

Call for Sites Consultation  
Planning Policy Team  
South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridge  
CB23 6EA

21<sup>st</sup> March 2019

Dear Sirs,

**Re: Land to the south of Lanacre along Chrishall Road, Fowlmere, SG8 7RY**

I am writing to you on behalf of Colegrove Estates Ltd, further to the Council's request for Call for Sites. This letter accompanies the completed submission form and a plan showing the area of land at the above address, available for development. The site area is outlined in red on the attached location plan included with the completed form.

I am a planning consultant for Lanes Land and New Homes, with over 23 years of experience working in local authorities, a divisional head of planning for a national house builder, and, more recently working on sites throughout the south east and east of England as a planning consultant. I have worked on many types of projects, including sensitive sites located within countryside locations and around towns and villages; with the most prestigious being the national award winning urban extension at Trumpington Meadows, to the south of Cambridge.

This submission responds to a request from South Cambridgeshire District Council to put forward sites that can accommodate 5 or more dwellings.

The site that has been put forward through this Call for Sites submission is the piece of land to the south of Fowlmere, along Chrishall Road. The site comprises vacant land with existing residential properties to the north, and countryside around the rest of the site.

**The overall site area outlined in red is 3.76 hectares. It is considered that based on a density of around 20 dwellings per hectare, and the retention of existing landscaping around the boundaries, provision of allotments and natural play area, the site could deliver around 50 dwellings. This would play a significant role in providing a sustainable form of village development, including both affordable housing and market housing.**

## Lanes Land & New Homes

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lanes new homes

The owner of the land, Colegrove Estates Ltd, is a local SME developer, and intends to build out the scheme as soon as planning permission is granted.

### **Local engagement**

In September 2018, Meeting Place Communications (MPC) undertook a door knocking exercise within the southern part of the village, close to the site. The purpose of the door knocking exercise was to seek out initial local resident views about existing services within the village, and discuss with them the residential development opportunity on land to the south of Fowlmere, along Chrishall Road.

A copy of MPC's report is included with this submission, and sets out the findings from this initial piece of engagement work.

In summary, a large proportion of those spoken to emphasised the need for a local shop that sells everyday groceries. Others made comments about other possible benefits, such as allotments. There was very little 'in principle' opposition to new homes in Fowlmere, with a preference towards delivering 2 and 3 bed properties.

This initial local community feedback has therefore informed initial thoughts for the site south of Fowlmere, and how its delivery could be of significant benefit to the village and local community.

### **Sustainability credentials**

Fowlmere is categorised as a Policy S/10 Group Village within the current Adopted Local Plan, and was previously considered as generally less sustainable location for new development than Rural Centres and Minor Rural Centres, having fewer services and facilities. The current adopted policy framework for the village seeks to maintain remaining services and facilities, and only allows developments within the village framework up to 8 dwellings, or exceptionally 15 dwellings.

Fowlmere currently has a primary school, churches, public house, restaurant, village hall, play area, recreation grounds, and allotments. There is also an established and growing employment base within the village, including the recent development for Ion Science at Butts Business Centre; supplier services (Alltec and Cambswood (Butts Business Park); an engineering retailer (Fowlmere Engineering Ltd, Rectory Lane), and manufacturing business at Welding Alloys Group, The Way. Within the village there are also many smaller businesses run from homes (eg. Parko Media, Cassander Close; Air Products, Rectory Lane; Clock Tower Cakes, London Road), and also there is tourist accommodation at The Chequers; High Street; holiday cottages along Rectory Lane; and, Chapel Cottage, London Road.

The village is therefore well served by services, business opportunities, and community facilities. Assessed against the higher tier villages within the current

adopted Local Plan, the only main services the village does not provide is a secondary school/college, dentist and doctors surgeries and a village shop.

The nearest secondary school, dentist and doctors surgery is in Melbourn 3.6 to 4 miles from Fowlmere.

To the south of the village is Appleacre Park (located to the north of Lanacre) along London Road. This is a residential park home site with a mix of retired and semi-retired residents. This park home site has grown over recent years, so that there are now around 42 plots on the site.

From the initial local engagement work carried out by MPC there is a clear demand for a local shop to serve the village.

The opportunity to promote development on land to the south of Fowlmere, would provide new housing that would not only provide a range of house types and tenure to meet local demand, but would contribute to supporting existing services and a growing employment base within the village. It could also help to support a shop within the village, either provided at the site itself or at another location.

There is a bus service (No.31) that runs along Chrishall Road and bus stops are located a short walk from the site near the junction with London Road. This bus service provides a direct 30 minute public transport link through to Addenbrooks Hospital, Cambridge.

It is therefore considered the sustainability credentials for Fowlmere have been under scored within the current adopted Local Plan. Through the development of the land south of Fowlmere, not only would there be direct benefits of providing a range of housing to cater for all age groups and meet local needs; but there is an opportunity for continued investment into the village, creating a significant benefit for the community in the long term, sustaining and enhancing village life.

### **Village context**

Fowlmere has historically grown along the B1368, projecting southwards along Chrishall Road, northwards along Long Lane, and eastwards along Thirplow Road. There is a central area to the village around the Fowlmere Memorial, with other uses, services and village hall located towards the outer edges of the village.

The development of land to the south of Fowlmere would therefore be a form of village extension that follows the projection of development towards the outer edge of the village, which has occurred over time.

An initial indicative master plan has been prepared for a development of around 50 homes at the site, with a mixed range of housing that would cater for affordable dwellings, starter homes, self-build plots and market housing. There is also room within the site to provide a small village shop, if it was considered an appropriate location.

There is also an opportunity within the site to provide allotments, which would cater in particular for properties to the south of the village, as currently there are only allotments to the north of the village.

The site is not located within the Green Belt, and as such on the lesser sensitive side of Fowlmere. The parcel of land is relatively self-contained with boundary landscaping that would be incorporated within a scheme. The density proposed at 20 dph and capacity for around 50 dwellings, could provide a spacious development that is sensitively designed to take account the views of the village as you approach from the south or west of the village.

The opportunity therefore arises to create a sensitively designed village extension that delivers a range of housing for the village, whilst being sensitive to the surrounding context and built form.

### **Available, deliverable and viable**

The site south of Fowlmere is in single ownership, a local SME developer, who is committed to delivering a development that will positively contribute towards the local community and sustain village life within Fowlmere. The site is therefore available immediately for development.

The site is relatively level with no signs of contamination. Direct access can be provided onto Chrishall Road. As such, the development could easily be delivered and the owner is experienced in constructing this type of development.

As the land is in the ownership of the local SME developer, there are no hurdles in terms of a developer having to acquire the land, and the form of development proposed would be viable.

It is envisaged that if brought forward for development through the adoption of the new Local Plan in 2022, this development could be completed within a three year period, by 2024/2025. The development could however start sooner if permission were granted ahead of the adoption of the new Local Plan say in 2020/2021, and would then be completed no later than 2023.

### **Conclusion**

This submission sets the scene about how a development at land to the south of Fowlmere could come forward, providing the opportunity to deliver both affordable housing and a mix of market housing for the village, to support the local economy and sustain village life within Fowlmere.

The land is therefore available, deliverable and viable, and is put forward for consideration by the Council for the Call for Sites and review of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

If you have any queries about the scheme, please do not hesitate at [planning@lanesnewhomes.co.uk](mailto:planning@lanesnewhomes.co.uk) or on tel. no. [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,



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