



# CLAREMONT

PLANNING CONSULTANCY

Greater Cambridge Issues and Options Consultation  
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Policy Team  
c/o South Cambridgeshire District Council  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridge  
CB23 6EA

24 February 2020

Dear Sir or Madam

**SOUTHERN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS (SWAVESEY): GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPRESENTATIONS FORM REGARDING LAND AT DAIRY FARM, BOXWORTH END, SWAVESEY**

On behalf of Southern and Regional Developments (Swavesey), Claremont Planning have been instructed to submit representations to the Issues and Options Consultation of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The representations relate to the promotion of land under their control at Boxworth End, Swavesey.

The identified site is available, suitable and deliverable for residential development. It is the position of Southern and Regional Developments (Swavesey) that the new Greater Cambridge Local plan should consider development at Swavesey and that the promoted Dairy Farm site should be allocated as a residential allocation given its sustainable location. Development at Swavesey will contribute to the delivery of a sustainable distribution of housing, whilst having the ability to provide material benefits in boosting local housing and meeting the strategic residential need over the new Plan period.

The Dairy Farm site at Boxworth End been previously promoted to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, with these submissions also being made separately to the Call for Sites consultation that is running alongside the Issues and Options Consultation. The representations made to the Issues and Options Consultation maintain that the site should be considered for allocation as part of a review of the spatial strategy of the emerging Plan. The emerging Plan should ensure it engages with all options in achieving new development so that it is able to identify sufficient land to meet strategic requirements.

This submission comprises the following documents that provide a response to the Issues and Options consultations:

- Cover Letter
- Completed Response Forms
- Dairy Farm, Bucking Way Road Location Plan

## **Swavesey's Suitability**

Swavesey is recognised in the adopted policy of South Cambridgeshire as a "Minor Rural Centre," a second-tier settlement within the spatial strategy of the Plan, despite the village having its own Secondary School, Primary School and GP Surgery. The village is considered to represent a sustainable location for growth due to the existing social and community facilities it provides, alongside the excellent links to Cambridge, St Ives, RAF Wyton and Huntingdon by the local road network and public transport. It is considered therefore that the current adopted settlement hierarchy does not appropriately reflect the sustainability of the settlement as demonstrated by the services that are available at the settlement and the opportunity for expansion. As these amenities are within walking distance of the site promoted, it reduces the necessity for residents to travel beyond the village to meet their everyday needs.

There are a number of public transport options available from the village to travel to local employment destinations beyond Swavesey, including an hourly bus service which runs through the village towards Cambridge and also to western destinations such as Huntingdon. The guided busway running along the disused railway line to the north of the village provides a high frequency of bus services towards Cambridge, Ely and Huntingdon that provides surety to passenger. The settlement benefits from close proximity to the A14, a strategically significant highway that has undergone recent upgrades and improvements. It is considered therefore that Swavesey benefits from a number of sustainable service and transport options that demonstrates its suitability to accommodate new residential over the next Plan period.

## **The Dairy Farm Site**

The site covers an area approximately 4ha in size is located towards the south of Swavesey, within an area known as Boxworth End. It is fronted by the highway to the west, where there is an existing farm access into the site and bounded by Ramper Road in the north. In the south and east the site is open to fields, with the boundaries marked by hedgerow. There are a number of structures and buildings located within the site, some of which continue to be used for agricultural purposes for dairy and pasture farming, as well as a recently converted barn into a dwelling and the original farmhouse. More widely, the site continues to be used as pasture and remains undeveloped. Dense, mature hedgerow run along the Bucking Way Road boundary of the site which currently provides a sense of enclosure. Otherwise within the site itself there is no woodland, trees or groupings of vegetation of significance.

The site does not include any particular gradients or changes in topography, so reflects the wider landscape characteristic of the Cambridgeshire fenland landscape. The north-eastern limits of the farm, adjacent to Ramper Road experience some flood risk and is identified as being within Flood Zone 3. As such, these areas of the farm are excluded from the site promotion as it is considered that this area is not developable but could be set aside as to inform a comprehensive landscape scheme. The site is otherwise unaffected by local or national designations, with the closes Grade II listed heritage asset at Drayton Lodge which is located approximately 40m to the west of the site.

Located towards the southernmost part of Swavesey, it is considered that the site exhibits a close relationship with the settlement through the built form that is present to the north of the site at Ramper Road and towards the south at Pine Grove. Although the village is predominantly linear in its development pattern, past development has expanded the village eastwards that provides a precedent for the realisation of its development potential. The

development of the site would reflect the wider settlement pattern and project to the east in line with Pine Grove, ensuring that the overall form and linear pattern of built form along Bucking Way Road is maintained.

### **Development Potential**

Southern and Regional Developments (Swavesey) maintain that the site represents an appropriate location for development. It is recognised that the western aspect of the site has been recognised locally as providing open views across the countryside, and although these are not identified by any statutory designation or development plan allocation they will be taken into account through the delivery of the site by providing a considered and sympathetic layout, incorporating green corridors and landscape zones to retain these visual aspects of the site.

