

**SC5A/SCDC**



Examination into the Soundness of the  
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

**Matter SC5A – Delivering High Quality Homes –  
Residential Site Allocations**

South Cambridgeshire District Council

September 2016



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## Introduction

1. This statement sets out the Council's response in relation to the Inspectors' Matter SC5A relating to the delivery of high quality homes on residential site allocations.
2. All the documents referred to in this statement are listed in Appendix 1, and examination library document reference numbers are used throughout the statement for convenience.
3. As a result of considering the Inspectors' questions, the Council is suggesting a modification to policy H/1 in Chapter 7: Delivering High Quality Homes of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. This is referred to in the response to question SC5A.1 and also listed in Appendix 2.

## Overview

4. The spatial development strategy for Greater Cambridge<sup>1</sup> focuses jobs and homes in and close to Cambridge through a sustainable development sequence. This sequence maximises use of land within and on the edge of Cambridge compatible with protecting the Green Belt and then in new settlements linked to Cambridge by sustainable transport and finally in the larger and more sustainable villages that have the best levels of services and facilities and accessibility by public transport and cycle to Cambridge and to a lesser extent to a market town.
5. In considering village site options, our choice was guided by the emphasis in the NPPF<sup>2</sup> on achieving sustainable development, which means that the search for site options started at the most sustainable village locations, there being no need to look further down the development sequence for site options than necessary to provide sufficient capacity and choice and to take account of Parish Council led proposals in Great and Little Abington and Graveley where there was clear evidence of local support for development. Many of our larger and more sustainable villages are located in or on the edge of the Green Belt and our assessment of site options also took account of their impact on Green Belt purposes.
6. A call for sites was issued in 2011. All qualifying sites were thoroughly assessed as were qualifying sites arising from representations submitted to the 2012 Issues and Options consultation<sup>3</sup> and the 2013 Issues and Options 2 consultation<sup>4</sup>. A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment of sites was published in 2012 and updated in 2013<sup>5</sup>. A summary of the outcome of the assessment incorporating key points from the Sustainability Appraisal Matrix of each site was used to help identify the most sustainable development sites for inclusion as site options in the Issues and Options

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<sup>1</sup> See the Council's Matter 2 statement

<sup>2</sup> RD/NP/010 paragraph 151

<sup>3</sup> RD/LP/030

<sup>4</sup> RD/LP/050

<sup>5</sup> RD/Strat/120

consultations<sup>6</sup>. The Audit Trail draws together how the Council has considered proposed housing development sites and the outcome of consultation<sup>7</sup>.

### **SC5A.1 - Site Reference: H/1:a-Dales Manor Business Park, Sawston**

#### **SC5A.1.i**

**Would the proposed vehicular access to the site from Wakelin Avenue provide the most appropriate arrangement in terms of highway/traffic considerations?**

7. Yes, the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment<sup>8</sup> notes that a junction located on Wakelin Avenue would be acceptable to the Highway Authority. Such an arrangement will allow access to this residential development through an existing residential area rather than through an existing Business Park, some of which will remain in operation over the long term. The existing vehicular access via Grove Road to Babraham Road through the Business Park will be retained. Grove Road is wider than Wakelin Avenue and provides direct access to the site and to the site of the proposed Cambridge City football ground to the north-west. It is also the case that Grove Road is not an adopted public highway and so the deliverability of a housing development relying on it would not be certain as the cost of gaining access rights may affect the viability of development.

#### **SC5A.1.ii**

**Would the existing tree belt located to the rear of Broadmeadows / Fairfields be retained if the proposed allocation was to proceed?**

8. The Concept Masterplans submitted by the promoter Salmon Harvester Properties<sup>9</sup> show the retention of the existing tree belt. This approach accords with Local Plan policy HQ/1 Design Principles criteria a), b), c), and m) which require development to respond to its surroundings, enhance local character, and protect and enhance the natural environment. This approach also accords with policies NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character and NH/4 Biodiversity which require new development to respect, retain, restore, or enhance local character and biodiversity.
9. These policies would apply to any development proposals even if the existing tree belt were to have already been removed by the landowner.
10. The Council would nevertheless support a proposed modification to policy H/1a to provide greater certainty regarding the future of the tree belt as follows:  
Add an additional development requirement bullet:
- **Retention of the tree belt and hedges on the south-west part of the site except as required to provide for access**

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<sup>6</sup> RD/Sub/SC/060 Annex B Summary Assessments of Sites for Housing, Mixed Use Development, Employment and Retail

<sup>7</sup> RD/Sub/SC/060 Annex A Chapters 2 and 7, Appendices 2, 3, and 8.

<sup>8</sup> RD/Strat/120 Appendix 7ii site 312

<sup>9</sup> Salmon Harvester (18295) rep 60404

**SC5A.1.iii**

**What, if any, would be the implications in terms of developing part of the site for residential purposes if Cambridge City FC relocates to Sawston?**

11. No significant implications are anticipated. Football grounds are often located within or adjoining residential areas. Local examples include Cambridge United in a long established part of Cambridge, and the new St Neots FC ground located in the centre of the recently developed Loves Farm residential development in St Neots<sup>10</sup>.
12. Planning Permission was granted for the development of the stadium in June 2015<sup>11</sup> subject to conditions controlling hours and days of use and other matters and a s106 agreement. The proposal includes a stadium for up to 3,000 spectators and 500 car parking spaces although average attendance in their current league is 338 per game. The application was supported by a large number of studies and reports including: external lighting, noise, transport, a travel plan, car boot sales traffic, coach tracking, transport modelling, trip distribution data, and an event management plan. The Council's Environmental Health Officer had no in-principle objections to the development in relation to existing residential areas or in regard to the proposed Local Plan residential site allocation. The Highways Authority was satisfied that the combined traffic flows from the development and the residential allocation were acceptable given that peak flows for each would occur at different times of the day.

