Town & Country Planning Act 1990

Appeal by Axis Land Partnerships Ltd

Against the refusal by South Cambridgeshire
District Council of an Outline application for the
development of land for a Retirement Care Village
in use class C2 comprising housing with care,
communal health, wellbeing and leisure facilities,
public open space, landscaping, car parking.
Access and associated development and the
provision of land for use as countryside park for
public access

on

Land at between Haverhill Road and Hinton Way, Stapleford, Cambridge, CB22 5BQ

LPA reference: S/02929/20/OUT

PINS reference: APP/W0530/W/21/3280395

Landscape Statement of Common Ground

November 2021



Signed:	Signed:
J. M. Billingsten	Dinah Foley-Norman
Name:	Name:
Jonathan Billingsley	Dinah Foley-Norman
On behalf of:	On behalf of:
The Landscape Partnership	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Date:26 November 2021	Date: 25 November 2021

Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Matters of agreement	3
3	Matters of difference	7

Table A – Summary of Landscape Effects

Table B – Summary of Visual Effects

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) relates to the Council's refusal of outline planning application 20/02929 for the development of land for a Retirement Care Village in use class C2 comprising housing with care, communal health, wellbeing and leisure facilities, public open space, landscaping, car parking, access and associated development and the provision of land for use as a Countryside Park for public access on land at between Haverhill Road and Hinton Way, Stapleford, Cambridge, CB22 5BQ ("the Appeal Site").
- 1.2 The Inspector's Note and Directions dated 11th October 2021 requested the preparation of a SoCG dealing with landscape and visual issues
- 1.3 The Landscape and Visual Statement of Common Ground has been agreed by The Landscape Partnership (TLP) on behalf of Axis Land Partnerships ("the Appellant") and South Cambridgeshire District Council (The Council).

2 MATTERS OF AGREEMENT

Methodology

2.1 The application was supported by a Landscape Visual Appraisal (LVA). The Methodology as set out at Appendix 1 of the LVA, follows good practice as set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual assessment (GLVIA3)¹.

Viewpoint selection and photographs

- 2.2 The representative viewpoints (A-M) included within the submitted LVA were agreed with the Council's Landscape Officer in January 2020 (see LVA Appendix 2), prior to the LVA being completed, and are considered sufficient for the assessment.
- 2.3 The Photographs of the Viewpoints included at Appendix 4 of the LVA provide a suitable comparison of summer and winter views. The photographs at Appendix 5 of the LVA are in accordance with the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Type 1 annotated photographs.

Landscape Value

2.4 The site is not situated in an area that is subject to any national or local designations and does not fall within the scope of 'valued landscapes' under Paragraph 174a) of the NPPF, as confirmed at paragraph 134 of the Council's Committee Report, paragraph 3.31 of the LVA and at para 6.5 of Ms Foley-Norman's Proof of Evidence.

Published Landscape character assessments

- 2.5 The Site is located within National Character Area 87 'East Anglian Chalk' which stretches from Letchworth Garden City in the south-west to Newmarket to the north-east.
- 2.6 At a District Level the relevant study which addresses landscape character and forms part of the current evidence base for the adopted 2018 Local Plan, is the Cambridge Inner Green Belt Study (CIGBS) produced by LDA Design in 2015 for both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 2.7 Within the CIBGS the Site falls within the Chalk Hills Landscape Type and Landscape Character Area 3B Gog Magog Hills. The settlement of Stapleford and Great Shelford and land to the south and east

^{1 1} Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition, April 2013

- is located in the River Valleys Landscape Type and Landscape Character Area 4B Granta Valley. The areas of the LCAs are shown in the GIGBS at Figure 8 and on Figure 02 of the LVA.
- An updated Landscape Character Assessment (Feb. 2021) has been produced by Chris Blandford Associates for the Greater Cambridge Shared Partnership and forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. In this assessment the appeal site falls within the Lowland Farmlands Landscape Type and Landscape Character Area 3D Cam and Granta Tributaries Lowlands Farmlands. The land to the north of the appeal site is located within the Chalk Hills Landscape Type and Landscape Character Area 7B Gog Magog Hills. Both LCA locations are shown at Appendix 2 Figure 04 of Mr Billingsley's evidence.

