

North West Cambridge

Future Phases of Eddington

September 2025

Design and Access Statement

A new quarter for Cambridge

A new quarter for Cambridge

North West Cambridge will create a new University quarter, which will contribute to meeting the needs of the wider city community, and which will embody best practice in environmental sustainability.

Housing for the University and the City

“Eddington is the University of Cambridge’s response to the need to provide affordable housing for its staff so it can attract and retain top talent to maintain its global competitiveness. By housing staff in a purpose-built, high quality neighbourhood, the University also reduces the demand on the wider housing market in the city.

By providing 50% of housing for staff and the remainder contributing to increasing the overall supply of housing in the city, the Eddington development supports the highly successful Cambridge eco-system which provides long-term growth and prosperity for the local, regional and national economy.”

Open to all

North West Cambridge is open to all. The University’s investment in the community is evident in the school, nursery, post-doc centre, hotel, supermarket, community centre, sports facilities and parklands as well as homes delivered in phase one. North West Cambridge is an open part of the city with cycleways, footpaths, roads and public transport routes that connect North West Cambridge with the city and key locations including Cambridge West.



Introduction

Document history

Version	Date	Description
P0	01.09.25	Issued for Planning

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Executive summary

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Hawkins\Brown Architects, alongside a wider team of specialists, to support the outline planning application submitted by the University of Cambridge for the Future Phases of North West Cambridge.

An Outline Planning Permission is being sought to deliver the Future Phases on the 114 ha site, and seeks to deliver: residential, employment, academic and ancillary uses, alongside associated infrastructure including landscape, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular routes.

The application site is located to the North-West of Cambridge's city centre and falls into the administrative area of both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Eddington is already an active and lively neighbourhood setting a high standard for sustainability and placemaking whilst supporting the academic and social goals of the University of Cambridge. North West Cambridge's Phase 1, delivered under a previous planning consent (Outline Planning Permission ref. 11/1114/OUT and S/1886/11 February 2013), established a new multi-use neighbourhood, including circa 1800 homes, student accommodation, a nursery, primary school, supermarket and retail, hotel and community centre.

The Future Phases is a globally ambitious proposal maintaining the standards set by Phase 1, introducing a wider variety of spaces and buildings, focusing on social sustainability and defining a new edge for Cambridge.



Team



The North West Cambridge team is led by the University of Cambridge Estates team and brings together expertise from across the UK.

Design Team



Hawkins\Brown
Architects and urban designers, design lead



Grants Associates
Landscape, design strategy, and placemaking



KMC
Transport consultants and placemaking

Other team members



Turner & Townsend
Project management



Quod
Planning, Housing, Environmental Planning and Socio-economic



Trium
Acoustics and Environmental Impact Assessment



Max Fordham
Sustainability



AECOM
Civil engineering



BDP
Lighting



Field
Consultation, PR and Comms



Mike Dean
Ecology



Cast
Cost control

Understanding the site

No clean slate

Informing the proposal

Even though the site is large and mostly undeveloped, it is far from a clean slate and a number of considerations have informed the proposal. These include wider and planning context, relationship and connections to neighbouring existing and emerging communities including the City of Cambridge, as well as the site's historic and physical characteristics.

Connections

The site is strategically located as a central node for both vehicular routes (M11, A14) and active travel routes linking North West Cambridge to surrounding networks.

Brook Leys and Storey's Field

The site includes areas with excellent opportunity for natural habitats and larger green spaces for amenity uses. Brook Leys includes a lagoon supporting a variety of plant, mammal and invertebrate species. Storey's Field includes a Site of Significant Scientific Interest (SSSI).

North West Cambridge Phase 1

Although not yet fully built, North West Cambridge Phase 1 is already a place. The Future Phases of North West Cambridge look to create synergies with Phase 1, as well as learning from its experiences.

Brook Leys

Huntingdon road

City Centre

Eddington Ave

Eddington

Turing Way

Working at multiple scales



Global

Home to a globally connected community, many of its members arrive from abroad to reside temporarily while studying or working at the university. The emerging design addresses the needs and characteristics of both permanent and transient communities. This also means people can take away lessons about creating exemplar places supporting communities.



City

North West Cambridge will define a new edge for the City of Cambridge and rethink the relationship between city and countryside by becoming an interface between people and nature whilst establishing a characterful urban face and silhouette.