**SC5A.1.iv**

**Is the housing trajectory for the site as indicated in Figure 3 of the Plan realistic?**

13. The proposed housing trajectory for the site in Figure 3 is out of date. Proposed Modification PM/SC/2/U<sup>12</sup> of December 2015 proposes the deletion of Figure 3 because it is now out of date in regard to a number of sites including this one. It is proposed instead that the Council will utilise the updated trajectory published annually in the Council's Annual Monitoring Report<sup>13</sup>.
14. The latest housing trajectory (November 2015) was prepared in consultation with the owners of the site, takes account of leasehold interests, and anticipates first completions in 2018/2019 with the site development being complete by 2022/2023. The housing trajectory is being reviewed and will be included in the Annual Monitoring Report to be published in December 2016.

**SC5A.1.v**

**Is the location of the site within the setting of the Grade II\* listed Pampisford Hall?**

15. No. it is separated from it by extensive arable fields some with hedges, a wood, the busy A505 with its associated hedgerows and buffer landscaping and the more modern part of the Dales Manor Business Park which is not included in the allocation. The two sites are around 2,600m apart as the crow flies and 3,600m apart by road.

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<sup>10</sup> [http://www.ourlovesfarm.co.uk/Groups/194902/Loves\\_Farm/St\\_Neots\\_Town\\_FC/St\\_Neots\\_Town\\_FC.aspx](http://www.ourlovesfarm.co.uk/Groups/194902/Loves_Farm/St_Neots_Town_FC/St_Neots_Town_FC.aspx)

<sup>11</sup> RD/CR/630 Planning Committee June 2014, report for planning application S/2239/13/FL

<sup>12</sup> RD/MC/100

<sup>13</sup> RD/AD/460 Table SC1a and text at page 163

16. The Highways Authority have not indicated that development of the site allocations in Sawston would result in any requirement to widen the High Street north of its junction with the A505 opposite Pampisford Hall. It can be noted that this junction was not identified as a key Sawston junction whose traffic capacity was modelled in the Sawston Transport Modelling technical note 2014<sup>14</sup>.

#### **SC5A.1.vi**

#### **Does the site represent a sustainable location in terms of its proximity to local facilities and services, and accessibility to sustainable modes of transport?**

17. Sawston is one of the largest and most sustainable villages in the District<sup>15</sup> and is located south of Cambridge close to a number of successful business and science parks. It is a suitable location for housing development being classified as a Rural Centre in existing plans and in the submission Local Plan. Development here forms an important part of the spatial strategy of the Local Plan which also provides for growth on the edge of Cambridge and in new settlements to the north and west of Cambridge. Sawston has a 20 minute bus service to Cambridge (the Citi 7), a secondary school, two primary schools and a range of shops and services<sup>16</sup>. The site was identified as having development potential for housing development through the SHLAA and SA processes and included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan as one of the better site options to meet the development strategy.
18. The site lies approximately 800 metres from the closest bus stops<sup>17</sup>, 830 metres from the closest Primary School, and 1,300 metres from the Secondary School and the shops and services in the village centre. The Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (2007), states that Walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes' (up to about 800 m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. However, this is not an upper limit and Planning Policy Guidance 13 Transport<sup>18</sup>, states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2 km (note that PPG 13 was withdrawn by Government in 2012 and replaced by the NPPF which does not provide such detail but its guidance remains relevant).
19. These distances are well within the 5km distance considered to be practical for cycling<sup>19</sup>. Scope also exists to create a quiet cycle and pedestrian route to the village centre through the proposed residential site allocation to the south of Babraham Road. National Cycle Network Route 11 which runs from Essex up to Kings Lynn in

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<sup>14</sup> RD/H/050

<sup>15</sup> RD/Strat/240 Village Classification Report pages 8 and 9

<sup>16</sup> RD/Strat/250 Village Services and Facilities Study from page 575

<sup>17</sup> The closest bus stop providing services to the Cambridge area is located at Queensway (800m from the site). Go Whippet bus 7A stops at Babraham Park and Ride site before going onto Cambridge Rail Station. The Citi 7, operated by Stagecoach stops at destinations including Hills Road and Cambridge Rail Station. Each service has a 20 minute frequency, and as a result there is a 10 minute frequency for services into Cambridge Rail Station.

<sup>18</sup> RD/Gov/240

<sup>19</sup> RD/T/093 Local Transport Plan page 4-32

Norfolk is located under 1km away from the site and connects with the segregated route beside the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway running into Cambridge.

20. It is inevitable that development on the edge of our larger villages such as Sawston will be some distance from the village centre, but that the services and facilities available are better than those available in smaller 'Group Villages' where the village edge may be closer but the services and facilities not as good.

