

BEACH ROAD, COTTENHAM,  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE

**A MASTERPLAN VISION**

**croudace**homes

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## VISION

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Issuing Date / Office  
29th January 2026 / Cambridge  
FINAL

# croudacehomes

# VISION

## BEACH ROAD

Beach Road will be a new landscape, nature and environmental design-led development of approximately 200 new homes in Cottenham, with the convenience of sustainable modern living, from award-winning developer Croudace Homes.

Beach Road will offer a variety of new energy efficient market and affordable homes, which suit every need at every stage in life. From homes for first time buyers through to homes – this new community aspires to cater to everyone and all set within new publicly accessible open space, to be enjoyed by everyone.

Our vision for Beach Road is about more than delivering new homes, it's about community and the environment, with a community orchard, children's play spaces, together with significant ecological and biodiversity enhancements.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 CROUDACE HOMES

**Croudace is a long-established, family-owned residential developer founded in 1946. They build high-quality homes that reflect local character and contribute positively to communities. Their strength lies in detailed internal and external design, quality materials, and thoughtful landscaping that enhances surroundings.**

Croudace homes are expertly built by professionals, with attention to social and environmental impact. They include play areas, sports facilities, wildlife protection, and promote non-car travel. Community events and charity support reflect their commitment to creating desirable, socially vibrant places to live.

### Strategic Land Promotion

Croudace Homes is a responsible, high-quality house builder specialising in strategic land promotion across the South East. Projects, range from 50-home developments to large urban extensions.

The company manages the planning process from promoting the site to building out the development, working closely with local communities, planners, and stakeholders to deliver sustainable, community-focused developments that benefit both new and existing residents.



## 1.2 SITE SUMMARY

The Site is located on the south-eastern edge of Cottenham, to the south west of Beach Road. Existing residential development wraps around the site to the north, with a mixture of arable farmland, paddocks, and orchards beyond the site to the south and east. There is also a large area of woodland and scrub beyond the western boundary.

The Site is flat and measures approximately 13.18 ha. The site is highlighted on the aerial photographs below and opposite.



Aerial view of proposed site



Aerial view of Cottenham Village highlighting proposed site

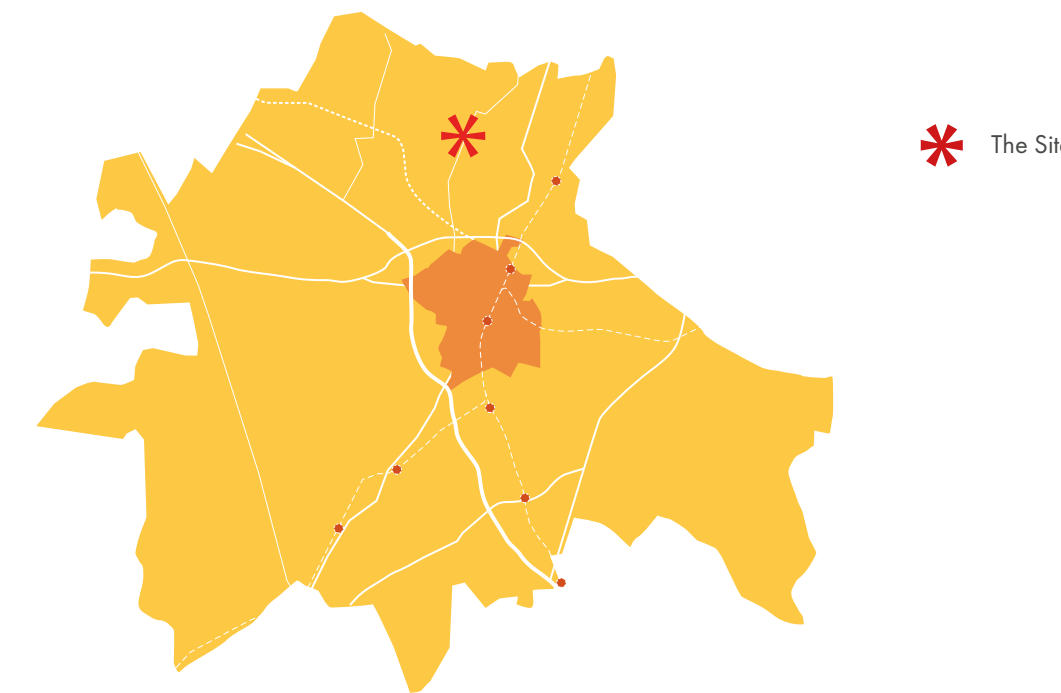
# 2. UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

## 2.1 WIDER CONTEXT

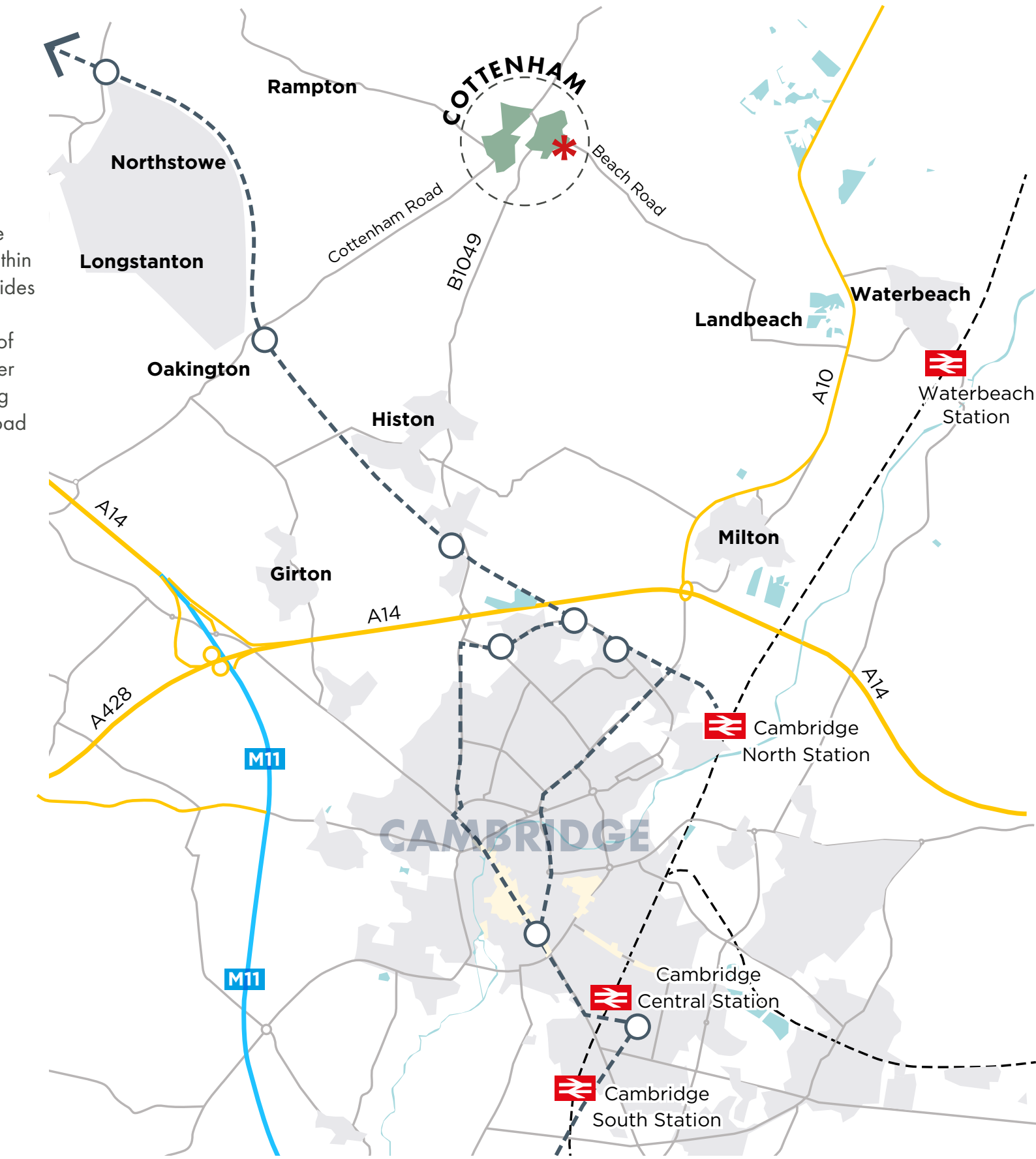
A large and vibrant village, Cottenham is located towards the northern edge of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Boundary, within South Cambridgeshire District.

Cambridge is located to the south, with Cambridge City Centre just 9km away. Neighbouring villages include Rampton, 2.6km to the west, Oakington, 4.9km to the south west and Landbeach, 3.6km to the south east. The village had an approximate population of 6,329 in 2021 census, this may have risen subsequently as a result of recent housing developments.

The main road running through the centre of the village is the B1049, most commonly known within the village as the High Street. The B1049, provides the main route to Histon, Impington, the A14 and Cambridge to the south and to the village of Wilburton and the A1123 to the north. The other key routes connecting Cottenham to the outlying villages, include, Oakington Road, Rampton Road and Beach Road, which passes The Site.



Location of Cottenham within Greater Cambridge Local Plan area



Cottenham within the wider context

## 2.2 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

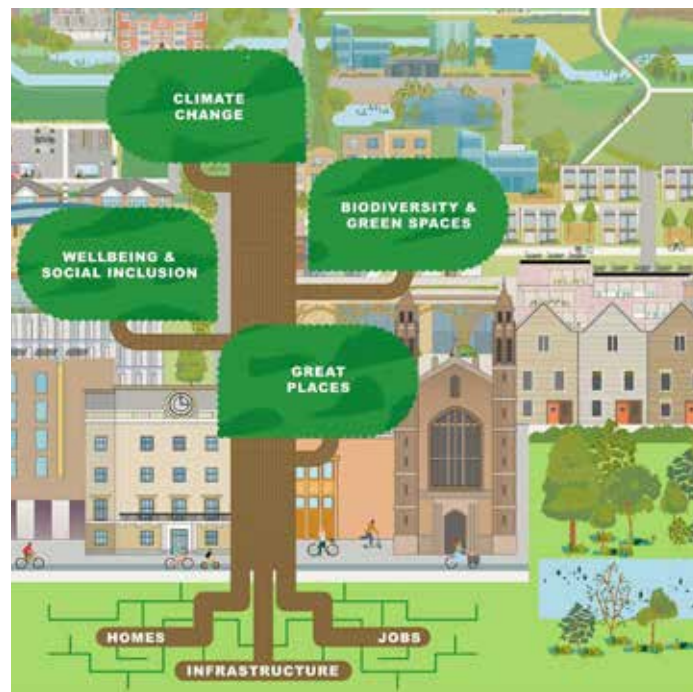
The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was adopted on 27th September 2018 and runs to 2031. The draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan to which this Vision Document relates, has now been published and sets out the joint Local Plan for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire for the period up to 2045.

Within the adopted Local Plan, Cottenham is identified as one of five Rural Centres in South Cambridgeshire, ‘the largest and most sustainable villages’ within the District. The other Rural Centres, as identified through the Local Plan comprise; Cambourne, Great Shelford & Stapleford, Histon and Imping ton and Sawston. Rural Centres are considered the largest, most sustainable villages in the District with good access to a secondary school, employment opportunities, a variety of services and facilities and good public transport services to Cambridge. However, the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan proposes to downgrade Cottenham’s status reducing it to a Minor Rural Centre. Given that Cottenham is one of the largest, most sustainable settlements outside Cambridge within South Cambridgeshire, Croudace considers this downgrading to be inappropriate.

The Cottenham Neighbourhood Plan was ‘made’ in May 2021. The Plan identifies that to remain sustainable “a village should provide local homes and employment opportunities for current and future generations, with adequate education, health, leisure and recreation facilities within easy walking distance for most residents and good public transport link.”

Upon adoption, the Greater Cambridge Local Plan will supersede the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. It will seek to shape development across Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire. The updated standard methodology published by the Government in December 2024 states that Greater Cambridge should be providing a minimum of 2,309 dwellings per annum.

The Cambridge Growth Company is a subsidiary of Homes England and has been set up by the Government to deliver “an ambitious plan for the housing, transport, water, and wider infrastructure Cambridge needs to realise its full potential.” The proposed number of homes that the Growth Company will seek to deliver has not yet been Announced but it is clear that the Greater



Cambridge will need to deliver homes significantly above those proposed in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

The Government also set up the New Towns Taskforce, which is an independent panel who will make recommendations as to the location and delivery of new towns (at least 10,000 homes). The Taskforce will make recommendations for the location of new towns (anticipated to be in the autumn) and this could include a potential location in South Cambridgeshire. These housing within these new towns will not contribute towards Greater Cambridge’s standard methodology requirement.

The draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan was published for Regulation 18 consultation from November 2025 to January 2026. The previous draft version of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (2021) had provisionally allocated a new sustainable settlement in North East Cambridge (draft Policy S/NEC). This draft allocation was intending provide 8,350 new homes, 15,000 additional jobs as well as retail, leisure and community facilities. This draft allocation was predicated on the relocation of Anglian Water’s wastewater treatment works, currently onsite.

In April 2025, the Government granted consent for Anglian Water to relocate its wastewater treatment works to Honey Hill to the south-east of Horningsea, to the north-east of Cambridge. However, in August 2025, the Government withdrew its funding, which was required to support the relocation. Therefore, the existing treatment works will likely remain in place and

the development of North East Cambridge not realised, raising concerns that the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan is not planning for a sufficient level of housing, particularly on smaller and medium sized sites. In addition, there is now some uncertainty about the relocation of Cambridge Airport and its manufacturing element. The decision to downgrade Cottenham from a Rural Centre to a Minor Rural Centre fails to consider the excellent public access and a range of shops and services in Cottenham. It remains a sustainable location for future development. To summarise:

- Cottenham continues to offer good access to a secondary school, primary school, employment opportunities, a variety of services and facilities and have good public transport services to Cambridge.
- In terms of population, amenities and services, Cottenham is comparable to the other

Rural Centres (indeed even with what Croudace’s representations conclude was a flawed scoring system, Cottenham scored just a single point lower than Great Shelford & Stapleford, which the draft Local Plan continues to include as a Rural Centre. It is concluded that Cottenham’s sustainability credentials make it an entirely appropriate location to accommodate further growth.

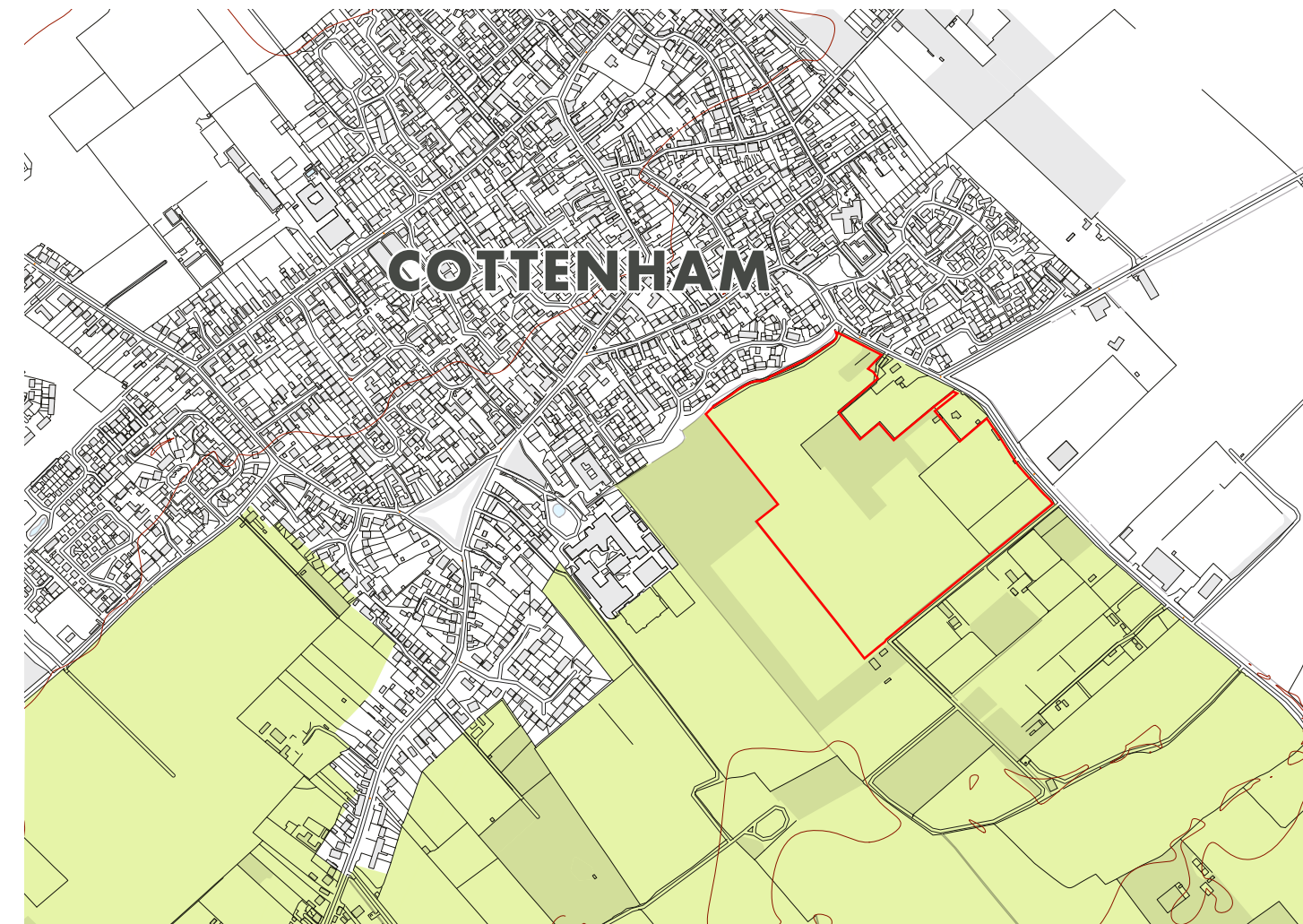
- The Neighbourhood Plan (May 2021) identifies a desire locally to consolidate and enhance existing services and amenities. Key issues highlighted in the plan include limitations

on education, medical, leisure and recreational facilities. However, aspirations in the Plan point to the retention of Cottenham as a Rural Centre.

The Site adjoins but falls outside of the settlement framework of Cottenham. Currently, the Site comprises a series of fields. The Site is classified as Green Belt. Policy S/4 (Green Belt) of South Cambridgeshire’s current Local Plan states Green

Belt will be maintained around Cambridge. It adds that new development in the Green Belt will only be approved in accordance with Green Belt policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Development of this Site will not impinge on the Green Belt around Cambridge itself. A Green Belt Review has been undertaken, having regard to the potential development of the Site, concluding



Site within the Cambridge Green Belt

that the release of the parcel for residential development would have only minor impacts on the functions of the Green Belt. Similarly, given the nature of the Site and the surrounding landscape, a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment has also been prepared for the Site.

It notes that the Site is within a transitional area at the edge of the Fen Edge Village and bordered by a series of orchards, hedges and trees to the southeast, by (mostly modern 2-storey brick) housing on Brenda Gautrey Way to the north of and further residential areas to the west. To its northeast and eastern edge, the Site fronts Beach Road and includes a number of dwellings on the road frontage, with further estate development beyond. The development of the Site could be delivered sensitively to be read as part of the existing settlement and minimise any impacts on the local landscape.

Adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Policy HQ/1 (Design Principles) seeks to achieve high quality development. It requires development to make a positive contribution to the local and wider context and to:

- Create an environment that feels safe and has a strong community focus.
- Include high quality landscaping and public spaces that integrate the development with its surroundings.
- Protect the health and amenity of occupiers and surrounding development that is overlooking, overbearing or results in a loss of

daylight or development, which would create unacceptable impacts, such as noise, vibration, odour, emissions and dust.

- Provide a harmonious integrated mix of uses that contributes to the creation of inclusive communities.

The Masterplan proposed hereby demonstrates the ability these objectives through the development of the Site

## 2.3 HERITAGE CONTEXT

Cottenham has a rich history with designated heritage assets and a Conservation Area. There are 66 listed buildings in total within the village, with 64 of them within the Conservation Area. There is also a Scheduled Monument, comprising a medieval moated enclosure.

Only a very small section of the Conservation Area adjoins the northern corner of The Site. The nearest listed building is the Grade II listed Olde Thatch property on the corner of Denmark Road and Beach Road, which is approximately 140m from the northern corner of the site and screened by existing residential properties.

The heritage assets within Cottenham are highlighted on the plan opposite. The photographs illustrate the variety of listed buildings found within the village.



Grade II Listed - Rose Villa, High Street



Grade II Listed - 332, High Street



Grade II Listed - Olde Thatch



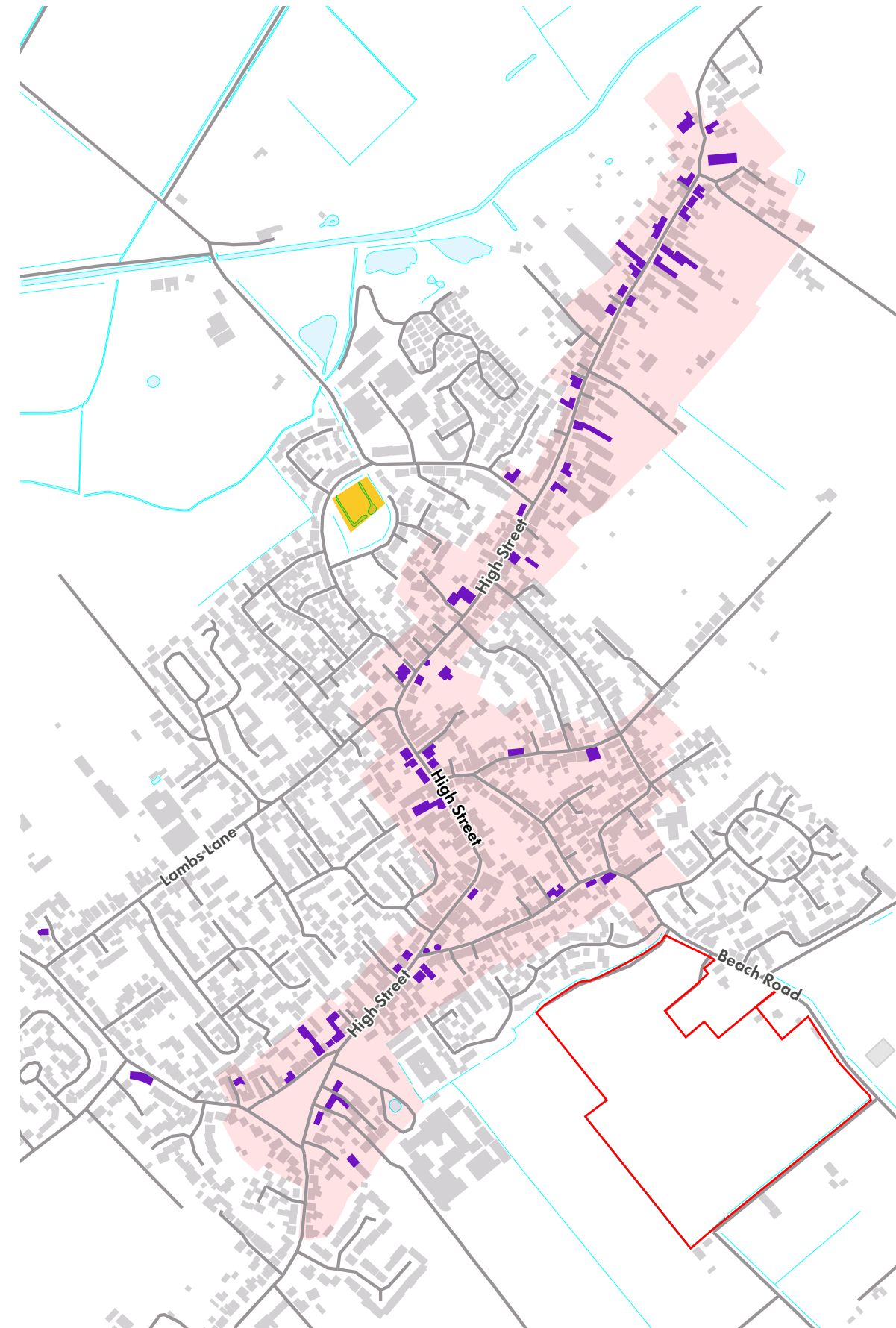
Grade II Listed - 226 & 228, High Street



Grade II Listed - 279, High Street



Grade II Listed - 86, High Street



## 2.4 TOWNSCAPE CONTEXT

Running through the centre of the village, the High Street defines the village's historic linear settlement pattern, and is where you will find the majority of the remaining historic buildings, many of them listed.

More than a mile long, the High Street is landmarked by the Village Green to the south and All Saints Church to the north. There is a mix of property types and architectural styles throughout the historic core of the village from small terraces, semi-detached houses, through to large, detached villa properties. The streetscape provides a mix of both wide and narrow fronted properties. The properties are mostly two-storey with some three-storey, such as the Hop Bind PH and The Tall House.

The pepper-potting of business and retail with residential dwellings creates a more active and vibrant environment along the majority of the High Street, which is further enhanced by the on-street parking. Detached properties with rear yards and parking, accessed by narrow passageways are common.