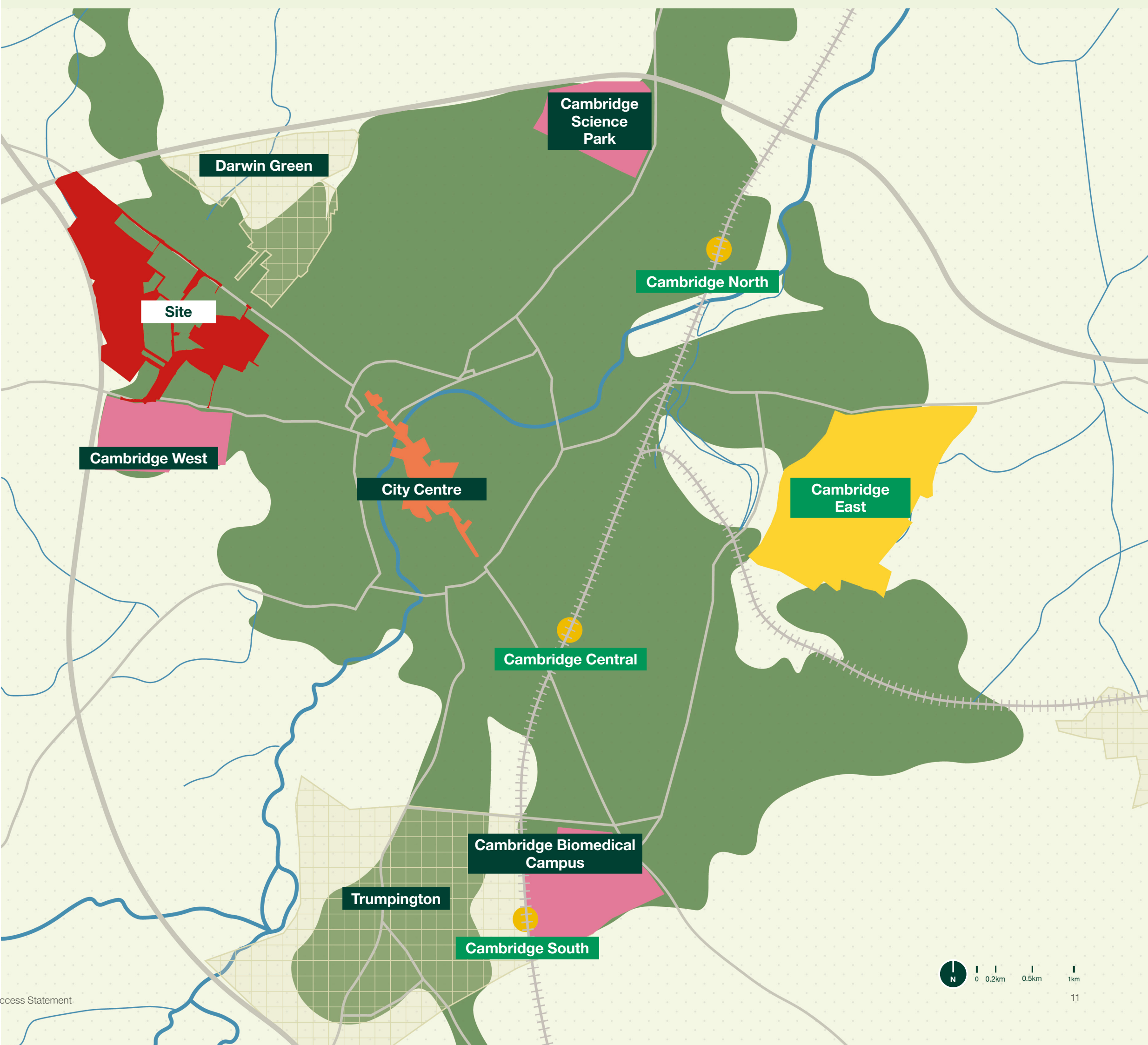
Site

The Future Phases of North West Cambridge propose neighbourhoods that foster contact with nature, active forms of travel and social interaction as means of looking after health, for people and planet.

Evolving Cambridge

The City of Cambridge is evolving. There are a number of areas and sites around the city re-defining its edge, connections and land uses. The Future Phases of North West Cambridge contributes to this process by establishing a new city edge, fostering synergies with the land uses across other emerging and established sites, and enabling future connections to both surrounding areas and the City Centre.

