existing development at Cambourne. From the wider landscape to the south and west, development at the Site would be visible from limited parts of the landscape along the Bourn Brook, and from parts of the rising ground beyond it to the south, although the existing development at Cambourne is also partially visible in many of these views. From the east, views are prevented from beyond Broadway.

## **f. Landscape Sensitivity**

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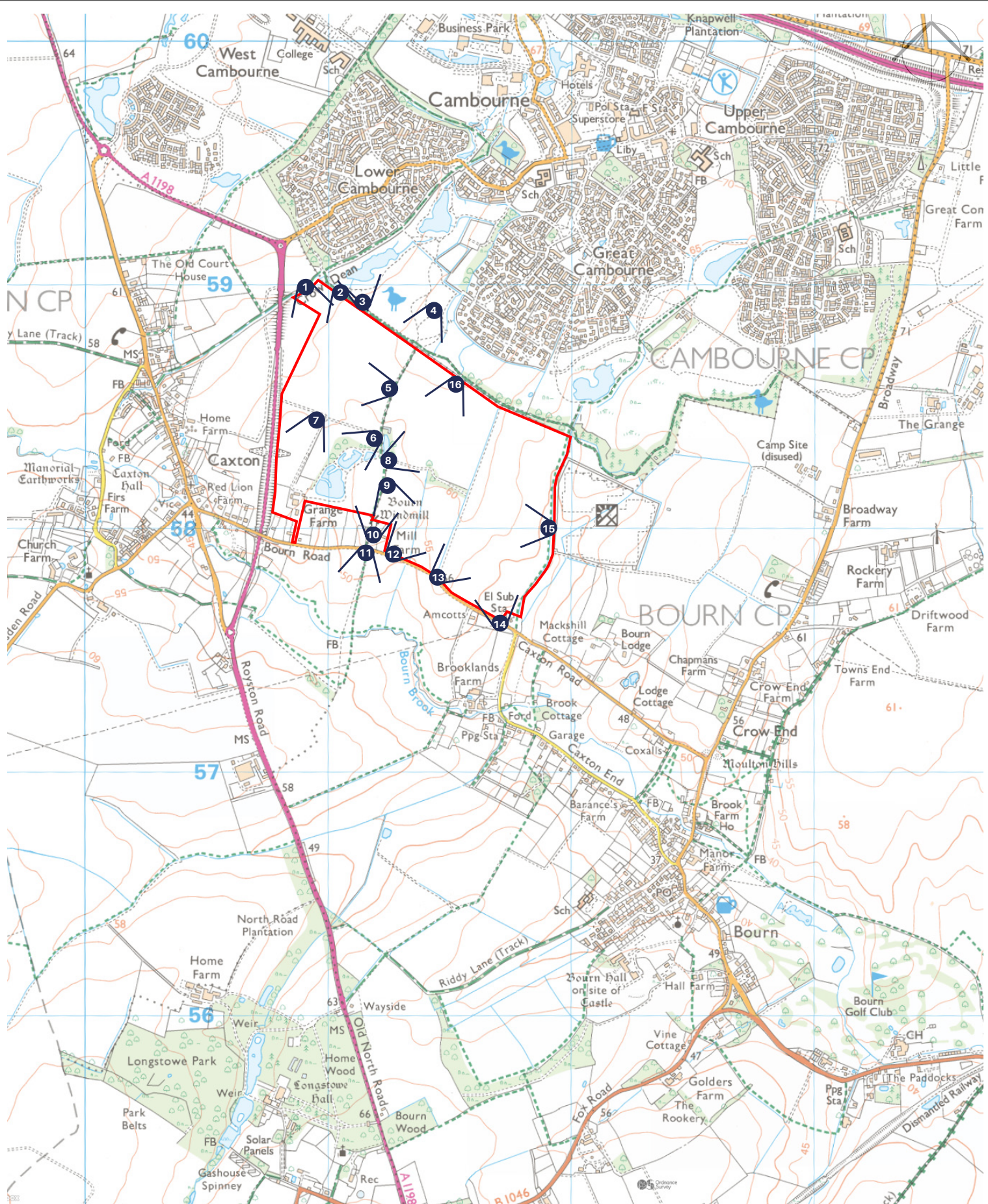
37. As noted in the Baseline studies, the landscape comprises ordinary arable fields, with copses and small areas of woodland frequent. While some hedgerows on the Site are well-managed, there are several which are gappy or have large sections missing, and there has been historic hedge removal to create larger fields. The tree groups and ponds create some interest within the centre of the Site, but otherwise the Site itself is ordinary. Its character and value are affected by the adjoining housing and Nature Reserve in Cambourne, the A1198, the Bourn Windmill, and the solar farm to its east. Public access is limited to the public footpaths. The Site is at a similar topography to the existing settlement at Cambourne, and separated from Caxton and Bourn by clearly identifiable features, alongside much vegetation. The Site is assessed as being of medium landscape value sensitivity.
38. Development at the Site can be readily accommodated. Specific mitigation measures and good design would:
- Retain an open landscape around Bourn Windmill, and retain views towards it from the north;
  - Retain a wooded/well-treed landscape between development at the Site and the A1198, to ensure a clear separation between Caxton and the development at the Site;
  - Incorporate new hedgerows and tree belts along the southern Site boundary along Caxton Road, the north-south ridge east of Bourn Windmill, and along the lines of former historic hedgerows within the east of the Site, and retain and strengthen the remainder of the structural vegetation on the Site to create a strong landscape framework and to break up the mass of development in views from the south, and visually assimilate it into the existing settlement to the north;
  - Respect the character and views from Cambourne Nature Reserve, with development set back behind a green corridor, to limit views of the new development over the intervening vegetation, from the bridleway within the south of the Reserve;
  - Incorporate view corridors from Crow Hill towards the Windmill, and churches within Caxton and Bourn, to reflect the local setting of the Site and Cambourne; and
  - Retain an area of open land in the south east of the Site, to ensure a clear separation between the houses within Bourn which lie along and near Caxton Road.