#### **SC5A.1.vii**

#### **Would the allocation result in the unacceptable loss of employment land in this location?**

21. No. The Councils' Matter 4 statement at paragraph 25 states that the land allocated for economic development in the Plans will meet the need for all foreseeable types of economic development and at paragraph 35 notes that the Council has more than a sufficient and flexible supply of employment land to meet needs during the plan period. The Land Supply summary in Appendix 5 of the Council's Matter 4 statement took account of the loss of land and floorspace from this site. The South Cambridgeshire Annual Monitoring Report January 2016<sup>20</sup> records at Figure 4.42 that there was 83.89 ha of employment land available with planning permission in the district at that time, much more than the 9 ha of employment land which will be lost through the redevelopment of this site.
22. Much of the site is vacant and the remainder provides basic floorspace where employment densities are relatively low. The most modern part of the Business Park is not included in the allocation and will be retained in employment use. Vacant parts of the site have been marketed for redevelopment since 2008 but there has been insufficient market interest to allow development to be brought forward.
23. Sawston is located close to a number of very significant employment areas located to the south of Cambridge including Granta Park (3.5 km), the Babraham Institute (2 km), the Wellcome Trust Genome Campus (5.5 km), and the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (5.5km), measured as the crow flies. There is also a large employment site with capacity to accommodate further B2/B8 uses on the former Spicers site known as Sawston Business Park to the west of the village<sup>21</sup>.
24. It is also the case that the development requirements section of the policy requires that land bounded by East Way, Middle Way and Grove Road adjoining the part of the Business Park which will remain in operation, should be developed to provide light industrial and office employment in use class B1.

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<sup>20</sup> RD/AD/470

<sup>21</sup> RD/E/240 June 2016 Marketing brochure:

<http://www.bidwells.co.uk/assets/properties/commercial/pdfs/256-4684-1.pdf>

**SC5A.1.viii**

**Should the development requirements also refer to the need for a land contamination report**

25. Such a reference is unnecessary because the Local Plan must be read as a whole and policy SC/12 'Contaminated Land,' states that where land is suspected of contamination the Council will require the developers to submit a report on the extent of contamination and any possible risks, and development will only be permitted where the land can be made suitable for the proposed use. Nevertheless such a reference could be added if the Inspector would consider it helpful in relation to both this site and to the Gamlingay site H/1:f.

**SC5A.1.ix**

**Could the impacts on the existing physical, social and educational infrastructure in Sawston as a consequence of the development of the site be adequately mitigated?**

26. A transport assessment for Sawston<sup>22</sup> has been carried out to test the impacts of the proposed housing sites on the main junctions in the vicinity to provide part of the evidence base for the plan. The study was commissioned by the County Council as the Highway Authority on our behalf and no objections to the allocation has been made by the County Council. The level of delay that is predicted at the A1301/Mill Lane junction (on the west side of Sawston) with proposed development traffic does not greatly increase from current use. Delays at the A1301 / Cambridge Road junction (the northern entrance to the village) are not forecast to significantly increase from current use, with the exception of traffic turning right out of Sawston from Cambridge Road to the A1301 in the AM peak. The level of delay may be less in practice given that the junction with the A1301 to the south at Mill Lane (on the west side of Sawston) is operating within capacity.
27. The level of delay forecast at the Cambridge Road/Babraham Road/Hillside/New Road signalised junction in the centre of Sawston is likely to be significant for the Babraham Road arm in both AM and PM peaks, as well as Hillside in the PM peak with the addition of the development traffic. However there is scope for utilising the current road layout with revisions made to the signal timings and phasing to optimise the operation of the junction. Road widening to increase flare lengths may also be possible. While mitigation will be necessary to address the impacts of the development, there are potential measures available that would provide relief to the traffic movements.
28. With development, the junction between High Street, Babraham and the A1307 shows some significant increases in delay, particularly turning on to the A1307 in both the AM and PM peaks. While there are increases in delay, the relatively low flow levels at this junction mean that the length of queue forecast does not significantly increase.
29. Overall the assessment finds that a number of potential mitigation measures may be feasible to help reduce the impacts of development. Particular attention will need to be paid to the signal controlled junction at Babraham Road/Cambridge Road in the

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<sup>22</sup> RD/H/050 Sawston Transport Modelling

village centre to effectively provide capacity for both vehicular and pedestrian movements. The response to question SC5A.1.iii notes that peak traffic flows from the residential allocations and the new football stadia fall at different times of the day and were acceptable.

30. Education impacts are considered to be capable of mitigation and the application of policies SC/4 'Meeting Community Needs' and TI/9 'Education', will ensure that additional school capacity is provided in a suitable way and when it is needed. During the preparation of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment<sup>23</sup> the County Council education officers advised that: *"It is likely that that the impact of these developments (H/1a, H/1b), and H/1c) could be effectively mitigated either within existing education provision, or through securing additional capacity within Sawston. Although there is no surplus capacity in both local primary schools, there is potential for expansion of one or both of these schools. There is currently capacity at Sawston Village College which would help mitigate the impact of some development within its catchment area. However, increased demographic pressure towards the end of the decade will mean that some addition capacity may be required, depending on the impact of development allocations and demographic changes within the catchment. There is likely to be capacity to work with the school to explore approaches for increasing capacity at the village college to mitigate the impact of these developments. This would need to be considered as part of wider local development policies and requirements"*. Policy H/1 requires all sites to make appropriate financial contributions to any necessary additional infrastructure requirements, including towards additional capacity in local schools.
31. During the preparation of the SHLAA the NHS advised that there was a medical practice and pharmacy in Sawston with spare capacity.
32. The development of the new site for Cambridge City FC will add additional open space, function, conference and meeting rooms and sporting facilities available for use by the public close to the housing allocation.