- Key
- Site application location
 - Cambridge city extents
 - Cambridge City Centre
 - River / waterway
 - Roads
 - Railway station
 - Train line
 - Science/ research parks
 - Airport
 - Sites of urban expansion



Cambridge character



Kings College Chapel



Girton College



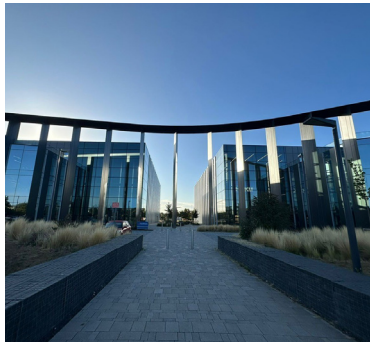
Accordia



North West Cambridge Phase 1



Bradfield Centre



Cambridge Science Park



Bridge of Sighs



Trinity Lane



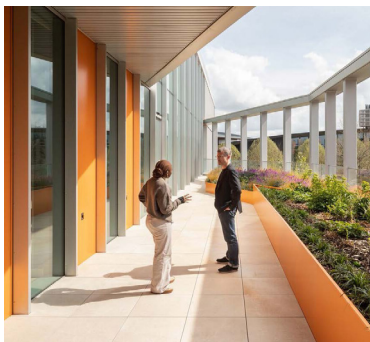
North West Cambridge Phase 1



Great Kneighton



Cambridge West



West Hub

Cambridge past

Cambridge has a strong recognisable character rooted in centuries of architecture and public life. Particularly insightful is the relationship between buildings and public realm, with spaces of many different scales and characters defined by buildings. This is true for narrow alleys and lanes and for larger parks.

Cambridge housing

In recent decades, Cambridge has seen the emergence of several exemplar housing developments that have helped set new standards, most notably North West Cambridge Phase 1. The Future Phases of North West Cambridge will build from the exemplar approaches, but also from the lessons learnt from these developments.

Future Cambridge

Building on the city and University of Cambridge's legacy of science, research and forward thinking, the city has also experienced growth in its science and research industries. One example of this university-led development is the neighbouring Cambridge West, although this is by no means the only example. The Future Phases will create synergies between its commercial uses and other innovation hubs.

Planning policy

This DAS has been prepared having regard to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as well as the guidance set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) / Making an Application / National Information Requirements / Design and Access Statements paragraphs 029 - 032. This DAS explains how the design principles and concepts have been applied to the North West Cambridge development and how issues relating to access have been dealt with. Existing and emerging policy identifies the site as a major development opportunity for the extension of Cambridge towards the north west. Appropriate uses identified for the site comprise residential (including 50% affordable housing to meet the needs of the University of Cambridge and College Key Workers), employment, retail, leisure, community as well as university related uses.

Emerging planning policy identifies using land more effectively at North West Cambridge through intensifying development within the existing boundary of the site as well as an opportunity for additional homes within the built area of the existing site through changes to the dwelling mix and appropriate intensification of development areas yet to be built.

Paragraph 124 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) states how planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting

the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 125 goes onto state how planning decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains - such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside.

Paragraph 131 describes that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 135 states planning decisions should ensure that development will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities); establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users

Policies 56 and 57 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) provide general design policies in relation to creating places and designing buildings and policy 59 addresses designing landscape and the public realm. Policy 80 describes how development will be supported where it demonstrates that prioritisation of access is by walking, cycling and public transport, and is accessible for all.

Policy HQ/1: 'Design Principles' of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan sets out a number of general design criteria including that proposal must provide safe and convenient access for all users and abilities to public buildings and spaces, including those with limited mobility or those with other impairment such as of sight or hearing. Part 2 of the policy explains that larger and more complex developments will be required to submit Masterplans and Design Codes to agree an overall vision and strategy for a development as a whole that demonstrates a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

Policy NW3: 'Implementing the AAP' of the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan (2009) describes:

- 1. A Masterplan is required to achieve the key development principles for North West Cambridge and must be submitted as part of an outline planning application;
- 2. The outline planning application will include parameter plans along with a design and access statement in support of the application;
- 3. Design Codes must be prepared for approval by the local planning authorities to support the delivery of all phases of development and will be approved in advance of any reserved matters application;
- 4. Any reserved matters application will include a design statement to demonstrate compliance with previously approved parameter plans and design codes.



Multiple jurisdictions

The site falls within the administrative boundaries of Cambridge City Council (CCC) and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The north-western part of the site falls within Girton Civil Parish, whilst the south-eastern part sits within the Castle Ward of CCC.