## **g. Conclusion**

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39. The Landscape Concept Plan in **Appendix A4** sets out the key design principles which should be incorporated into the development, to ensure that the proposed development reflects and respects its setting and surroundings, and to create a development which forms a natural extension to the settlement at Cambourne.
40. Residential-led development at the Site which follows the principles set out above, would be well suited to the context, and would not result in unacceptable landscape or visual harm.

## Appendix A1



— Site Boundary
 
 Photograph number and direction of view

CLIENT <b>Richborough</b>	DRAWING NO. <b>2247_L01</b>	REVISION -	<b>ICENI PROJECTS LIMITED</b> Da Vinci House 44 Saffron Hill London, EC1N 8FH 
PROJECT <b>Land south west of Cambourne</b>	SCALE @ A4 <b>NTS</b>	DATE <b>Jan 2026</b>	
TITLE <b>Site Location Plan</b>	DRAWN BY <b>SG</b>	CHECKED BY <b>SG</b>	

## Appendix A2




Photograph no. 1 View into north of Site from Crow Dean bridleway



Photograph no. 2 View towards Site from within Nature Reserve along bridleway in south

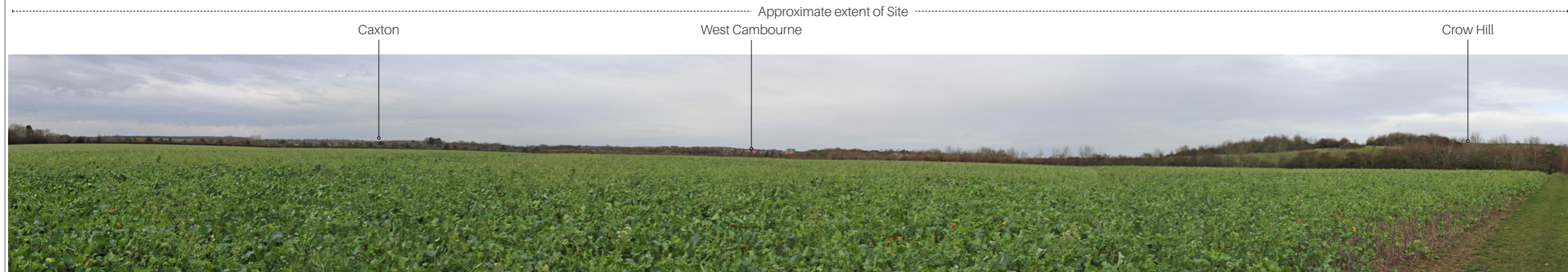


Photograph no. 3 View from Nature Reserve towards Cambourne

<b>ICENI PROJECTS LIMITED</b> Da Vinci House 44 Saffron Hill London, ECN1 8FH		PROJECT	Land south west of Cambourne	DRAWN BY	SG	DRAWING NO.	2247_L02
		DRAWING TITLE	Photographs	CHECKED BY	SG	DATE	January 2026
		CLIENT	Richborough	REV	-		




Photograph no. 4 View south from Crow Hill in Nature Reserve



Photograph no. 5 View west from public footpath in west of Site



Photograph no. 6 View of field in Site north of woodland and ponds

<b>ICENI PROJECTS LIMITED</b> Da Vinci House 44 Saffron Hill London, ECN1 8FH		PROJECT <b>Land south west of Cambourne</b>	DRAWN BY <b>SG</b>	DRAWING NO. <b>2247_L02</b>
		DRAWING TITLE <b>Photographs</b>	CHECKED BY <b>SG</b>	
		CLIENT <b>Richborough</b>	DATE <b>January 2026</b>	REV -

Southern Site boundary

Approximate extent of Site

Boundary along A1198



Photograph no. 7 View south west over south westernmost field of Site

Internal copse, roughly centrally in Site

Approximate extent of Site

Public footpath



Photograph no. 8 View south east from public footpath in west of Site

Horizon along Broadway

Approximate extent of Site

Southern Site boundary on Caxton Road

Bourn Windmill



Photograph no. 9 View south east from public footpath in west of Site

Field within Site north of Windmill just visible

Approximate extent of Site



Photograph no. 10 View north from Bourn Windmill

Southern Site boundary

Depot on Royston Road

Caxton



Photograph no. 11 View southwards from Bourn Road south of Windmill

Boundary of Mill Farm indented into Site

Approximate extent of Site

Copse in centre of Site

Ridge between central and eastern fields of Site



Photograph no. 12 View north east over southern part of Site from Caxton Road




Photograph no. 13 View east from ridge along south of Site on Caxton Road



Photograph no. 14 View north west from south eastern corner of Site



Photograph no. 15 View west from public footpath on eastern Site boundary

<b>ICENI PROJECTS LIMITED</b> Da Vinci House 44 Saffron Hill London, ECN1 8FH		PROJECT	Land south west of Cambourne	DRAWN BY	SG	DRAWING NO.	2247_L02
		DRAWING TITLE	Photographs	CHECKED BY	SG	DATE	January 2026
		CLIENT	Richborough	REV	-		

