

**South Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Land Availability
Assessment (SHLAA) Report
August 2013**

**Appendix 7iv: Assessment of sites arising from the Issues &
Options 2 Consultation**

Index of Fen Ditton Site Assessment Proforma

Site Number	Site Address	Site Capacity	Page
Site 339	High Ditch Road, Fen Ditton	52 dwellings	2728

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan Review
Site Assessment Proforma

Proforma Created	July 2013
Proforma Last Updated	July 2013
Location	Fen Ditton
Site name / address	High Ditch Road, Fen Ditton
Category of site:	A village extension i.e. a development adjoining the existing village development framework boundary (Sustainable villages focus)
Description of promoter's proposal	High quality residential development at a low density to reflect the settlement character and of the village and significant landscaping enhancements to mitigate impact on the Green Belt.
Site area (hectares)	2.29
Site Number	339
Site description & context	<p>The site is located to the south of High Ditch Road on the eastern edge of Fen Ditton. It adjoins residential properties to the east and west. Open agricultural land lies to the north and a dense planting belt lies along the former railway line to the south. The site comprises a residential property, Fleam End farm buildings and paddock land, including a smaller area of enclosed paddock in the northern part of the site (SHLAA site 061).</p> <p>(The northern part of the site is SHLAA site 061)</p>
Current or last use of the site	Farm and paddock
Is the site Previously Developed Land?	Yes – residential property in south west corner.
Allocated for a non-residential use in the current development plan?	No
Planning history	<p>An attempt to gain planning permission for residential development on the larger part of the site (C/0383/60/) was refused.</p> <p>SHLAA Site 061 - there have been attempts to gain permission for one or two dwellings on the northern part of the site (C/179/58/ and C/261/71), which were refused for being in the Green Belt and the need for housing was being met elsewhere. It was also considered the proposed development would spoil the character of the area.</p>

Source of site	Issues and Options Consultation 2 Part 2 January 2013
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Tier 1: Strategic Considerations

Green Belt	<p>The site is within the Green Belt.</p> <p>Green Belt Purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains and enhances the quality of Cambridge's setting • Prevents coalescence between settlements and with Cambridge <p>Function with regard to the special character of Cambridge and it's setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The distribution, physical separation, setting, scale and character of Green Belt villages • A landscape which retains a strong rural character <p>Site falls within an area where development would have a significant adverse impact on GB purposes and functions. The Landscape Design Associates Green Belt Study (2002) identifies the rural landscape separating the inner necklace villages, and separating those villages from Cambridge, as critical in preserving the separate identities of these villages and therefore the immediate landscape setting of the city. (page 59) The site is within an area of supportive townscape / landscape, which support the character of the historic core and areas distinctive to the city. They provide the backdrop and ambience, and bolster the sense of place of the city and its approaches (page 62), the most essential areas to be safeguarded and preserved in their current form (page 73).</p>
Is the site subject to any other considerations that have the potential to make the site unsuitable for development?	No
Tier 1 conclusion:	--- Significant adverse impacts which cannot be effectively mitigated

Tier 2: Significant Local Considerations

Designations and Constraints

Heritage considerations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Buildings – there are several Grade II Listed buildings along High Ditch Road, including numbers 6, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23 and 25; the closest is approximately 130m to the west. • Non-statutory archaeological site - The site is located to the
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	<p>south of the route of the Fleam Dyke, an earthwork boundary of Saxon date. Further information would be necessary in advance of any planning application for this site.</p> <p>With careful design and it may be possible to mitigate the impacts on the historic environment.</p>
<p>Environmental and wildlife designations and considerations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Rights of Way – a footpath runs diagonally across the middle of the site. • Biodiversity features - Fenland landscapes support species and habitats characterised by intensive agriculture due to the high quality soil. This has restricted biodiversity in some parts. However, drains, hedges and field margins provide refuge for species such as barn owl, corn bunting and skylark. Washlands provide temporary areas of flooded grassland that are important for plants such as the marsh foxtail, tufted hair-grass and narrow-leaved water dropwort. Important numbers of wintering wildfowl maybe found on flooded fields. The network of drainage ditches in places still retain water voles with otters occasionally found into the fens where suitable fish stocks are found. Any development proposals should show how features of biodiversity value have been protected or adequately integrated into the design. <p>With careful design and it should be possible to mitigate the impacts on the natural environment.</p>
<p>Physical considerations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land contamination - Historical agricultural, industrial / commercial uses on site and adjacent to disused railway line will need investigation and remediation as appropriate. This can be dealt with by condition. • Noise issues - Road Transport General - The A14 lies to the East. Traffic noise will need assessment in accordance with PPG 24 or associated current guidance. The impact of existing noise on any future residential in this area is a material consideration in terms of health and well being and providing a high quality living environment. However residential use is likely to be acceptable with careful noise mitigation – combination of appropriate distance separation, careful orientation / positioning / design / internal layout of buildings, noise insulation scheme and extensive noise attenuation measures to mitigate traffic noise (single aspect, limited height, dual aspect with sealed non-openable windows on façade facing Roads, acoustically treated alternative ventilation, no open amenity spaces such as balconies / gardens). Commercial shielding or noise berms / barriers options? Noise likely to influence the design / layout and number / density of residential premises.

