Quality Assurance

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Appendix 1 - Parameter Plan
1. INTRODUCTION
1.1 THE DOCUMENT

This Design and Access Statement has been produced on behalf of Pembroke College and G.W Balaam & Sons Ltd to support an outline planning application for up to 78 houses on land to the east of Linton, Cambridgeshire.

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the process of appraisal and evaluation that has been undertaken in relation to the physical, social and planning context of the proposal site and its surrounding area. Included within this document is an appraisal of the site in landscape and visual terms. The purpose of the appraisal is to identify site opportunities and constraints and any mitigation measures that can be incorporated into the emerging design to avoid or reduce the predicted effects of the proposed development.

The document will comprise of the following sections:

- **Introduction** – Introduce the purpose of the document and a brief outline of the site and the proposals.
- **Policy Background** – Provide a brief overview of the planning framework within which the site has come forward and highlight any relevant planning policies which have been considered as part of the application.
- **Site Appraisal** – An appraisal of the landscape and townscape in and around the site to identify local features, characteristics and landscape receptors likely to be affected by the proposals, including a photographic visual study.
- **Consultants Analysis** – Summary of other consultants analysis of the site to provide a comprehensive picture of the Opportunities and Constraints of the site.
- **Design Rationale** - Establish the opportunities and constraints the site affords and define a clear rationale which informs the emerging design.
- **Design Evolution** – Illustrate the evolution of the design proposals through various iterations of the proposals from the initial zoning plans through to the final illustrative master plan.
- **Consultation** – Identify the specialist consultants involved within the planning application and provide an overview of the stakeholders engaged as part of the application process including public consultation.
- **Final Proposals** – Define the design principles to which the final illustrative master plan is based upon including access and circulation, landscape and open space, planting mitigation and site drainage. Rendered master plan and rendered section illustrations.
- **Summary and Conclusion** – Summarise the main features of the proposals and how they respond to the local context of the site.
1.2 THE PROPOSALS

The proposed layout for this Outline Application is for up to 78 dwellings (40% affordable housing), associated access routes, open space and drainage systems on an area of approximately 4.8 hectares. The northern parcel measures approximately 1.1 hectares and the southern parcel 3.6 hectares, located to the north and south of Bartlow Road respectively.

The site is well positioned, in a sustainable location abutting the existing village of Linton. Linton is well resourced to accommodate the proposed development, with a substantial array of services and facilities located within the village.

There are two bus stops located immediately adjacent to the site on Bartlow Road providing easily accessible public transport links to Cambridge and Haverhill. The design and character of the development would look to respect and complement the existing village and there would be a mixture of semi-detached and detached properties. Building materials would be carefully chosen to ensure the development was of a high quality.

The development will seek to respond to its dual aspect between the village setting and rural aspect, while respecting existing vegetation, especially riverine landscape and on the flood plain.

Additionally, the development will seek to create a suitable ‘end’ to the village’s eastern edge, while fostering a sense of arrival from Cambridge Road.

Practically, the plan uses orientation and land form to promote a good range of building response and massing, within a sustainable development that minimises infrastructure and has a minimal impact on the River Granta.

In summary, the main features of the illustrative master plan are as follows:

- The site is divided into two distinctive parcels to north and south of Bartlow Road;
- The properties will consist of various typologies and sizes ranging from smaller ‘starter’ homes to larger ‘family homes’;
- Approximately 1.6 hectares of open space includes an informal recreation space to the east of the northern plot and a green corridor through the centre of the southern plot connecting to the river corridor park to the south, including a low lying wetland area. An easily accessible children’s play area is located at the heart of the southern part of the site;
- A 30m wide planted boundary along the southern and eastern boundary onto the A1307 to reduce the impact of the highway, physically and visually protect the site and present a green edge to the village;
- Vehicle access provided from Bartlow Road to the northern and southern parcels at non-opposing locations.
- Properties fronting onto Bartlow Road to reinforce this important east-west route and create an enhanced gateway arrival experience to the village;
- Public footpaths and walking routes provided throughout the site and connecting the existing PROW to the north of Bartlow Road with the River Granta corridor to the south;
- Properties orientated in a north-south direction, taking advantage of the site topography to assimilate the buildings into their landscape setting and take advantage of views towards the River Granta corridor;
- Reinforcement and protection of neighbouring property curtilage to reduce impact on amenity for existing residents.
2. POLICY BACKGROUND
2.1 PLANNING POLICY

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets the context for national planning guidance.