Proposals for the Retirement Care Village

- 2.9 The proposed retirement village would occupy the lower lying and flatter part of the site with a gain in elevation starting towards the northern part of Area A.
- 2.10 The site access works would result in the loss of approximately 185m of the existing hedgerow along Haverhill Road. Mr Billingsley (PoE 5.7b) indicated a length of c 250m would be lost based on the Tree Survey. Ms Foley-Norman (PoE 5.3.1.1) indicated a minimum loss of 160m. Based on a remeasurement of the most up to date site access drawing (SLR Drawing 406.09693.00002.14 H 11.2) it is agreed that 25m of hedge could be retained to the south and 40m to the north. This combined length of 65m if removed from the total 250m gives the figure of 185m. The length of existing hedge lost could be replaced with a new hedge which could achieve a height of c.2-2.5m within 8 -10 years.
- 2.11 The application is in outline with only the submitted Parameter Plans being for approval. A future reserved matters application would be able to address a number of the concerns raised by Ms Foley-Norman in relation to the illustrative layout.
- 2.12 The alternative Parameter Plan 008A, which restricts the maximum height of development to 9m would result in some benefits compared with the 12m scheme shown on Parameter Plan 008 including to the fit, in terms of height, with existing properties to the edge of Stapleford.
- 2.13 The change in height to 9m would not result in the assessed magnitude of change and significance judgements altering from those in either the LVA or evidence of Ms Foley-Norman or Mr Billingsley.

Landscape Effects

2.14 The effects of the proposals on the appeal site have been assessed using landscape units of varying scale from the national level to the site scale. Table A (see below) provides a summary of the judgements made in the LVA and Proofs of Evidence of Dinah Foley-Norman and Jonathan Billingsley.

Where there is agreement on the level of significance of visual effects, the significance columns are shaded in green.

Visual effects

- 2.15 The most open public aspects from roads of the retirement village area are from Haverhill Road (LVA Viewpoints C, D, E, G, H and I) which runs directly past the Site.
- 2.16 Public views of the appeal site from Stapleford village including Gog Magog Way and Chalk Hill (LVA Viewpoints A and B) are restricted by built form and vegetation.
- 2.17 There would be no views of the retirement village area from Hinton Way (Viewpoints L and M) due to containing landform and vegetation.
- 2.18 Views from Rights of Way are limited to a single Route Bridleway S2 to the south-east. This passes through the open landscape of the Granta Valley from where there are 360 degree views including views to the chalk hills and towards Stapleford village (as illustrated by Viewpoint K).
- 2.19 Viewpoint F from the single access track road to Stapleford cemetery west of the site reveals part of the site immediately to the north of the existing buildings on Gog Magog Way, Haverhill Road and Chalk Hill.
- 2.20 There would be an elevated view of the appeal site from the north-east of the Magog Down close to Little Trees Hill which has public access.
- 2.21 There would be no intervisibility between the appeal site and the city of Cambridge.
- 2.22 There is no existing public access on the appeal site.
- 2.23 Table B (see below) provides a summary of the judgements made in the LVA and Proofs of Evidence of Ms Foley-Norman and Mr Billingsley. Where there is agreement on the level of significance of visual effects columns are shaded in green.
- 2.24 There is agreement on the level of effect at Viewpoint locations (including those amended due to the change in the length of hedgerow removed from Haverhill Road) A, B, D, E, F, G (Year 1 only) and J.

Landscape Proposals

2.25 In most cases there is a reduction in the level of any adverse effects identified from Year 1 to Year 15 for both landscape character and visual receptors. This reflects the establishment of the proposed mitigation as shown on the Landscape Parameters Plan 009 over time.

Effects on Green Belt

2.26 There is agreement that there would be an effect on openness from the Retirement Care Village part of the proposals and that the Green Belt purpose to safeguard the countryside from encroachment would also be affected. There is disagreement on the level of the effect.