<p>Townscape and landscape impact?</p>	<p>The South Cambridgeshire Village Capacity Study (1998) describes Fen Ditton as close to the north eastern edge of Cambridge, on the eastern bank of the River Cam and bordered by the water meadows of the river. It is a linear village, with a 'cross-roads' form. The whole village is historic, with low density development, including historic farmhouses, interspersed with cottages.</p> <p>The Fen Ditton Conservation Area Appraisal (2006) describes Fen Ditton as an essentially linear village which has resulted in a very narrow, serpentine form with an almost complete absence of backland development, the only exceptions being a few modern houses. The village has an unmistakably rural feel with its grass verges, large trees and its bucolic riverside setting. The high proportion of good quality buildings and spaces means that the streetscene and townscape is of exceptional quality even though the scale is modest.</p> <p>Some new brick houses (The Loft) are set back from High Ditch Road by varying degrees and as a result the rhythm of the street frontage is lost. There is a further new development, Shepherds Close. These houses have little visual relationship to High Ditch Road. It is not until the end gable of No. 30 steps forward to partly frame views to the open countryside at the end of the built-up street that a sense of enclosure is restored.</p> <p>Little Ditton is the area south of High Ditch Road which was Little Ditton Field and farmed as open-field arable in 1790. It contains part of the filled in Fleam Dyke which although Anglo-Saxon in its final phase of construction, may have been built upon Iron Age works. Parts of Fleam Dyke are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.</p> <p>The agricultural character of the village is very important especially at the eastern end of the village, along High Ditch Road, where (converted) barns line the road and there are views of the fine groups of farm buildings. The linear nature of much of the village also means that views out into the open fields surrounding Fen Ditton can be seen from many parts of the village.</p> <p>Development would have a significant adverse impact on townscape and the landscape setting of the village. There is a clear edge to the village on the eastern edge of the site, with two properties at right angles to the road facing out across the site.</p>
<p>Can any issues be mitigated?</p>	<p>No. Significant historic environment, townscape and landscape impacts on this historically sensitive part of the village. Development would have a detrimental impact on the setting of several Grade II Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area, which it would be possible to mitigate.</p>

Infrastructure	
Highways access?	<p>Regarding sites in the Fen Ditton / Fulbourn et al / Gt Wilbraham / Teversham area (estimated capacity of 10,922 dwellings on 25 sites) the Highways Agency comment that sites at the southern end of this group are likely to be well integrated with Cambridge though clearly there could be some additional pressure on M11 and A14. Sites around Fen Ditton are more likely to generate pressure on the A14 corridor, particularly to and from employment along the northern fringe of Cambridge.</p> <p>A junction located on High Ditch Road would be acceptable to the Highway Authority. The proposed site is acceptable in principle subject to detailed design.</p>
Utility services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity - No significant impact on existing network • Mains water - The site falls within the CWC Cambridge Distribution Zone, within which there is a minimum spare capacity of 3,000 properties based on the peak day for the distribution zone, less any commitments already made to developers. There is insufficient spare capacity within Cambridge Distribution Zone to supply the number of proposed properties which could arise if all the SHLAA sites within the zone were to be developed. CWC will allocate spare capacity on a first come first served basis. Development requiring an increase in capacity of the zone will require either an upgrade to existing boosters and / or new storage reservoir, tower or booster plus associated mains. • Gas – Fen Ditton has mains gas supply and the site is likely to be able to be accommodated with minimal disruption or system reinforcement. • Mains sewerage - There is sufficient capacity at the WWTW to accommodate this development site. The sewerage network is approaching capacity and a pre-development assessment will be required to ascertain the specific capacity of the system with regards to this site. If any mitigation is deemed necessary this will be funded by the developer.
Drainage measures?	<p>No FRA provided.</p> <p>The village of Fen Ditton is close to the boundary of the Swaffham internal Drainage Board. The District does not have the capacity to accept direct discharge into its system. Any discharge would have to be at the green field run off rates.</p>

School capacity?	Fen Ditton has one Primary School with a PAN of 25 and school capacity of 175, and lies within the catchment of Bottisham Village College. In their 2011 submission to the South Cambridgeshire and City Infrastructure Study, the County Council stated there was a surplus of 10 primary places in Fen Ditton taking account of planned development in Fen Ditton. After allowing for surplus school places, development of this site would be likely to require an increase in school planned admission numbers, which may require the expansion of existing schools and/or provision of new schools.
Health facilities capacity?	The doctors surgery in Cambridge has some capacity to grow.
Any other issues?	
Can issues be mitigated?	Yes, with upgrades to local infrastructure, including utilities (mains water and sewerage), school capacity and health.

Tier 2 Conclusion:	--- Significant adverse impacts which cannot be effectively mitigated
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Tier 3: Site Specific Factors

Capacity	
Developable area	1.72 ha.
Site capacity	52 dwellings
Density	30 dph

Potential Suitability	
Conclusion	The site is not potentially capable of providing residential development taking account of site factors and constraints.

Availability	
Is the land in single ownership?	Yes
Site ownership status?	The site is promoted by a single landowner.
Legal constraints?	No known constraints.
Is there market interest in the site?	The site has not been marketed but expressions of interest from developers have been received based on the current status of the site. No known impediments to the sale of the land.

When would the site be available for development?	The promoter indicates that the site is available immediately.
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Achievability	
Phasing and delivery of the development	The promoter indicates that the first dwellings could be completed on site in 2011-16
Are there any market factors that would significantly affect deliverability?	None known
Are there any cost factors that would significantly affect deliverability?	Drainage issues may increase development costs.
Could issues identified be overcome?	No known issues
Economic viability?	

Site Assessment Conclusion
Site with no development potential.

Status of Site in Proposed Submission Local Plan 2013
Not allocated for development; outside Development Framework; Green Belt.