

FAQ

SmithsonHill – FAQ - February 2017

SmithsonHill are proposing to create a park for AgriTech comprising 1.2m sqft gross or 1m sqft lettable flexible commercial space that will bring together excellence in multiple science sectors to address agricultural productivity and sustainability.

The following FAQ is as a result of engagement with Hinxton and other Parish Council's in January 2017. Questions were both submitted in advance and asked during the presentation session. We are grateful to have a continued dialogue with all interested parties on the proposals for the site and welcome comments and feedback to hello@smithsonhill.co.uk

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General

Q1: What is SmithsonHill's primary objective in the proposed development?

A: With a keen interest in the growing role of technology in agriculture, environmental stewardship and sustainability the Smith family wishes to leave a positive legacy for future generations. Also based locally, Hill Commercial (as part of the Hill Group of companies - a proven successful team offering expertise in all types of development) shares this vision.

We intend to enhance and expand the crop trials already on site and in the wider area. As with any new development there is however a need to ensure that it is commercially viable and provides competitive returns to enable the development to be deliverable in accordance with national planning policy.

Q2: The scope of the SmithsonHill's development has changed over time, what can we realistically expect from this development?

A: When the initial thoughts about the potential development of the site were shared with representatives of the parish, district and county council in November 2015 it was not known what form they may take. In accordance with best practice the purpose of that consultation was to understand what the key issues were for the local community with respect to developments in the area and what, if any, new facilities residents may wish to see delivered as part of any scheme.

We did have an initial conversation with the National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB) about this site as they currently undertake crop trials on the land owned by Wellcome on the western side of the A1301. NIAB now also farm on third party land to the east of the A1307 alongside our ownership.

Between November 2015 and summer 2016 more detailed research was undertaken, which highlighted a government recognised need space and investment in companies developing and testing new technologies to make agriculture and food production both more productive and sustainable; what is known as 'near to market commercialisation'. Further detailed work and consultations were also undertaken in relation to wider transport issues around the A505 and A1307. That work formed the basis of the public exhibition to update the local community on current thinking in summer 2016.

The presentation in January 2017 provided a further update on the emerging draft proposal for the development, following baseline environmental survey work undertaken during 2016. As noted separately the scheme being promoted does not include any residential development.

The proposal has developed and will continue to evolve slowly just as other parks have. As with any planning application that is submitted you have to state your biggest thoughts/proposals in order for their potential impacts to be comprehensively assessed. We expect that it will take a long time to develop the park as has been seen with other business parks in the area.

Q3: You have stated in the past that "residential development is not part of the current thinking", is that still the case? Has the possibility of residential development ever been discussed in relation to this project? What reassurance can you provide that you will not include housing at some future point? Is housing next?

A: Housing had been discussed for this site prior to the formation of SmithsonHill. Our proposal is a result of detailed research which recognised the need for investment in space to accommodate companies working on development and testing of advanced technology in agriculture and food production. Russell Smith Farms and Hill Commercial Investments have invested in the site and we are bringing forward this project as a park for AgriTech and associated science and technologies.

Many people have asked, including potential occupiers and other businesses, but no residential development is proposed as part of this project.

Q4: Isn't Hill a residential builder?

A: SmithsonHill is a joint venture between Hill Commercial Investments (a new subsidiary of the Hill Group) and Russell Smith Farms. Before setting up Hill Commercial Investments, Hill Group had already completed a number of commercial developments including a new primary school at Walden School (formally Friends' School) in Saffron Walden, doctors' surgeries, community buildings, their own Head Office at Waltham Abbey and a multiscreen cinema and commercial units in Walthamstow, in addition to pure housing developments.

Q5: What guarantees can you give us that there will never be housing going in there?

We know from other developments in the area, and even the past history of this site, that you can never guarantee additional uses of the land in the future. However, this joint venture is bringing forward a commercial park for AgriTech.

Q6: Where do you believe that the 3,000-4,000 people who would work on this site would live?