At the local level the relevant adopted Development Plan Documents (DPDs) for South Cambridgeshire are the Core Strategy, Development Control Policies DPD and the Proposals Map. The following adopted Supplementary Planning Documents are also material considerations:

- District Design Guide
- Trees and Development Sites
- Landscape in New Developments
- Affordable Housing
- Biodiversity
- Public Art
- Health Impact Assessment
- Open Space in New Developments

A new Local Plan (2011 – 2031) was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 28 March 2014. The examination was suspended on 20 May due to the Inspector’s concerns in relation to the overall development strategy, objectively assessed need for new housing and conformity with revisions to National Planning Policy. Emerging policies can however be given some weight and are a material consideration in the determination of this application.

South Cambridgeshire District Council are unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and in accordance with paragraph 49 of the NPPF relevant policies for the supply of housing cannot be considered up to date. The application must therefore be considered in the context of sustainable development. The following policies of the adopted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies DPD remain relevant:

- The Core Strategy DPD (2007)
- Policy ST/5 Minor Rural Centres
- The Development Control Policies DPD (2007)
- Policy DP/1: Sustainable Development
- Policy DP/2: Design of New Development
- Policy DP/3: Development Criteria
- Policy DP/4: Infrastructure and New Developments
- Policy DP/6: Construction Methods
- Policy HG/1: Housing Density
- Policy HG/2: Housing Mix
- Policy HG/3: Affordable Housing
- Policy SF/6: Public Art and New Development
- Policy SF/10: Outdoor Playspace and New Development
- Policy SF/11: Open Space Standards
- Policy NE/1: Energy Efficiency
- Policy NE/3: Renewable Energy Technologies in New Development
- Policy NE/4: Landscape Character Areas
- Policy NE/6: Biodiversity
- Policy NE/9: Groundwater
- Policy NE/9: Water and Drainage Infrastructure
- Policy NE/11: Flood Risk
- Policy NE/12: Water Conservation
- Policy NE/17: Protecting High Quality Agricultural Land
- Policy CH/2: Archaeological Sites
- Policy TR/1: Planning for More Sustainable Travel
- Policy TR/2: Car and Cycle Parking Standards
- Policy TR/3: Mitigating Travel Impact
- Policy TR/4: Non-Motorised Modes

The application site is situated in a sustainable location which directly abuts the settlement framework boundary of Linton. Linton is identified as a minor rural settlement in both the adopted and emerging Local Plans containing a wide range of services, facilities and amenities.

The development will have the ability to make a significant contribution to the urgent need for market and affordable housing need within Linton and the wider South Cambridgeshire District. The landscape impacts of the development can be successfully mitigated and the local highway network can accommodate the proposed level of development.

The residential development of the site is considered to accord with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF. The full planning policy context is explored in detail within the Planning Statement which accompanies this application.
3. SITE APPRAISAL

The following chapter of the report seeks to appraise the site and its context in landscape, townscape and visual terms with view to establishing a clear understanding of the site. This information will be used to help establish an appropriate brief including a series of design objectives and for the subsequent development of design proposals.

The study include:-

- National, Regional and Local Landscape Character
- Topography and Hydrology
- Site History
- Statutory and Non-statutory Designations
- Vegetation
- Townscape Character
- Key Views and Receptors
3.1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

National Joint Landscape Character

The study area lies on the boundary of the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland Character Area 86, as defined in the Countryside Character of England Map and the East Anglian Chalk Character Area 87. As such it displays the attributes of both character areas and represents the transition zone between the two character types where the attributes of character types merge together.