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<sup>23</sup> RD/Strat/120 Appendix 7ii site 312

**SC5A.2 Site Reference H/1:b-Land North of Babraham Road, Sawston**

**SC5A.2.i**

**Does the site represent a sustainable location in terms of its proximity to local facilities and services, and accessibility to sustainable modes of transport?**

33. Sawston is one of the largest and most sustainable villages in the District and is located south of Cambridge close to a number of successful business and science parks. Development here forms an important part of the spatial strategy of the Local Plan which also provides for growth on the edge of Cambridge and in new settlements to the north and west of Cambridge. Sawston has a 20 minute bus service to Cambridge (the Citi 7), a secondary school, two primary schools and a range of shops and services. The site was identified as having development potential for housing development through the SHLAA and SA processes and included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan as one of the better site options to meet the development strategy.
34. The site lies approximately 800 metres from the closest bus stops<sup>24</sup>, 400 metres from the closest Primary School, and 1,300 metres from the Secondary School and the shops and services in the village centre. The Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (2007), states that Walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes' (up to about 800 m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. However, this is not an upper limit and Planning Policy Guidance 13 Transport, states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2 km (note that PPG 13 has been withdrawn by Government in 2012 and replaced by the NPPF which does not provide such detail but its guidance remains relevant).
35. These distances are well within the 5km distance considered to be practical for cycling<sup>25</sup>. Scope also exists to create a quiet cycle and pedestrian route to the village centre through the proposed residential site allocation to the south of Babraham Road. National Cycle Network Route 11 which runs from Essex up to Kings Lynn in Norfolk is located under 1km away from the site and connects with the segregated route beside the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway running into Cambridge.
36. It is inevitable that development on the edge of our larger villages such as Sawston will be some distance from the village centre, but that the services and facilities available are better than those available in smaller 'Group Villages' where the village edge may be closer but the services and facilities not as good.

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<sup>24</sup> The closest bus stop providing services to the Cambridge area is located at Queensway (800m from the site). Go Whippet bus 7A stops at Babraham Park and Ride site before going onto Cambridge Rail Station. The Citi 7, operated by Stagecoach stops at destinations including Hills Road and Cambridge Rail Station. Each service has a 20 minute frequency, and as a result there is a 10 minute frequency for services into Cambridge Rail Station.

<sup>25</sup> RD/T/093 page 4-32

**SC5A.2.ii**

**Could the impacts on the existing physical, social and educational infrastructure in Sawston as a consequence of the development of the site be adequately mitigated?**

37. See the response to question SC5A.1.ix. above.

**SC5A.2.iii**

**Is the location of the site within the setting of the Grade II\* listed Pampisford Hall?**

38. No. it is separated from it by extensive arable fields some with hedges, a wood, the busy A505 with its associated hedgerows and buffer landscaping. The two sites are over 3.2km apart by road and 2.2km apart as the crow flies.

39. The Highways Authority have not indicated that development of the site allocations in Sawston would result in any requirement to widen the High Street north of its junction with the A505 opposite Pampisford Hall. It can be noted that this junction was not identified as a key Sawston junction whose traffic capacity was modelled in the Sawston Transport Modelling technical note 2014<sup>26</sup>.

**SC5A.2.iv**

**Would the development of the site result in the loss of good quality agricultural land and wildlife habitats?**

40. The site comprises a flat arable field in active agricultural use. There is a significant hedge between it and Dales Manor Business Park but the other boundaries have no significant planting. The site is of limited biodiversity interest with the greatest impact coming from the general loss of farmland habitat. The policy requires the creation of a significant landscape buffer along the eastern boundary of the site where it adjoins farmland which would provide a new wildlife habitat. Policy NH/4 Biodiversity requires new development to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity.

41. The need to identify and maintain a large supply of land for development in the district means there is pressure for the development of agricultural land. The Map of Agricultural Land Classification<sup>27</sup> for the district demonstrates that the vast majority of the district comprises grades 1, 2, and 3 agricultural land, with only small isolated areas of grade 4 or 5.

42. The site comprises 3.64 ha of good quality grade 2 land. The Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal<sup>28</sup> at page B1456 records a minor negative impact from the loss of productive agricultural land, but well below the 20 hectare threshold above which Natural England have to be consulted on planning applications for the development of such land. This finding is confirmed in the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans SA Addendum Report (November 2015)<sup>29</sup>. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that Local Planning Authorities should

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<sup>26</sup> RD/H/050

<sup>27</sup> RD/Sub/SC/060 Draft Final Sustainability Report Part 2 Annex 1 chapter 10 figure 5 Page 2A-8

<sup>28</sup> RD/Sub/SC/060 Annex B SHLAA site 313

<sup>29</sup> RD/MC/020 Part 5 page 1,100

take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

43. South Cambridgeshire has a significant resource of good quality agricultural land. Agricultural land classification provides a uniform method for assessing the quality of farmland to enable informed choices to be made about its future use within the planning system. The most productive and flexible land falls into Grades 1 and 2 and Subgrade 3a and collectively comprises about one third of the agricultural land in England and Wales. Within the district there are significant areas of high quality agricultural land. Much of the best agricultural land lies around Cambridge and the larger settlements, which often the most sustainable locations for future development.

**SC5A.2.v**

**What, if any, would be the implications in terms of the development of the site if Cambridge City FC relocates to Sawston?**

44. The direct implications would be limited given that the sites are approximately 640 metres apart. Also see the response to SC5A.1.iii above. The Council is aware that this site is in the same ownership as the football stadia site but this has not been a factor taken into account in the site allocation.

