

Land between 41 Gog Magog Way and Hill Farm (on the bend)

Council's Initial Response

The Core Strategy Examination Report confirmed the sequential approach to housing development in the district in Policy ST/2, with edge of Cambridge at the top of the sequence followed by the new town of Northstowe and lastly in the rural area in Rural Centres and other villages. It considered the anticipated level of housing provision by 2016 at those stages with 4,180 on the edge of Cambridge in the Area Action Plans (AAPs) submitted alongside the Core Strategy, 4,800 dwellings at Northstowe and 10,050 in the rural area. As such, it identifies a shortfall of 1,000 dwellings. It says that knowledge of potential additional sites, principally those put forward by objectors, satisfied the Inspectors that the "housing requirement will be met through the agency of the other submitted DPDs which are to be examined in the near future, together with the AAP for North-West Cambridge" (paragraphs 3.18 and 3.19). The Core Strategy Examination Report also considered the merits of further development at Cambourne (section 7 of the report). It concluded that there should not be an increase in the proposed dwelling contribution in Cambourne in the light of the sequential approach to the allocation of housing land, and reiterates the view that there are sites on the edge of Cambridge which might be suitable for allocation in one or other of the submitted DPDs (paragraph 6.1). It says that the "possibility of meeting the shortfall in housing supply on the edge of Cambridge outweighs the sustainability case for further substantial development at Cambourne" (paragraph 7.6). Specifically in respect of the rural area, the Report states that "it would not be appropriate to increase the amount of development proposed for villages in general, to allocate more land in villages, or, in principle, to expand village frameworks in order to allow for more development" (paragraph 6.1). In the light of the above, there is no justification for any new allocations in the rural area. Notwithstanding the above, if further sites were needed to be found in the rural area, sites within Rural Centres would be considered first, and only failing that would sites on the edges of Rural Centres be considered, with non-Green Belt sites considered prior to those within the Green Belt. Only if suitable sites could not be found at Rural Centres would the next stage in the rural settlement hierarchy be considered and so on. Policy DP/7 in the Development Control Policies DPD defines the Village Framework and paragraph 2.23 explains that frameworks have been drawn to take account the present extent of the built-up area, development committed by planning permissions and other proposals included in the LDF. The Cambridge Green Belt boundary abuts the framework. Therefore the site is outside the framework and within Green Belt. Paragraph 2.6 of PPG2 clearly state that "detailed Green Belt boundaries defined in adopted local plans should be altered only exceptionally." The land fulfils the purposes of the Green Belt, as identified in PPG2 and paragraph 2.2 of the Core Strategy, and there are no exceptional circumstances for a change to the boundary. The site forms the edge of a large, open area of agricultural land. Its development would have the impact of enclosing this part of the village, creating a continuous frontage and having a dramatic impact on the character of the area.