A: Data from the Wellcome Trust Genome Campus from 2014 states:

- 3% live within 2 miles (considered a reasonable walking distance)
- 13% live within 2-5 miles (considered a reasonable cycling distance)
- 35% live within 5-10 miles
- 49% live 10+ miles from the site

The survey also demonstrates that the majority of their employees live to the north of the site.

Centre for Cities data states that the average distance people now travel to work in Cambridge is 25km. It is highly unlikely that most of those working on site will be living near the site but it does mean that getting the transport correct is very important.

The comprehensive approach being adopted by SmithsonHill, in relation to transport, is based primarily on making access between the site and surrounding communities, employment areas and stations as safe, convenient and inviting as possible. This includes investing in new and improved walking and cycling links, and public transport services and facilities, as well as discouraging single-occupancy car use through measures like parking management. Nevertheless, a proportion of employees will still need to drive and the impact of increasing the number car trips on the local network will be mitigated through capacity improvements at critical locations, such as the A1301/A505 'McDonalds' roundabout.

AgriTech in the region

Q7: There's a recently published Government initiative that actively promotes the development of AgriTech businesses located between Norwich and Cambridge. Given this initiative why do you justify an AgriTech Business development near Hinxton, which is not geographically located within the East of Cambridge and isn't named within this initiative? Why are you considering developing a green field site rather than using that which has already been appointed by government?

A: There are a number of initiatives including the London Stansted Cambridge Corridor (LSCC) and the initiative from Liverpool, down to London. The AgriTech agenda isn't just confined to one corridor. It's a national UK wide programme with intrinsic links to the EU and around the world.

The AgriTech market on a global basis is worth about £140billion a year. It's one of the largest sectors globally and as such, whilst a critical component, focussing only on developing within the Cambridge to Norwich corridor would not achieve all of the work that is required.

There are developments of this nature taking place across the UK. We are very keen to see Cambridge further support and promote this emerging sector because of the world-class science and technology base already within Cambridge. This location will also allow the park to link in with existing businesses and clusters that are already working in technologies related to this sector locally.

The challenge of future food production is so large the UK needs more than one site to address this need.

Q8: With all the infrastructure related hurdles to overcome at this location, why have you chosen this location over other potentially less complex development sites?

A: The proposal relates to development of a bespoke park for AgriTech, which has specific locational requirements in relation to scale and the need for access to adjoining suitable (e.g. well irrigated) land for crop trials and demonstration areas together with the proximity to Cambridge and its highly skilled workforce. Whittlesford Parkway, which is within walking and cycling distance from the site, has increasing importance as an interchange hub recently acknowledged in the context of the City Deal. The development offers the opportunity to invest in facilities/infrastructure in Cambridgeshire.

Q9: Why can't it be located where existing or planned infrastructure has an opportunity to develop and alternative modes of transport could be employed?

A: To develop on other available sites in the area would require active landowners. This can be very difficult depending on how many ownerships are involved. But also, SmithsonHill don't own land elsewhere and this is where the crop trials are taking place. It is an area where scientific companies want to be present, especially those associated with AgriTech – having been relocated from the edge of Cambridge by other development schemes.

Q10: What types of initiatives are underway in Cambridge around AgriTech?

A: Cambridge is the joint host of Agri-tech East – a business focused, cluster of organisations within the AgriTech sector.

More recently, Cambridge University has set up a Global Food Security Department where a number of initiatives provide industry leading research on food and its supply chain. Many of the spinouts from the university are active in this area and are looking for a site to start in a new cluster.

Q11: Given that Cambridge has not experienced the recession in the way that many areas of the UK have, why do you not propose the development in an area where there is a need for the development (jobs etc.)? How can you justify providing more jobs in an area without a requirement for more jobs when other areas of the UK have requirement?