3 MATTERS OF DIFFERENCE

Landscape Effects

- 3.1 The approach to the assessment of landscape effects from the proposals differs since:
 - a. The LVA considers landscape effects on the appeal site in two component parts, Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park. This was done by the author of the LVA since the two parts comprise different land uses and locations within the appeal site with variations in susceptibility to the specific type of change. Mr Billingsley considers that the approach used in the LVA identifies the worst case situation from the retirement care village. The LVA Addendum (Section 3) includes consideration of the appeal site as a whole. Ms Foley-Norman considers the appeal site should be assessed as a whole as otherwise the findings are skewed if made in isolation and level of effects underestimated.
 - b. The LVA and Mr Billingsley consider that Area A part of the site is outside the core of the Gog Magog Chalk Hills LCA 3B (CIGBS) and is more representative of the Cam and Granta Tributaries Lowland Farmlands as defined in the CBA LCA study that forms part of the evidence base to the emerging Local Plan (JB PoE 4.7-4.9). Ms Foley-Norman considers that the Appeal site is 'irrefutably part of the Gog Magog Chalk Hills LCA' (DFN PoE 6.11.4). This difference leads to a variation in judgement on the sensitivity of the appeal site to accommodate the proposed change and in particular the Retirement Care Village within Area A and as identified in Table A.
- 3.2 Table A (see below) attached to this Statement of Common Ground identifies differences of judgement on the significance of landscape effects between Ms Foley-Norman and Mr Billingsley, with relevant columns being highlighted in pink in the table. The differences of judgements focus on the District Level, Local Level and the Site Level at Year 15.
- 3.3 Other matters of difference relating to character include:
 - a. If the existing development adjacent to the appeal site on Gog Magog Way, Chalk Hill and Haverhill Road are 'somewhat isolated' from the village proper or forms a coherent part of it.
 - b. The scenic quality and perceptual aspects of the appeal site in relation to assessing its landscape value and whether it is appropriate to consider the appeal site in two parts (A and B) related to the different proposed land uses or whether the site should be assessed as a whole.

c. The difference in urban form of the existing adjacent development and the urban form of the developed area of the appeal site.

Visual effects

3.4 There is a difference of opinion on the level of effect at Viewpoint location G (Haverhill Road looking south) (Year15) and for residential properties to the south of the site, primarily at Year 1.

Countryside Park

- 3.5 There are differences concerning the following aspects:
 - a. The extent to which the proposals for the Countryside Park would be urbanizing or in keeping with a semi-natural open space in the rural landscape.
 - b. Whether the proposals for the Countryside Park would be beneficial to general landscape enhancement, recreation and biodiversity (as promoted through Policy CSP5) or they would be harmful to landscape character.

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village (and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline) and Area B Countryside Park as separate. Combined assessment for Site entry on page 3.
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.
- Entry in italics later addition in this table to give assessment of aspects not covered in LVA or Proof of Evidence

Landscape Unit	J Billingsley Sensitivity	D Foley- Norman Sensitivity	J Billingsley Magnitude	D Foley- Norman Magnitude	J Billingsley Significance	D Foley- Norman Significance	Comments
National level: NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk – Year 1	Medium	Not stated	Very Low	Not stated	Negligible	Negligible	
Year 15	Medium	Not stated	Very Low	Not stated	Negligible	Negligible	
District Level: Gog Magog Chalk Hills (LCA 3B CIGBS - 2015)	Medium* (Area A) Low (Area B)	High	Medium (Area A and Area B)	Medium	Moderate Adverse (Area A) Moderate Neutral (Area B) Whole Site = Moderate Adverse	Major- Moderate Adverse	The CIGBS (2015) is the published assessment referred to in the 2018 Local Plan. The CBA LCA (2021) forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. In this study the Appeal site is all located within Cam and Granta Tributaries Lowland Farmlands - LCA 3D. *LCA at Medium – see JB PoE 4.7-4.9.
Year 15	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	High	Low (Area A) Medium (Area B)	Medium	Minor Adverse (Area A) Moderate Beneficial (Area B) Whole Site = Minor Neutral	Moderate- Minor Adverse	

