

Date: 19.03.19

By email: planningpolicy@scambs.gov.uk

Reference: JJ/016-92

Dear Sir/Madam

Land to the East of Ely Road, Milton – Representations on behalf of the College of West Anglia

This 12.07 hectare site is being promoted for residential development comprising both market and affordable housing. The proposed site has the capacity to deliver 170 dwellings, of which 40% will be affordable. The site represents an underused part of the College of West Anglia landholding, which is somewhat divorced from the main campus which is located 200m to the south east. The development of this site will represent a logical extension to the land to the south and south east of the site which is being promoted for residential development. The south western part of the site is occupied by an existing group of equestrian and agricultural buildings and hardstandings which cover circa 1.0 hectares and could conceivably be designated as previously developed land. The fields which are the subject to this proposal are surplus to requirements and their development can be undertaken without curtailing existing college activities.

It must be recognised that colleges of further education have suffered significant cuts in funding and such facilities are increasingly having to look at alternative ways to raise revenue. The development of this site will allow the College of West Anglia to upgrade the existing facilities at Milton and also undertake improvements to their other campuses at King's Lynn and Wisbech. This is a clear community benefit arising from this proposal.

It must also be recognised that the eastern part of the site adjoins an existing watercourse and the development of the site will allow this part of the site to be subject to habitat and bio-diversity enhancements.

It is acknowledged that the site falls within the Cambridge Green Belt and any allocation for residential use would have the effect of removing the site from the Green Belt. However, particularly if the land to the south is allocated it would the effect of making this site a logical extension to this part of Milton. Ely Road forms a defensible western boundary, with the watercourse on the eastern boundary and the golf course (currently used by the Cambridge Foot Golf Centre) to the north forming the remaining defensible boundaries. In terms of the eastern boundary, the railway line, area of land designated as Flood Zone 3 and open countryside prevent coalescence of this part of Milton with Horningsea to the east.

However, it must be recognised that the site to the south is currently occupied by office and research buildings, with the open space to the north and east of these being promoted for residential development. Therefore, it could be argued that this proposal would represent a logical extension to this part of Milton and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

Benefits arising from this site

From the above it is clear that the benefits arising from this development are wide-ranging when considered against the economic, social and environmental objectives as detailed at paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Partners:

M W Hamilton Ltd, E W Lee Ltd, J G L Law Ltd, M Walshe Ltd, P G M Claydon Ltd, N R Harris Ltd, W King Ltd, S J Lewis Ltd, C M B Ashton Ltd,
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In terms of the **economic objectives** the proposal will give rise to significant employment during the construction phase of the development. Future occupiers of the development would be likely to use local services and facilities in Milton making a positive contribution to their vitality and viability.

The **social objectives** are the supply of circa 170 dwellings to help the Council to maintain a deliverable five-year housing land supply. The proposal will accommodate a mix of houses, including bungalows, to meet the needs of families, young couples, singles and retirees. Bungalows are particularly suited to the ageing population and those with limited mobility.

The provision of circa 68 dwellings will make a positive contribution to the district's housing affordability. The provision of 68 affordable dwellings also meets the objectives of paragraph 59 of the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposal will provide funding to assist in the improvement of further educational facilities in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, which is a significant community benefit.

The **environmental objectives** include the sustainability credentials of the site in terms of access to local services and facilities. Good pedestrian links are available from the site to these facilities, which are within both walking and cycling distances. It is important to stress that Milton has a high-quality cycle network and is located very close to the Milton Park and Ride, offering viable alternatives to the private car to access Cambridge. The Park and Ride site can be accessed via a bridge over the A10, offering a safe cycle and pedestrian route. The nearest bus stops are located 400m to the south of the site.

The proposals will also allow the bio-diversity of the site to be enhanced and the provision of structural landscaping will not only soften the impact of the development but also create new habitats.

Site Capacity

It is considered that the site has capacity for approximately 170 dwellings which gives a density of 30 dwelling per hectare. This density of development is considered appropriate for this edge of settlement location and the need to incorporate structural landscaping and bio-diversity enhancement. The above figure is a net density and would allow for infrastructure such as access, landscaping, open space and any necessary mitigation measures. Any planning allocation relating to the residential element of the site would need to make it clear that this is an indicative capacity and that this capacity should be informed by a master planning exercise.

