

Date: 14th March 2019
Reference: 019-26

By email: planningpolicy@scambs.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

LAND OFF WEST WICKHAM ROAD, BALSHAM: REPRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF [REDACTED]

Introduction

This Statement has been prepared by Cheffins on behalf of [REDACTED] to promote land to the north west of West Wickham Road, Balsham in the Council's Call for Sites consultation. This is with a view to gaining an allocation for residential use in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The location of the site is shown on the site location plan, which accompanies this representation.

Existing planning status

The site comprises open countryside and lies immediately adjacent to, but outside of, the current Balsham Development Framework which borders the site on its northern boundary.

Section C: Land ownership

The site is owned freehold by [REDACTED]

Section D: Site details

The site is located to the south of The Brambles – a small residential cul-de-sac on the eastern side of West Wickham Road. The site comprises 0.9 hectares of agricultural land which is currently low-key grazing land used for equestrian purposes.

The post code of the nearest residential property to the site (45 West Wickham Road) is CB21 4DZ.

To the south/south east of the site lies a large detached residential property, Stocking Cottage No. 45 West Wickham Road, which is located in large domestic grounds. To the south west, on the opposite side of West Wickham Road, lies Stocking Toft – a similar property in large grounds. Only to the east is the site bordered by wider open countryside comprising arable fields.

The frontage of the site and its boundaries comprise well established mature hedgerows with trees meaning the site is highly contained and clearly separated from the wider open arable land to the east.

Section E: Recent and current land uses

The site comprises existing agricultural land in grazing/equestrian use.

Section F: Proposed future uses

The site is being promoted for residential use which would include land for access/roads, landscaping, possibly open space and an element of affordable housing.

Partners:

M W Hamilton Ltd, E W Lee Ltd, J G L Low 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,
W E Pepper Ltd, P M Woolner Ltd, M O Peck Ltd, J A Stiff Ltd, M B Jones Ltd, R W Freshwater Ltd, S P C Gooderham Ltd, B Goodsell-King Ltd.

The benefits of the proposed development are wide-ranging and will promote the economic objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework. The site is located in a sustainable location, adjacent to the existing village boundary and can provide a modest suitably designed residential development.

Balsham is an appropriate location for further development given its range of services and facilities including shops, pub, primary school, recreational facilities, bus service and so forth.

Site capacity

We consider that the site has capacity for approximately 15-20 dwellings assuming a fairly low density to reflect the character of surrounding houses and the edge of village location. The precise capacity will need to be subject to a master planning exercise encompassing issues of access, open space, landscaping and the relationship with existing development.

Section G: Suitability – Site features and constraints

There are no significant constraints at the site, which could prevent residential development at the site being delivered in a timely manner. We have outlined other constraints which may need to be considered when developing the site.

Access

Vehicular access to/from the site would be taken from West Wickham Road. The current field access is not in an ideal location due to a bend in the road and therefore we suggest that the access is located closer to the village, further west, where visibility appears greater i.e. to the east of No. 39 West Wickham Road. Even at the existing access point, there is a wide highway verge which does allow adequate visibility when exiting the site.

Biodiversity

The site comprises a single grass field and in itself, does not appear to have any high biodiversity value particularly given its equestrian use. This would be subject to an assessment as part of any planning application, particularly the boundary trees/hedgerows, and any development at the site would have the potential to incorporate any appropriate mitigation, should that be necessary or indeed to bring about an enhancement of local biodiversity.

Contaminated land

The undeveloped site comprises greenfield land and, as such, is very unlikely to be contaminated.

Flood risk and drainage

The site is in Flood Zone 1, which is at the lowest risk of flooding. As such, housing development is appropriate in this location in principle. Any planning application would be accompanied by a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which would outline how surface and foul water would be managed.

Heritage

Neither the site, nor its immediate environs, are considered to be of any heritage value.

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Landscape impact

The site is well-defined on all its boundaries by existing mature hedgerows with trees and these will assist in integrating any new development into this site without adverse impacts on the wider landscape or on adjacent residential properties. It is clearly already well 'contained' on three sides.

Services and utilities

The site is located close to existing roads serving Balsham (West Wickham Road) and it is considered that connections can be made to existing services – including electricity, gas, telecommunications and water as required.

Public rights of way

There are no public rights of way at or close to the site which could be affected by its development.

Topography

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

Section H: Availability

The site is within the sole ownership of [REDACTED] who are actively promoting it for residential development use. Therefore, it is available for development now.

We consider that Balsham is an attractive housing market location with strong demand. As such, we consider that there would be healthy occupier demand for new dwellings at this site.

We are not aware of any legal constraints which could delay or prohibit development.

Section I: Deliverability

The site is within the ownership of the promoter and it is considered that development at the site could easily be delivered within five years. The site is greenfield land and there are no constraints at the site which could prohibit delivery within this time period.

Section J: Viability

Given the character and nature of the site, we do not consider that there would be any issues associated with viability or deliverability of the site. The owners are fully aware of the requirements for affordable housing on residential sites such as this.

Section K: Supporting evidence

We have attached a Site Location Plan to this representation which we trust will inform the assessment of the site's suitability for development.

Conclusion

We consider that the site is highly suitable for a modest residential development, that can be delivered promptly and is well related to the built fabric of the existing village. The site is a logical extension to the

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existing village and is a largely unconstrained site. We therefore commend this representation to the Council.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss this representation further.

Yours faithfully

[Redacted signature]

Ian Smith
Director of Planning

[Redacted contact information]

Enc.

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