

## Greater Cambridgeshire Local Plan Call for Sites Consultation

### Land at Platts Farm, High Street, West Wickham

#### Representations on behalf of [REDACTED]

1. Brown & Co act for [REDACTED] in connection with land at Platts Farm, West Wickham. Brown & Co is a leading provider of agency, professional and consultancy services across the whole range of rural, commercial, residential, and agricultural markets.
2. Platts Farm is located off the High Street in the village of West Wickham (see Figure 1). The site is irregular in shape and extends to around 1.2 hectares. The land is generally open, but includes a range of dilapidated farm buildings located centrally. The land slopes gently up from east to west. The boundaries of the site are generally defined by trees and hedges.



Figure 1 Site Location

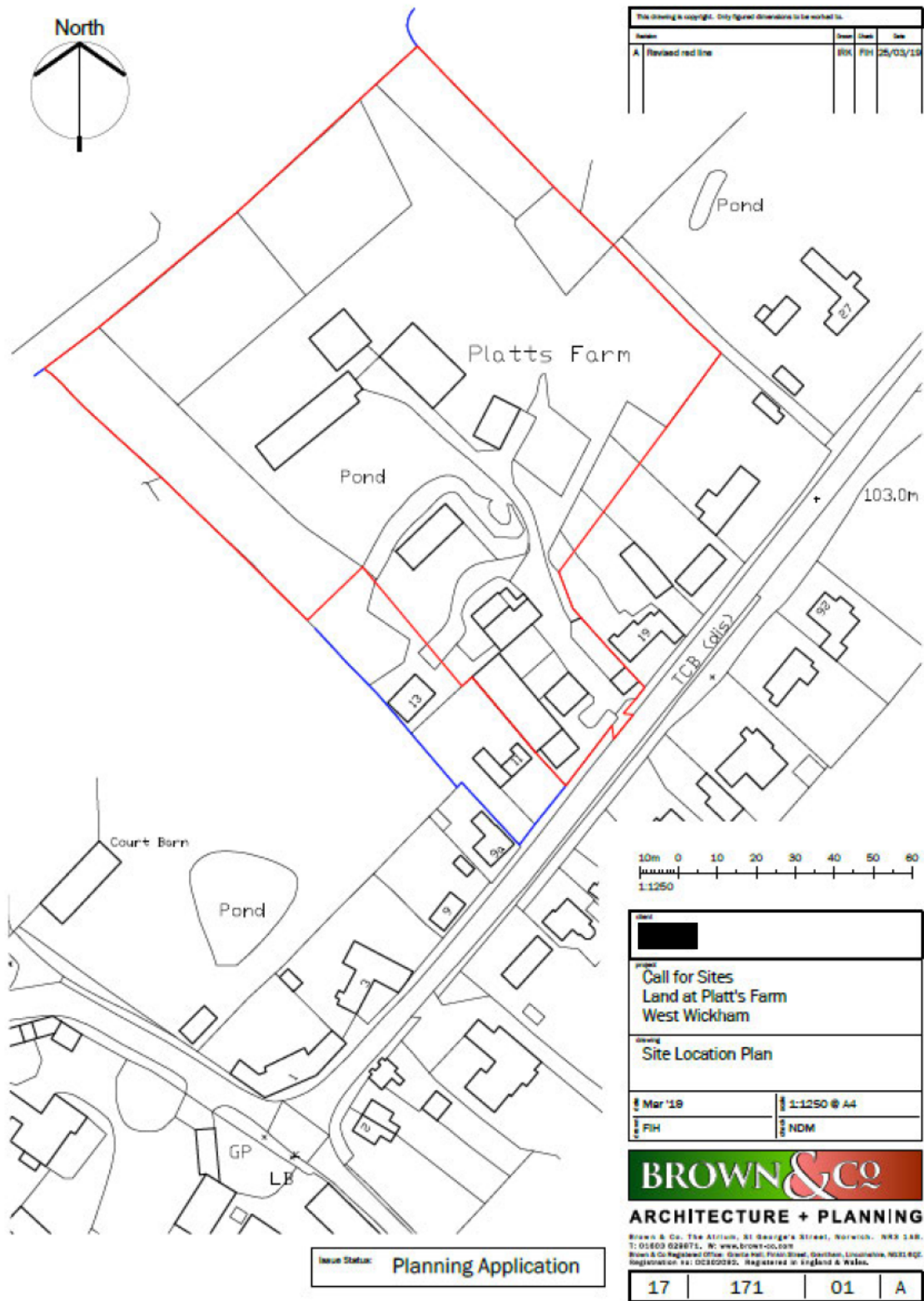
3. The following representations support the Call for Sites submission made in response to the Greater Cambridgeshire Local Plan consultation undertaken between 11<sup>th</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019.
4. West Wickham is identified as an 'infill village' in the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. Infill villages are considered suitable for modest housing development due to the limited range of services available. West Wickham benefits from a modern and well-used village hall, playing fields and church.
5. Other facilities are available in the nearby village of Balsham, some 1 ½ miles to the north-east, including a primary school and a shop with a post office, and in the larger village of

Linton, approximately 3 miles to the south-west, which includes shops, a secondary school and health centre. A wider range of higher order services are available in the town of Haverhill some 5 miles to the south-east. Regular bus services operate through the village providing links to Linton, Cambridge and Haverhill.

6. The site proposed for development is well-related physically to the village, abutting the current development boundary and housing immediately to the east. Village facilities and other housing would be within easy reach of the site. The allocation of the site would not result in an isolated development therefore.
7. The scheme would make a positive, if modest, contribution to the supply of housing in the area. Its construction would also provide some economic benefits, albeit short-term. Additionally, local businesses and services, including those in nearby villages, would be likely to derive some modest support from the development due to increased patronage and the addition to the local economy of the spending power of new residents. New residents would also contribute generally to the vitality of the community.
8. The proposal would thus be consistent with the guidance set out in paragraph 78 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which indicates that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It would also support the social and economic objectives of the NPPF.
9. The site is also well-contained visually by established boundary vegetation and other buildings. Mature trees and hedgerows to the boundaries would effectively screen views of the development site from across open fields from the north, south and west. Development would not therefore appear as an intrusion into the open countryside or otherwise compromise the rural setting of the village.
10. From the High Street, only glimpsed views of the site are available, due to the screening effects of intervening buildings and vegetation. It is intended that existing buildings and land within the current development boundary will be the subject of separate proposals for residential development, including the conversion of the traditional barns on the site frontage. Development to the rear would be designed to complement and complete this scheme, as demonstrated by the initial sketch proposals drawn up (see Figure 2 below).
11. A low density of development is proposed in order to maintain a suitable transition between existing development along the High Street and the open countryside to the west and preserve the spacious character of this part of the West Wickham Conservation Area. Additionally, the removal of existing dilapidated farm buildings offers the potential to significantly improve the site's appearance. The proposed development would be screened from view from St Mary's Church by the tree belt on the south-western site boundary, and so would have a minimal impact on its setting.
12. Access to the development would be gained from High Street. To ensure adequate visibility for emerging vehicles would meet the appropriate highway standards the existing entrance would be moved slightly to the south-west.



Appendix 1 – Site location plan



Appendix 2 – Illustrative site layout