Key

Site application boundary

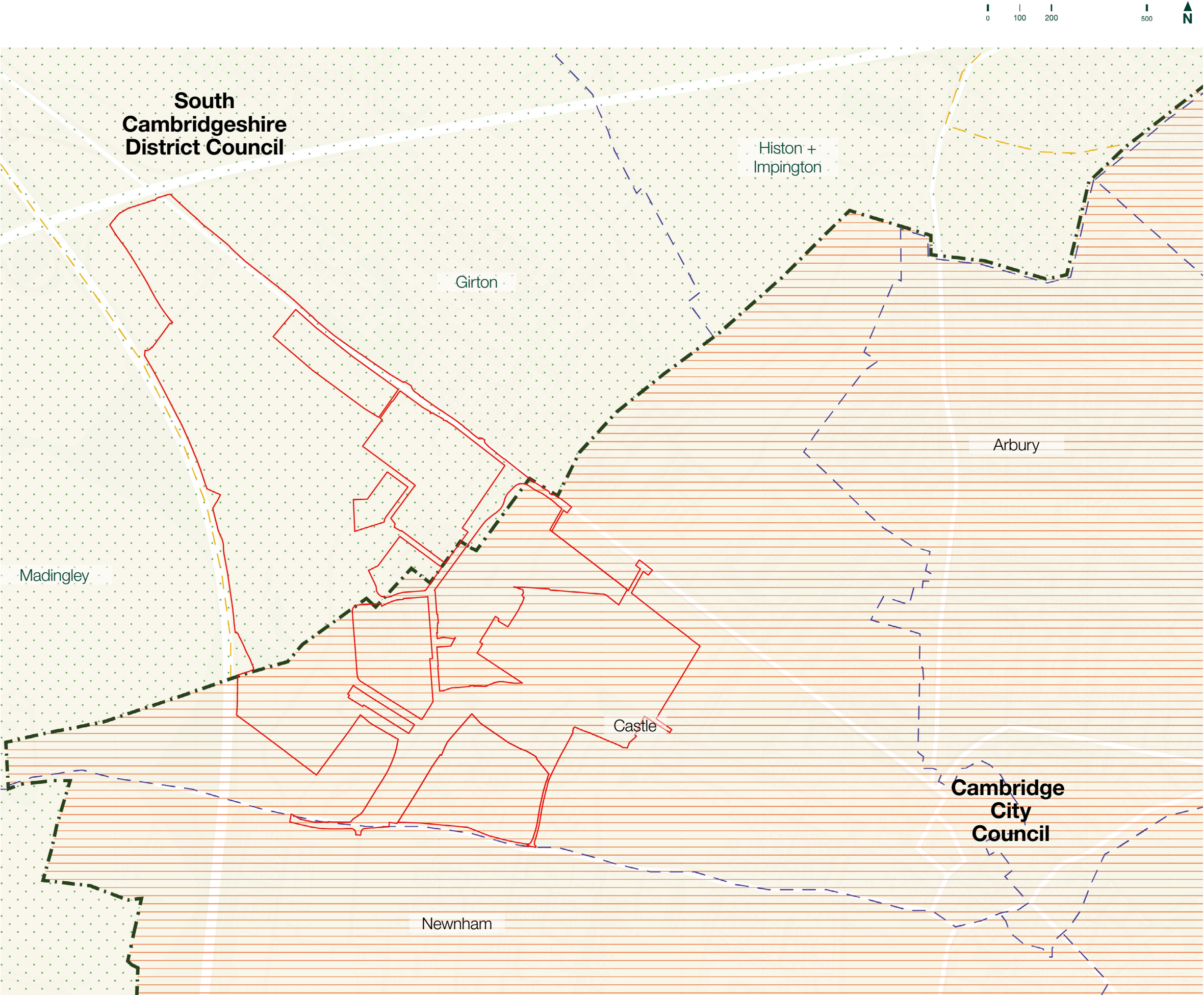
City/ District Council boundary

Ward boundaries

Parish boundaries

Cambridge City Council (CCC)

South Cambridgeshire District Council



The 2013 Outline Planning Permission

An Outline Planning Permission was granted for the site in 2013. Phase 1 has been built under this permission. The current outline application is for the Future Phases of the North West Cambridge Masterplan.



Green infrastructure

The site benefits from a wealth of surrounding green infrastructure.