### **SC5A.3 Site Reference H/1:c-Land South of Babraham Road**

#### **SC5A3.i**

#### **Does the site represent a sustainable location in terms of its proximity to local facilities and services, and accessibility to sustainable modes of transport?**

45. Sawston is one of the largest and most sustainable villages in the District and is located south of Cambridge close to a number of successful business and science parks. It is a suitable location for housing development being classified as a Rural Centre in existing plans and in the submission Local Plan. Development here forms an important part of the spatial strategy of the Local Plan which also provides for growth on the edge of Cambridge and in new settlements to the north and west of Cambridge. Sawston has a 20 minute bus service to Cambridge (the Citi 7), a secondary school, two primary schools and a range of shops and services. The site was identified as having development potential for housing development through the SHLAA and SA processes and included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan as one of the better site options to meet the development strategy.
  
46. The northern part of the site lies approximately 800 metres from the closest bus stops<sup>30</sup>, 400 metres from the closest Primary School, and 1,300 metres from the Secondary School and the shops and services in the village centre. The middle part of the site while being further from bus stops, the village centre and the secondary school adjoins the Icknield Primary School and the policy requires land to be provided if necessary to enable the expansion of the school. The southern part of the site lies approximately within 300 metres of the nearest Primary School, 660 metres from the nearest bus stop, 1,400 metres from the secondary school and 900 metres from the village centre to which it is connected by a new cycle and pedestrian links. A strip of land has been included within the site to enable such provision to provide access to the village centre via Church Lane. The Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (2007), states that Walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes' (up to about 800 m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. However, this is not an upper limit and Planning Policy Guidance 13 Transport, states that walking offers the greatest potential to replace short car trips, particularly those under 2 km (note that PPG 13 has been withdrawn by Government in 2012 and replaced by the NPPF which does not provide such detail but its guidance remains relevant).
  
47. These distances are well within the 5km distance considered to be practical for cycling<sup>31</sup>. National Cycle Network Route 11 which runs from Essex up to Kings Lynn in Norfolk is located under 1km away from the site and connects with the segregated route beside the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway running into Cambridge.

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<sup>30</sup> The closest bus stop providing services to the Cambridge area is located at Queensway (800m from the site). Go Whippet bus 7A stops at Babraham Park and Ride site before going onto Cambridge Rail Station. The Citi 7, operated by Stagecoach stops at destinations including Hills Road and Cambridge Rail Station. Each service has a 20 minute frequency, and as a result there is a 10 minute frequency for services into Cambridge Rail Station.

<sup>31</sup> RD/T/093 page 4-32

48. It is inevitable that development on the edge of our larger villages such as Sawston will be some distance from the village centre, but that the services and facilities available are better than those available in smaller 'Group Villages' where the village edge may be closer but the services and facilities not as good.

#### **SC5A.3.ii**

##### **Could the impacts on the existing physical, social and educational infrastructure in Sawston as a consequence of the development of the site be adequately mitigated?**

49. See the response to question SC5A.1.ix. above. Policies H/1 and TI/8 requires all sites to make appropriate financial contributions to any necessary additional infrastructure requirements, including towards additional capacity in local schools. The development requirements for this site also refer to land being provided if necessary to enable the expansion of the adjoining Icknield Primary School.

#### **SC5A.3.iii**

##### **Is the location of the site within the setting of the Grade II\* listed Pampisford Hall?**

50. No. it is separated from it by extensive arable fields some with hedges, a wood, the busy A505 with its associated hedgerows and buffer landscaping. The two sites are around 3.2km apart by road and 2 km apart as the crow flies.
51. The Highways Authority have not indicated that development of the site allocations in Sawston would result in any requirement to widen the High Street north of its junction with the A505 opposite Pampisford Hall. It can be noted that this junction was not identified as a key Sawston junction whose traffic capacity was modelled in the Sawston Transport Modelling technical note 2014 .

#### **SC5A.3.iv**

##### **Would the development of the site result in the loss of good quality agricultural land and wildlife habitats?**

52. The site comprises flat arable fields in active agricultural use. The only significant hedges lie on the southern boundary and on the southern part of the eastern boundary, other boundaries have no significant planting. The site is of limited biodiversity interest with the greatest impact coming from the general loss of farmland habitat. The policy requires the creation of a significant landscape buffer along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site where it adjoins farmland which would provide a new wildlife habitat. Policy NH/4 Biodiversity requires new development to maintain, enhance, restore or add to biodiversity.
53. The need to identify and maintain a large supply of land for development in the district means there is pressure for the development of agricultural land. The Map of Agricultural Land Classification<sup>32</sup> for the district demonstrates that the vast majority of the district comprises grades 1,2, and 3 agricultural land, with only small isolated areas of grade 4 or 5. The site comprises 12.04 ha of good quality grade 2 land. The

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<sup>32</sup> RD/Sub/SC/060 Draft Final Sustainability Report Part 2 Annex 1 chapter 10 figure 5 Page 2A-8

Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal<sup>33</sup> at page B1562 records a minor negative impact from the loss of productive agricultural land, but well below the 20 hectare threshold above which Natural England have to be consulted on planning applications for the development of such land. This finding is confirmed in the Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans SA Addendum Report (November 2015)<sup>34</sup>. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that Local Planning Authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

54. South Cambridgeshire has a significant resource of good quality agricultural land. Agricultural land classification provides a uniform method for assessing the quality of farmland to enable informed choices to be made about its future use within the planning system. The most productive and flexible land falls into Grades 1 and 2 and Subgrade 3a and collectively comprises about one third of the agricultural land in England and Wales. Within the district there are significant areas of high quality agricultural land. Much of the best agricultural land lies around Cambridge and the larger settlements, which often the most sustainable locations for future development.

