

22 March 2019  
CAPL435699/A3/RJM



South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Call for Sites Consultation,  
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Dear Sirs,

## CALL FOR SITES SUBMISSION – WHITEFIELDS, HINTON WAY, GREAT SHELFORD

### SUBMISSION TO GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN ON BEHALF OF [REDACTED]

Savills (UK) Ltd Planning Team are instructed by [REDACTED] to provide planning consultancy advice in respect of their landholdings across the country including those landholdings in the city of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.

#### Context

In such a context, we are instructed to make the necessary representations to the various stages of consultation as it relates to a review of the currently adopted Local Plans. To this end we welcome the Council's embarking on a review of those Plans to create a new Greater Cambridge Local Plan for the next plan period. We certainly consider that there is great merit in a single plan covering the Cambridge area because there is a very clear relationship between the City and the area surrounding it.

The application of previous planning policies has been part of a planning strategy which has sought to control growth on the edge of the City which in turn has led to a more dispersed pattern of development requiring settlements within South Cambridgeshire District Council's administrative area needing to accommodate new development whilst looking at Cambridge to mainly provide for the main focus for employment, retail, leisure and cultural needs.

Consequently, a significant amount of commuting takes place within and across South Cambridgeshire's administrative area in to and out of Cambridge. A series of initiatives remain in the pipeline to address the issue of influencing patterns of travel to encourage alternative modes of transport other than the private motor car. Whilst such programmes are welcome, it remains the case that a development strategy that analyses all possible options should be taken forward within the next plan period.

The development strategy within the recently adopted Local Plans for the City and South Cambridgeshire acknowledges that Cambridge remains the most sustainable location for new development – that strategy identified the urban area as the starting point for new development. The next most sustainable location for new development was the edge of Cambridge in terms of a development sequence and this part of the strategy has seen significant new developments at Trumpington Meadows, North West Cambridge, land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road, north of Newmarket Road and land north of Cherry Hinton. Whilst significant in terms of numbers, such development in our view, has not had a significant adverse impact on the qualities that the City seeks to protect and accordingly we consider that there is certainly potential for further growth on the City's edge within the next plan period.

After the City edge, the Council's took the view that new settlements were the next most sustainable options for growth – Waterbeach, Cambourne West and new development at Bourn Airfield form part of the current

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planned growth and indeed further growth at such locations may form part of any new strategy in the next plan period.

In the case of the other settlements within South Cambridgeshire there was a general view taken within the strategy as it relates to the current adopted plan that development should be generally limited. This was on the basis of sustainability reasons.

Thus the development strategy within the current adopted plans was part of a mixed approach having regard to the development sequence although such a strategy was heavily skewed in number terms towards new settlements and expansion of Cambourne. A number of representations were made to the Inspectors on this point and the Council's responded on these specific issues during the course of the Examination.

It is our view that it remains the case that the development strategy to be adopted in any single plan review across both local planning authority's areas should consider a range of development options and allocations within the urban area, on its urban edge, at new settlements and within the villages. There is no single location for growth in such a context.

With regards to the villages within South Cambridgeshire, it is the case that those larger villages with services and facilities, or indeed those with potential for increased services and facilities should be the focus for growth. In our view, villages that possess no primary school nor with good access to a primary school, should not be the focus for further allocations. Whilst this would not necessarily preclude new growth through infill nor indeed new affordable housing, it is accepted that it would be generally unsustainable to make housing allocations in such settlements unless there are other planning considerations that would indicate otherwise.

A planning approach within the rural area of South Cambridgeshire which assesses the level of services and facilities within a village and its accessibility to them is a strategy that has been applied in the past and we consider is applicable to the next round of plan formulation. Such an approach recognises the need for villages to accommodate growth where environmental considerations allow both in terms of providing new housing for new residents as well as introducing new spending power and investment to sustain and grow local facilities.

It is clear in such a context, both in terms of development in villages as well as the application of a development strategy which looks at development on the edge of Cambridge, that a review of Green Belt boundaries is required. To retain Green Belt boundaries as currently defined in the adopted plans is to maintain a pattern of development which generates significant problem of commuting and the cost therein by forcing new housing and businesses in to more remote locations beyond the main focus of demand which remains the City of Cambridge. In addition the tightly drawn Green Belt Boundaries around a number of the larger necklace villages surrounding Cambridge have prevented their own growth and in a climate associated with the next plan review where we consider development pressures will remain intense, the focus on accommodating new growth in and on the edge of villages will continue to be a major issue and the planning authorities need to adopt a strategy which acknowledges this issue.

### **Whitefields, Hinton Way, Great Shelford**

The site known as Whitefields, Hinton Way is in the ownership of [REDACTED]. The site is some 10.4 hectares in extent and is located within the Green Belt. This rectangular shape landholding lies adjacent to a further landholding owned by the [REDACTED] to the west and is the subject of a separate representation to advance the land for housing in the content of this Call for Sites consultation exercise.

The Whitefields site has a road frontage to Hinton Way which is a route that connects Great Shelford to Babraham Road and forms the south eastern boundary of the site. To the west, north and east of the site exists farmed agricultural land. To the north east of the site along Hinton Way lies further residential built development in ribbon form. With a direct frontage to Hinton Way, vehicular access to the site can be gained from this road. The topography of the site is relatively flat with the site containing a number of trees and landscape features as well as the remnants of the former large dwellings that was present on the site a number of years ago.

There was a dilapidated dwelling located within the site, known as Whitefields, which is to be demolished this year due to health and safety concerns with regards to trespassing (LPA Ref: S/2921/18/PN).

The site has been the subject of a number of planning applications including a golf course club house (LPA Ref: S/2257/01/F) and a hotel (LPA Ref: S/1633/96/O, S/0778/97/RM, S/1883/99/O). The granting of the permission for the hotel and the golf course on this site reflected the need at that time to secure a very high end hotel facility to serve the Cambridge market. The granting of the consent by the Council demonstrated the ability of the site to accommodate built development and in such a context we consider that the site has the potential to accommodate new built form whilst accepting the present inclusion of the site within the Green Belt.

The site lies outside the Great Shelford Development Framework as defined in the recently adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018. The site lies within the Green Belt and is subject to a Countryside Enhancement Strategy within the Adopted Local Plan 2018 which cross references to Policy CSF/5 within the Southern Fringe Area Action Plan.

The site is not subject to any other policy, ecological or landscape designations. The site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1; the least risk of flooding and where development should be directed. There are no heritage assets on or in close proximity to the site.

Great Shelford is identified in the recently adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) as a Rural Centre, which is the highest tier of the settlement hierarchy. The village has a range of services and facilities including the post office, primary school, village shops and employment opportunities. Furthermore, the village has a railway station with regular train services running to Cambridge and London daily offering further employment opportunities and the facilities and services found in Cambridge.

In view of the planning history of the site in terms of the permissions granted but now lapsed, the [REDACTED] consider that the site could accommodate new built form and to that end suggests a number of options that could come forward. This includes the possibility of new residential development including both market and affordable housing but also options which could look at the provision of either a care home or possibly a retirement village. The latter featured within the most recent consultation exercise as it relates to the Cambridge Housing Strategy at the beginning of 2019 and specifically acknowledged the interest that Councils would have for a retirement village in South Cambridgeshire district. The wooded character of this discrete area where consent has previously been granted provides the opportunity to create a new community to address this important part of the housing sector and we would wish to enter into dialogue with the Council should this be considered an option for new development.

It is considered that the Councils should look at this opportunity to secure much need new housing in this location.

We look forward to being kept informed of plan progress and should you have any queries concerning the contents of submission please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely,



**Garth Hanlon**  
Director