

**LAND WEST OF HAUXTON ROAD (SECTOR 7)**

**GREEN BELT REVIEW**

ON BEHALF OF GROSVENOR DEVELOPMENTS, USS LTD. AND  
TRUMPINGTON MEADOWS LAND COMPANY (TMLC).

JANUARY 2015

FINAL

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# Land West of Hauxton Road (Sector 7): Green Belt Review

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Terence O'Rourke on behalf of Grosvenor Developments, USS Ltd and Trumpington Meadows Land Company (TMLC). Its purpose is to consider Matter 6A, question 2, namely:

*“Does the Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (December 2012) provide a robust justification for the proposed boundary changes? If not, why not?”*

- 1.2 Reference is made to a number of relevant documents, which are listed in full in Appendix A. For ease, the main reports that are central to this question are listed here in chronological order:

- Inner Green Belt Boundary Study, Cambridge City Council 2002
- Cambridge Green Belt Study: A vision of the Future for Cambridge in its Green Belt Setting, LDA September 2002
- Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment, Cambridge City Council April 2003
- Trumpington Green Belt Appraisal, Terence O'Rourke, July 2012
- Inner Green Belt Boundary Study, Cambridge City Council /South Cambridgeshire District Council, December 2012

- 1.3 In chapter 3.0 this review considers the Councils' general approach and methodology in assessing the Green Belt boundary and appropriateness of potential development sites in 2012. Chapter 4 goes on to demonstrate that flaws in the process and methodology has resulted in an incorrect assessment for Sector 7.

- 1.4 Sector 7, as defined in the Councils' report, is also referred to as Land to West of Hauxton Road, part of which is being promoted by Grosvenor Development, USS Ltd and TMLC as part of the Cambridge Sporting Village proposals. Figure 1 shows the location and extent of this land.

- 1.5 It should be noted that since 2012, significant new development has taken place in the Southern Fringe. How this has potentially altered the character and value of the land in terms contribution to the Green Belt is noted when relevant.

- 1.6 This review has been undertaken by fully qualified landscape architects. As well as a desktop review, the site and the surrounding landscape was visited in October and December of 2014, and again in January 2015.

## 2.0 Purpose of Green Belt

2.1 The Councils' 2012 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study outlines four specific criteria for Cambridge that are relevant when considering the inclusion of land within the green belt. These are listed below:

1. Provide green separation between existing villages and any urban edge of Cambridge
2. To preserve the setting and special character of Cambridge
3. Ensure the protection of green corridors running from open countryside into the urban area
4. A vision of the city and of the qualities to be safeguarded

2.2 In terms of Green Belt policy, it is worthy of note that the general approach adopted by the Councils' in their 2012 report is at odds with the principles established by the Structure Plan Review in 2003.

2.3 In 2.1 of the Councils' report it outlines the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt. Paragraph 8.10 of the Structure Plan Panel Report clearly states that in the case of Cambridge it only has a Green Belt because it is a historic city. As such, the primary aim of the Green Belt was defined in the Structure Plan as being:

*'To Preserve the special character of Cambridge and to maintain the quality of its setting'*

2.4 A secondary purpose was states as being: *'To prevent further coalescence of Settlements'*

2.5 It was agreed in the Structure Plan and enshrined in the subsequent Local Plan and Core Strategy that the purposes of the Cambridge Green Belt are to:

- *'Preserve the unique character of Cambridge as a compact, dynamic City with a thriving historic centre;*
- *Maintain and enhance the quality of its setting; and*
- *Prevent communities in the environs of Cambridge from merging into one another and with the City.'*

2.6 The four criteria that the Councils have used in their assessment do not follow these agreed purposes. Significant to Sector 7, the Councils' criteria introduce a new category relating to green corridors running in the open countryside. This landscape feature in the Green Belt should more correctly have been considered as part of the three agreed purposes enshrined in policy. It will be shown later in chapter 4 that for Sector 7 this anomaly in the Councils' methodology has incorrectly focused too much attention on the River Cam corridor rather than on the wider

agreed Green Belt issues relevant to the unique character of Cambridge and its setting.

- 2.7 For consistency, in chapter 4 we have assessed Sector 7 using the same four purposes as the Councils' study, as this helps to highlight this departure from the agreed policy context.
- 2.8 It is important to stress that we acknowledge that the River Cam corridor is a valid consideration, and this is clearly demonstrated later in this review. The salient point here is that it should have been assessed in combination with other important considerations relevant to the setting of Cambridge, rather than as a '*purpose*' in its own right.