The South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands are described as:

- Broadly flat, chalky, boulder clay plateau dissected by undulating river valley topography, particularly marked in upper valley reaches, which are much smaller in scale.
- Predominantly arable with wooded appearance. Some pasture in valley floors. Irregular field pattern despite rationalization; remnant Ancient Countryside.
- Scattered farmsteads, deep ditches and moats, parishes with scattered, small settlements around ‘tyes’ (commons) or strip greens, with isolated hamlets. Concentration of isolated moated sites.
- Timber-framed and colour-washed houses, sometimes faced with Georgian red brick. Impressive churches. Large villages and frequent towns, most with medieval street plans and elaborate timber frame houses. Rich heritage of barns. Fewer settlements and more 20th century development towards coast, with several large estates.
- Cultural association with Constable and tourist honey pot of Dedham Vale. Preserved, archetypal, lowland pastoral, English countryside coupled with attractive vernacular buildings dating from period of industrial wealth.
- Hedgerow tree of area is elm (with hornbeam) in Essex. Oak and ash in Suffolk. Few large woods (20 acres plus), but some ancient coppice woods and typical pattern of copses connected by hedgerow. Trees and woods appear to join together to give wooded skyline, with some bare ridge lines.
- Winding road pattern away from major routes, often with wide verges and strong hedgerows. Sunken hollow lanes are a feature, lined with hedgerows, but impact of Dutch Elm disease apparent.

The key characteristics of the East Anglian Chalk relevant to the transition between the two character areas are described as:

- Distinctive, open, variable topography of the Chalk a continuation of the Chilterns.
- Large-scale rolling downland, mainly arable, with distinctive beech belts along roads and in hilltop clumps and ash-dominated woodland.
- Long straight roads, open grass tracks, isolated 19th century white or yellow brick farmhouses and distinctive nucleated villages, generally within valleys.
- Few large towns (Baldock, Royston and influence of Cambridge) on major transport routes and enlarged commuter villages which still retain their rural character.
- Generally muted colour range with distinctive white soils and building materials but relatively lively landform.
- Manicured character of stud landscape around Newmarket, with domesticated smaller-scale settled landscape to the east with rows of pine.
- Significant linear ancient or Roman earthworks Devil’s Dyke, Fleam Dyke and Icknield Way.

Elements of both these character areas are found on the land to the north and east of Linton.
Character Area 86
South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland

Map of South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland Character Area 86

Map of East Anglian Chalk Character Area 87
The Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines

Whilst the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines (1991) describe the character area as ‘South-east Clay Hills’ the land to the north west and north east of Linton shares many of the characteristics of the ‘Chalklands’. The key points of the South-east Clay Hills character area are:

- Undulating land at about 100-120m above sea level on the hill tops which is quite high for Cambridgeshire.
- Small hamlets and villages have developed in the sheltered locations along in the shallow valleys.
- Farmsteads and small settlements are interspersed with farm woodlands.
- Generally large field sizes united by rolling landform and woodland.
- Earth banks are a distinctive feature along some roadsides from the historic hedge and bank field boundaries.
- Hedges are often without trees and are trimmed low and can give an open appearance to the landscape
- All present villages had been founded by medieval times.

- Moated sites are common, making use of the water retentive to provide protection to dwelling.

This area has some of the attributes of the Chalklands Character Area, including:

- The region was mostly too dry for early settlement, however it is traversed by major prehistoric and historic routes.
- The hills are dissected by two gentle valleys of the Granta and Rhee which converge to form the river Cam just south of Cambridge.
- The majority of the chalkland is devoted to growing cereal crops despite the frequently poor, thin soils.
- It is a broad-scale landscape of large fields, low mechanically trimmed hedges and few trees.
- The eastern part of this area has a number of woodlands and shelter belts which help to break up the long distance views.
- Certain high points have small beech copses or ‘hangers’ and are trimmed low and can give an open appearance to the landscape
The East of England Landscape Framework

This character assessment describes the area to the north and east of Linton to be ‘Chalk Hills and Scarps’. A summary of the key characteristics is given as:

- Prominent chalk hills, exhibiting a rounded, rolling ‘downland’ topography, in places forming a distinct edge, elsewhere incised by dry valleys to create a rounded landform.
- Often well wooded with long distance views, this is a large scale landscape with an ordered pattern of fields and woodlands.
- Free draining land.
The topography of the site is varied, with low lying land to the south rising to the north. Within this general trend the land is undulating, creating folds in the landscape.