Copse in centre of Site

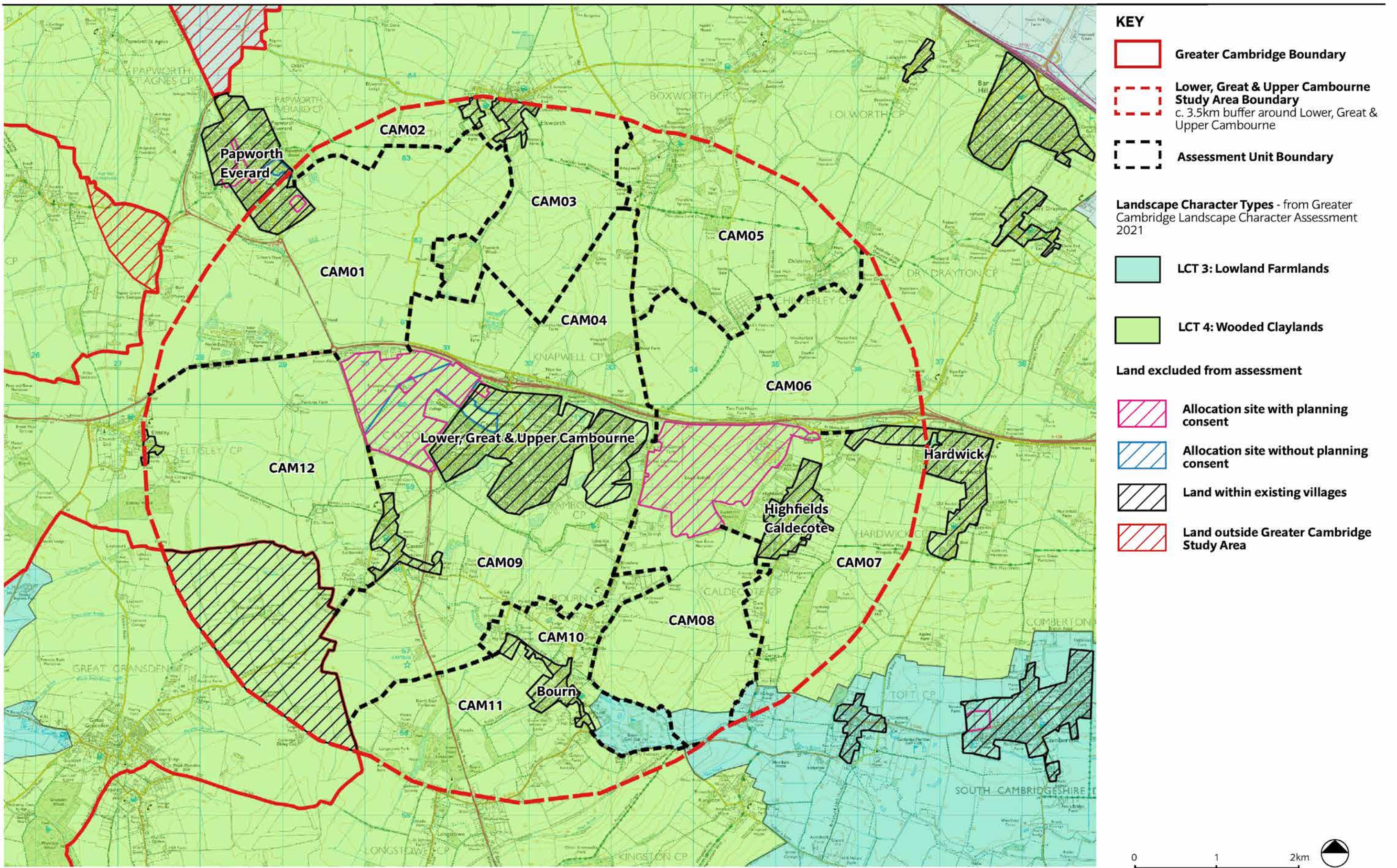
Approximate extent of Site

North eastern Site boundary



Photograph no. 16 View south over central parts of Site

## Appendix A3



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## Assessment Unit CAM09

Criteria	Susceptibility
<b>Natural Factors</b>	<p>Natural factors that make the landscape <b>less susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally simple arable landscape comprising arable fields of medium to very large size</li> </ul> <p>Natural factors that make the landscape <b>more susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A gently undulating landform forming part of a wider plateau rising to approximately 70-80m</li> <li>• Shallow valley associated with the Bourn Brook</li> <li>• Scattered blocks of woodland and occasional boundary trees add structure to the landscape</li> <li>• In the north, Cambourne Nature Reserve includes woodland, meadows and wetlands</li> <li>• Bourn Brook, and several ponds add diversity to the landscape</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Factors</b>	<p>Cultural factors that make the landscape <b>less susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highways include the A1198 Ermine Street Roman Road</li> <li>• Scattered development includes a lorry depot and a solar farm</li> </ul> <p>Cultural factors that make the landscape <b>more susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural landscape between the villages of Cambourne and Caxton with built development limited to The Grange farm in the north</li> <li>• The edge of Cambourne is integrated into the landscape by wetland and woodland associated with Cambourne Nature Reserve</li> <li>• The eastern edge of Caxton is softened by small hedged paddocks, woodland and trees</li> <li>• Bourn Windmill is a distinctive feature</li> </ul>
<b>Perceptual and Aesthetic Factors</b>	<p>Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape <b>less susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of tranquillity eroded by the A1198 and presence of Cambourne and Caxton</li> <li>• Limited scenic value associated with the open, arable landscape</li> </ul> <p>Perceptual and aesthetic factors that make the landscape <b>more susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong sense of separation between Cambourne, Bourn and Caxton due to well treed village edges</li> </ul>