A: The key is location and its proximity to Cambridge to provide direct links to the science base where ideas can be commercialised into new products and services. Cambridge is the centre of a number of other business parks and research centres with which our site will work, at the heart of the UK's most productive agricultural region. The site's access to Whittlesford Parkway Station and public transport links from Cambridge - Stansted - London makes it very accessible for national and international companies. Something other sites have failed to bring because of their location and proximity.

This is an exciting, fascinating new science that's coming forward and to be successful it needs input from the best people in Cambridge - working with world-class companies to develop and commercialise new technologies and new inventions.

We accept that with any new development the proposals are likely to result in some impacts but it will also lead to significant benefits for the regional, national and global population when it comes to commercialising innovations on future food production. The project will be something that existing and future generations within the local community and the district and County Councils can be proud of being associated with.

About the Scheme

Q12: What is the expected percentage of the site taken up by the scheme?

A: The total site area extends to around 240 hectares (ha) of which it is envisaged only around 10% would be required to accommodate built development (buildings, car parking, roads etc.). Much of the remainder of the site would be retained in agricultural use, for continuing field trials and for demonstration plots. It is intended that a large area (around 40ha) will also be made available as publicly accessible, informal open space.

Q13: While it's noted that the proposals refer to a specific quantum of development, how would you control the number of employees, which can vary considerably in relation to different uses?

A: There has been significant interest from potential occupiers; some of which may have requirements for denser occupancy, while others may need more space (for labs, agricultural equipment storage crop trials etc.). Any planning permission would be determined in the context of the physical parameters of the development (e.g. floor area, parking numbers, building heights) assessed through an Environmental Statement. A planning permission can, if deemed necessary, be tied to maximum employee numbers. Based on a review of other developments, 4,000 employees is seen as a realistic maximum upper estimate for a development of this size and type at full occupancy.

Q14: How can the site be considered sustainable from a services perspective as there is nothing nearby, including no retail or leisure facilities?

A: The development proposes a small local service centre, easily accessible on foot and by bicycle, with facilities such as a café, meeting space, shared workspace, gym, childcare, and outdoor leisure facilities. This will aim to cater for many of the daily needs of the occupiers, reducing the need to travel off-site during the day and provide a nearby facility for recreation and access to the estate for those living in close proximity to the site.

Q15: You've put the park on the southern side, going up towards Hinxton Grange. Can you explain why the north-western corner of the site has not been allocated for development and are there any future plans for that area?

A: There is a major gas main that runs across the north-west corner of the site, which, since the Buncefield Oil Disaster, the Health and Safety Executive has defined a significant restricted area which does not enable a clustering of businesses which we believe are essential for the park to thrive.

Q16: Was that known prior to your research?

A: We were aware that the pipe was under the site. However, when we started talking to a Health and Safety Executive, the full extent of the protection zone was understood.

Q17: Will the pesticides and sprays used on the crop trials be dangerous?

A: No pesticides or sprays will be used that are not already legislated and approved for use by the UK government. It will be fully compliant with current policies. AgriTech and its associated technologies work to reduce the need for sprays and/or substantially reduce the quantity used. For example; precision spraying technology targeting individual weeds can reduce spray use by over 95%.

Q18: Will there be any industrialised methods (polytunnels, white sheeting etc.) of farming used on the site? What methods will you be putting in place to conserve nature already on site?

A: Currently on site there are a number of crop trials taking place. We are not aware that polytunnels or plastic has ever been used on the site or will be required for the trials on the farm.

Nature and conservation is something Russell Smith Farms and more recently SmithsonHill have been keen to promote and enhance. We hope to improve on the existing hedgerows, for example by filling the gaps, and plant additional hedgerows along proposed pathways. We are not proposing to use or disturb the disused railway.

There are no open water courses currently existing on the site but we intend to incorporate some flood attenuation areas to address some of the existing surface water flooding issues in the local area which has the potential to create new wildlife habitats on the site.