The majority of the properties along the High Street hug the back of the pavement, with some of the larger properties having small set-back behind dwarf brickwork walls, railings or grass verges.

The predominant material used in the village is the local buff brick, which is commonly combined with slates tiles on pitched roofs, resulting in a subtle and muted colour palette. However, painted

render and brickwork, black timber boarding tiles, and thatched roofs can also be found, adding to the variety and richness to the character of the village. Architectural detailing is rich throughout the village but often simple and understated, such as timber casement windows and dormers. Chimneys are prominent to both the street and roofscape.

Permeating out from the High Street is a network of finer-grain streets and lanes leading to the post-war and later 20th century developments on the edge of the village. Detached and semi-detached properties are prevalent, with some short terraces. Parking to the side or within the rear curtilage of properties behind timber gates is also a common feature throughout the village.

In bringing forward proposals for The Site, the design will aim to incorporate and reflect the existing context and character, to create a new, well designed and vibrant place, which integrates into the existing fabric of Cottenham.



Examples of the subtle and muted colour palette found on the more historic buildings around the Cottenham.



Brick detailing over doors and timber sash windows is a common architectural features found in the village on both larger villa properties and former worker cottages.

Chimneys are a prominent architectural feature to both the street and roofscape of the village. Parking to the site or within the rear curtilage of the property behind timber gates is also a common feature throughout the village.



The majority of the properties along the historic High Street abut and hug the back of the pavement creating active frontages.

Some properties are set-backs behind dwarf brickwork walls and or railings creating definition between the public and provide realm.

Small planted green spaces woven into the fabric of the village townscape.



The local buff brick with a slate roof covering is the predominant material found on buildings within the village.



Painted brickwork is also found on a number of buildings within the village.



Painted brickwork is also found on a number of buildings.



Examples of the original agricultural buildings in weatherboarding. Some with clay tiles (pictured) or metal corrugated roofs.

## 2.5 STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

Cottenham is able to provide high levels of connectivity and accessibility, with access to regular and high quality public transport helping to reduce current and future dependency on journeys undertaken by car.

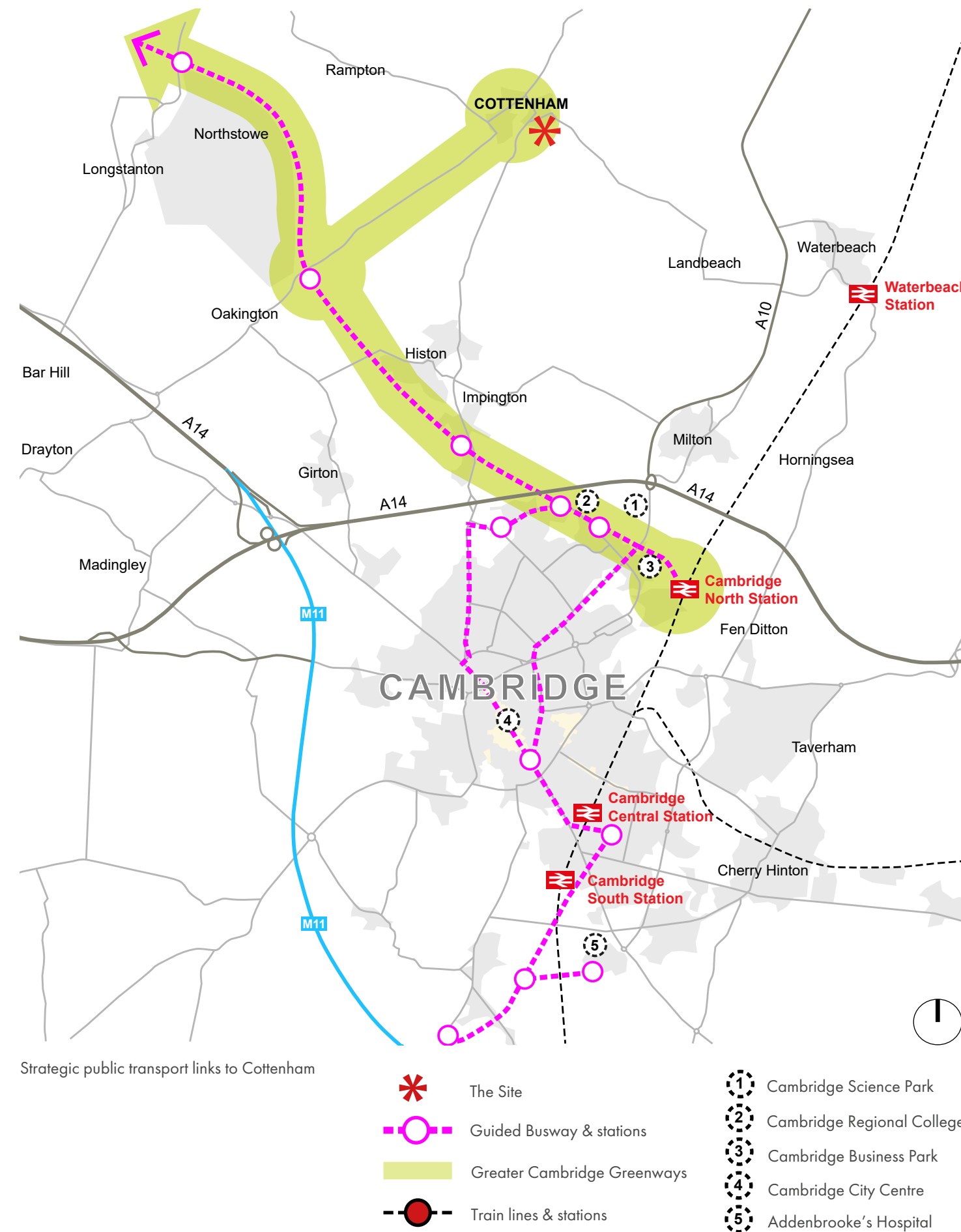
### Cambridge Guided Busway

Cottenham benefits from easy access to the Guided Busway from the nearby Oakington station, just 4km (2.5 miles) away from the centre of Cottenham. The Guided Busway provides regular, quick and convenient links to Cambridge City Centre, Cambridge Train Station, Cambridge Science Park, Addenbrooke's Hospital, St. Ives and Huntington.

### Greater Cambridge Greenway Network

In addition to the public transport network, Cottenham will also benefit from being linked to the Greater Cambridge Greenways network. This network of Greenways will make it easier both to travel in a pleasant and sustainable way into and out of Cambridge and to enjoy the countryside for leisure purposes.

The plan provides details of the strategic and local connections and routes accessible to Cottenham.



## 2.6 ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT

In addition to strategic public transport connections, Cottenham also benefits from good local public transport services.

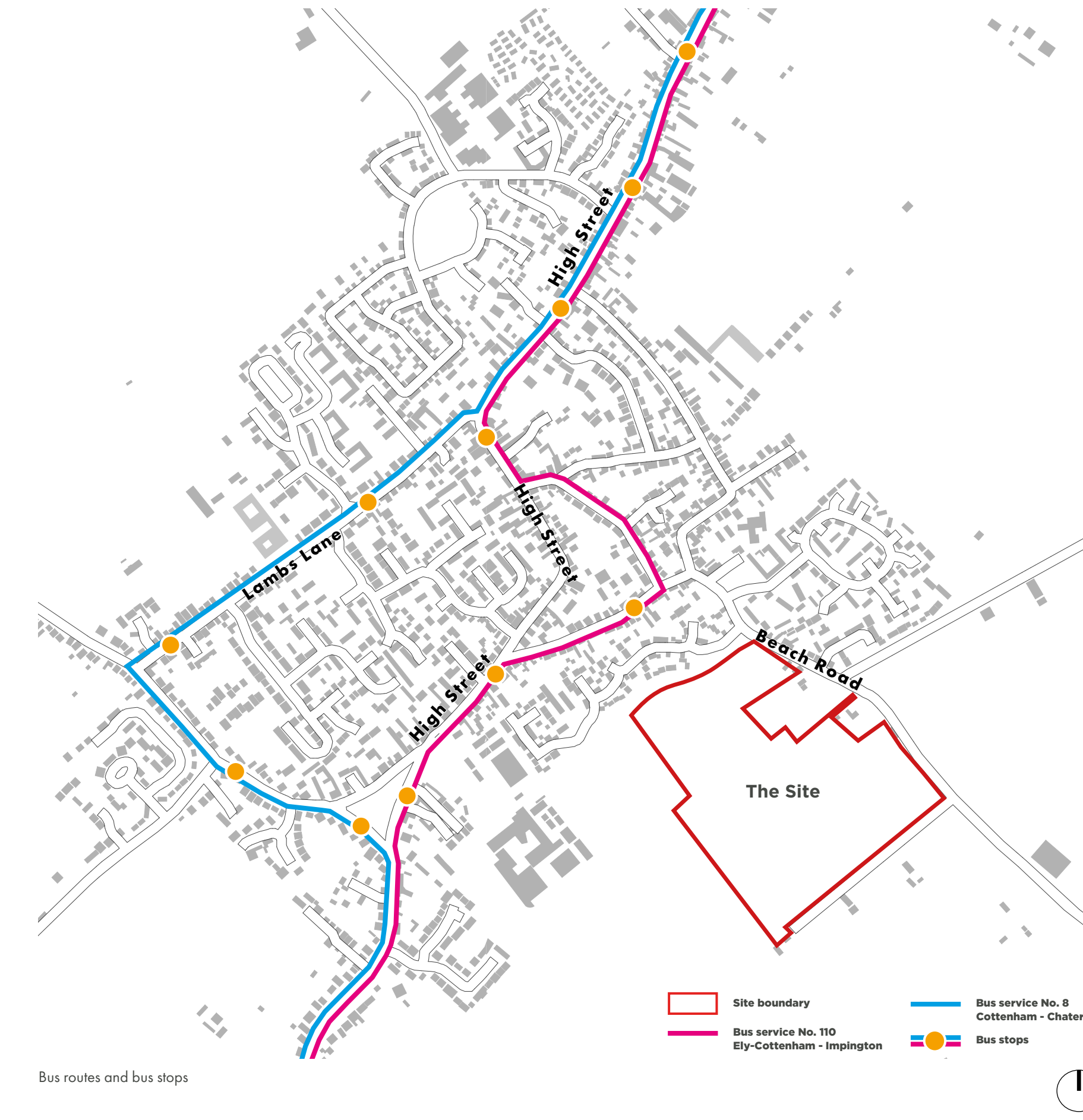
Cottenham is served by a regular local bus services. The 110 Cottenham to Ely service and the No.8 Cambridge to Chatteris service. Both services provide links to neighbouring villages.

The nearest bus stop on Denmark Road is just a 3 minute walk from The Site.

The plan provides details of the strategic and local connections and routes accessible to Cottenham.



Cottenham High Street - No. 8 bus service to Cambridge



## 2.7 LOCAL SERVICES & FACILITIES

Cottenham is one of the largest villages in the area, the historic core of the village is found on either side of the High Street (B1049). The High Street creates a linear or ribbon townscape through the village, with housing punctuated by local services and facilities, particularly to the southern half of the High Street. The village green is also located on the southern end of the High Street. Most of the growth of the village has happened since the 1960's.

Cottenham boasts a wealth of local community services and facilities. The site's location means that new sustainable development can be delivered that is able to take full advantage of the local services and facilities available on its doorstep. New development will maximise the opportunities these services offer and through population growth, help play its role in supporting and maintain these important local amenities for the future.

The services and facilities within Cottenham include:

- **3 supermarkets/convenience stores**
- **News agent**
- **Pubs**
- **Takeaways/restaurants**
- **Estate agent**
- **Numerous independent businesses - Butchers, hairdressers, cafés & bakery....**

In addition to the retail offer, Cottenham also benefits from a number of key community facilities, which include:

- **Secondary school**
- **Primary school**
- **Special education school**
- **Sports centre**
- **Post Office**
- **Pharmacy**
- **GP surgeries**
- **Vets**

All the primary services and facilities are within easy walking and cycling distance of the site. The plan opposite highlights these services. The approximate walking and cycling times to some of the key community services are also highlighted.