#### **SC5A.3.v**

**What, if any, would be the implications in terms of the development of the site if Cambridge City FC relocates to Sawston?**

55. The direct implications would be limited given that the sites are approximately 790 metres apart. Also see the response to SC5A.1.iii above.

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<sup>33</sup> RD/Sub/SC/060 Annex B SHLAA sites 178 and 258 revised (in re-assessment of sites to take account of revised site boundaries etc. section)

<sup>34</sup> RD/MC/020 Part 5 page 1,100

#### **SC5A.4 Site Reference H/1:d-Land North of Impington Lane, Histon & Impington**

##### **SC5A.4.i**

##### **What proportion of the site is within flood zone 1?**

56. All of the proposed allocation H/1:d site is within flood zone 1. The site comprises the southern parts of SHLAA sites 112 and 114<sup>35</sup> being the parts of the sites that excluded land in flood zones 2 and 3<sup>36</sup>. The site has not been the subject of objections from the Environment Agency or from Cambridgeshire County Council as the lead flood authority for the area.

##### **SC5A.4.ii**

##### **Would the location and configuration of the site enable the creation of an acceptable access arrangement in the context of highway safety?**

57. During the preparation of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) the Highway Authority confirmed that a junction onto Impington Lane would be acceptable to the Highway Authority. The development of a significantly larger site than was eventually allocated in the Local Plan was considered to be acceptable in principle by the Highway Authority subject to detailed design. The Highways Authority considered that the easternmost access link would be unsuitable to serve the number of units then being proposed on SHLAA site 114 alone (32 dwellings) but that it could be served from the access into SHLAA site 112 to the west to serve the site proposed to be allocated as a whole. The number of dwellings proposed in allocation H/1:d at 25 dwellings is less than half originally sought by the landowners on sites 112 and 114 together.
58. The Highways Authority have commented as follows:  
*“While the ideal width of a carriageway to enable refuse vehicles to enter and leave developments would be 6m, this is not always achievable within the existing road network of Cambridgeshire. While narrower roads do require refuse vehicles to cross the centreline of the road, this does not appear to be problem at present in Impington Lane (where a refuse vehicle would have to under take this manoeuvre to enter Impington Place) nor in other similar locations in the county. So while the carriageway width may not be ideal, the hazard created by a refuse vehicle crossing the centre line to enter a development would not be outside the normal range of risks and hazards that users of the highway should expect to encounter.*

*The statement that the appropriate radii for the access is unlikely to be achieved would be a matter for detailed design, but clearly if this does indeed turn out to be the case such a situation will be of concern to the Highway Authority.*

*If the 85% speed along Impington Lane is in excess of 30mph (despite the traffic calming) then the Highway Authority may well seek an inter-vehicle visibility splay of 2.4m x 70m. However, these dimensions were achieved for the development of Impington Place (Planning Application reference S/1356/08/F) so it is probable that a*

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<sup>35</sup> RD/Strat/120

<sup>36</sup> RD/Strat/120 Appendix 7i pages 554 and 562

*similar dimensions could be achieved by a future development if required. However the exact nature of the access and its inter vehicle visibility splays will be determined using the data presented in the Transport Statement/Assessment that will accompany any full planning application.*

*There does appear to have been some (limited) encroachment into the adopted public highway by boundary hedges along Impington Lane and while these are not an issue at present, if necessitated by the requirements of an inter vehicle visibility splays there are powers under the Highways Act 1980 to have such visual obstructions trimmed to the boundary of the highway”.*

#### **SC5A.4.iii**

#### **Could the impacts on the existing physical, social and educational infrastructure in Histon & Impington as a consequence of the development of the site be adequately mitigated?**

59. Histon and Impington is one of the largest and most sustainable villages in the District located just to the north of Cambridge. It is a suitable location for housing development having infant, junior, and secondary schools and a range of shops and services within easy walking distance (less than 800 metres), good access to a range of employment opportunities and with bus and guided bus public transport routes to Cambridge offering a 10 minute frequency from 7 am to 7pm<sup>37</sup>. The nearest bus stop being approximately 100 metres from the site. The site consulted on was identified as having development potential for housing development through the SHLAA and SA processes and included in the Proposed Submission Local Plan as one of the better site options to meet the development strategy. The impact on Green Belt purposes and landscape were taken into account through the SHLAA and SA processes and a smaller site consulted on at Issues and Options and in the Proposed Submission Local Plan. The site lies adjacent to a recently completed housing development and the Local Plan site would round off and not extend development further north than the recently completed development site.
60. Account was also taken of the views of Cambridgeshire County Council concerning education provision who told us that the approach to mitigating the education impact of development will need to be considered as part of a wider review of provision in the village<sup>38</sup>. There is one doctors practice in Histon which has limited physical capacity to grow. Looking at the capacity of village infrastructure, Local Plan policy TI/8 ‘Infrastructure and New Developments’ requires that new developments mitigate their impacts through planning obligations and CIL. The small scale of the proposed development at 25 homes will limit the impacts on the infrastructure of the village and limit the extent of mitigation required given that 25 homes amounts to an addition of around 0.68% to the number of dwellings in the village<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> RD/Strat/250 Village Services and Facilities Study

<sup>38</sup> RD/Strat/120 Appendix 7i pages 556 and 564

<sup>39</sup> RD/Strat/250 Village Services and Facilities study records 3,650 dwellings in the village in 2012

**SC5A.4.iv**

**Would the future occupiers of the site be adversely affected by traffic noise emanating from the A14?**

61. No, the site is approximately 1,500 metres from the A14 at its closest point and separated from it by the built up area of Impington. No concerns were raised concerning noise from the A14 by the Council's Environmental Health team during the preparation of the SHLAA.
62. The A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme received its Development Order Consent in May 2016 following a statutory DCO examination. It includes widening part of the A14 Cambridge northern bypass between Girton and Milton. The Environmental Statement<sup>40</sup> by the applicant sets out a study area for operational noise extending 600m from the road. At paragraph 14.2.3 it states 'Operational adverse effects have been assessed outside the study area. No significant effects outside the study area have been identified arising from the scheme'.