Key

Site application boundary

Washpit Brook

Public Open Space
Parks and green open space

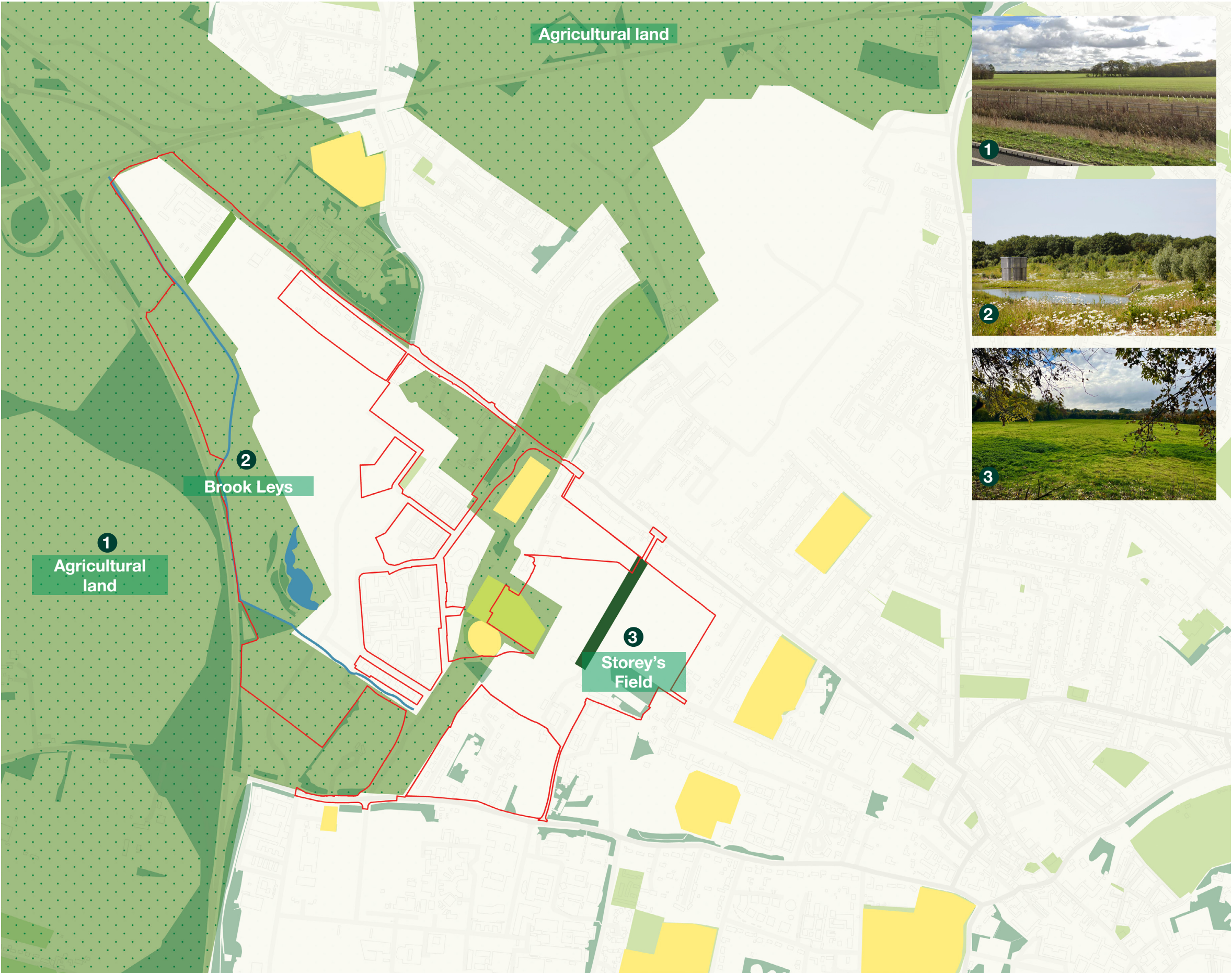
Woodland
Significant stands or wooded areas

Sports and Recreation
Sports and recreation facilities

Open Land
Cambridge's ring of open land surrounding the city

Traveller's Rest Pit
Site of Special Scientific Interest (Geological designation)