1. Cottenham Village College & Centre School



2. Cottenham Primary School



24. Chestnut Nursery School



9. Cottenham CoOp supermarket



10. Premier Express Convenience Store



7. Cottenham Convenience Store and Post Office



4. Cottenham GP Surgery



5. Cottenham Pharmacy



8. Cottenham Library



26. Village Hall



18. Fish & Chip shop & Newman's Barbers shop



17. Building Society & independent Cafe



20. Estate Agent



21. Hairdressers



22. Community Centre / The Coffee Shop

- 1 Cottenham Village College  
The Centre School & Sports Centre  
14 min. walk - 4 min. cycle
- 2 Cottenham Primary School  
17 min. walk - 5 min. cycle
- 3 Firs GP surgery  
4 min. walk - 1 min. cycle
- 4 Cottenham GP surgery  
12 min. walk - 4 min. cycle
- 5 Pharmacy  
10 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 6 Dental Practice  
13 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 7 Post Office/Convenience store  
12 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 8 Library  
8 min. walk - 2 min. cycle
- 9 CoOp supermarket  
9 min. walk - 3 min. cycle



23. Village Vet Practice



11. The Chequers Public House



15. Curry Palace Indian Restaurant

- 10 Premier Express Convenience store  
7 min. walk - 2 min. cycle
- 11 The Chequers PH  
7 min. walk - 2 min. cycle
- 12 Wagon & Horses PH  
9 min. walk - 2 min. cycle
- 13 The Cottenham Club  
9 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 14 The Hop Bind PH  
11 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 15 Curry Palace Indian Resaurant  
11 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 16 Butchers  
7 min. walk - 2 min. cycle
- 17 Building Society / Bakeed Cafe  
8 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 18 Fish & Chip Shop / Barbers Shop  
8 min. walk - 3 min. cycle



19. Independent Sandwich shop and Bakery



14. The Hop Bind Public House



25. King Georges Playing Fields -  
Recreation Ground and Sports Pitches

- 19 Not Just Baguettes - Sandwich shop/Bakery  
13 min. walk - 4 min. cycle
- 20 Estate Agent  
12 min. walk - 4 min. cycle
- 21 Hairdressers  
7 min. walk - 2 min. cycle
- 22 Community Centre / The Coffee Shop  
8 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 23 Village Vet Practice  
8 min. walk - 3 min. cycle
- 24 The Chestnut Nursery  
19 min. walk - 5 min. cycle
- 25 King Georges Playing Fields  
19 min. walk - 5 min. cycle
- 26 Cottenham, Village Hall  
19 min. walk - 5 min. cycle

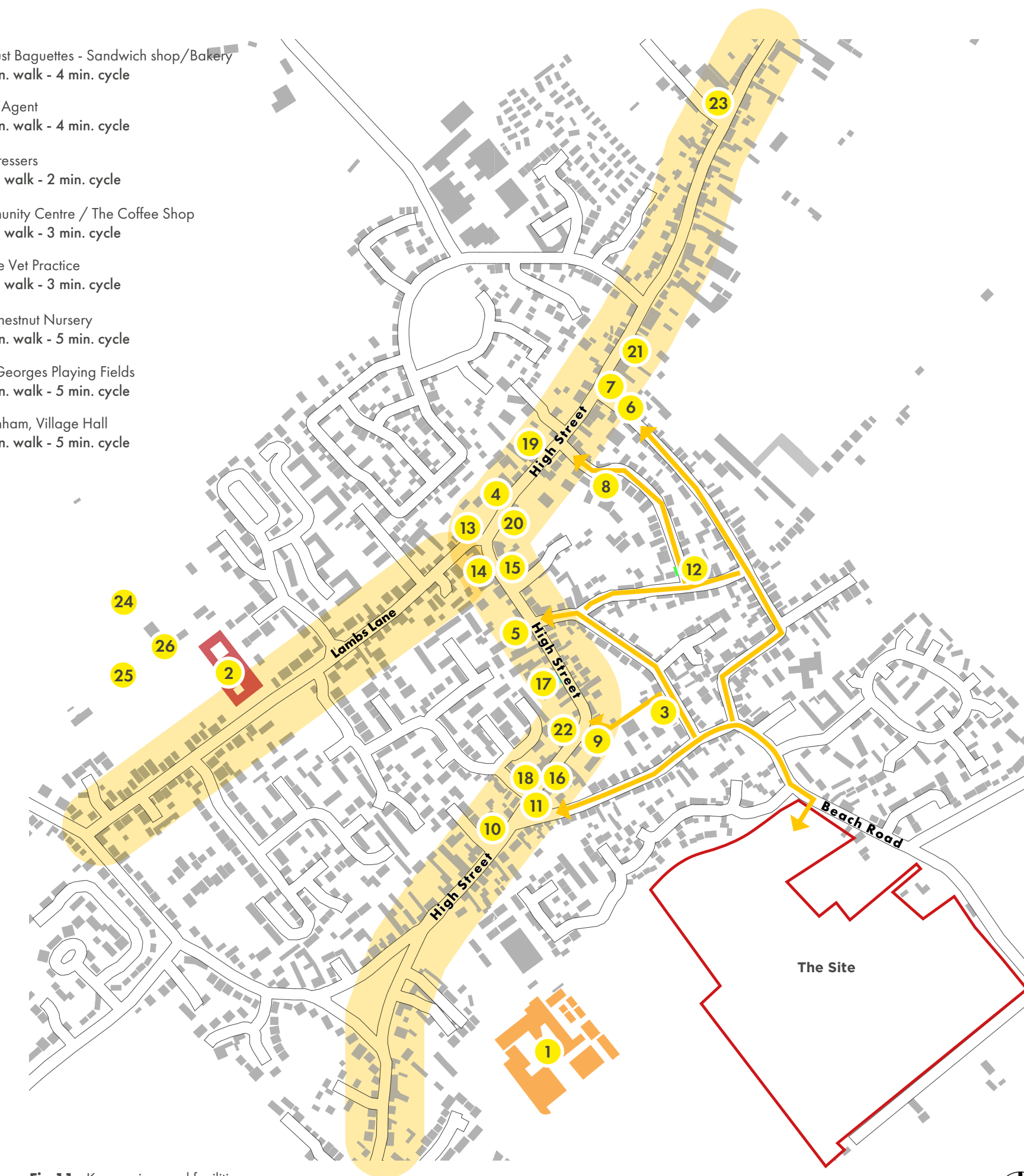


Fig 11: Key services and facilities

## 2.8 BASELINE SITE ANALYSIS

The site itself is flat with the majority of the land comprising of arable fields.

The Site borders the south-eastern edges of the village of Cottenham. A drainage ditch and mature hedgerow planting forms the north-western boundary, with an existing woodland areas forming the boundary to the north-western corner of the site. Beach Road forms along the majority of the north-eastern boundary, with the remainder formed by private paddocks and gardens. To the immediate south of the Site lie medium-sized arable fields interspersed with gappy tree belts and small blocks of woodland.

The site itself is flat with the majority of the land comprising of 2 arable fields. The central portion of the site contains two blocks of neglected orchard. Overhead power lines run north-east to south-west across the centre of the site.



1: Existing farm access into northern field



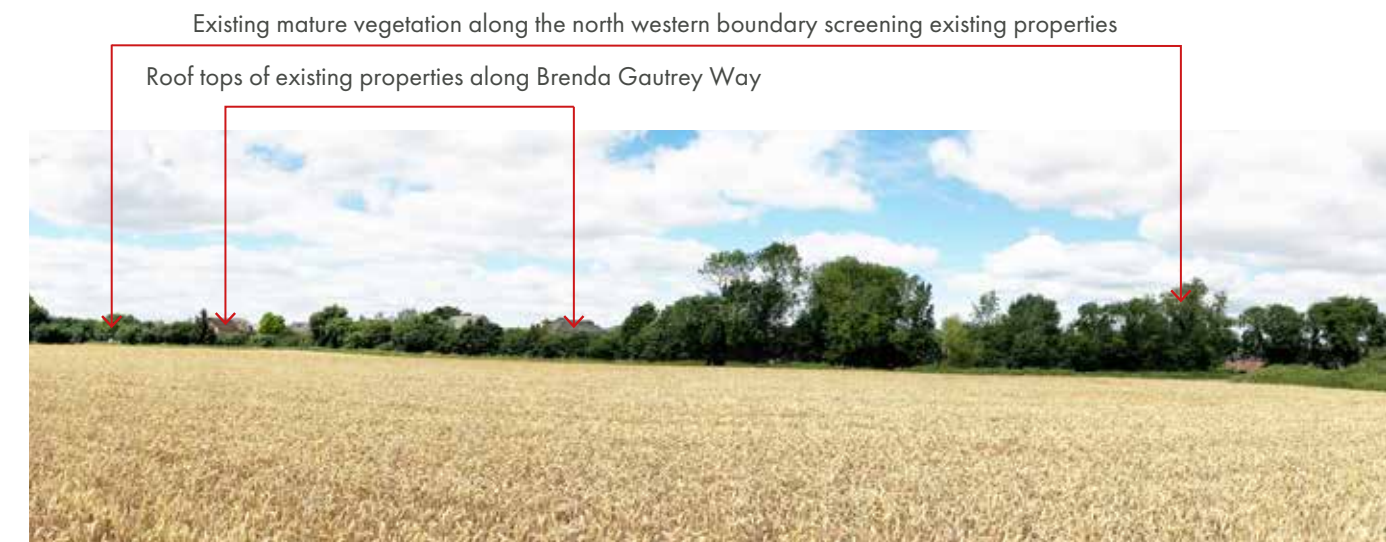
2: Looking north-west along Beach Road and the mature boundary edge.



3: View along the Projected Village Amenity green space and properties on Brenda Gautrey Way



1 View looking north east towards Beach Road.



2 View from the southern boundary looking across towards the existing mature planting along the northern boundary.



3 View looking towards the heavily screened south western site boundary.

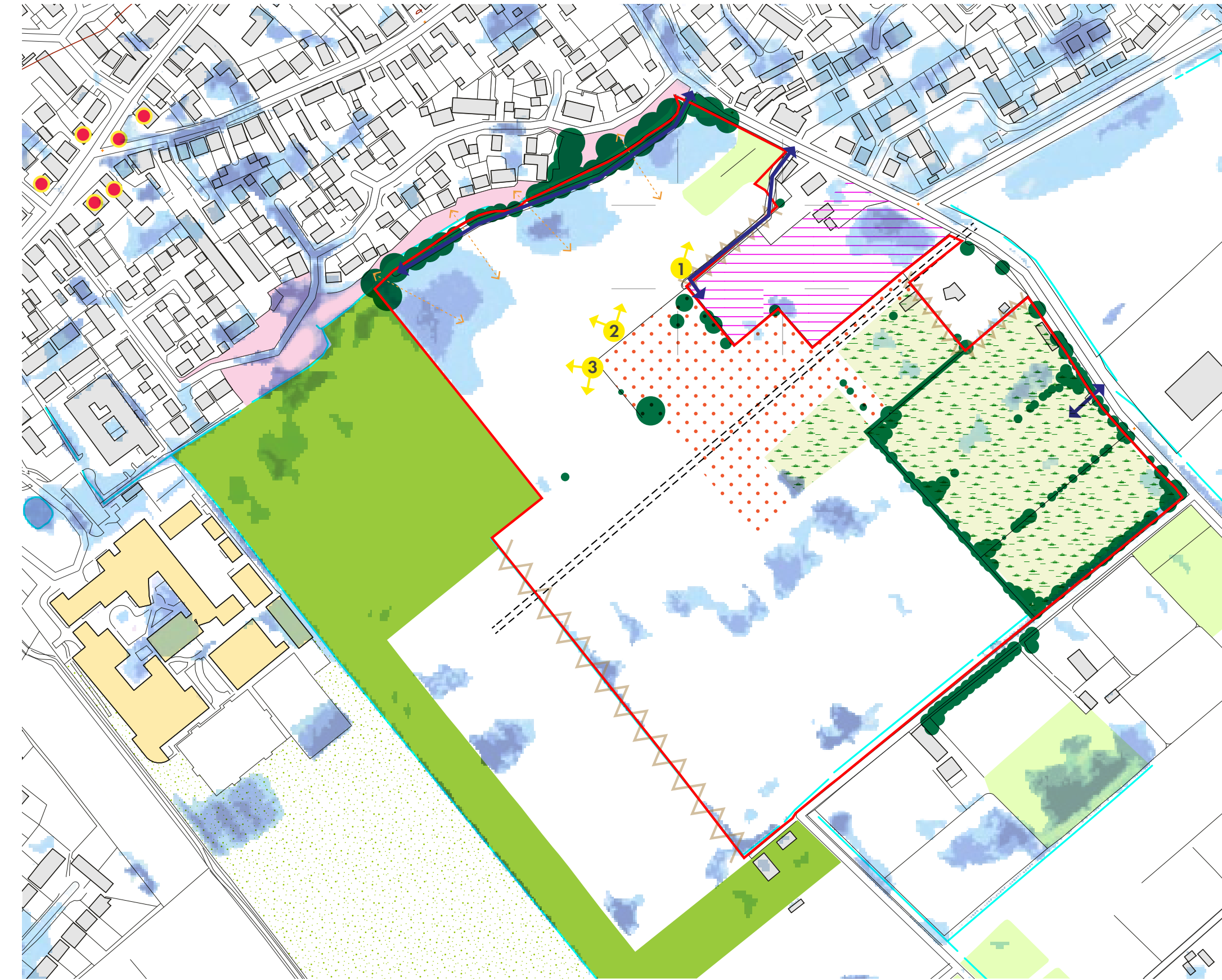


Fig 11: Baseline site analysis

- The Site
- Existing development
- Surface Water Flood Zones
- Existing trees & hedgerows
- Orchard
- Paddocks
- Overhead lines
- Woodland
- Neutral grassland
- Existing field access / track
- Glimpses through to Brenda Gautrey Way
- Sensitive edge
- Protected Village Amenity
- Listed buildings/structures

## 2.9 LANDSCAPE ,VISUAL AND GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

CSA Environmental prepared a Landscape and Visual Overview and Green Belt Assessment for the site and is summarised within the section.