**SC5A.8 Policy H/2: Bayer Crop Science Site, Hauxton**

**SC5A.8.i**

**Should paragraph 7.12 be updated to reflect the latest position in relation to planning applications?**

63. Paragraph 7.12 has become out of date and should be deleted from the plan. No replacement updated text is necessary.

**SC5A.8.ii**

**In respect of paragraph 7.13, is it the intention of the policy that the future redevelopment of the waste water treatment works and the recreation buildings would be restricted to uses which would not represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt?**

64. Yes, such an approach is consistent with the NPPF<sup>41</sup> as stated in the final bullet point to paragraph 89. The Council is also aware that the December 2015 DCLG consultation on proposed changes to the NPPF proposed to allow a greater degree of harm to the openness of such a site provided that the harm would not be substantial<sup>42</sup>. Any proposals would be considered against national Green Belt policy applying at the time of a planning application.

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<sup>40</sup> RD/T/310 A14 Examination Library ref APP-345

<sup>41</sup> RD/NP/010

<sup>42</sup> RD/NP/180 page 20

### **SC5A.9 Policy H/3: Papworth Everard West Central**

#### **SC5A.9.i**

#### **Would the scale of redevelopment on the site require mitigation measures to the A428/A1198 junction?**

65. No. The scale of redevelopment envisaged would not require mitigation measures to the junction. The policy was identified originally in the Site Specific Policies DPD<sup>43</sup>, acknowledging the areas of vacant land and redundant buildings then existing within the area. The largest parts of the site, on Church Lane, now have planning permission. There may be other development opportunities within the site area, but transport implications are likely to be limited and capable of being addressed through the planning application process.
66. The redevelopment opportunities remaining in the policy area (it has never been envisaged that all of the site would be redeveloped), are limited. The Annual Monitoring Report<sup>44</sup> records an extant planning permission for 58 dwellings and 8 units for either housing or business use on land south of Church Lane granted in October 2014.

### **SC5A.10 Policy H/4: Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate**

#### **SC5A.10.i**

#### **Does the modified policy now accord with the Written Ministerial Statement dated 25 March 2015?**

67. The Council considers that Policy H/4, as modified<sup>45</sup> by Proposed Modifications in December 2015 accords with the Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) of 25 March 2015. No representations requiring any further changes to the policy were received in response to the consultation on the Proposed Modifications.
68. The WMS (25 March 2015) withdraws the Code for Sustainable Homes aside from legacy cases. The proposed modifications take account of the withdrawal of the Code for Sustainable Homes by removing details related to the Code for Sustainable Homes, and amending the policy so that it will still ensure the delivery of the same outcomes. To ensure its ongoing consistency with the WMS, the Council took a report to the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015 Planning Portfolio Holder meeting<sup>46</sup> to agree a supplement to the adopted Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate Supplementary Planning Document<sup>47</sup>.
69. The Fen Drayton former LSA estate would be considered as 'countryside', if it was not designated as a special policy area for sustainable forms of development. The Site Specific Policies DPD Inspector concluding that the LSA Estate represented an

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<sup>43</sup> RD/AD/120 pages 26-28

<sup>44</sup> RD/AD/470 page 160

<sup>45</sup> RD/MC/010 Proposed Modifications Consultation Report PM/SC/7/C to PM/SC/7/E

<sup>46</sup> RD/CR/640

<sup>47</sup> RD/SPD/110 (adopted SPD)

interwar experiment in sustainable living and that it would be appropriate given its history to consider the area as a test-bed for future patterns of sustainable living. Housing would not usually be permitted in this location outside the village framework unless it was a replacement dwelling, reusing/convertng an existing building or a dwelling required for the functioning of a rural enterprise or tied to agricultural use. For housing to be acceptable in this location, the current adopted policy in the Site Specific Policies DPD (January 2010) requires new developments to deliver ground breaking and experimental forms of sustainable living, which is defined in the accompanying SPD as meeting the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6.

70. Continuing to seek 'ground breaking and experimental forms of sustainable living' in this location is consistent with national policy as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF<sup>48</sup>, published in March 2012) allows new isolated homes in the countryside in certain circumstances, such as delivering an exceptional quality or innovative nature to the design of the dwelling (paragraph 55); supports the move to a low carbon future by planning for development in a location and way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (paragraph 95); and states that new developments should be planned to minimise energy consumption and avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change (paragraphs 96 and 99).
71. Whilst the policy can no longer specifically require that new dwellings in this location applied for under this policy must achieve Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6, any new dwelling should still be 'experimental and ground breaking' and carbon neutral.