Criteria	Susceptibility
<b>Landscape Quality/Condition</b>	<p>Landscape quality/condition factors that make the landscape <b>less susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hedgerows are often missing inside fields through field enlargement, and several fields are very large</li> <li>• Limited rural character associated with the large scale arable landscape</li> </ul>
<b>Views and Visual Context</b>	<p>Views and visual context that make the landscape <b>less susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pylons and poles associated with the telecommunications network break the skyline</li> <li>• Strong sense of visual enclosure within Cambourne Nature Reserve</li> </ul> <p>Views and visual context that make the landscape <b>more susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally long, open views across arable fields to treed horizons</li> <li>• Bourn Windmill is a distinctive landmark on the skyline</li> <li>• Recreational users of the PROW network and Cambourne Nature Reserve</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape Value</b>	<p>Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape <b>less susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple, commonplace arable landscape with occasional lines of boundary trees</li> <li>• Limited historic value</li> </ul> <p>Characteristics, features and qualities of landscape value that make the landscape <b>more susceptible</b> to the development scenario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gently undulating landform forming part of a wider plateau</li> <li>• Strong sense of enclosure in Cambourne Nature Reserve</li> <li>• Strong sense of separation between Cambourne, Bourn and Caxton</li> <li>• Natural value associated with occasional lines of boundary trees and Cambourne Nature Reserve</li> <li>• Recreational value associated with the PROW network</li> <li>• Locally valued views from the western edge of Caxton</li> </ul>
<b>Mitigation Potential</b>	<p>There is potential to mitigate the type and scale of change associated with the development scenario in this area by following the relevant landscape guidelines set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (2021) where appropriate.</p> <p>There may be scope for strategic landscape mitigation measures to help integrate development into the landscape (such as structural planting/buffers) where carefully designed</p>