Horse Chestnut Avenue
Existing avenue of Horse Chestnut trees

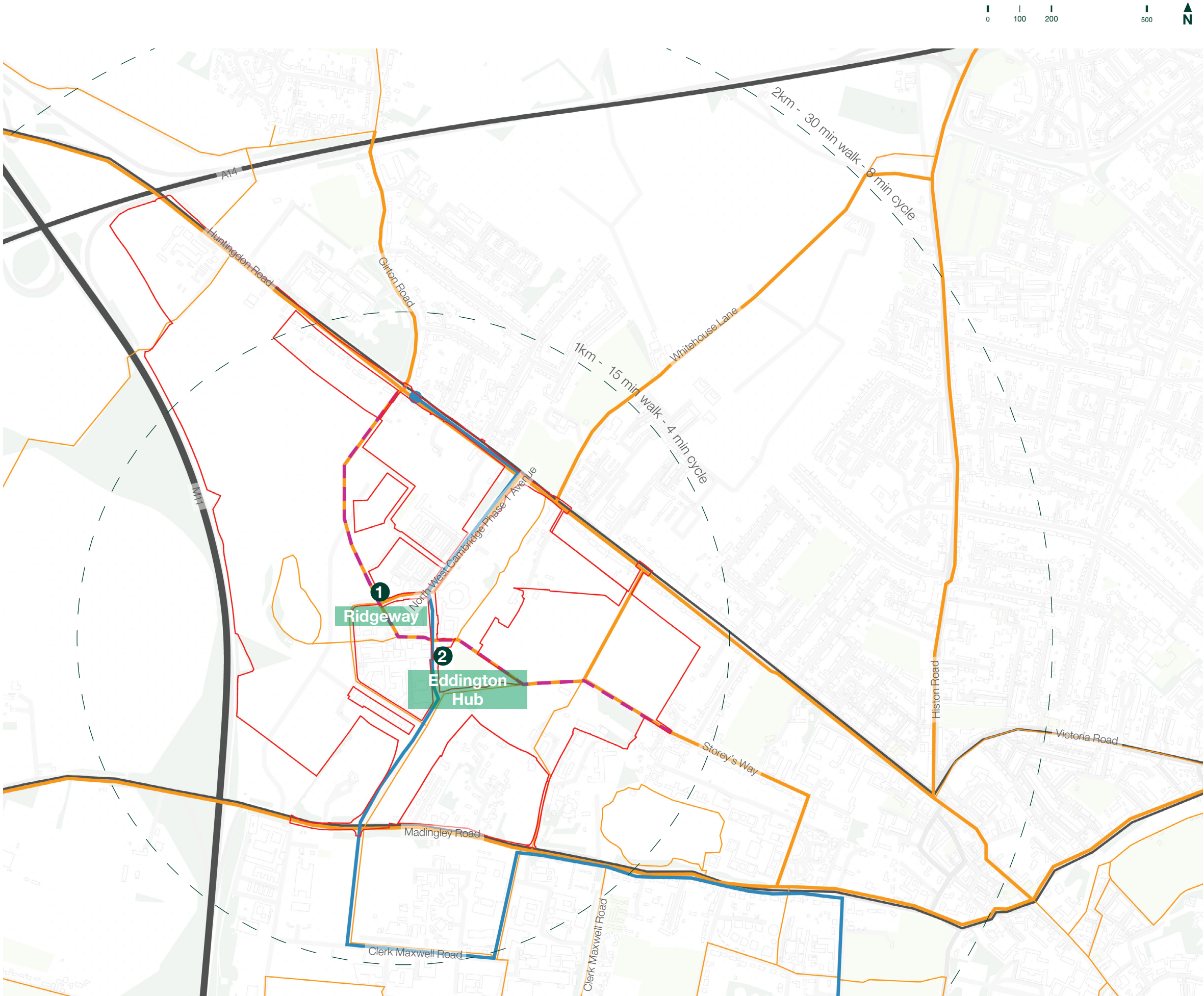


Connections

The site provides a necessary and beneficial role in providing connections between the radial corridors of Huntingdon Road and Madingley Road. These connections complement and form part of a wider movement network which connects Cambridge West to the south and northwards to Darwin Green and the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan area. The Ridgeway delivered by Phase 1, connects the site to Storeys Way and Girton Road providing further walking and cycling connectivity towards Cambridge City Centre. Phase 1 has also successfully delivered and maintained a primary mobility hub which provides travel information and shared transport options and is served by the U bus service which provides access to the City Centre and Cambridge Biomedical Campus.

Key

- Site application boundary
- Vehicular network
- Cycle routes
- Ridgeway cycle route
- U1 bus route



Around the site

The site is surrounded by a wide range of features, uses and conditions. There are a number of University Colleges to the north east and south of the site with buildings ranging from historic, listed buildings to newly built, innovative research hubs. To the south and north, Cambridge West and Darwin Green, together with North West Cambridge Phase 1 form an emerging and evolving development context in North West Cambridge. And in addition, to the west, the M11, agricultural land and surrounding villages extend the spectrum of conditions informing the proposal for the Future Phases. And most crucially, the Future Phases emerge and build from North West Cambridge Phase 1.



