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The Cambourne to Cambridge Order

Cambridgeshire County Council

Transport and Works Act 1992

Transport and Works (Inquiries Procedure) Rules 2004

Inquiry into:

THE CAMBOURNE TO CAMBRIDGE ORDER

SUMMARY PROOF OF EVIDENCE

of

Chris Carolan

of WSP

On behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council

31st July 2025

Planning Inspectorate Reference: DPI/E0535/25/1

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 My name is Chris Carolan. I am an Associate Landscape Architect at WSP. I hold a BSc(Honours) in Spatial Planning from Dublin Institute of Technology and a MArchSc (Honours) in Urban Design from University College Dublin. I have over 10 years' of specialised experience in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) in the UK as well as internationally. I have led landscape and visual inputs for Development Consent Orders (DCO) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for projects across rural, urban and coastal environments.

1.2 This document is my summary Proof of Evidence on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, focusing on landscape and visual aspects for the Cambourne to Cambridge Scheme. It addresses the methodology, mitigation measures, findings of the assessment, and responses to objections related to landscape and visual matters.

2. SCOPE

2.1 The evidence covers the approach and findings for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), including standards followed (such as GLVIA3 – Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition) and the criteria used for assessing sensitivity, magnitude of change, and significance. It also responds to objections from statutory and non-statutory objectors, including National Trust, South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils, Cambridge Past, Present & Future (CPPF), Mr. J Sadler, and Mr. N Maguire.

3. LVIA METHODOLOGY

3.1 The landscape and visual assessment was carried out in accordance with recognised guidance, including GLVIA3. The methodology was shared during EIA Scoping and no concerns were raised regarding its scope or approach. The methodology is robust and appropriate for the scale and nature of the proposed CtoC scheme. On this basis, I am satisfied that the assessment was conducted in accordance with agreed and accepted professional practice, and that it forms a reliable foundation for identifying and evaluating the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

4. MITIGATION MEASURES

Construction

4.1 A Code of Construction Practice (CoCP) was prepared for the CtoC Scheme, which sets out the controls and measures that will be implemented to mitigate potential impacts as a result of construction activity and will form part of the TWA Order and deemed planning permission applications.

Operation

4.2 The design of the CtoC Scheme included primary mitigation embedded into the Proposed Scheme design to avoid potential adverse landscape and visual effects. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) sets out the landscape design principles and the landscape proposals in key areas to respond to the environmental context and reduce the impact of the scheme on its surroundings.

4.3 At Coton Orchard, the landscape design aims to reinforce the presence of the existing orchard as well as reflecting the historical landscape feature of the area, while additional landscape features are proposed where the route runs through land south of Madingley Road to better integrate the infrastructure into the rural field patterns. The proposals retain the existing open character and views, enhance green corridors, and safeguard countryside frontages.

5. KEY FINDINGS

5.1 The key findings of the landscape and visual assessment can be summarised as follows:

Construction

- **Landscape:** The CtoC Scheme will introduce temporary construction related activities into the landscape, resulting in a Moderate adverse (significant) effect predicted for LCA 4B Lolworth to Longstowe Wooded Claylands only.
- **Visual:** Visually, at construction, effects of the Scheme are anticipated to range from neutral to large adverse with moderate adverse (significant) effects for receptors R5, R6, R15, R21, R24, R26, R30, R31 and R32, and large adverse (significant) effects for receptors R16 and R19 only (representing users of Public Right of Way (Coton 55/2)).

Operational (Year 1)

- **Landscape:** At operation, the CtoC Scheme will result in the partial loss of areas of arable land by introducing built elements, lighting and vehicles into the landscape. It will, however, only occupy a small portion of the LCA considered, which are already influenced by urban or infrastructure features. It is predicted that only LCA 4B Lolworth to Longstowe Wooded Claylands will have an effect of moderate adverse (significant) at year 1.
- **Visual:** Visually, during operation, the effects are anticipated to range from neutral to large adverse at Year 1, with moderate adverse effects identified for receptors R5 (representing residents on Scotland Road), receptor R6 (representing users of PRoW (Dry Drayton 66/17)), R16 (representing users of PRoW (Coton 55/2)), R21 (representing residents on Cambridge Road), R24 (representing users of Rectory Farm), and receptor R31 (representing users of PRoW (Cambridge 39/30)). Large adverse effects are likely for receptors at R19 (representing users of PRoW (Coton 55/2).