We will be working to improve the tree belts on site so that they are effectively managed and maintained. With the help of an ecologist we will be seeking to ensure we enhance the site for wildlife as far as possible. We have been talking with UK wildlife conservation and protection groups to help further this vision. We intend to have a Site Management Plan which supports the development and maintenance of wildlife habitats across the site.

Q19: In the light of published facts regarding AstraZeneca's expansion requirements for an additional million square feet of work space required in the imminent future, is your proposed development targeted at them? Are SmithsonHill already in contact with AstraZeneca regarding this?

A: Our proposals are targeted at addressing a significant unmet need for an AgriTech park, focussing on developing technologies to improve efficiency in agriculture and food production. We have been in contact with AstraZeneca (as we are both part of Cambridge Ahead), especially in regards to transport however they are not involved with this project.

Q20: Can you confirm if you have formal agreement in place between SmithsonHill and prospective companies that intend to use the business park for AgriTech? What are the names of those companies and if there are no formal agreements as yet, who else do you expect to use the proposed park for AgriTech?

A: We have had initial discussions with companies but we have nothing formal in place. In terms of looking for potential tenants, that is commercially confidential but currently, we have no formal arrangements with anybody for the site.

Q21: Based on traffic forecasts from TRICS the development could lead to a very significant 9,000 vehicle movements per day, which would obviously be concentrated within the rush hour periods. This additional traffic would cause huge congestion on the surrounding roads, with people cutting through the villages (Hinxton, Ickleton, Duxford, Whittlesford) to avoid the main junctions. How do you intend to address this?

A: Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS) data for standard business parks indicates an average of 2.4 all-mode trips generated per employee per day or 0.4 all-mode trips per employee in the busiest peak hour.

Our proposals will incorporate a series of measures like new walking and cycling links, public transport improvements, parking restraints and travel plan monitoring to ensure that only 50% of these trips are by car drivers during peak hours. A total of 800 car driver trips could be generated by 4,000 employees in the busiest peak hour, once the development is fully built out.

The impact of these trips on the operation of the existing highway network are being assessed in detail through a transport assessment which will identify, where required the need for mitigation measures to be secured including, for example improvements to the capacity of the A505/A1301, 'McDonald's' roundabout' and other affected junctions. The transport assessment would be submitted in support of a planning application.

Q22: There is negligible housing within walking or cycling distance of the site therefore won't most employees be forced to travel by car, bus or train?

A: The comprehensive approach being adopted by SmithsonHill in relation to transport is based primarily on making access between the site and surrounding communities, employment areas and stations as safe, convenient and inviting as possible. This includes investing in new and improved walking and cycling links, and public transport services and facilities, as well as discouraging single-occupancy car use through measures like parking management. Nevertheless, a proportion of employees will still need to drive and the impact of increasing the number car trips on the local network will be mitigated through capacity improvements at critical locations, such as the 'McDonalds' A505 roundabout.

Q23: You are proposing one-to-one cycle spaces, but if people are traveling 25km to get to work, it's exceedingly unlikely they are going to cycle. Based on typical commuter cycling patterns in Cambridgeshire, it is reasonable to assume that people working on the park could comfortably cycle from places like Great Shelford, Linton, Saffron Walden or Fowlmere?

A: For those that live further away (a large proportion are likely to be in Cambridge itself), cycling could be combined with other modes, such as rail (Whittlesford Parkway is a short cycle from the site). We intend to make it easier to get to and from Whittlesford Parkway station on foot and by bike, and to propose a transport interchange with bus services and to potentially access hire bicycles. There is also an anticipated growth in ebikes which will facilitate longer journeys and will be making provision of charging points as part of our proposals. This will allow more direct and convenient connections to a wider area and build on other rail improvements like the three potential new stations around Cambridge and the fact that the regional trains are going to perform much better in the future than we've seen to date.

Infrastructure

Q24: If the development were to be constructed how possible/straightforward/realistic is it to get a sufficient level of infrastructure to the site (electrical supply, water supply, sewage removal, flood trench control, roads, carparks etc.)? What is the estimated time and estimated cost of all this and who will be paying for it?