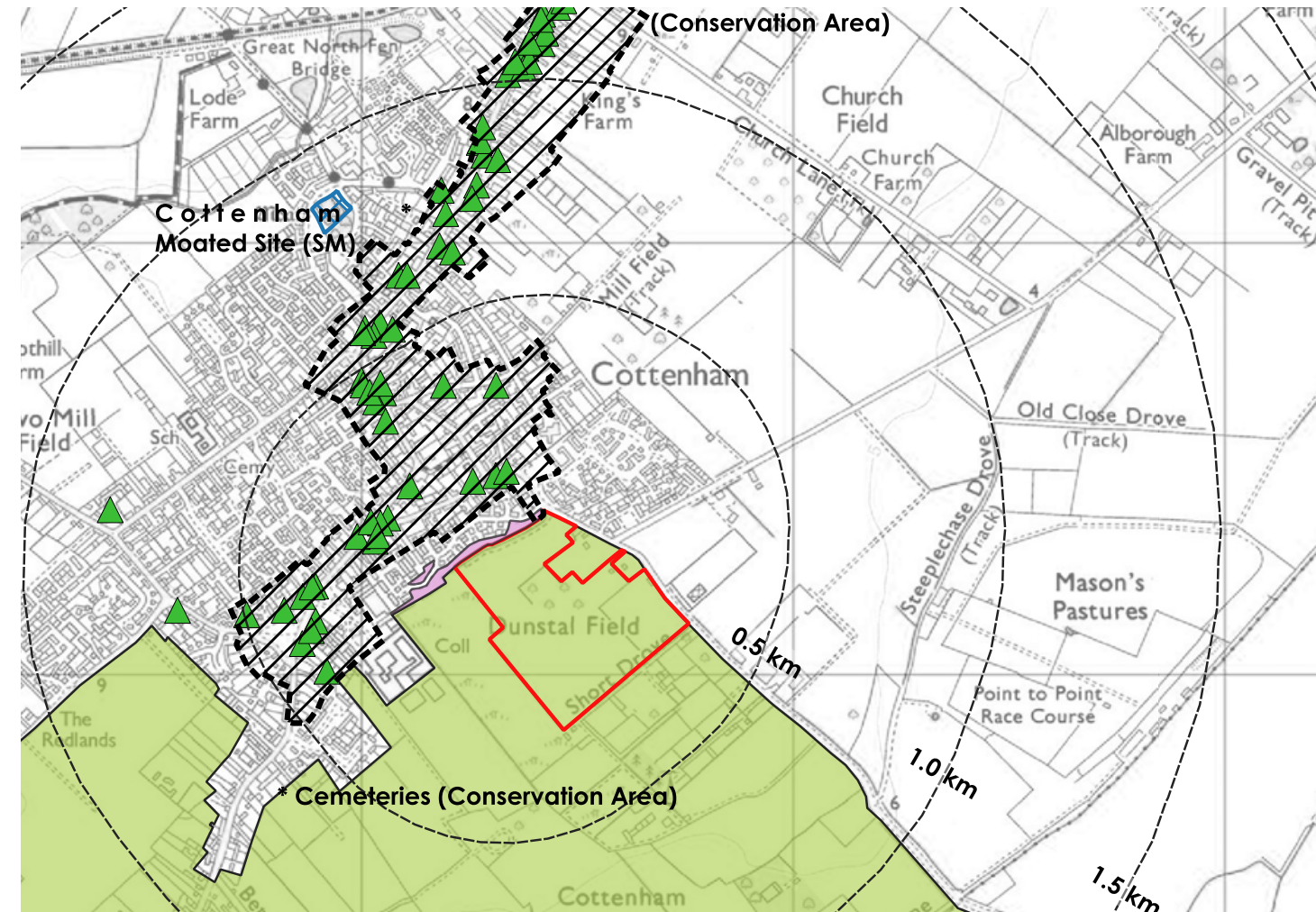
### Site Context and Description

The site is located on the south-eastern edge of Cottenham and is characterised by its agricultural use and surrounding landscape. The site is bordered by arable fields, woodland, and residential areas.

The Site lies on the outer edge of the Cambridge Green Belt. The narrow strip of green open space running immediately to the north west of the Site along Brenda Gautrey Way is designated as a Protected Village Amenity Area

The site contains no statutory designations for landscape quality and is not covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

The designations are highlighted on the plan opposite.



Designations and Local Plan Extract Plan

- Site boundary
- Designations**
- Heritage**
- Conservation Areas
- South Cambridgeshire Adopted Policy**
- Green Belt (Policy S/4)
- Protected Village Amenity Area (Policy NH/14)

### Landscape Character Area

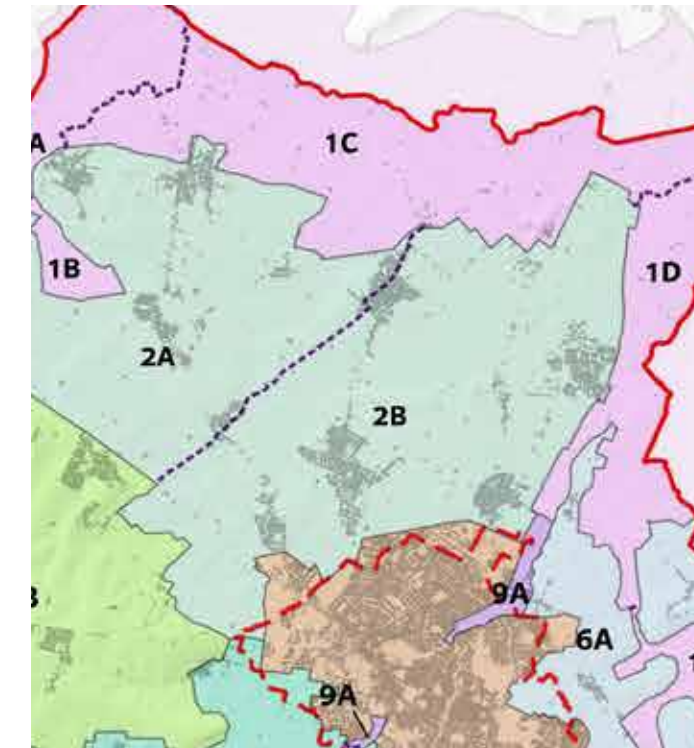
The Site and its surroundings lie within Landscape Character Area ('LCA') 2B: Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands identified in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment. Key characteristics of the LCA are:

- *'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*

The landscape is predominantly arable, with medium-sized fields and occasional waterbodies.

The area has a medium-low landscape quality and medium landscape value.



Extract from Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Types and Areas Plan

- 2: FEN EDGE CLAYLANDS**
- 2A: Longstanton Fen Edge Claylands
- 2B: Cottenham Fen Edge Claylands
- ✱ The Site

### Visibility

The Site is visually well-contained to the north, east and west in middle and long-distance views by built form within Cottenham and by blocks of woodland and belts of vegetation.

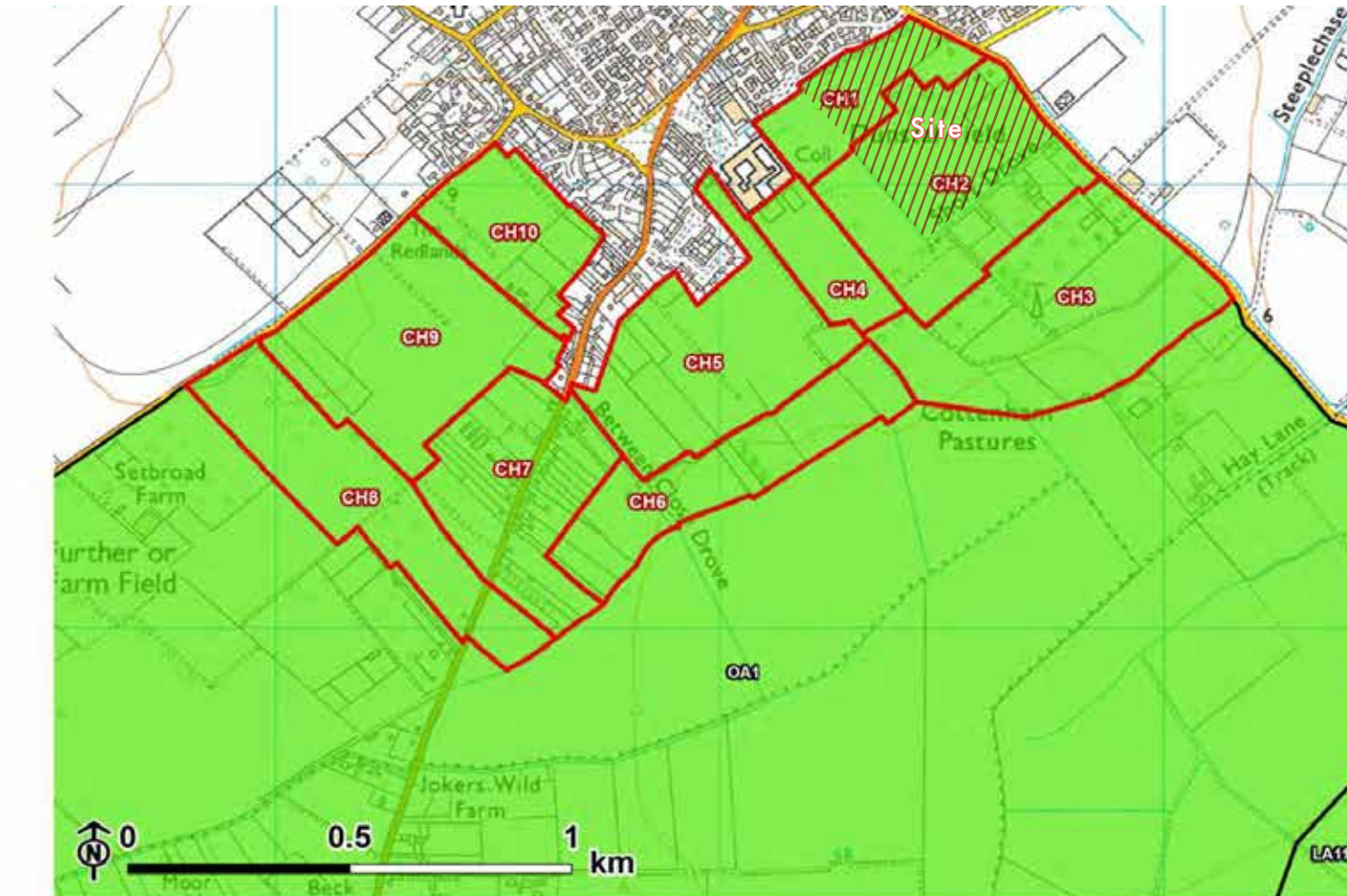
Due to the very limited visual envelope of the proposed development, visual effects on the wider landscape would be very limited.

### The Green Belt

The Cambridgeshire Green Belt surrounds Cambridge, extending around 3 to 5 miles from the edge of the City and incorporates many of South Cambridgeshire's larger and most sustainable villages.

The Green Belt abuts the southern edge of Cottenham. The Site itself forms the northern most extent of the Green Belt, illustrated on the Designations Plan on page 20.

The Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment 2021 considered Parcel CH1 which corresponds to the arable part of Parcel A and the block of woodland to the southwest which lies outside the Site. Parcel CH2 comprises the neglected orchard in the south-eastern corner of Parcel A, along with Parcels B and C and the strip of land south of South Drive, west of Beach Road and east of Cottenham Village College. The Assessment concluded that the overall harm of releasing Parcel CH1 from Green Belt would be Moderate-High; and that of Parcel CH2 would also be Moderate-High.



- Local Authority
- Cottenham parcel
- Neighbouring parcel
- Green Belt



**Updated National Planning Policy Framework**

In December 2024 the NPPF was updated, including an amendment to the Green Belt Policy. This is relevant to this assessment as it post-dates the Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment 2021.