### **3.0 Review of Inner Green Belt Boundary Study, 2012**

- 3.1 Our review of the Councils' 2012 Inner Green Belt Study has highlighted a number of issues that we consider bring into question the robustness of the study in terms of assessing the availability of land that could be released from the Green Belt. These are outlined below:

#### **Approach and Methodology**

- 3.2 There are a number of irregularities relating to the methodology. A key flaw in the study relates to the overall approach. The study has tended to amalgamate areas of land into as large as possible parcels. This necessarily means that the impact and assessment for the whole area is based on the most sensitive characteristic. By way of example, for Sector 7 the whole area has been classified as River corridor, whereas the sector is in fact made of different character areas with varying sensitivities.
- 3.3 Had the different characteristics of the sectors been correctly assessed, differing sensitivities within the overall zones would have been determined. Given that the purpose of the study was to establish land, of whatever size, that could be released from the Green Belt without harm, this is a significant omission.
- 3.4 In table 2 of the Councils' study there is a category relating to the importance of rural character to the Green Belt. There is no category relating to the importance of recreational uses, which in the County Council's 2003 Landscape Character Assessment is clearly stated as been an appropriate and positive land use in the Green Belt. In the same table, the assessment data are repeated and combined with other considerations. This makes it very difficult to attribute the correct sensitivity to the relevant Green Belt criteria, or to understand the rationale or outcome of the assessment. The lack of commentary for each of the assessment data exacerbates this weakness in the methodology.

#### **Consistency with other reports**

- 3.5 It is very apparent that the Councils' 2012 study contradicts earlier reports on Green Belt, including those prepared by them or by consultants appointed on their behalf. Perhaps the most significant contradiction in terms of Sector 7 is that the Councils' conclude that the whole zone is Defining Character, the highest category. In the LDA 2002 Green Belt report, a significant portion of the site next to Hauxton Road is assessed as '*Connective*' landscape which is the lowest category (other than negative features) and:

*'lack individual distinction or do not play a significant contribution to the setting of the city'.*

- 3.6 No mention is made of the M11 motorway that borders the site that has been assessed in the same report as a *Visually Detracting* landscape in the Green Belt. The opportunity to enhance this negative feature is also ignored.

#### **Evidence base**

- 3.7 Given the scope and important of the assessment, there is a lack of actual evidence to back up the conclusions. For each of the sector's there are no photographs or plans. For Sector 7, which is a very large area of land with complex boundaries and interfaces, the commentary in the table is very sparse and does not adequately convey the complexity of the sites. The conclusion for Sector 7 that the importance to setting is **Very High** is completely unsubstantiated.

#### **Inaccuracies in the baseline information**

- 3.8 Within the report there are a number of errors. In chapter 4, these have been highlighted in terms of Sector 7. For example, views of Trumpington Church are noted as being important, but the study fails to anticipate that these views will be lost once consented development at the Southern Fringe is built out.
- 3.9 Lastly, although not a failing of the report, it is important that the landscape and context in the southern edge of Cambridge has changed significantly since 2012. This is relevant to Sector 7 as set out in the next chapter.

## 4.0 (Sector 7) Land West of Hauxton Road

4.1 This section shows how the significant flaws in the Councils' methodologies when applied to Sector 7 has resulted in an incorrect assessment for each of the four Green Belt purposes in 2.2 of their report.

### **Purpose 1: Provide green separation between existing villages and any urban edge of Cambridge**

4.2 In the original 2002 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study by the City Council the analysis of Land West of Hauxton Road did not raise separation as a consideration. It classifies this land as being of **low value** in terms of maintaining separation between existing villages and any urban edge.

4.3 The LDA 2002 Cambridge Green Belt Study also did not highlight this as a function of this part of the Green Belt. On figure 1641LP/09 in that report it can be seen that the land is not highlighted as providing separation, unlike the land to the east of Hauxton Road. Again, in the 2003 Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment the separation diagram on page 16 does not highlight Land West of Hauxton Road as providing this Green Belt function.

4.4 Our own Green Belt appraisal undertaken in 2012 supports the Councils' own view that coalescence is not a consideration. The detailed analysis contained in this report concluded that intervening land between Sector 7 and nearby villages is more than sufficient to maintain settlement separation. Reference to Viewpoints 8 and 9 in that report clearly shows that land within Sector 7 is not important in providing separation between the urban edge of Cambridge and the villages of Hauxton and Great Shelford.