The study area lies between approximately 40 and 60m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum).

The land to the north of Linton rises to Rivey Hill. This is the highest point in the local area at approximately 110m AOD and provides extensive panoramic views. Further to the north east the land rises to Borley Wood, and further east towards Horsehearth.

To the south of Linton the land rises to Haw’s Hill and further south west to Catley Park.

The centre of Linton is located in a shallow valley between Rivey Hill and Haw’s Hill and through which the River Granta runs from the south east to the north west later joining the River Rhee to form the River Cam which flows on through Cambridge. Flood Zones 2 and 3 surround the Granta River at the south of the site, constraining the growth of the village in that direction.

The topography of the local area is complex with folds in the land and significant vegetation such as woodlands and hedgerows obscuring views. There are, however, extended views possible from elevated points within the landscape such as Rivey Hill to the north of Linton and The Windmill to the south.
Topographical map of Linton and the surrounding area

Legend

Application Site

Topography

- 30m - 40m
- 40m - 50m
- 50m - 60m
- 60m - 70m
- 70m - 80m
- 80m - 90m
- 90m - 100m
3.3 SITE HISTORY

1891 Historical Map

The 1891 historical map shows that at that time Linton was concentrated along the High Street and Horseheath Road. The River Granta was a central feature in the village.
The 1950 historical map, on page 23, shows an evolution of the built form of Linton with new housing extending the village to the north and north west. This plan does not show the A1307, Cambridge Road. It was constructed after 1950.
3.4 LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

Local Landscape of the Study Area

From the landscape assessments described above and the site visits undertaken, the landscape in the local vicinity of the study site can be divided into the following character areas. This represents a more local level of assessment.

The Granta Valley
Central to the character area is the Granta river which runs through Linton heading north west towards Cambridge. Topography is low lying and generally flat rising to either side. The river Granta acts as a boundary to arable fields or grazing land. Structural vegetation is made up of small groups of trees and mature individual trees sporadically located along the river. Willow is particularly characteristic.

Semi-enclosed farmland
Located in the valley to the south and east of Linton this area consists of generally small semi-enclosed arable fields or grazing land, interspersed with woods and plantations and single specimen trees. A network of PRoW provides access from the historic centre of Linton towards Hadstock Village in the south. The field boundaries consist of thick hedgerows and trees which limit views. Where views are possible they open up on to larger rambling fields to the south and south east.

Rising farmland
Located to the north and east of Linton, on land generally rising to the north, towards Rivey Hill and to the east towards Borley Wood. Parts of the topography, especially to the north, undulates dramatically creating folds in the landscape, the remaining landform has gentler undulations. This area consists of small to medium scale arable fields. Field boundary vegetation and tree cover is limited providing a more open feeling than to the semi-enclosed farmland character area. Views of Rivey Wood and the Water Tower located on Rivey Hill on the horizon are generally visible throughout this area.

Rolling farmland
This area is situated broadly on higher land offset from Linton. This area consisted of medium to large scale arable fields and areas of woodland such as Borley Wood. Field boundary vegetation and tree cover is limited. Sometimes field boundaries are not visible, due to the rambling nature of the land. This can give the impression of large extended fields continuing onto the horizon.

Residential Suburbs
The majority of suburbs on the edge of Linton are houses built post war, these housing areas are densely populated with thin roads. Houses from the Victorian period and older can be found on the High Street and other local roads in the historic centre.

The proposed development is located at some distance from the conservation area of Linton, buffered by existing and more recent housing stock.
Plan of the local landscape characters of the study area

Legend
- Proposed Development Site
- Semi-Enclosed Farm Land
- Rolling Farm Land
- River Valley
- Rising Farm Land
- Built Form

Plan of the local landscape characters of the study area
2. Policy Background

Plan of the landscape designations and listed buildings of the study area

Legend
- Application Site
- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Conservation Area