The updated NPPF introduces the concept of the Grey Belt. Annex 2 of the NPPF defines Grey Belt as previously developed land or land which ‘does not strongly contribute’ to Green Belt purposes: a (to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas); b (to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another) or d (to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns) within the NPPF.

In relation to **Purpose a**: To Check the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built-Up Areas, Cottenham does not constitute a Large Built-Up Area. The Site makes No Contribution to this purpose.

In relation to **Purpose b**: To Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging into One Another this purpose is not applicable as Cottenham is a village and not a town. Irrespective of that, the Site only occupies a small part of a wide gap between Cottenham and the hamlet of Landbeach with substantial separating features. Development on the Site will therefore not result in any towns or villages merging. The Site makes No Contribution to this purpose.

In relation to **Purpose d**: To Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns, the Site has some rural character but lies adjacent to

modern residential development on two sides and is some distance from historic parts of Cambridge. The Site makes Little or No Contribution to this purpose.

From our assessment of the Site in relation to Green Belt purposes, we consider that the Site constitutes Grey Belt land, given that it does not contribute strongly to **purpose a, b or d** of Paragraph 143 of the NPPF.

The Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment 2021 sets out the interrelationship between the Cambridge purposes and the former NPPF purposes as follows: Cambridge Purpose 1 corresponds to NPPF Purpose a; Cambridge Purpose 2 corresponds to NPPF Purposes c and d; Cambridge Purpose 3 corresponds to NPPF Purpose b.

The methodology in the 2021 Assessment does not mirror the current guidance in the NPPF. For example, Cambridge Purpose 3 focuses on gaps between Cambridge and surrounding villages and the gaps between villages. This is at odds with the current NPPF which makes it clear that purpose b is to prevent towns merging. The function of the sites in Green Belt purposes need to be assessed in the context of the current NPPF as we have done.

Based on findings of the 2021 Cambridge Green Belt Assessment, as set out in the table below, the Site would not contribute strongly to purposes a, b or d and therefore constitutes Grey Belt Land. The findings of the 2021 assessment are summarised in the table opposite.

<b>Cambridge Purpose 1(a): To Preserve the Unique Character of Cambridge as a Compact, Dynamic City with a Thriving Historic Centre</b>	<b>CH1: Limited/No contribution CH2: Limited/No contribution</b>
<b>Cambridge Purpose 2(c &amp; d): To Maintain and Enhance the Quality of its Setting</b>	<b>CH1: Relatively Limited CH2: Moderate</b>
<b>Cambridge Purpose 3(b): To Prevent Communities in Environs of CV Cambridge from Merging into One Another</b>	<b>CH1: Relatively Limited CH2: Moderate</b>

Summary of findings of the Greater Cambridge Green Belt Assessment 2021

**Conclusion on Development Impact**

The Site borders the village of Cottenham to the north east and northwest. To the immediate south of the Site lie medium-sized arable fields interspersed with intermittent tree cover on the field boundaries and small blocks of woodland in areas that historic mapping shows were occupied by orchards. The wider landscape is mostly composed of larger arable fields arranged geometrically in relation to the hierarchy of fen drainage channels.

The Site lies on quite flat land and is visually well-contained to the north, east and west on account of existing development in Cottenham and by areas of woodland and belts of vegetation in the neighbouring countryside.

We consider that the Site constitutes Grey Belt as it does not contribute strongly to **purpose a, b or d** of the NPPF. Our findings on the Site’s function against these purposes is not inconsistent with the findings of the Cambridge Green Belt Assessment 2021.

Development of the Site would allow the restoration and enhancement of neglected orchards on Site. The vast majority of the mature trees and undergrowth on the Site boundaries have the potential to be retained.

**The Site is capable of accommodating development without resulting in material harm to the surrounding countryside or the objectives and purposes of the wider Cambridge Green Belt.**

**2.10 ECOLOGY**

CSA Environmental have undertaken a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the Site. As part of this PEA, a desk study and field survey of the Site were undertaken in December 2024, including a UK Habitat Classification survey.

No nature conservation designations cover the Site or adjacent land. The Site comprises mostly arable habitat of negligible ecological importance. Habitats with greater ecological interest include neutral grassland, scrub, traditional orchard and a small area of deciduous woodland, as well as the native boundary hedgerows, lines of trees and wet ditches. The traditional orchard, deciduous woodland and native hedgerows are Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance and of significant ecological importance. These habitats should be retained, protected, and wherever possible, enhanced.



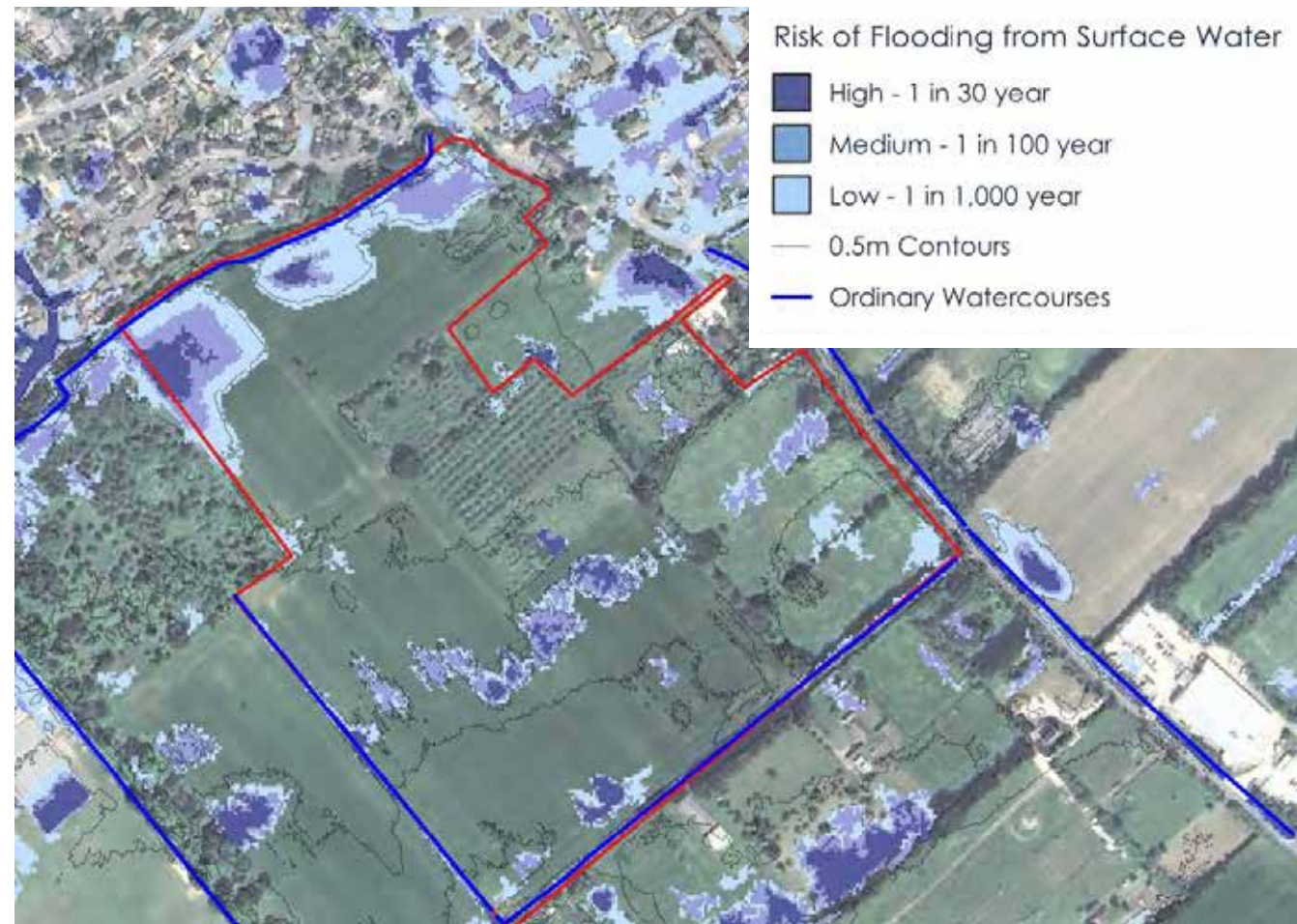
Cottenham within the wider context

## 2.11 DRAINAGE & FLOOD RISK

The site is located in Flood Zone 1 and has been assessed as being a low to moderate risk from all other sources. Surface water flooding within the site is associated with the watercourses located in the vicinity of the site and rain falling directly on the site itself, so appropriate mitigation has been proposed, therefore the site passes the Sequential Test. It is at overall very low or negligible risk of flooding from other sources, subject to confirmation by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment.

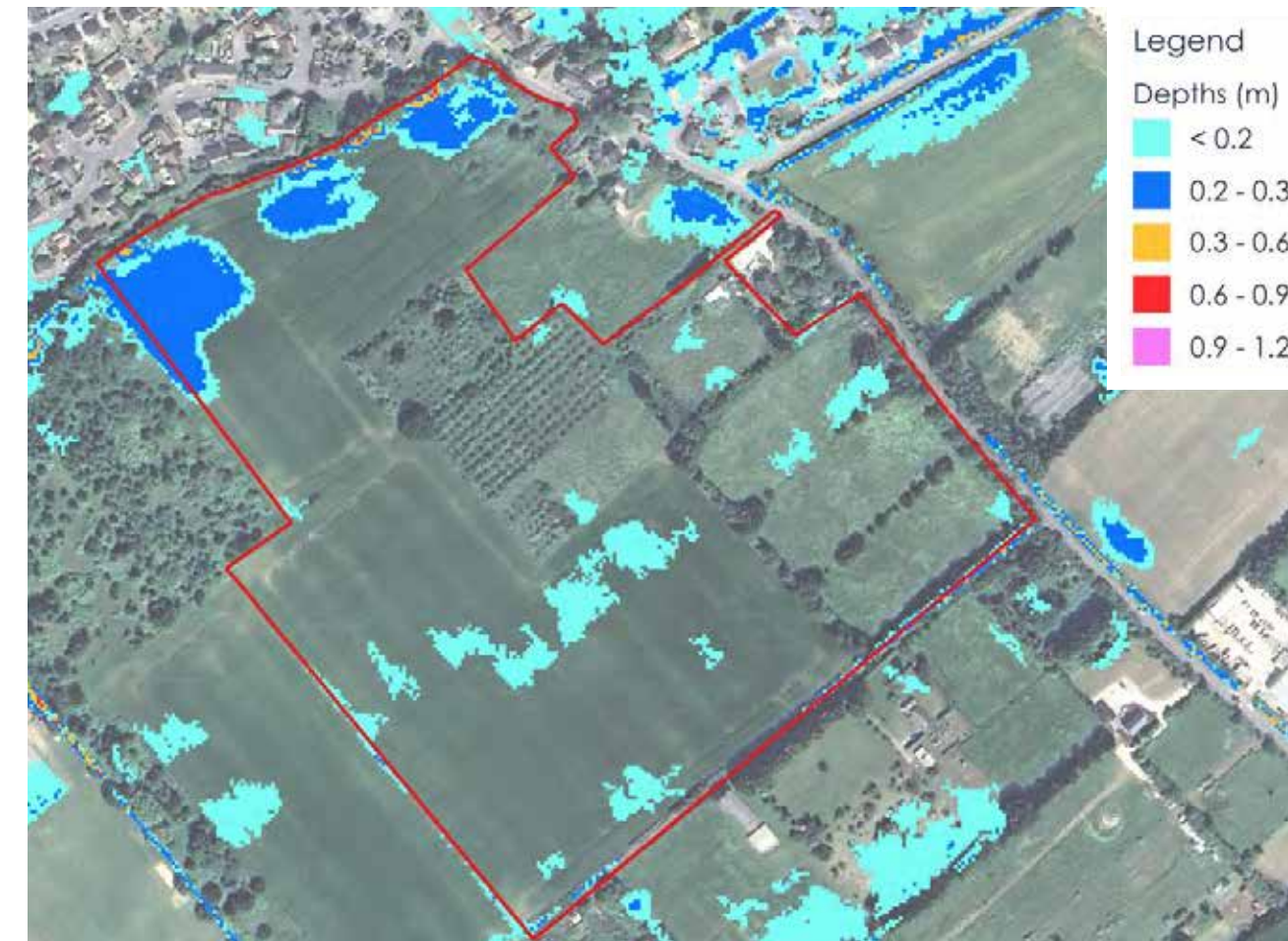
Runoff generated from the development parcels can be feasibly managed using a SuDS-based approach that is cognisant of local conditions and constraints.

Surface water runoff generated from the development is proposed to be managed by two infiltration basins located in the north and the south of the site. The basins have been sized to accommodate the 1 in 100 year + 40% climate change event and provide additional capacity for exceedance events.