#### **SC5A.11 Policy H/5 South of A1307, Linton**

##### **SC5A.11.i**

**In the context of the sustainability of the site's location, is there a significant difference in this regard to the Old Police Station site which has been granted planning permission for residential development (S/2420/12)?**

72. This long established policy which dates back to 1993, seeks to prevent residential development south of the A1307 in the interest of public safety and sustainability. The relatively small part of Linton located to the south of the A1307 is largely in non-residential use and is severed from easy and safe access to the village services and facilities by the busy and congested A1307 which runs between Haverhill and Cambridge. The vast majority of the village shops and services are located to the north of the A1307 as are the village schools<sup>49</sup>. There is a pelican crossing providing a safe crossing point and access to a bus stop for buses to Cambridge on the south side of the main road. Bus services between Cambridge and Haverhill have been improved and this crossing is well used but concerns remain that any increase in operation of the crossing during the day will have an effect on congestion.
73. The A1307 Haverhill to Cambridge corridor is one of the key radial routes into Cambridge and suffers from congestion during peak periods, particularly at the Cambridge end, at the junction with the A11 and around the village of Linton, the

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<sup>48</sup> RD/NP/010

<sup>49</sup> RD/Strat/250 Linton entry, including maps of services and facilities

largest settlement on the corridor. The corridor is over 20km in length and connects a large number of important settlements and key employment areas including Haverhill, Horseheath, Linton, Great Abington / Little Abington /Hildersham, Granta Park, Babraham & Babraham Research Campus and the Addenbrooke's Hospital / Cambridge Biomedical Campus. The City Deal A1307 Concepts Report<sup>50</sup> records housing growth in Haverhill of 4,260 homes to 2031 and jobs growth at CBC, Granta Park, and the Babraham Research Campus of over 10,000 over the same period. The report notes that between 2001 and 2011 there was a significant growth in the number of Haverhill residents working in these locations north of Linton (paragraph 3.4.5).

74. With regard to the Old Police Station, the site was already in residential use with 4 existing homes, and Planning Committee determined that a departure from policy was justified to provide a wholly affordable housing development of 18 affordable homes in a village with a very high level of local need.
75. The Council consulted on whether to retain this policy restriction in the Issues and Options consultation as question 115<sup>51</sup>, and also consulted on the possible inclusion of a residential site option on land just to the west (site option 29). The majority of responses at issues and Options and Proposed Submission favoured maintaining the policy restriction which resulted in its retention in the submission Local Plan. This approach counted against the inclusion of site option 29 as a proposed site allocation in the proposed Submission Local Plan.

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<sup>50</sup> RD/Strat/480 A1307 Haverhill to Cambridge Corridor draft concepts report

<sup>51</sup> RD/LP/030

## **Appendix 1: List of Reference Documents**

The Council's evidence in relation to SC5A: High Quality Homes – Residential Site Allocations is set out in the following documents:

### **National Policy:**

- National Planning Policy Framework (RD/NP/010)
- Consultation on Proposed Changes to National Planning Policy (RD/NP/180)

### **Government Regulations and Acts:**

- Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport (RD/Gov/240)

### **South Cambridgeshire District Council Submission Documents:**

- South Cambridgeshire Draft Final Sustainability Appraisal Report and HRA Screening Report (Rd/Sub/SC/060)

### **Committee Reports and Minutes:**

- Planning Portfolio Holder Meeting - September 2015 (RD/CR/640)

### **Earlier Stages of Plan Making:**

- South Cambridgeshire Issues and Options Report (RD/LP/030)
- South Cambridgeshire Issues and Options 2 Report: Part 2 – South Cambridgeshire Further Site Options (RD/LP/050)

### **Adopted Development Plan Documents:**

- South Cambridgeshire Site Specific Policies Development Plan Document (RD/AD/120)
- South Cambridgeshire Annual Monitoring Report 2014-15 (RD/AD/460)
- Cambridge Annual Monitoring Report 2014-15 (RD/AD/470)

### **Supplementary Planning Documents:**

- Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate Supplementary Planning Document (RD/SPD/110)

### **Development Strategy:**

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (RD/Strat/120)
- South Cambridgeshire Village Classification Report (RD/Strat/240)
- South Cambridgeshire Village Services and Facilities Study (RD/Strat/250)
- A1307 Haverhill to Cambridge Corridor Draft Concepts Report (RD/Strat/480)

### **Housing:**

- Sawston Transport Modelling (RD/H/050)

### **Economy and Tourism:**

- Marketing Brochure for Sawston Business Park (RD/E/240)

**Transport and Infrastructure:**

- Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2031 (LTP3 Refresh) (November 2014) (RD/T/093)
- A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Improvement Scheme Environmental Statement (RD/T/310)

**Modifications Consultation:**

- Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Modifications Consultation Report (November 2015) (RD/MC/010)
- Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans SA Addendum Report (November 2015) (RD/MC/020)
- Proposed Modifications arising from the Government's Written Ministerial Statements (November 2015) (RD/MC/100)

## Appendix 2: List of Proposed Modifications

The modifications set out below relate to a policy H/1 in Chapter 7 Housing of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. Text to be deleted is shown as a strikethrough and text to be added is shown in **bold and underlined**.

The references to page and paragraph numbers in the table below do not take account of the deletion or addition of text proposed through modifications submitted previously.

Page	Policy/Paragraph	Modification	Justification
130	<b>Policy H/1:                      Allocations for                      Residential                      Development at                      villages</b>  <b>H/1:a Sawston,                      Dales manor                      Business Park</b>	Add an additional development requirement bullet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Retention of the tree belt and hedges on the south-west part of the site except as required to provide for access</u></b></li> </ul>	The Council would support a proposed modification to policy H/1:a to provide greater certainty regarding the future of the tree belt located to the rear of Broadmeadows / Fairfields.