Access

Vehicle access could be taken from the existing access from Ely Road, which is designed for use by both cars and HGV's. This access would need minimal improvement to facilitate access to this site. This access is located on a traffic calmed stretch of Ely Road and is located within the 30mph speed limit. However, the site has an extensive frontage to Ely Road and an alternative access could be secured if required. A segregated pedestrian and cycle access from this site could also be achieved.

Bio-diversity

The majority of the site is used for grazing and would appear to be of limited bio-diversity value. It is recognised that the barn complex may have the potential to provide habitats for bats and other protected species. An ecological assessment would be required to accompany a planning application for the development of this part of the site. The development of the site would have the potential to enhance bio-diversity at and adjacent to the site. This is particularly of note with regards to the eastern boundary of the site which adjoins the watercourse.

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Contaminated Land

The majority of the site comprises greenfield land, which is unlikely to be contaminated. A Phase 1 Assessment will be required in relation to the agricultural buildings and the hardstandings located in the south western corner.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The entirety of the development site falls within Flood Zone 1, which is at the lowest risk of flooding. As such residential development is appropriate in this location. Due to the scale of development a flood risk and drainage strategy will need to accompany an application for the development of this site.

Heritage

The site is located to the north of the Milton Conservation Area and North Lodge, a Grade II Listed building. The Listed Building and Conservation Area are spatially separate from and well screened from the proposed development site. This screening will ensure that the setting of and the character and appearance of the Listed Building and Conservation Area are not compromised. It is recognised that any application for the development of the site will need to be accompanied by an archaeological assessment, although there is no reason to believe that this will limit development.

Landscape Impact

The site is well screened from Ely Road by mature trees, with similar screening on the southern boundary. Longer distance views from the north are softened by the golf course. Although, it is recommended that structural landscaping will need to be provided to soften views from the north. In addition, the area to the west of the watercourse is open and it is recommended that planting is provided in this location to provide screening as well as enhancing the bio-diversity of the site.

Services and Utilities

The site is located adjacent to the existing development framework for Milton and it is considered that connections can be made to existing services, including electricity, sewerage, gas, water and telecommunications. The site is not crossed by pylons/telegraph poles and the site is also not crossed by pipelines or similar.

Public Rights of Way

The public footpath network within Milton is limited. However, as part of the development a footpath network could be created along the southern, eastern and northern site boundaries.

Topography

The site is flat with no significant changes in levels. This means that development would not be prevented in whole or part.

Availability

The entirety of the site is in the ownership of The College of West Anglia who are committed to promoting it for residential development. It is confirmed that the site is immediately available for development.

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It is considered that this site represents a sustainable location and will help assist the viability and vitality of local services. As stated the site is attracting interest from promoters who are interested in delivering development in this location.

There are no known legal constraints which could delay or prohibit development.

Deliverability

The site is within the sole ownership of the promoter and it is considered that the development at the site could be delivered within 5 years. The site is a mixture of previously developed land and greenfield and there are no constraints at the site which could prohibit delivery within the time period. Work undertaken to date has confirmed that the site is viable and deliverable.

Viability

Given the character, location and nature of the site we do not consider that there would be any issues associated with the viability or deliverability of the site.

Supporting evidence

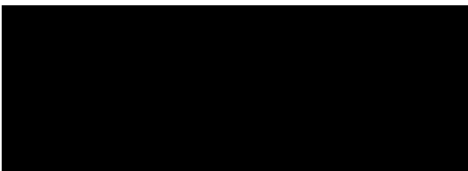
The following plans/documents are attached in this representation, which further demonstrate the site's suitability for development:

- Site location plan – land subject to these representations
- Flood Zone map
- Email from clients confirming their support for the submission of these representations

Conclusion

It is considered that this site is suitable for residential development and is located within walking and cycling distance of the facilities and services located within the village of Milton. The site will result in significant community benefits, facilitating the enhancement of the facilities operated by the College of West Anglia. The College is also committed to using profits from the sale of this land to benefit the educational needs of the wider community. Other benefits arising are the provision of a policy compliant level of affordable housing and habitat creation. It is considered that the site is suitable for residential development and is capable of being delivered within 5 years.

Yours faithfully



Director - Planning



Enc.

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