A: We have investigated all the utilities to the site as a part of our baseline work.

As part of those investigations, an electricity supply issue has been flagged as an immediate problem.

UK Power Networks are interested in installing a new substation in the area because the electricity situation at Sawston is very fragile with intermittent blackouts happening in the villages. We are working with UK Power Networks to future proof the electrical supply to the area for current residents and to meet the needs of future developments. Currently the Sawston sub-station services everything from Shelford down to the north-end of Great Chesterford and there is minimal electricity available to service any new developments. There needs to be a new supply to this area from Fulbourn substation. We are pushing very strongly for any new electricity infrastructure to be fed underground.

We continue to work with utility companies in the area as part of our work towards a planning application.

Any infrastructure improvements required in relation to the development itself would be funded by SmithsonHill but the bigger infrastructure projects will involve a number of parties and funding sources. South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) recognise that current infrastructure is a problem as identified in their 2013-2015 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Infrastructure reports but there is a lead time to deliver on many of these items. We are doing what we can to facilitate discussions between the relevant parties.

Q25: The Environment Agency (EA) directive says that under no circumstances should people increase the air pollution. How will you predict and combat the increase in air pollution?

A: Air quality is very much at the heart of local and regional policies. We have already taken background data and we will be working very hard to mitigate our impact on air quality. We are currently working on this information and it will be published as part of any planning application submission (forming part of the Environmental Impact Assessment) and fully available for anyone to review.

The City Deal is already exploring ways of promoting a cleaner air area in the middle of Cambridge. As a nation, we're predicting that we will be favouring electric vehicles by 2025 and our proposals will seek to accommodate such cleaner air technologies.

Q26: What plans are there, if any, for renewable sources of energy on the site?

A: It is intended that the development would include highly efficient fabric-first buildings that reduce energy demand. We are also looking at a number of options for renewable energy provision such as solar to ensure that relevant policy requirements are adhered to. A planning application would be supported by details of the energy strategy for the development, along with general sustainability, water conservation and waste strategies. We hope to have this ready to present at our next Public Exhibition.

Q27: How much is this going to cost you? Will SmithsonHill be solely responsible for financing these improvements?

A: We will not have a full understanding of the costs of any new infrastructure improvements (in relation to our proposals) until we complete all of our site surveys and studies. We are however aware that there will be a need for significant investment in infrastructure to ensure that any adverse impacts of the development are suitably mitigated. The provision of such infrastructure would be funded by ourselves, that funding secured through a legal agreement as part of any planning permission for the development. Projects of regional significance (i.e. those not directly related to our scheme) are likely to be funded by a number of parties including ourselves. We need to involve the council and work on bringing money together from both the private and public sectors.

Our next presentation in spring/summer 2017 will include proposals on all areas of infrastructure and contain information on how we propose to mitigate adverse impacts of the development on the area.

Transport

Q28: Given the current daily gridlock in this area for vehicles and its current impact on the village (access being used as shortcuts, conflicting with our walking/cycling routes) - what road infrastructure requirements do you see as necessary for a successful development bid?

A: We are jointly working with the County Council to gather information to better understand existing and future traffic conditions. This will inform our transport strategy and help us identify what can be done to mitigate any adverse impacts associated with the development. We have installed counters and other monitoring equipment on roads in the area to assess traffic levels and junction performance. This will also monitor the rat-runs (cut throughs) through Ickleton and Hinxton where people are cutting through to avoid the A505/A1301. The Council had similar projects in Haverhill

(December 2016) monitoring the A1307 to know where people are travelling. These studies allow us to identify where rat running and similar issues are occurring and therefore to plan how we can help to reduce these problems with the Council.

We started by talking to other business parks about 2 years ago, to see how we might work together to resolve some of the travel and traffic issues that are regularly raised. One person or indeed organisation can't solve all the issues, and we are all part of the problem and hence it is important we work together to find the solutions.