4.5 Unhelpfully, in the Councils' 2012 Inner Green Belt report the issue of settlement separation is combined with other considerations such as setting and character when making an assessment of the land's value. However, on Plan 3 in the report it is again clear that the land is not seen as providing a 'Critical Gap', which is the new term used in the updated report.

4.6 It can therefore be seen that Land West of Hauxton Road has consistently been assessed as not being important when considering settlement separation. As part of this review, the site was revisited at the end of 2014. It is our assessment that nothing has changed to alter this conclusion.

## **Purpose 2: To preserve the setting and special character of Cambridge**

- 4.7 In reviewing the Councils' 2012 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study, it is our view that for Sector 7 the report is both inaccurate and too broad in its assessment. As a consequence, its conclusion on the importance of this land in preserving the setting and special character of Cambridge is also incorrect. Recent development, since the 2012 report was prepared, has also changed the baseline conditions relevant to the setting and special character of Cambridge.
- 4.8 A significant anomaly of the 2012 Inner Green Belt is that as part of its assessment of Sector 7 it considers the land as a single zone, thereby combining landscape character areas of differing sensitivity into a single assessment.
- 4.9 It is highly significant that in the LDA 2002 Cambridge Green Belt Study the portion of land within Sector 7 currently being promoted for development was not assessed as Distinctive or Supporting character, but instead as the lower category of Connective character. This area was categorised as:
- '...areas of townscape / landscape which are an integral part of the city and its environs, but lack individual distinction, or do not play a significant contribution to the setting of the city'.*
- 4.10 The same report also defined the landscape character areas for this part of Cambridge. On plan 1641LP/05 it can be seen that the River Cam Corridor character area did not extend into Sector 7. However, in the Councils' 2012 report it now incorrectly assesses the whole area as *River Corridor*. As such, it also incorrectly defines the whole of Sector 7 as Defining Character, the highest category. This contradicts the LDA 2002 report, which in our view correctly shows the land next to the River Cam as being the more important Supportive landscape and the land immediately west of Hauxton Road as the lower category of Connective character.
- 4.11 As part of the 2006 consented Trumpington Meadows scheme, a Country Park has now been created along the River Cam. This new landscape has a distinct character similar to Grantchester Meadows, and is now consistent with the River Cam Corridor character area. Figure 2 shows the approved Country Park plan. Figure 3 shows the Green Finger/ River Corridor that was determined in the Council's 2003 Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment. On both of these plans the area covered by Sector 7 has been added. Despite the difference in the scale of the plans, it can be seen that the Green Finger / River Corridor and the Country Park are broadly consistent in terms of their extent within Sector 7. The Councils' 2012 report therefore contradicts its own 2003 landscape character assessment and is not representative of

the site's current character. The river corridor in Sector 7 should have been assessed separately because it has a different character and is of greater sensitivity. Conversely, the remainder land of Sector 7 is of lower value and if it had been assessed separately a different conclusion would have been reached.

- 4.12 It should be noted that the higher sensitivity River Cam Corridor within Sector 7 is not proposed to be omitted from the Green Belt and will be safeguarded in perpetuity. This is discussed further below under Purpose 3.
- 4.13 The land immediately west of Hauxton Road lies between the consented housing and the M11 motorway. While this land is less sensitive, it does play a role in terms of the southern approach into Cambridge and it abuts the River Cam Corridor. These are important considerations and are addressed below.
- 4.14 Figure 4 indicates the extent of the proposed additional housing and sporting facilities within Sector 7.
- 4.15 On the same plan we have indicated the ridgeline that crosses the land. This accords with TMLC's original assessment in the Design and Access Statement for the 2006 consented scheme, and with the Council's own topography plan in its 2002 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study (see Map 2). Importantly it can be seen that the new housing does not extend beyond this ridgeline. Indeed, the topography has been used as a key landscape feature to determine an appropriate development edge. A wide landscape buffer between this and the M11 has been maintained to provide a strong landscape setting in the foreground. This is proposed to be used for extensive sporting facilities, which is considered to be both appropriate and in character (see Purpose 3).
- 4.16 Plan 3 of the Councils' 2012 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study does not indicate the land between the consented housing and the M11 motorway as being important to *Setting Views* (the most important category). It does show a *Minor View* across this land to Trumpington Church. However, views of the church will be lost once the consented scheme is built out. It is our assessment that the appearance of the new urban edge and the landscape in the foreground will be far more important in terms of the approach to Cambridge, rather than the vista to Trumpington Church which will be lost in views from Hauxton Road as part of the consented Southern Fringe development.
- 4.17 Plan 3 also indicates *Significant Views* across Sector 7 towards Cambridge from land to the south, near Hauxton. The location of these views is incorrectly shown on land that is not publicly accessible. As part of our 2012 Green Belt Appraisal viewpoints were taken from land to the south that is accessible to the public. These viewpoints have been

retaken in January 2015 and are included in this report (see figures 5 to 6). The location of the viewpoints are shown on Figure 7.