Girton



Grade II* Listed Girton College

Darwin Green future phases will see over 1500 new homes alongside associated community facilities



Darwin Green



Science Park



Old and new: Cambridge is characterised by a rich historical heritage alongside a growing pattern of contemporary development

Site



The M11 borders the west of the site

Eddington



Open, rolling agricultural land to the west of the site

Surrounding villages with rural character

Coton



University's employment, learning and research cluster

Cambridge West



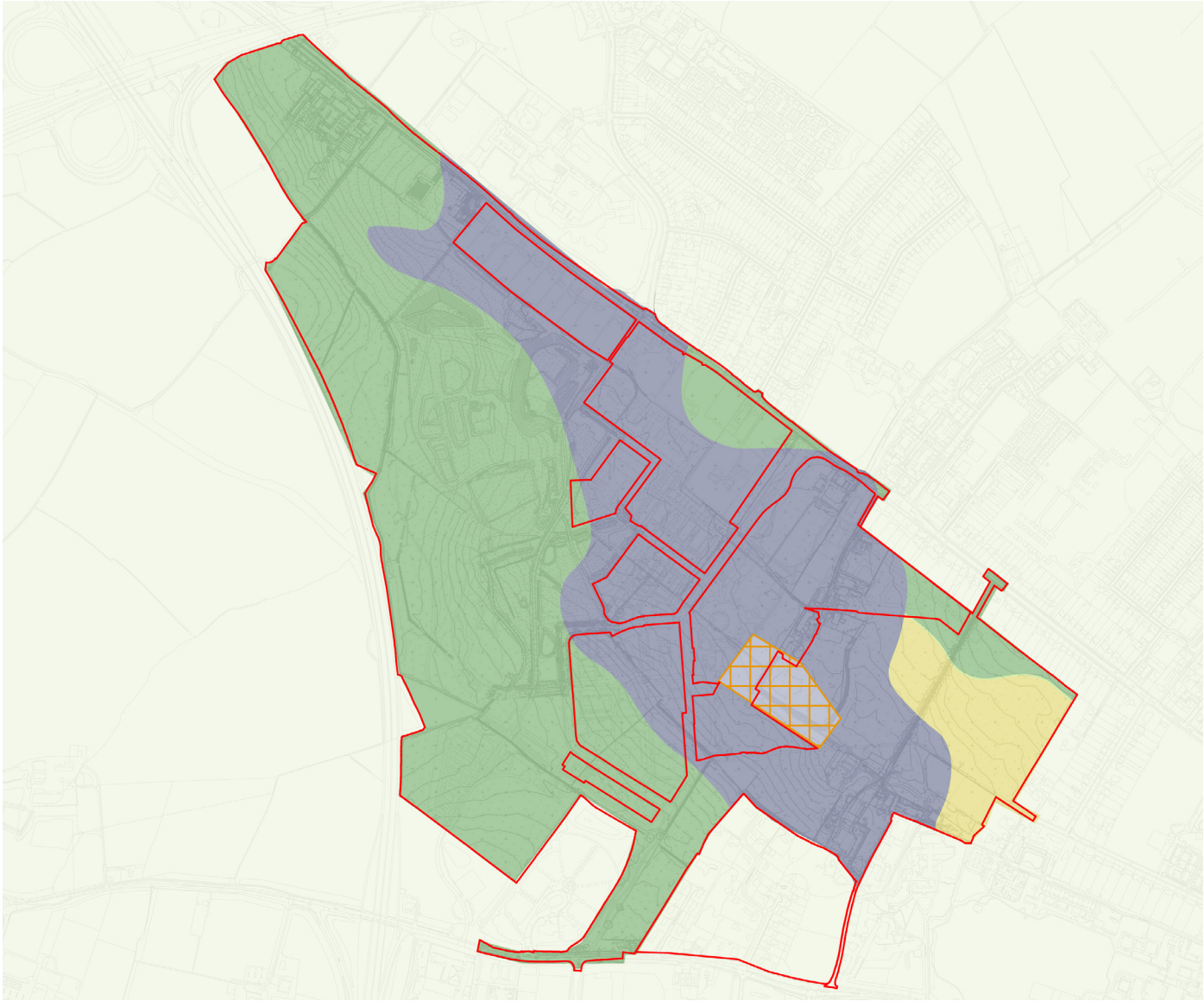
Academic neighbourhood: Over 9 University of Cambridge colleges sit within 2 miles of the site



King's College historic landmark

Cambridge

Site geology and topography



Geology

The site has predominantly a gault clay geology. If suitably compacted the clay should achieve sufficient bearing capacity so as not to require reinforcement. Similarly, maximum side slopes of 1:3 will be self-supporting as long as they are not unduly loaded. This material has potential to be re-used or recycled.