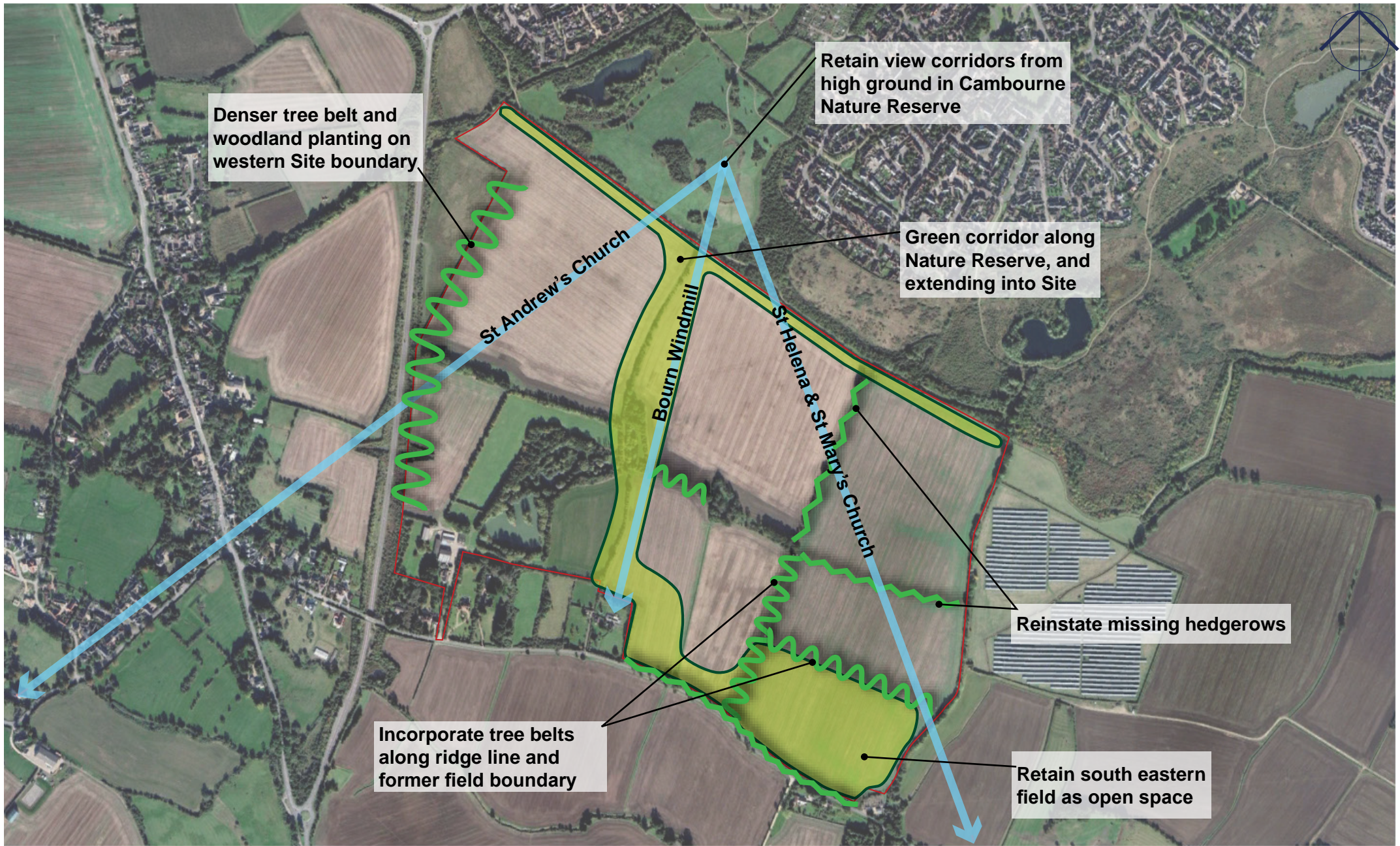
Criteria	Susceptibility
	<p>to be compatible with the characteristics of the wider landscape.</p> <p>The management and enhancement of existing hedgerows, re-planting hedgerows where these have been lost/become fragmented and consideration of opportunities to expand and link woodland, hedgerows and other semi-natural habitats to benefit biodiversity and manage key views across the rural landscape would be beneficial for creating a well-integrated settlement edge.</p>

3.3.38 Overall, this is a simple arable landscape with several features which are less susceptible to the development scenario including some very large fields, pylons breaking the skyline, and the highway network. The PROW network, recreational and natural value of Cambourne Nature Reserve, sense of separation between Cambourne and Caxton and distinctive landmark of Bourn Windmill are all more susceptible to the development scenario. Overall this Assessment Unit is assessed as being of **medium** sensitivity to the development scenario.

Sensitivity Level	Definition