- 4.18 There are a number of important setting issues that the viewpoints help illustrate:
1. The new Clay Farm development edge to the east of Hauxton Road is currently very exposed and the corner building dominates the skyline. While planting associated with that development will go some way to mitigate this, further planting on TMLC land could greatly enhance views of this edge making it less abrupt, especially from the new cycleway in the Country Park.
  2. The M11 motorway and the noise barrier on the southern edge of the motorway remain visually intrusive (the LDA 2002 Cambridge Green Belt Study rightly assessed this as a *Visually Detracting* feature in the landscape). Within the Country Park, a combination of earthworks and planting has significantly mitigated the adverse visual impact of the M11. The opportunity exists to continue this approach immediately west of Hauxton Road to further mitigate the impact of the motorway. This could result in a major enhancement to the way the southern approach into Cambridge is currently perceived.
  3. Because the new development follows the ridgeline and does not extend down to the slope, it would not appear materially closer in views from the M11 motorway or land to the south. A sensitively designed development edge in combination with a strong landscape framework would assimilate the development edge into the landscape. This would be consistent with the Councils' own recommendations in its 2012 report that suggests further planting to the new development edge.
- 4.19 As well as defining the whole area as River Corridor, the Council's assessment also determines that the land is of **High** importance to physical separation, distribution, setting, scale and character of Green Belt villages because it abuts the river corridor. The rationale and methodology for this part of the assessment is both misleading and inaccurate. For example, the proximity of the River Corridor has nothing to do with character of Green Belt villages or separation. The land also abuts the M11 motorways and Hauxton Road, which have a distinctive character quite separate from the River Corridor, and in the case of the motorway are detracting features in the Green Belt. The report does not even mention these other important characteristics of the site. In terms of the River Corridor it is important to note that based on the proposals being promoted for land west of Hauxton Road, the majority the River Cam Corridor will abut the new formal recreational rather than new housing, which it has been shown is a common and positive landscape arrangement elsewhere in the Green Belt.

- 4.20 In terms of further structure planting, the opportunity exists to build upon the landscape proposals that have already been implemented. Any enhancement measure would be based on the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines, June 1991, which contains excellent guidelines on how settlement edges and the landscape approach can be enhanced to reflect local character.
- 4.21 In conclusion, it is apparent that the Councils' 2012 report incorrectly assesses the land immediately west of Hauxton Road as being of **Very High** importance to setting. Our review has instead determined that part of this land could be released from the Green Belt without impacting on the setting and special character of Cambridge.

**Purpose 3: Ensure the protection of green corridors running from open countryside into the urban area**

- 4.22 When the original master plan was prepared for Trumpington Meadows it was recognised that the redevelopment of the Monsanto site had the potential to deliver one of the core visioning principles for the city as defined in the LDA 2002 Cambridge Green Belt Study. This was to safeguard green fingers into the city. The River Cam corridor is the principal 'green corridor' and the Trumpington Meadows site was unique in that it abutted a 3.3km section of the River Cam to the south of Grantchester Meadows. When the land was in agricultural use, the actual river corridor was very narrow, with open arable land of limited landscape and biodiversity interest extending right up to the river's edge.
- 4.23 The opportunity to enhance this key Green Belt objective was central to the master plan of the consented scheme. A new 60ha Country Park has now been created by TMLC, which has significantly widened the strategic green fingers into the city. The first section of a traffic free strategic cycleway from Hauxton into Trumpington was opened to the public in October 2014 and the whole Country Park will be formally opened in summer 2015.
- 4.24 This is relevant because TMLC has made the commitment to safeguard this strategic open space in perpetuity for the benefit of existing and new residents of Trumpington. As noted previously, Sector 7 includes this strategic green corridor, which is why this land has been incorrectly assessed by the council as **Very High** sensitivity. The green corridor that TMLC has created is not proposed to be omitted from the Green Belt.
- 4.25 The proposed release of land from the Green Belt for residential development has been considered earlier under Purpose 2. It has been shown that this will not impact on the setting or the special character of Cambridge, including the River Cam corridor. What is particularly relevant here is the proposed sporting facilities. It is our view that this type of land use is wholly appropriate next to the green corridor and could be designed as an complementary extension to the existing Country Park,

thereby enhancing it. Indeed this marriage of informal and formal open space on the edge of Cambridge is a defining characteristic of the city's Green Belt that the Council is seeking to protect.