Surface water flooding is predicted to be shallow, less than 200mm for much of its extent and not expected to exceed 0.3m in depth.

As shown in the Framework Development Plan, proposed development has been located outside of surface water extents in the northern, southern and western parts of the site as a precaution, but this should be revisited during more detailed assessments.

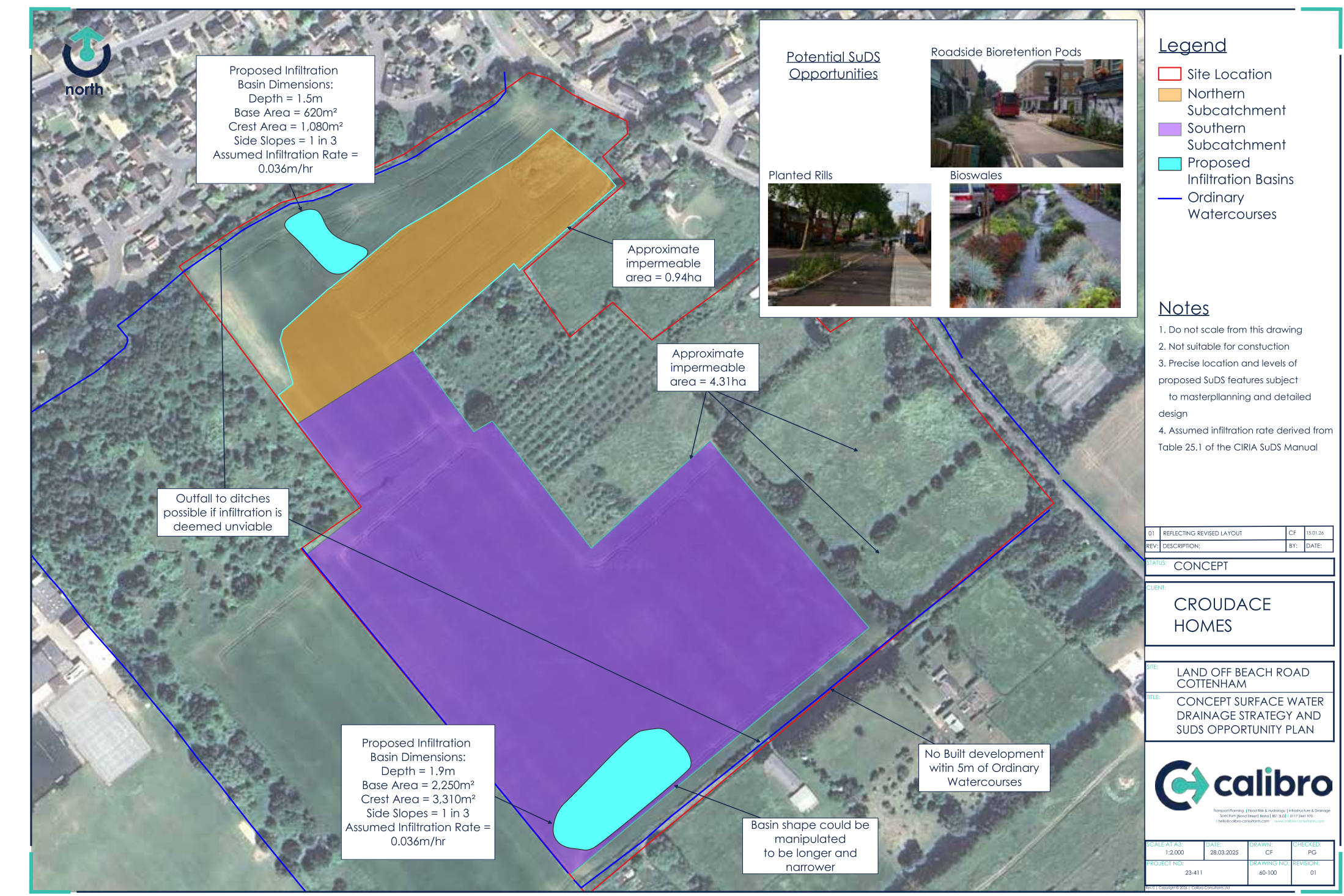


Outside of the watercourses, the only other parts of the site predicted to be inundated are in the centre, where the surface water extents are generated from water falling on the site itself. These areas would therefore be mitigated by the drainage strategy.

As a result of the above, the site has been assessed as being at a Low risk of surface water flooding.

Surface water runoff generated from the development is proposed to be managed by two infiltration basins located in the north and the south of the site. The basins have been sized to accommodate the 1 in 100 year + 40% climate change event and provide additional capacity for exceedance events.

As the masterplan emerges additional SuDS measures will be included within the designs that would provide additional cleansing of water and multiple benefits as well as likely reduce the storage requirement of the strategic storage basins.





## 3. DESIGN

### 3.1 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

**Our vision is to create a new high-quality sustainable place in Cottenham that is landscape, nature and environmentally design led, delivering new energy efficient homes that meet the needs of existing and future residents; with multi-functional open spaces that deliver new spaces to relax and play and the opportunity to create new habitats and biodiversity enhancements, including the restoration of lost fruit orchards.**

The evolving masterplan is set around the principles of an environmental and placemaking design approach, that delivers a development that responds and reflects positively to the context and opportunities of the site and its surroundings.

#### DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Positive identity, creating a high-quality, sustainable and cohesive development with a strong connection and sense of place within the existing community.
- Viable and sustainable place, which contributes positively to the long-term economic and sustainable growth of Cottenham.
- Delivering best practice in development, which is responsive to existing landscape and environmental features of Cottenham and creates new features that continue to enhance the ecological and biodiversity of the village.

The primary design objectives are described below and illustrated on the plan opposite.

- A walkable and cyclable place, which links and integrates with the existing village, providing access to wide range of existing local services and facilities including open space, leisure, primary and secondary education, local retail and public transport in Cottenham.
- Create a healthy and sustainable new living environment, which promotes an active lifestyle and sense of wellbeing.
- New energy efficient homes of a range of type, size and tenure to meet local need, including affordable.



Opportunities plan

### 3.2 ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

The concept masterplan opposite has been produced to provide an idea of how the site could be developed to deliver a sustainable and coherent development that delivers a range of much needed new homes and public open space.

The development is designed around a series of perimeter blocks, creating outward facing development, which frame and overlook areas of public realm such as the streets and open spaces, as well as active frontages and informal surveillance.

A large new area of informal, semi-natural green space is provided as the heart of the development, together with a linear green corridor along the northern boundary. The open spaces will be multi-functional, providing space for leisure and for environmental, ecological and biodiversity enhancements. The new spaces will also accommodate sustainable ponds and basins, children's play spaces and mix of new native planting.

The concept promotes a pedestrian friendly environment, with a network of pedestrian routes and links throughout the development. Materials, textures, landscape and colour will all play their part in defining and reinforcing the pedestrian priority nature of the development. Landscaping features will act as traffic calming measures, in addition to creating a verdant and attractive living environment.

The primary access into the development will be via Beach Road in the north western corner of



the site. A secondary emergency access is also proposed further along Beach Road.

Further details on the design approach for the scheme are provided within this section.

- 1 Primary access proposed from Beach Road with homes setback behind a soft landscaped frontage.
- 2 Pedestrian/cycle connection to existing footpath network linking to village centre, services and facilities.
- 3 Green Corridor - Extend linear Public Open Space along northern edge to create a green corridor with Brenda Gautrey Way
- 4 New Community Orchard will create a new public space for existing and new residents as well as important new habitat and biodiversity enhancements.
- 5 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) - Opportunity to incorporate SuDS as part of an overall landscape and environmental design strategy.

- 6 Informal Public Open Space with new native planting linked by a network of new informal paths.
- 7 Boundary planting to be retained and enhanced where possible to project existing ecological, habitat and biodiversity assets and maintain screening and the green edge character of the site.
- 8 Material and colour palette that reflecting the existing townscape character of the village.
- 9 Secondary access proposed from Beach Road.

Illustrative concept masterplan



New area of open space next to community orchard to include new children's natural play space, planting and seating.

Existing derelict orchard to be restored into new Community Orchard. The restored orchard will provide opportunity for participation by new and existing residents and will contribute to biodiversity.

Linear open space along northern edge including ponds and children's play space

Pedestrian and cycle link from the new open space providing direct links to Cottenham High Street and existing community services and facilities.

Proposed new access and landscaped entrance into development from Beach Road.

New homes will frame and overlook streets, new areas of open space and public realm through the development.

Green spaces creating a verdant and attractive streetscape and views.

Area for SuDS for surface water management and opportunity to create new habitats and biodiversity enhancements.

New and enhanced native planting along boundaries to soften the development edge.

A variety of native meadow grass species together with trees and shrubs would be planted around the walking routes selected for aesthetic appeal and biodiversity benefit.

### 3.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

The landscape strategy is for the new development to be set with a semi-formal, naturalistic landscape, which incorporates Blue/Green corridors (Greenways) with native planting, reflecting the rural character edge of the site and its surroundings.

Existing trees and hedgerows along the boundaries are maintained and enhanced wherever possible. This will provide an immediate landscape setting to the scheme, maintain the visual containment of the site and more importantly maintain these important ecological, habitat and biodiversity assets.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), in the form of ponds are also being considered as part of delivering a sustainable and biodiversity response to long-term water management and climate change.

The landscape strategy for the development will play its part in encouraging a more active and sustainable lifestyle and is also one which is healthy for the environment.

The current illustrative masterplan delivers approximately 6.2 hectares of open spaces, which is in excess of the requirements set out in Policy SC/7.

The open space areas are as follows:

- **Informal open space** = **5.2ha**
- **Community orchard** = **1.0ha**
- **Attenuation ponds** = **0.41ha\***

All areas are approximate only and subject to possible change at the detailed design stage.

\* Excluded from open space calculation.



- The Site
- Informal green space
- Community orchard
- Ponds
- Green Corridors
- Natural children's play space

Landscape framework plan



#### Restored Community Orchard

Provide habitats for various wildlife, including birds, insects and mammals and also enhance soil health. It will also provide a space for community interaction and education.



#### Wildflower and Meadow Planting

A variety of native meadow flowers and grasses supporting insects and pollinators - bees, butterflies, beetles.



#### New Tree Planting

New native tree planting including Oak, Common Beech and Field Maple providing food and nesting opportunities for wildlife.



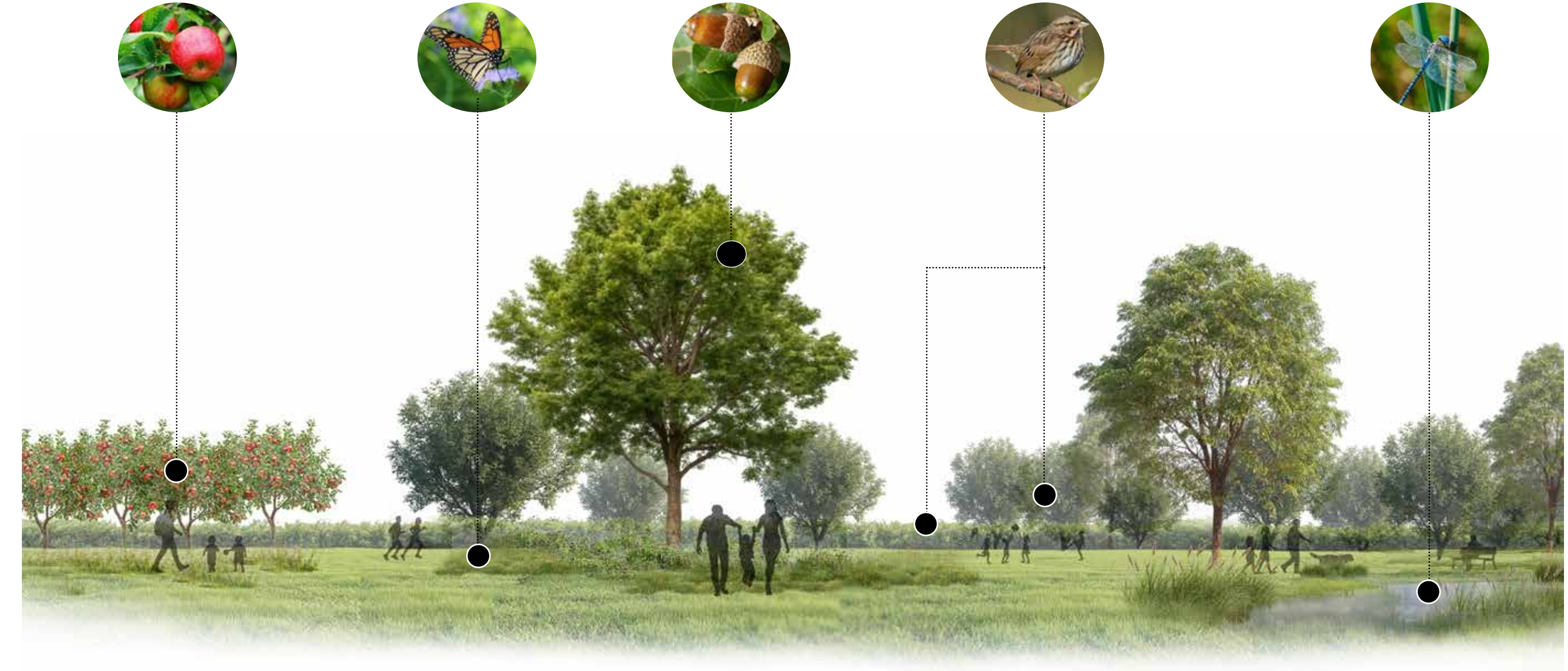
#### Existing Trees and Hedgerows

Retained and enhanced trees and hedgerow protecting existing wildlife habitats.