Planning permission S/1531/15/FL was granted at the dairy farm for the conversion of a number of the existing barns to a large dwelling with contemporary styling. This permission has been implemented on site and helps to establish the suitability of the location for further housing development. Demonstration of this is also established through the approval of two residential developments at Boxworth End, on the opposite side of Bucking Way Road to the site. These consents (S/1605/16/OL and S/1605/16/OL) identify the suitability of Swavesey to accommodate growth and the sustainability of the Boxworth End area. The related appeal decisions described the Boxworth End location as being within only a short distance of Swavesey's facilities, whilst development would not give rise to notable harm to the countryside when the presumption in favour of sustainable development is applied.

Planning permission S/3391/16/OL was also considered for residential development of the site through which the location was assessed as being suitable to accommodate residential development with a sensitive layout capable of being achieved without an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding landscape, with the site's suitable for housing considered to outweigh the limited harm that would arise in relation to the Important Countryside Frontage designation along the roadside frontage. No technical concerns were identified through this proposal's consideration, with the Highway Authority, Ecology Officer, Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority, Urban Design, District Landscape Officer and Planning Department considering the site as suitable to accommodate new homes.

Through the subsequent appeal decision, the Planning Inspector considered that the site could accommodate development but not of the scale proposed; with the potential to accommodate single storey dwellings at the frontage suitably addressing the setting and a lower density scheme capable of retaining the open views. In particular open views along Ramper Road were considered to be preserved.

In relation to secondary school provision, an extension to increase capacity at the Village College by 150 pupils has been completed, as a result of an identified shortfall in capacity in 2012. Following other residential consents at Swavesey any development at the village would enable the expansion of the Village College further, which would assist in ensuring capacity over the extended plan period.

It is Southern and Regional Developments (Swavesey) position that the approach to be taken by Greater Cambridge Councils should identify a spatial strategy that is comprehensive across all of the sustainable settlement tiers; considering a number of avenues to achieve the requisite levels of housing development. Swavesey's settlement status as a Minor Rural Centre should be recognised through the allocation of further housing growth proportionate to the facilities it provides.

The emerging Plan should include robust engagement with development opportunities in those villages of South Cambridgeshire that are sustainable and suitable to accommodate new residential growth. The Dairy Farm Site at Boxworth End is such a development opportunity, whilst Swavesey is an appropriate, highly sustainable settlement for inclusion as a growth location within the spatial strategy. Given that the Dairy Farm site is available, suitable and deliverable as a location for new residential development, with the ability of any development scheme to respond to local landscape considerations, the site should be duly considered as a development option within the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

The identification of the Dairy Farm site as a residential allocation would be an appropriate option for development at Swavesey that would represent moderate growth. The site is directly opposite to a recently consented major residential development, which alongside other consents establish the suitability of the settlement as a sustainable location. The spatial strategy would benefit from the inclusion of further non-strategic sites located at sustainable villages such as Swavesey within the Greater Cambridge area. This would comply with the assertions of the National Planning Policy Framework, where it states at Paragraph 68 that authorities should secure small and medium development sites as complementary to strategic allocations. These smaller sites exhibit less complex and speedy delivery which can valuably maintain a housing supply if delays arise at strategic sites. This is particularly relevant in South Cambridgeshire given the large allocations which have been made that represent a significant proportion of their housing supply. As such, the Dairy Farm site at Bucking Way Road should be duly considered by the authorities as part of a development solution to accommodate growth at Swavesey.

## **Conclusion**

It is maintained that Swavesey is a suitable and sustainable settlement to accommodate new residential development to meet the identified needs of the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The adopted spatial strategy establishes limited acceptability for growth to be directed towards villages such as Swavesey, but it is considered that given the settlement's available service base and access to public transport linkages, Swavesey should be recognised as appropriate to accommodate more growth.

The Dairy Farm site is an appropriate location for new development in Swavesey. It is acknowledged that the implementation of the site will need to engage with the local designations that through the provision of a robust landscape strategy. It is considered that the designation does not wholly restrict the development potential of the site, rather it will inform the layout and design of the site, as well as the maximum residential quantum that will be achievable.

The Dairy Farm site at Boxworth End, Swavesey should be duly considered as a suitable and deliverable location for development that is able to accommodate sustainable residential growth. The new Plan must ensure that it explores all options in achieving the requisite levels of growth to meet the needs of the new Plan period. This should include sites such as that under the control of Southern and Regional, and villages including Swavesey which are able to achieve development that can make a significant contribution to the strategic requirements of the new Plan.

The Dairy Farm Site at Boxworth End, under the control of Southern and Regional Developments (Swavesey), is demonstrated to be an appropriate and sustainable location to achieve new residential development. The Site should form part of a wider and comprehensive

assessment of opportunities to secure new residential growth within suitable villages such as Swavesey through the implementation of a new spatial approach to accommodate additional housing. It is considered that the new Plan must engage with such opportunities if it is to positively address the substantial increase in residential demand within the Plan area. If the Plan does not effectively engage with this growth, it will result in the stifling of economic investment as well as exacerbating the significant development pressures already experienced in the Plan area.

These representations on behalf of Southern and Regional Developments (Swavesey) promote the suitability of Swavesey to accommodate housing growth, whilst realising the potential of the identified Dairy Farm site to accommodate housing at this sustainable location. If you have any queries with respect to the representations provided or the related call for sites submission, please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Yours sincerely,

**Katherine Else MRTPI Bsc Hons PG Dip**  
Managing Director

Enc - Dairy Farm Site Location Plan  
- Representation forms on behalf of Southern & Regional Developments (Swavesey)