- 4.26 This is particularly true for an extensive area of the Green Belt land west of Cambridge, which is acknowledged as being of greatest sensitivity. The full extent of formal recreation to the south and west of Cambridge is shown on figure 8. In views from the west including the M11 motorway and from Coton Nature Reserve the openness of the formal recreation is a positive feature of the Green Belt.
- 4.27 In addition to the existing sporting facilities, the City Council has granted permission for a new sports ground off Barton Road and a new tennis club off Grantchester Road for Downing College. In addition, the university's north west development includes outdoor pitches and at NIAB the intention is to locate school playing fields on the urban edge. All of these new facilities are located within the Green Belt and have been deemed appropriate by the Council in accordance with their own guidance in the 2003 Landscape Character Assessment (see 4.31 below).
- 4.28 The strategic River Cam corridor is also shown on figure 8. This includes Trumpington and Grantchester Meadows. It can be seen that to the north of Grantchester Meadows a combination of informal recreation, sports facilities and agricultural land are the principal land use of the Green Belt.
- 4.29 On the same plan the potential zone for sports facilities at Trumpington Meadows is shown. Two key facts are evident; firstly, it is clear that the existing green corridor at Trumpington will remain unaffected, and secondly, that a similar marriage of informal and formal recreation set in a rural landscape will be established at Trumpington, which is one of the unique characteristics of the Cambridge Green Belt so valued by the Councils.
- 4.30 In figures 9,10 and 11, a selection of photographs are provided to illustrate the existing formal sports facilities located within the Green Belt. These include the sports pitches at Grantchester Meadows along with university pitches on the west edge of Cambridge. It can be seen that these existing sites comprise a range of facilities including grass pitches, lit hard surface pitches, fencing, running tracks and various structures including stadiums, pavilions and parking. Whilst it is acknowledged that the sporting facilities must be carefully designed and contained within a strong landscape framework, it is clear that this type of land use is both common in the Green Belt and a positive defining feature.
- 4.31 This view is endorsed in the Council's, 2003 Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment, in which it states:

*'The College and school playing fields are a valuable landscape and environmental resource, often providing views over large tracks of land. Hedges and hedgerow trees, providing features and habitat, bound many of the playing fields. The college playing fields are mostly found off Queen's Road, Barton Road, Grantchester Road and Huntington Road. Many are located on the edge of the town and provide a good transition between the built area and the rural hinterland.' (emphasis added)*

- 4.32 This arrangement is exactly what could be created at Trumpington Meadows.
- 4.33 It is also relevant that both national and local policy promote recreational uses in the Green Belt.
- 4.34 National guidance on Green Belts state that once Green Belt are defined, local authorities should plan positively to:

*'enhance the beneficial uses of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide ... outdoor sport and recreation '.*

- 4.35 Policy CSF2 of the Councils' Southern Fringe AAP states that development of Trumpington West should:

*'provide opportunities for landscape improvements, outdoor recreation and public access to the open countryside around Trumpington'*

- 4.36 In conclusion, the green corridor, which has been significantly enhanced by TMLC as part of the consented 2006 scheme, will be protected. Provision of adjacent sporting facilities will in our view strengthen the River Cam green corridor and be wholly in character. It is clear that in reviewing Sector 7 the Councils' report has failed to consider the opportunity to plan positively to enhance beneficial uses such as sport provision within the Green Belt in accordance with the NPPF.

#### **Purpose 4: A vision of the city and of the qualities to be safeguarded**

- 4.37 The vision for the city and qualities to be safeguarded were set out in the LDA Cambridge Green Belt Study. For land west of Hauxton, these were reviewed in detail as part of our 2012 Trumpington Green Belt Appraisal. Rather than repeat here the detailed findings, we have provided a summary below against the original list of qualities to be safeguarded. The summary has been updated to reflect changes that have occurred since 2012.