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village (and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline) and Area B Countryside Park as separate. Combined assessment for Site entry on page 3.
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.
- Entry in italics later addition in this table to give assessment of aspects not covered in LVA or Proof of Evidence

Landscape Unit	J Billingsley Sensitivity	D Foley- Norman Sensitivity	J Billingsley Magnitude	D Foley- Norman Magnitude	J Billingsley Significance	D Foley- Norman Significance	Comments
District Level: Granta Valley (LCA 4B CIGBS - 2015)	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium*	Very Low (Area A and Area B)	Medium	Negligible (Area A and Area B) Whole Site = Negligible	Moderate	*Error made in typing judgement for Sensitivity and consequent judgement for Significance in DFN PoE. Now adjusted and also covered in Landscape Rebuttal (para 1.6).
Year 15	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium	Very Low	Medium	Negligible Whole Site = Negligible	Minor	Ditto
Local Area (up to 1km)	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium	Medium/High (Area A) Medium/High (Area B)	Medium/ High	Moderate Adverse (Area A) Moderate Neutral (Area B) Whole Site = Moderate Adverse	Major/ Moderate Adverse	

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village (and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline) and Area B Countryside Park as separate. Combined assessment for Site entry on page 3.
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.
- Entry in italics later addition in this table to give assessment of aspects not covered in LVA or Proof of Evidence

Landscape Unit	J Billingsley Sensitivity	D Foley- Norman Sensitivity	J Billingsley Magnitude	D Foley- Norman Magnitude	J Billingsley Significance	D Foley- Norman Significance	Comments
Local Area Year 15	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium	Medium (Area A) Medium/High Area B)	Medium/ High	Moderate Neutral (Area A) Major/Moderate Beneficial (Area B) Whole site = Moderate/Minor Beneficial	Minor Adverse	
Site	Medium/Lo w (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium	High (Area A and Area B)	High	Major/Moderate Adverse (Area A) Moderate Neutral (Area B) Whole site = Major/Moderate Adverse	Major/ Moderate Adverse	JB includes whole site – See PoE para 6.11
Year 15	Medium/Lo w (Area A) Low (Area B)		High (Area A and Area B)	High	Moderate Neutral (Area A) Major/Moderate Beneficial (Area B) Whole site = Moderate Beneficial	Moderate Adverse	JB includes whole site – See PoE para 6.11

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village (and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline) and Area B Countryside Park as separate. Combined assessment for Site entry on page 3.
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.
- Entry in italics later addition in this table to give assessment of aspects not covered in LVA or Proof of Evidence

Landscape Unit	J Billingsley Sensitivity	D Foley- Norman Sensitivity	J Billingsley Magnitude	D Foley- Norman Magnitude	J Billingsley Significance	D Foley- Norman Significance	Comments
Site Features							
Landform - Year1	Medium	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Not stated	
Landform - Year15	Medium	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Not stated	
Vegetation – Year1	Medium	Not stated	Medium*	High	Moderate Adverse	Major Adverse	JB - Increase from LVA due to increase in hedgerow loss to Haverhill Road. No definite judgement by DFN in PoE due to uncertain length of hedge to be removed. Now clarified (also see Landscape Rebuttal para 6.2).
Vegetation – Year 15	Medium	Not stated	Medium	Medium	Moderate Beneficial	Moderate Adverse	
Land use – Year 1	High	Not stated	High	Not stated	Major Adverse	Not stated	
Land Use - Year 15	High	Not stated	High	Not stated	Major Neutral	Not stated	

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline to south of Area A = worst case part of proposals
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.

Viewpoint	Location	J Billingsley Sensitivity	D Foley- Norman Sensitivity	J Billingsley Magnitude	D Foley- Norman Magnitude	J Billingsley Significance	D Foley-Norman Significance	Comments
A – Year 1	Gog Magog Way	Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Receptor at Viewpoints A and B = pedestrians and road users. See end of Table for residents
A – Year 15		Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Ditto
B – Year 1	Gog Magog Way /Chalk Hill	Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Ditto
B – Year 15		Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Ditto
C – Year 1	Haverhill Road	Medium	Not stated	Medium	Not stated	Moderate Adverse	Not stated	No definite judgement by DFN on magnitude of effect and significance on views due to uncertain length of hedge loss. See para 6.18.2 of DFN proof. Also see Landscape Rebuttal. Agree views most affected are D and G.
C – Year 15		Medium	Not stated	Medium	Not stated	Moderate Adverse	Not stated	
D – Year 1	Haverhill Road	Medium	Not stated	High*	Not stated	Major/Moderate Adverse	Major/ Moderate Adverse	*JB Magnitude increased from LVA based on extent of loss of roadside hedge. Significance unchanged.