#### Pond Life

On site attenuation ponds will also create new habitat and biodiversity opportunities supporting amphibians, ground frogs, toads, dragonflies and birds etc.



A biodiverse landscape tapestry.

### 3.4 WORKING WITH NATURE - ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

Being outside is fun and having access to open spaces, nature and wildlife on our doorstep has major benefits to our physical and mental health and sense of wellbeing. The scheme has been designed to deliver a rich, natural environment that's woven through and around the development.

Existing and new landscape features have been incorporated that will benefit and encourage wildlife and strengthen the local ecological and biodiversity eco-systems.

#### PONDS AND BASINS

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in the form of ponds and basins are being considered. Although usually dry for the majority of the time, during periods of wetter weather, ponds provide an environmentally friendly and efficient method for dealing with surface water run off, and the opportunity for creating new habitats and biodiversity and an attractive landscape setting.



#### TREE PLANTING

New native tree planting, including fruit trees will be incorporated throughout the development, within areas of open space and along the streets. Trees can help to manage surface water, benefit wildlife and create an attractive and pleasant environment for everyone.



#### WILDFLOWER AND GRASSLAND PLANTING

Areas of species-rich meadow planting within open spaces will provide for substantial gains in biodiversity and encourage pollinators such as bees, beetles, butterflies and moths.



#### BAT AND BIRD BOXES

Bat and bird boxes will be installed on homes and other locations around the site.



#### COMMUNITY ORCHARD

The development will include the restoration of an existing derelict orchard into a new community orchard, creating a new community space and new habitat and biodiversity opportunities.



#### HEDGEHOG HIGHWAYS

Sadly, hedgehog populations are falling, particularly in rural areas. Simple measures such as gaps and holes in fencing and gates will provide a network of hedgehog highways, allowing them to roam and access spaces to forage for food, build nests and hibernate.



### 3.5 A SPACE TO RELAX AND PLAY - HEALTH AND WELLBEING

This landscape-led development will open up new areas of publicly accessible green spaces that can be enjoyed by everyone.

The theme underpinning the proposal is a healthy and sustainable living environment. The development will provide a variety of attractive semi-natural open spaces for all ages, with the emphasis on nature, wildlife and the creation of new habitats and biodiversity.

The community will be able to partake in a healthy, active lifestyle that facilitates exercise and interaction with wildlife and each other.

Open spaces will complement and connect with the existing network pedestrian routes, encouraging people to walk and cycle to nearby local facilities.

A new network of pedestrian greenway routes will criss-cross the development, providing safe and convenient access throughout the entire development.



Spaces for children to play and have the opportunity for social interaction is an important element in the social, mental and physical development and wellbeing of children. They also play an important role in creating places and fostering a lasting sense of community.

Open spaces within the development will provide a range of play opportunity for children, including 'Play on the Way' and natural play spaces, created using natural materials, promoting imaginative and active play for children of all ages.



Being within walking and cycling distance of Cottenham Sports Centre means residents will be able to enjoy indoor and outdoor fitness and sports facilities.

The open space strategy will encourage and promote wildlife, biodiversity, active lifestyle choices and establish a real sense of community and wellbeing.

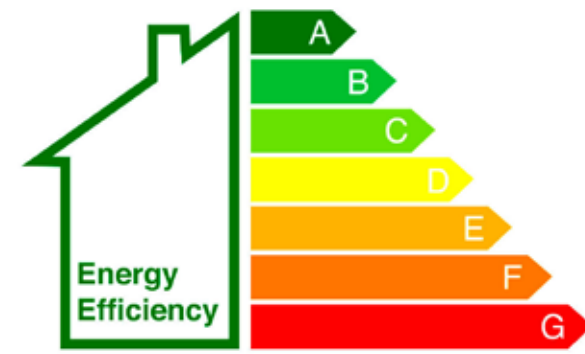


### 3.6 ENERGY EFFICIENT HOMES

Courdace Homes is committed to delivering new homes and communities that incorporate new low carbon technologies. New homes will be designed and built to ensure that the whole development is set on a rapid trajectory towards zero emissions, with all homes built to the **Future Homes Standard**.

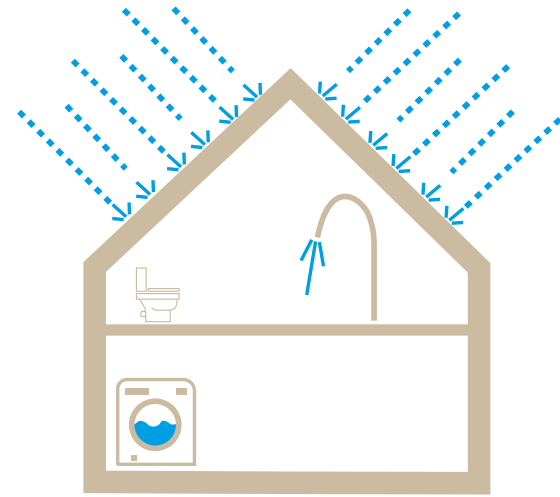
This will minimise the impact of development on our changing climate and significantly reduce energy costs for residents and building owners.

Homes will incorporate the following design features.



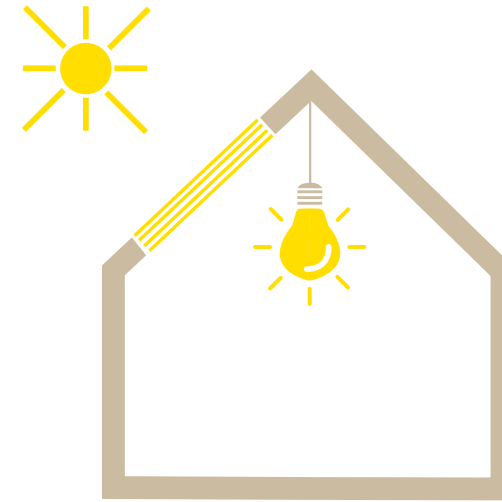
#### ENERGY EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

All electric and water-related appliances, where installed, will be of the highest possible efficiency to further reduce both energy and water consumption within the home.



#### INTEGRATED SOLAR PANELS

Solar photovoltaic panels will appear on homes, and be roof integrated to fit seamlessly into the roofscape. Solar technologies complement the heat pump solution resulting in a properly integrated, long term, sustainable energy supply solution for the community.



#### EV CHARGING

Every new home with a driveway or allocated parking space will have an EV car charging point – this is essential in supporting the rapid transition to a cleaner, more sustainable transport system.

#### THERMALLY EFFICIENT HOMES

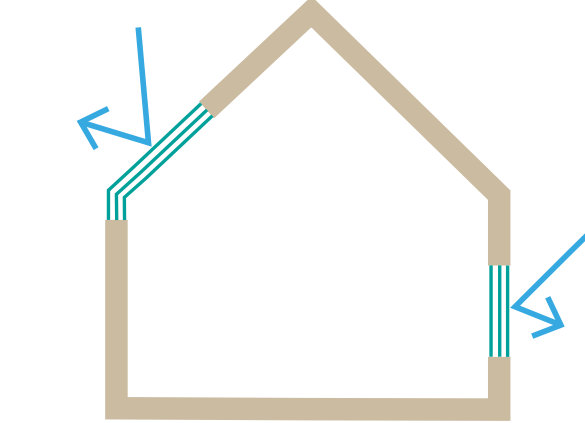
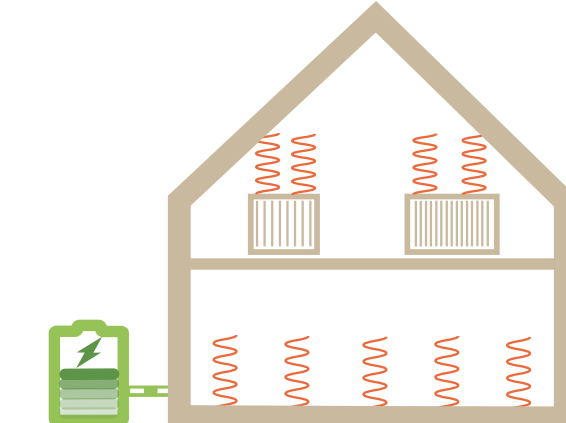
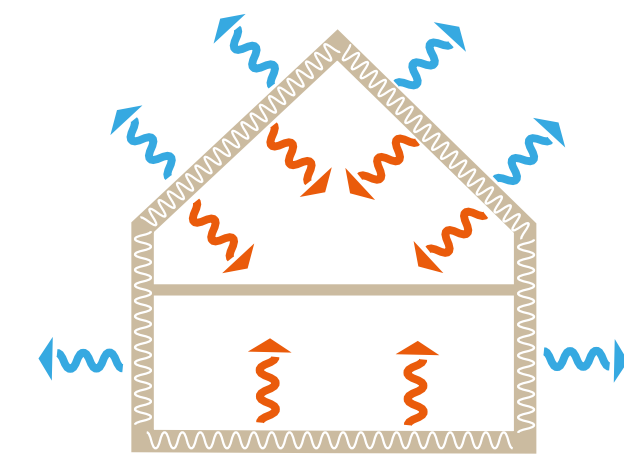
All new homes will be designed and built to minimise heat loss through all construction elements – walls, floors, windows and roofs - minimising energy demands and reducing energy bills for residents.

#### HEAT PUMPS

Air source heat pumps will provide heat and hot water and are a highly efficient, low carbon technology for new buildings. Orders of magnitude more efficient than gas boilers, they will benefit from a de-carbonising grid, are well suited to thermally efficient homes, and mean the dwellings will not need to be retrofitted to meet climate targets in the future.

#### HIGH PERFORMANCE WINDOWS

Windows and doors will be fitted with high performance glazing and seals, delivering high thermal performance and reducing external noise transmission into homes.



## 4. CONCLUSION

## 4.1 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSALS

Through this Vision Document it has been demonstrated that the site can accommodate new housing in an environmentally sensitive, sustainable and responsible manor. This scheme can deliver up to 200 new homes, offering opportunities across a range of house types, sizes and tenures including an appropriate proportion of affordable housing and open space.

These initial proposals have been derived from an approach including analysis, assessment and best practice. The proposals would deliver new high-quality homes, open space and biodiversity enhancements in a sustainable and deliverable location; with access to essential local services and facilities, employment, public transport, education and leisure.

The primary objective is to create a long-lasting environmentally sustainable place by:

- **Designing responsively and in context to the landscape setting of the site and its surroundings.**
- **Designing with local ecology in mind to maintain and enhance the relationship between development and nature.**
- **Provides access to essential local services, facilities and public transport - all within walking and cycling distance of the site.**
- **Delivering a range of much needed high-quality housing for all ages, in a highly sustainable location.**
- **New development of an appropriate scale that is available, sustainable, and deliverable.**

## COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT BENEFITS WOULD INCLUDE:



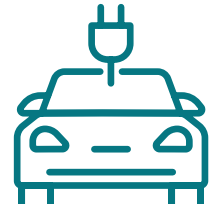
Circa **200** new high quality, energy efficient homes



New **Affordable** homes for the community



Modern, **energy efficient low carbon** homes



**EV car charging** to new homes



New **habitat and biodiversity** across the site, including restored community orchard



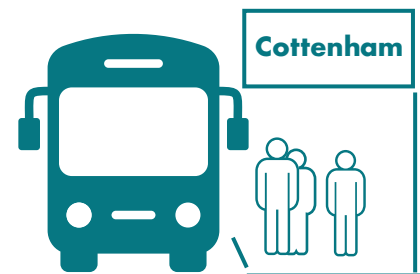
Links to existing **Public Right of Way** and wider countryside



New area of **public open spaces & blue/green infrastructure**



**Within walking and cycling distance** of school and local services and facilities



**Access to public transport**



**On-site children's play space**





1A Clifton Court, Clifton Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB1 7BN