Q29: How will you avoid your development contributing to an already over-stretched local road network?

A: A number of physical infrastructure improvements will be provided to make walking and cycling as attractive as possible. In addition, the development will fund improved public transport services and bike hire. On-site parking will be restricted and closely monitored to discourage single-occupancy driving to and from site.

With any new development, particularly of this scale, there is bound to be additional traffic added to the existing network. We will be assessing the impact of this in detail and providing mitigation measures where necessary. These will be likely to include capacity improvements to the A505/A1301 'McDonalds' roundabout and other junctions.

Q30: Would SmithsonHill be willing to pay for some dualling of the A505 and A1301 and for the building of either an underpass or a flyover at the McDonalds roundabout prior to commencing any building on the proposed development site?

Would you be willing to commit to (until such time when road plans are finalised) doing something with the road where the A1301 meets the A505 and would any construction start before that time?

A: Our transport assessment, which is being prepared to review traffic impacts (including the existing capacity of the network) is still ongoing and will be submitted to SCDC in support of a planning application. The extensive consultation and initial assessment work undertaken confirms this will likely include significant improvements to the A505/A1301 'McDonalds' roundabout in order to increase capacity and enhanced access for non-car users across the A505. Any dualling with large infrastructure such as a road flyover is likely to form part of the bigger A505 corridor review that is being conducted by Cambridgeshire County Council and Highways England at a more strategic level.

Cambridgeshire County Council have said that approximately £90m is required to improve transport infrastructure in the local area. We are keen to promote the potential for improvements to the A11 to the M11 link, including the restricted access to junction 9, because it has the potential to significantly reduce the pressure on the A505.

The 'McDonalds' roundabout is central to improve the flow of traffic in the area and our transport assessment work will feed into that. We have had discussions with the County Council about what can be done with this and other junctions, but these plans need to be refined to determine what can be achieved, what will improve the flow of traffic and ensure safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists. The phasing of required infrastructure works associated with our scheme would be defined through any planning permission for the development. We would not be allowed to start any construction

before the plans are finished, however, aside from any works directly attributed to our development we will continue to lobby for highway infrastructure improvements in the wider area.

We will provide financial contributions towards such transport improvement schemes to mitigate our impact on Hinxton and the surrounding villages as deemed necessary through the planning application process. We have also moved our development edge to over 0.5km from Hinxton Village which avoids any complications or impact on the longer-term development proposals by Wellcome. Ultimately, it will involve a number of parties who are developing in the area working together to look at the big infrastructure projects.

Q31: How would the development be served by public transport given that there are currently extremely limited bus services in the locality?

A: We agree that existing bus services are limited, although Citi7 (every 20min Mon-Sat) and 7a (every 75min Mon-Sat) are accessible within walking distance. We will be exploring options for increasing frequency and extending these services to better link the development to Whittlesford Parkway Station and Cambridge.

We will also be lobbying heavily to improve general provision for public transport and adding bespoke shuttle services (including coordinating/consolidating existing private services operated by other commercial parks in the area).

Q32: Regarding Whittlesford and the new station; is that going to impact on Whittlesford? What are the plans for extending what is a very small station?

A: One of the key issues is parking at Whittlesford station and its impact on local residents which is why we have been working with the local parish councils during their neighbourhood planning sessions.

When the station opens at Addenbrookes, there is going to be more people traveling by train to the Addenbrookes Biomedical Campus and parking will need to be addressed at all the regional stations, not just Whittlesford. While not likely to be required in relation to our development we believe that we can help improve Whittlesford Parkway as a regional transport hub by making land available for parking beside the station which lies in the Pampisford Parish area. If Pampisford and Whittlesford are willing, we are keen to actively engage with them about how we can help solve this problem.

While subject to further transport assessment work it is envisaged that our proposals will include provision of a bus/cycle interchange as part of a package to enhance access between the site and Whittlesford Parkway Station by non-car modes.