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline to south of Area A = worst case part of proposals
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.

Viewpoint	Location	J Billingsley Sensitivity	D Foley- Norman Sensitivity	J Billingsley Magnitude	D Foley- Norman Magnitude	J Billingsley Significance	D Foley-Norman Significance	Comments
D – Year 15		Medium	Not stated	Medium	Not stated	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	
E – Year 1	Haverhill Road	Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	
E – Year 15		Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	
F – Year 1	Stapleford Cemetery	Medium	Not stated	Medium	Not stated	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	
F- Year 15		Medium	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Moderate/Minor Adverse	Moderate/Minor Adverse	
G – Year 1	Haverhill Road	Low	Not stated	High *	Not stated	Major /Moderate Adverse*	Major /Moderate Adverse	*JB Magnitude and significance increased from LVA based on extent of loss of roadside hedge.
G - Year 15		Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Moderate Adverse	
H – Year 1	Haverhill Road	Low	Not stated	Medium	Not stated	Moderate Adverse		
H- Year 15		Low	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse		
I – Year 1	Haverhill Road	Medium	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse		
I- Year 15		Medium	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse		

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline to south of Area A = worst case part of proposals
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.

Viewpoint	Location	J Billingsley Sensitivity	D Foley- Norman Sensitivity	J Billingsley Magnitude	D Foley- Norman Magnitude	J Billingsley Significance	D Foley-Norman Significance	Comments
J – Year 1	Magog Down/Little Trees Hill	High	Not stated	Medium	Not stated	Major/Moderate Adverse	Major/Moderate Adverse	
J – Year 15		High	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	
K – Year 1	Bridleway S2	High	Not stated	Medium	Not stated	Moderate Adverse	Not stated	
K- Year 15		High	Not stated	Low	Not stated	Minor Adverse	Not stated	
L – Year 1	Hinton Way	Low	Not stated	No Change	Not stated	Negligible	Not stated	
L- Year 15		Low	Not stated	No Change	Not stated	Negligible	Not stated	
M – Year 1	Hinton Way	Low	Not stated	No Change	Not stated	Negligible	Not stated	
M- Year 15		Low	Not stated	No Change	Not stated	Negligible	Not stated	
Residential V	/iews							
Viewpoint B – Year 1	Gog Magog Way, Chalk Hill and Haverhill Road	High	Not stated	High	Not stated	Some properties Major	Medium	See J Billingsley PoE para 7.12 D Foley-Norman PoE para 6.18.7-8. NB LVA did not assess residential receptors at this location

- Judgments in the table are based on entries in LVA and J Billingsley Proof of Evidence and D Foley-Norman Proof of Evidence
- J Billingsley Assessment based on Area A Retirement Care Village and Parameter Plan 008 12m max ridgeline to south of Area A = worst case part of proposals
- D Foley-Norman Assessment based on whole site i.e. Area A Retirement Care Village and Area B Countryside Park combined
- Boxes shaded green where agreement on significance. Boxes shade pink where difference on significance.

Viewpoint	Location	J Billingsley	D Foley-	J Billingsley	D Foley-	J Billingsley	D Foley-Norman	Comments
		Sensitivity	Norman	Magnitude	Norman	Significance	Significance	
			Sensitivity		Magnitude			
Viewpoint	Gog Magog	High	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	Specific level not	Minor	See J Billingsley PoE para 7.12
B – Year 15	Way, Chalk					stated – but		D Foley-Norman PoE para
	Hill and					reduced over time		6.18.7-8
	Haverhill							NB LVA did not assess
	Road							residential receptors at this
								location