<b>Medium</b>	<p>Typically, a landscape comprising relatively commonplace components and/or has few distinctive characteristics and/or is an area in moderate condition. Key characteristics and valued attributes of the landscape have some susceptibility to the particular type and scale of change being assessed. Considerable care may be needed in locating and designing change within the landscape.</p>

3.3.39 In this context, there may be some opportunities for residential, commercial and mixed-use development with increased height/scale in parts of this Assessment Unit.

## Appendix A4



Denser tree belt and woodland planting on western Site boundary

Retain view corridors from high ground in Cambourne Nature Reserve

Green corridor along Nature Reserve, and extending into Site

Reinstate missing hedgerows

Incorporate tree belts along ridge line and former field boundary

Retain south eastern field as open space

— Site Boundary

**ICENI PROJECTS LIMITED**  
 Da Vinci House 44 Saffron Hill  
 London, EC1N 8FH



PROJECT Land south west of Cambourne  
 DRAWING Landscape Concept Plan  
 CLIENT Richborough

SCALE @ A4	Not to Scale	DRAWING NO.	2247_L03
DRAWN BY	SG	REV	-
CHECKED BY	SG	DATE	January 2026
<small>ICENI PROJECTS ACCEPTS NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY UNAUTHORISED AMENDMENTS TO THIS DRAWING.        ONLY FIGURED DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE WORKED TO.</small>			