



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

GREATER CAMBRIDGE CALL FOR SITES SUBMISSION: LAND SOUTH OF DRY DRAYTON ROAD, OAKINGTON

On behalf of European Property Ventures (Oakington), Claremont Planning have been instructed to submit their site south of Dry Drayton Road, Oakington to the Local Planning Authority through the Call for Sites exercise as part of the Greater Cambridge Issues and Options consultation. Claremont Planning are keen to establish that the site is available, suitable and viable for residential development and that it can robustly contribute towards the housing land supply of the Local Plan area as part of the newly identified strategic need identified through the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Accordingly, the following documents are provided in support of these comments:

- Cover Letter
- Completed Call for Sites Proforma
- Site Location Plan

The site at Dry Drayton Road is in a sustainable location that relates well to the settlement of Oakington and does not contribute towards the openness or function of the Green Belt to the south of the village. It is within appropriate walking distances from services within the village and benefits from excellent public transport linkages by way of bus services into Cambridge.

The Dry Drayton Road Site

The Dry Drayton Road site extends to 2.06ha and is located on the south eastern side of Dry Drayton Road, located to the south of Oakington. It is laid to managed grassland, with boundaries in the north robustly formed by hedgerow and woodland. In the south, the site is partly open to fields and abuts the built form of Oakington Garden Centre. In the south east, the site's boundary is formed by a drove that provides access from Cambridge Road to the horticultural complex located beyond the south eastern boundary of the site.

The Site is laid to grassland but is actively managed and therefore has limited biodiversity and ecological significance. The site's immediate context is influenced by existing development, including the large complex of buildings associated with the Oakington Garden Centre to the south and Fare Acres Farm to the north. Given the urbanising influence of the collection of buildings associated with the garden centre, the promotion site should be considered as



located at the edge of the built area of the village. This diminishes any landscape concerns that would arise through the screening that these built features provide to the site when travelling northwards into the village on Dry Drayton Road. The urbanising influence of built form reduces the function of the Green Belt at this location, with the openness of this location significantly eroded by these buildings that demonstrate an extent of development that reduces the visual aesthetic and value of the countryside to the south of Oakington. It is considered that development of the promotion site would be able to capitalise on this extent of development and capable of establishing a revised edge to the settlement without detrimental impact to the function of the Green Belt between Oakington and Cambridge.

The site is influenced by flooding across its frontage, reflecting the drainage characteristics along the length of Dry Drayton Road. Development of the site will include a set back from the road frontage to avoid this flood area whilst also mitigating noise impacts from traffic, and therefore it can be demonstrated that the site is developable. The developable areas of the site toward the south are characterised by Flood Zones 1 and 2, which can be demonstrated to be suitable for residential development. This will allow for a considered layout to be implemented, including provision of a sustainable drainage strategy which will be underpinned through a comprehensive flood risk assessment.

Development Potential of the Promotion Site

It is acknowledged that the site's primary constraint is its designation within the Green Belt, which covers the entire area of the site. If the site was to be released through the amendment of Green Belt boundaries and included within the village's development framework, it is considered that the other environmental constraints including flooding can be appropriately mitigated. The site is will provide a development that is able to deliver a material beneficial number of dwellings and will not result in harm to the strategic position of the village or impacts on the services available within the settlement.

The presence of existing development along Dry Drayton Road that extends south from the established settlement boundary of Oakington, there is already an urbanising influence on the openness of the Green Belt. The promotion site benefits from partial enclosure by this development, including the Oakington Garden Centre which consists of a complex of buildings as well as the buildings of Fare Acres Farm in the north. This built form significantly reduces the openness of the Green Belt at this location and diminishes the open nature of the site given that it remains undeveloped. The development of the site through a sensitively scaled housing scheme would not result in detriment to the function of the Green Belt at this location, given the extent of urbanisation that has been established along Dry Drayton Road. Revision of the village's development framework to incorporate these urbanising features and the promotion site would provide an improved settlement edge and delineation of the Green Belt.

The development of the site would enable the provision of a landscape strategy to provide defensible boundaries and screening features to the adjacent existing buildings. Such landscaping would utilise natural characteristics to the north east of the promotion site. This will effectively reduce any visual impact that the introduction of new built form may have, reinforcing the transitional nature to the south of the settlement between the village and the open countryside.

Whilst Oakington is currently regarded as a lower order settlement in the adopted South Cambridgeshire spatial strategy, identified as a Group Village in policy S/10 of the Local Plan, it has a strong service base that is able to support further growth. These services include amenities that are within walking distance of the promotion site, such as a primary school,

post office, convenience store and public house. There are also community facilities available in the village in the form of the recreation ground and village hall. These facilities meet the day to day needs of the village and reduce the need to travel. Where travelling beyond the village is required to access higher order services and employment, Oakington benefits from public transport links into Cambridge, including a half hourly bus service from Cambridge Road. The site is also located 1.5km to the south of the Cambridgeshire Busway with services every 3 minutes into Cambridge city centre and to other locations such as Huntingdon and St Ives. These services provide excellent accessibility and linkages to the wider area, providing opportunities to access the rapidly expanding employment market in Cambridge. Bus journey times range between 20 to 30 minutes in Cambridge city centre, with journeys by car taking approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

The established linkages and service base demonstrate that Oakington is a suitable location for moderate levels of development, with the site at Dry Drayton Road representing an appropriate location to accommodate a residential allocation. Development of the site would not result in detrimental harm to the Green Belt to the south of the village and would be able to make best use of linkages into Cambridge by public transport and as well as sustainable modes of access to the amenities available in the village. It is considered that the current classification of the village as a Group Village in the adopted hierarchy undermines the suitability of the village and stifles the potential and capacity of Oakington to provide new sustainable directions of growth. New development at the village would support the local service economy of the village, as well as providing much needed local housing that is able to contribute towards meeting the strategic housing need identified within the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Conclusion

The site at Dry Drayton Road is in a sustainable location that relates well to the settlement of Oakington and does not contribute towards the openness or function of the Green Belt to the south of the village. It is within appropriate walking distances from services within the village and benefits from excellent public transport linkages by way of bus services into Cambridge.

Given the rapid economic growth experienced within the wider sub-region, it is imperative that the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan identifies sufficient sites to meet the strategic residential needs of the new Plan area. The distribution of an appropriate quantum of development to villages within the rural area will ensure that smaller developments are realised that are able to address local housing requirements whilst boosting delivery. Such sites would contribute toward the Plan being able to demonstrate a strategy that provides a sustained housing trajectory whilst also addressing localise housing deficiencies. This would result in a boost to the housing supply trajectory and maintenance of the housing land supply. It is emphasised therefore that sites such as at Dry Drayton Road, Oakington needs to be robustly considered for allocation, alongside a comprehensive and wide ranging spatial strategy, if the new Plan is to ensure that it identifies sufficient land to meet the strategic needs of the new Plan period.

This site submission is supported by consultation responses to the Issues and Options document of the new Local Plan, made by Claremont Planning on behalf of European Property Ventures (Cambridgeshire). Please do not hesitate to contact me if you any questions regarding the site presented for the Council's consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Katherine Else MRTPI Bsc Hons PG Dip
Managing Director



Enc - Site Location Plan
- Call for Sites Form