Q33: Wellcome are also intending to expand their campus in the near future including several roundabouts on A1301. Are you working together when discussing possible access points to your development?

A: We are aware of Wellcomes' initial plans as provided to the general public. We have ensured that our masterplan does not impact along any common boundaries and also does not impact on their proposed road realignments to the south. We continue to meet with them and other parks in the area on a regular basis to discuss transport and other matters.

Q34: With the current transport networks being overwhelmed by population even before any developments take place, how are resources allocated when there are none available?

A: The developments which already have planning permission, but aren't built yet (referred to as 'committed developments'), have been taken into account within our assessment work.

We have been working with the County Council and Highways England to present our reports on infrastructure in the area. We have a very detailed transport assessment underway and everything we do (transport studies, survey work, assessing the rat-runs etc.) will be filtered into plans managed by the County Council as part of the preparation of our planning application.

Q35: If the development were to be constructed, what is the estimated time and estimated cost of the road infrastructure updates and who will be paying for it?

A: The County Council has put in a bid to review the A505 and it is the next corridor on which they will focus their effort. They estimate that it will cost about £90m to review and upgrade the A505. It is likely that significant developments (like ours) that impact on the operation of the road will need to contribute towards its improvement as part of the bigger project. We are currently undertaking further transport investigations to mitigate our own impact in the local area, focusing on the 'McDonalds' roundabout where it meets the A505.

It may be possible to provide separate, parallel walking and cycling links along parts of the A505 and A1301 on land owned by SmithsonHill. These would provide high quality, direct and inviting routes away from the main carriageway connecting Whittlesford Parkway to the main development site.

Hinxton

Q36: Hinxton is an idyllic, county village with many unique/traditional houses, a very strong community and yet its people maintain its place in the modern world. How do you propose your site would enhance the aesthetics of our beautiful rural village?

A: While any new development would have an impact in terms of introducing more people to the parish, the scheme being developed seeks to minimise any adverse impacts. We are respectfully proposing to set the development half a kilometre back from the edge of the village with land in between retained for agricultural use.

We want our proposal to enhance the ability for villagers to get access to open countryside, starting with circular walks. For example, if you're able to walk your dogs and interact with the people on the park in the future, then we'll have achieved our goal of community cohesion. We also intend to introduce a safer crossing on the A505 to enable children to get to the school in Sawston safely. We completely appreciate the concerns about the

impact on the village but we genuinely believe we can add features to enhance people's experience of the countryside and improve the village for all. We welcome your input as to what you would like to see on our site. We are still at very early stages and we are open to thoughts on what further facilities could be incorporated.

Q37: What guarantees would be forthcoming to compensate owners of adjacent land/property if they suffer flooding due to this development?

A: Any planning application would need to be accompanied by a detailed flood risk assessment, which will adopt Greenfield Runoff rates in accordance with best practice so that the development does not result in flooding elsewhere.

We are aware that there are a number of local hotspots for surface water flooding in the vicinity of the site such as the western end of Tichbault Road, at its junction with the A1301 and around the A505/A1301 'McDonalds' roundabout. We believe that we can intercept this water by incorporating some form of flood attenuation area into our plan. Such features could also be used for other benefits (i.e. 70% of water across the globe is used for agriculture each year) and are working with consultants to look at what we need to achieve to make sure that our development does not result in any significant adverse impacts on the local area as far as possible but help to address the current situation.

Q38: What precautions would be taken to ensure that the aquifers in this area are not contaminated or compromised?

A: The development has been sited in the south west corner of the site for a number of reasons related to physical and environmental constraints, including the presence of a groundwater source protection zone in the north-eastern half. Initial liaison with the Environment Agency has confirmed that development in the southern area of the site should not compromise existing groundwater/aquifers in the area. Planning permission would not be granted unless suitable mitigation is proposed to alleviate any potential impacts. We are undertaking full geological surveys to ensure that we are in the right location to mitigate any potential adverse impact.