Key

- Site application boundary
- Gault Formation - Mudstone. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 113 and 100.5 million years ago during the Cretaceous period.
- West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation - Chalk. Sedimentary bedrock formed between 100.5 and 93.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period.
- Head - Clay, silt, sand and gravel. Sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period.
- Geological Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This is known as the Travellers Rest Pit SSSI, a geological landform



Topography

The site has a broad fall from east to west. These slopes will need to be slightly reprofiled as part of the Future Phases to provide an inclusive and accessible public realm. Additionally, a series of stockpiles of earth from Phase 1 exist today on the site. These could be re-utilised for the reprofiling of the site levels.

Key

- Site application boundary
 - Height above sea level
- | |
|------|
| 68 m |
| 64 m |
| 61 m |
| 57 m |
| 54 m |
| 50 m |
| 47 m |
| 43 m |
| 40 m |
| 36 m |
| 33 m |
| 29 m |
| 26 m |
| 23 m |
| 19 m |
| 16 m |
| 13 m |
| 10 m |
| 7 m |
| 4 m |

Site hydrology and ecology



Hydrology

The Washpit Brook is the closest watercourse to the Site which runs through the site from southeast to the northwest. The Brook Leys lagoon and swales delivered by Phase 1 introduced an attenuation basin as well as landscape feature.

Key

- Site application boundary
- Open land
- Washpit Brook
- Water body
- Flood zone between 0.1% and 1% chance a year
- Flood zone between 1% and 3.3% chance a year
- Flood zone more than 3.3% chance a year
- Phase 1 attenuation basin



Ecology

The site is already habitat for a number of animal species. It also include mature hedgerows, trees and forest areas, which ave been taken into account in the design of the proposed development. Refer to PP2-10002 - Green Infrastructure Plan.

Key

- Site application boundary
- Woodland habitat
- Riparian habitat
- Water habitat offset
- Notable tree/ hedgerow habitat
- Wet grassland habitat

Site noise, air quality and utilities



Noise and air quality

The M11 is the main source of noise and air pollution. The Brook Leys landscaping acts as a buffer between the proposed development and the M11; however, this will be further taken into account by the design of the proposed development.

Key

- Site boundary
- Noise sources



Utilities

A series of existing utilities run through the site constraining the design of the Future Phases, most notably the gas easement running across the site on the north and parallel to the M11 along the Brook Leys.

Key

- Site boundary
- Gas easement zone
- Existing pumping / sub station
- Phase 1 energy centre

Site history

The Ridgeway is both a topographic and historic feature reflected on 19th century maps. Phase 1 has begun to recuperate its presence. Towards the late 19th and 20th century, Huntingdon Road and Madingley Road have become important links to the City Centre. Therefore, as population grew throughout the century, development began to establish along those two lines and in the land surrounding them. Further, in the last half of the 20th century motorways occupied part of the landscape defining physical boundaries to city extension. North West Cambridge is part of the growth extending out from the City Centre along main connectors and the land around them (or in between them as in this case), until the physical limit imposed by the M11. As such, it is the role of North West Cambridge, both for Phase 1 and the Future Phases, to re-define the city edge, provide an appropriate and positive response to existing development along the two main roads around the site, and recuperate the historic features of the site's history such as The Ridgeway.



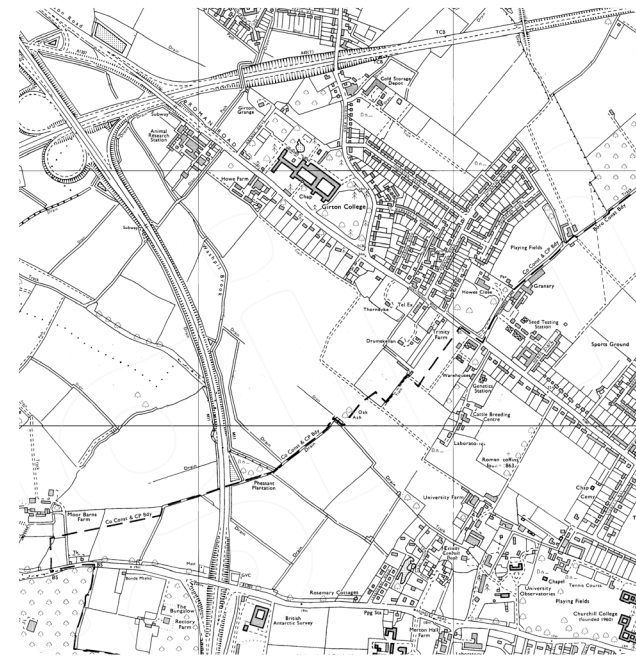
Topographical relief map showing 'ridgeway'



UoC college expansion across Cambridge



Ground broken and construction starts on Phase 1



M11 built in 1975 on Brook Leys of Cambridge

1880

1937

1975

2013