Qualities to be safeguarded	No impact	Impact	Comment
A large historic core relative to the size of the city as a whole A city focussed on the historic core	√		Not relevant to Sector 7. Development of the scale proposed within the M11 corridor will not materially alter this quality.
Short and/or characteristic approaches to Cambridge from the edge	√		Development at land west of Hauxton would extend the city by only 200 metres. The distance therefore between the urban gateway and historic core (or “distinctive” Cambridge as defined in the LDA 2002 report) will not materially change. The perception of a compact city when entering Cambridge on Trumpington Road will be maintained.
Key views of Cambridge from the surrounding countryside	√		Sector 7 is rarely viewed in context of wider Cambridge and historic core and as such the Councils’ 2012 report (Plan 3) does not show important <u>setting</u> views across this land. Minor view to Trumpington church will be lost by consented development. The significant views indicated further south are shown from an area that is not accessible to the public. Our detailed visual assessment has shown that further opportunities exist to enhance the setting.
Significant areas of distinctive and supportive townscape and landscape	√		The area of Sector 7 that is being proposed for release from the Green Belt was not assessed as Distinctive or Supporting landscape in LDA 2002 report. The Councils’ 2012 Green Belt report has incorrectly determined this land as Very High Importance.
Topography providing a framework to Cambridge	√		Land in Sector 7 being considered for development would not impinge into the river corridor or up onto the surrounding hills. Locally, development would remain within ‘plateau’ determined by our own assessment and as shown in the 2002 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study

A soft green edge to the city	√		Significant planting already proposed at Trumpington will create a very strong green framework in which the area of search will be viewed. A green swathe of formal recreation between the M11 and new development edge can maintain the guiding principle of a soft green edge. Opportunities exist to further strengthen the landscape enhancement works on agricultural land that can soften the intrusive M11 motorway and highly visible development east of Hauxton Road.
Green fingers/corridors into the city	√		The strategic green corridor along River Cam is retained and potential exists to extend country park around a new enhanced southern development edge within M11 curtilage.
Designated sites and areas enriching the setting of Cambridge	√		Trumpington Conservation Area / views of the church, Bryon's Pool Local Nature Reserve and the SAM protected with the new Country Park would not be impacted. No designation lie within the land considered for release from the Green Belt.
Long distance footpaths and bridleways providing links between Cambridge and the open Countryside	√		Potential for significant further enhancement.
Elements and features contributing positively to the character of the landscape setting	√		New scheme has the potential to build upon the landscape framework established for Trumpington Meadows, providing a new green park viewed in the context of the wider agricultural land. Views of M11 motorway, which is visually detracting, can be enhanced.
The distribution, physical separation, setting, scale and character of necklace villages	√		No impact

<p>A city set in a landscape which retains a strong rural character</p>	<p>√</p>		<p>The concept of a compact urban city in strong rural setting would be retained. As in other edge locations of Cambridge, the provision of formal recreation to complement the Country Park will provide a good transition between the built area and the rural hinterland.</p>
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## 5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 This detailed review of the Councils' 2012 Inner Green Belt Boundary Study has determined that:
- The 2012 study is inconsistent with earlier findings and the methodology is not sufficiently robust or accurate to reach an informed decision in terms of an appropriate Green Belt boundary.
  - For Sector 7, these weaknesses in the Councils' study have resulted in an incorrect assessment.
- 5.2 Had Sector 7 been assessed correctly, the report would have determined that the land is made up of areas of differing character and sensitivity.
- 5.3 Our assessment shows that within Sector 7 there is land of lower sensitivity that has the potential to be released for the Green Belt without compromising its defined purposes.
- 5.4 The Councils' study also fails to recognise the positive contribution that recreation land plays in terms of the setting and the unique character of the Cambridge Green Belt. It also does not consider the Councils' obligation under national and local planning policy to look for opportunities to provide outdoor sport and recreation within the Green Belt.

## Appendix A: References and data sources

Countryside Agency, 2002, Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland
Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2002, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan (adopted), 2003
South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted January 2007
South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework – Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan adopted February 2008
Countryside Agency, 1999, Countryside Character Volume 6 East of England
Cambridgeshire County Council, 1991, Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines
Cambridge City Council, 2003, Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment
Landscape Design Associates, 2002, Cambridge Green Belt Study: A Vision of the Future for Cambridge in its Green Belt Setting
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Trumpington Green Belt Appraisal, Terence O'Rourke, July 2012
Inner Green Belt Boundary Study, Cambridge City Council /South Cambridgeshire District Council, December 2012

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