Operational (Year 15)

- **Landscape:** No significant residual effects as mitigation planting will be well established allowing the Scheme to integrate into the landscape context.
- **Visual:** As the new planting establishes throughout the operational period, it will enhance visual amenity and further screen the C2C Scheme from the receptors. All effects reduce to slight adverse or neutral except PRoW Coton 55/2, which retains a moderate adverse effect.

6. RESPONSES TO OBJECTIONS

6.1 **National Trust (covenanted land, Coton / Red Meadow Hill):** The National Trust broadly accepts that the LVIA follows best practice and concurs with its overall conclusions. However, it raises concerns regarding potential underestimation of landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change, particularly in relation to covenanted land at Coton and the landscape south of Madingley Road. The NT also suggests the Scheme could subdivide Coton Orchard and diminish views from Red Meadow Hill. While they do not consider these effects to be significant under Environmental Impact Assessment criteria, they advocate for a more rural approach to the bund design and suggest restorative planting in underused areas of the Orchard. In my professional opinion, the LVIA properly reflects the rural context and sensitivity of the land, and the embedded mitigation, such as the north–south planting and considered orchard design minimises impact effectively and proportionately.

6.2 **CPPF:** CPPF acknowledges that the LVIA is generally competent but argues it underrepresents the sensitivity of the rural landscape west of Cambridge, particularly the areas to the north and east of Coton and the Rifle Range Lane area near Bin Brook (West Fields). They also claim the openness of the countryside has not been sufficiently appreciated. I disagree. The LVIA incorporates detailed fieldwork, Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) analysis, and review of published character studies and recognise the openness and long views characteristic of this landscape. The relevant Landscape Character Areas (LCA 3B and LCA 4B) were appropriately assessed as medium sensitivity based on their value, susceptibility, and context. Furthermore, the LVIA draws a clear distinction between impacts on landscape character and visual amenity, which are related but methodologically separate under GLVIA3.

6.3 **Local Authorities (CCC & SCDC):** No objections to the LVIA or its conclusions. Instead, they highlight the importance of continuing landscape design development at the detailed stage to ensure high quality and full integration of mitigation. This position is noted and welcomed.

6.4 **Other Third Parties:** Mr Sadler asserts that the character of Madingley Hill is “unique” and would be irreversibly harmed by the Scheme. However, no published landscape assessment designates Madingley Hill as having exceptional or unique landscape qualities. The area falls within LCA 4B Lolworth to Longstowe Wooded Claylands, which has been assessed as of medium sensitivity. While this area has a peaceful rural quality and long views, it is also influenced by existing infrastructure and lacks formal designation. In my professional judgement, the LVIA appropriately assesses this area and the proposed Scheme will not result in unacceptable landscape harm.

6.5 Mr Maguire objects to the perceived visual intrusion of the proposed Travel Hub on nearby residential properties on Scotland Road. I consider this concern to be adequately addressed by the embedded landscape design, which includes woodland perimeter planting, including fast-growing screening species such as poplar and aspen. Internal tree and shrub planting also helps soften the hardstanding of the car park. These measures are illustrated in the Proposed Site Plans and Proposed Site Sections and will, in my view, provide appropriate visual mitigation for residents on Scotland Road.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 It is my professional opinion that the proposed CtoC scheme has been subject to a robust and proportionate landscape and visual assessment, carried out in accordance with recognised guidance, including GLVIA3. While some adverse landscape and visual effects are predicted, particularly in the short term and in close proximity to sensitive visual receptors, these are generally localised and have been addressed through careful alignment, integrated design, and a comprehensive mitigation strategy. No nationally or locally designated landscapes would be significantly affected, and no landscape or visual effects are considered unacceptable in planning terms. Furthermore, the scheme offers opportunities for landscape enhancement, including new green infrastructure and long-term improvements to visual containment and character along parts of the route. I therefore consider the scheme to be acceptable in landscape and visual terms, and that it does not present a barrier to the grant of consent.