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

Dear Sirs

**Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment Call for Sites and Broad Locations.
Response Form 2019
Submission by Savills (UK) Limited on behalf of Mr Paul Wilkinson and Mrs Helen Wilkinson as
Shareholders of Three Prospects Farm Limited.**

Land east of the A505 and south of the A10 near Royston.

Savills (UK) Ltd Planning Team are instructed by our clients Mr Paul and Mrs Helen Wilkinson to make the relevant and necessary representations to the Council's Call for Sites consultation exercise to promote our clients landholdings on the eastern side of Royston and west of Melbourn village within South Cambridgeshire District Council's administrative area. A letter confirming the clients instructions and support for the promotion of the land is enclosed with this submission

In the context of submitting representations to this consultation exercise, we welcome the two Councils embarking on a review of the existing recently adopted Local 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 as well as a relationship between areas in the southern part of South Cambridgeshire and towns such as Royston which possess a high level order of services and facilities.

The application of previous planning policies has been part of a planning strategy which has sought to control growth on the edge of the Cambridge 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

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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 given the function and role that other towns outside the area have in terms of attracting investment and growth. Whilst 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, these are largely focused on people getting in and out of Cambridge from the surrounding area.

In such a context the new single local plan for the area must acknowledge that other locations on the fringes of the plan area also play an important role and influence in terms of considering options for growth in the new plan period. It is the case that the local planning authorities must be cognisant of opportunities that exist to both accommodate development as well as ensuring that such growth is contiguous with investment so that the benefits of such new development are felt locally.

The development strategy within the recently adopted Local Plans for the City and South Cambridgeshire acknowledge that Cambridge remains the most sustainable location for new development – that strategy identified the Cambridge 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 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 and new development at Bourn Airfield form part of the current 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. Such a strategy did not consider our clients' landholdings during the last local plan review and which is based on land on the eastern edge of Royston beyond the Royston bypass. The red line boundary of the relevant landholding is shown in the accompanying plan.

The land lies within South Cambridgeshire district and presents the opportunity for new housing and employment development in this location as an expansion to Royston. Whilst it is clearly the case that the land falls with the adjacent local planning authority boundary, it must be the case that as an option for growth for Royston it should be the case that such land cannot be precluded simply because it falls in another District. That is simply not good planning and the Council must look critically in the Duty to Cooperate context to bring forward plans that address strategic cross border issues.

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 across the plan area. This should include an option to realise the potential for new growth at our clients land on the eastern side of the A505. The extent of the landholding includes land either side of the A10 but for the purposes of the development option, the focus is on that area of land south of the A10. The land north of the A10 is constrained by the railway line as well as the presence of an SSSI that runs alongside that line..

The landholding south of the A10 extends to some 209 hectares and is capable of accommodating substantial numbers of new housing alongside the commensurate amount of infrastructure required to serve such a scale

of new development . Having regard to the high levels and services and facilities in Royston it presents a significant opportunity to secure a logical extension to the town which does not involve incursion into sensitive landscape areas such as those at the Heath to the south of Royston nor to areas close to other sensitive receptors. The scale and nature of the land parcels means that the necessary infrastructure can be put in place to address the needs of new development and this will necessary include the need for new educational facilities and community buildings as required. The clients confirm that they are in full control of the land in question and that the site is overlain an aquifer so access to water should not be an issue. The proximity to Royston and its facilities and indeed Melbourn, as a well-served village to the east, means that there are good accessibility links that can be provided and in a manner that continues to complement and enhance the existing service base of both locations. The provision of a new cycleway connecting Cambridge and Royston enhances the site's accessibility credentials for non-car modes and provides a pleasant cycling and pedestrian routes between villages between those main settlement

It is considered that the area of land south of the A10 is capable of accommodating some 1500 new dwellings including affordable housing as well as the necessary education facilities (this is likely to be at least one new primary school), and open spaces and other relevant community buildings. Clearly at this stage there has been no work undertaken concerning the disposition of those uses but importantly there is a significant area of landholding to accommodate this scale of development. Potential access could be off the A10 although the proposals could link into a possible new roundabout on the A505 (see enclosed drawing)

It is acknowledged that the promotion of such a strategy is not based on locating development at an existing village in South Cambridgeshire. The option of promoting development at this location does not and should not acknowledge administrative boundaries and must be seen in the context of providing a robust and cogent approach to the expansion of Royston whose existing built up area falls within North Hertfordshire but with the potential for growth in South Cambridgeshire.

It is our view that the land in question has the capability to address an element of Greater Cambridge's housing need by accommodating new growth in this relatively sustainable location and is directed at accommodating the expansion of Royston in an area which is seen as a sustainable extension to the town .

We look forward to acknowledgement of this submission and being kept informed of plan progress.

Yours sincerely

 DipEnvP MRTPI
Director