Q39: There's growing concern from the families in this area, especially those with children, about the effects of pollution on our health. Given the increase of vehicle usage locally, how does your proposed development address this problem, including those vehicles it brings into Hinxton?

A: We've been monitoring air quality for the last year on site in order to get background data. The scoping report submitted to SCDC sets out the various issues, including impacts on air quality that will be assessed as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment, which will accompany any planning application in the form of an Environment Statement. Impacts on air quality will take into account traffic generation, both during and post-construction.

We are also anticipating the growing use of electric vehicles in the coming years and as a result will be making provision of vehicle charging points to be installed on site as part of the proposals with additional flexibility as electric bikes also come online.

Q40: Why did SmithsonHill place "No public right of way" signs at various points along Tichbault Road obscuring the designated Permissive Footpath sign?

A: These signs were not intended to cause offense or harm or indeed stop the permissive footpath. We have had a problem with people coming onto the land and it was purely a deterrent and not there to block the permissive footpath. These signs have since been removed.

Planning

Q41: Where are you in the formal planning process with regard to the proposed development? What have you submitted so far, and when? If you have submitted plans, why haven't you alerted the village and provided a copy of those submissions? If not, specifically what (and when) will you be submitting in the future? Will you provide copies of any such submissions to the village for review prior to submission?

A: As highlighted during our presentation in January 2017, no formal submission had been made to South Cambridge District Council (SCDC) in relation to the proposed development at that point. In line with our presentation, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report was submitted to SCDC on February 2nd. While not mandatory, in accordance with best practise this process seeks to ensure that we have scoped all potentially significant effects arising from the proposals and that the proposed assessment methodologies applied through our assessment work are robust. A link to the report was emailed to all local parish councils and is available to view [here](#).

It is intended that a further public exhibition will be undertaken in relation to our proposals prior to the submission of any planning application to SCDC. Any application documentation will be made available to the Parish Council's once an application has been submitted.

Q42: What is the South Cambridgeshire general plan for development in this area? How does the projected SmithsonHill development relate to that general plan?

A: While the local plan (2010) identifies the main site as countryside and the land north of the A505 is designated as part of the green belt, the proposals are considered to be broadly compliant with the strategic objectives and policies set out within both the adopted development plan and the new and emerging local plan. Very special circumstances must be provided to support the introduction of improved linkages to Whittlesford Parkway within the green belt.

There are additional national and regional strategies that call for developments with an agriculture and technology focus such as the AgriTech strategy that came forward in 2013 after the new local plan review had started. The local plan does not allocate this site for commercial development but it does support new and emerging clusters.

Q43: Have you taken the new housing development at Uttlesford into consideration when planning amenities (electricity, transport, water)? Will you submit any plans also to Uttlesford Parish Council?

A: Cambridgeshire County Council assesses the impact on travel on the Hinxtton side of the A11 and Essex County Council the other. They are currently working closely to organise works across the boundary to improve travel. We're aware that Uttlesford District Council is considering potential for development around Great Chesterford as one of many options for accommodating future housing growth within the district as part of its local plan review. The plan is at a very early stage with no formal allocations proposed or indeed the council's preferred option(s).

We have been talking to the Cambridgeshire County Council to liaise across the border to better understand what the proposals are, including those to the south. Every site and every scheme that comes forward is placed in the Councils' modelling scenario to see the impact over several years to include background growth.

There is also a group chaired by the Haverhill Chamber of Commerce looking at the A1307 (especially through Haverhill), which Emma Fletcher (Managing Director of SmithsonHill) is currently involved in, to collaborate efforts and promote improvement initiatives. The focus is squarely on transport across Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

Any proposals in the local area for which planning permission has been granted will be taken into account through the transport and other assessment work being carried out to support our planning application.

These questions formed part of the January 2017 engagement with Hinxtton and other local parishes. We welcome questions from the community at any point in time to hello@smithsonhill.co.uk

More detailed materials and presentations can be found [here](#).