

25 March 2019
CAPL437211/A3/RJM



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South Cambridgeshire District Council
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Dear Sirs,

STRATEGIC HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT – LAND AT BEACH ROAD, COTTENHAM

CALL FOR SITES SUBMISSION TO GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN

Savills (UK) Ltd Planning Team are instructed by a consortium of landowners to submit representations in support of the site above to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Savills (UK) Ltd supports the City and South Cambridgeshire Councils working together to prepare a Greater Cambridge Local Plan. Both Local Planning Authorities are intrinsically linked through the need to create a single spatial planning policy for the Cambridge area, given the symbiotic relationship that exists between the urban area and the rural area that surrounds it. The pattern of development that has emerged in part has contributed to a dispersed strategy of placing new development across a number of development locations, most notably at new settlements as well as in the larger villages. This in turn has resulted in significant commuting and travel into Cambridge from the surrounding villages within South Cambridgeshire - a feature that will continue to be exhibited on the basis of the existing planning strategy continuing. The opportunity afforded through the work on a new single development plan for the whole of the Cambridge area is welcomed and consequently provides the context for a comprehensive review of that strategy, including a strategic review of both the inner and outer edges of the Green Belt.

Demand for new housing and employment growth in the area is not diminishing and, a review of current Local Plans will need to acknowledge continuing market demand for new houses and jobs close to Cambridge. Clearly, any such approach cannot have one solution that fits all and it should not be a stark choice between putting all development in, or on the edge of Cambridge, or in village, or new settlement locations within South Cambridgeshire – it has got to be a blend or mix of such locations, having regard to land characteristics and the sensitivities of a range of planning factors including sustainability credentials, and accessibility to jobs and services. In such a context, it is the case that focus for growth around the edge of Cambridge alongside the growth across the more sustainable villages within South Cambridgeshire can help to accommodate the significant development requirements across the two administrative areas.

The site is located to the south east of Cottenham village and comprises 2.119 hectares of undeveloped, greenfield, agricultural land. The site is bound to the east by Beach Road, to the north by a drain which runs from Beach Road westwards, beyond which is the residential development of Brenda Gautrey Way. To the west of the site is agricultural land, beyond which is Cottenham Village College. To the south of the site lies land within some of the landowners ownership and agricultural land.

There are no heritage assets on or in close proximity to the site. The site also wholly lies within Flood Zone 1; the least risk of flooding and where development should be directed. Along the site boundary there lies a number of trees and hedgerow, part of the site includes an old orchard.

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Access to and from the site could be sought from the current accesses, of which there are three, located along Beach Road, it is acknowledged that the access will need to be improved to accommodate the residential development at the site. The site lies within the 30mph speed limit zone of the village. A Highways Statement would accompany any further planning applications, should the site be allocated. Although the site does not currently have access to key utilities, these can be secured at a later stage, should the site be allocated and a planning application come forward. There are no known key utilities crossing the site.

With regards to policy, the site lies outside of the Cottenham Development Framework and outside the Cottenham Conservation Area. It is subject to a Green Belt designation. There are no other policy, landscape or ecological designations on the site, although adjacent to the north of the site lies a 'Protected Village Amenity' policy NH/11 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The topography of the site is relatively flat. There are no known contamination issues at the site.

Cottenham is identified in policy S/8 the recently adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 as a Rural Centre. This is the top of the settlement hierarchy acknowledging Cottenham as a highly sustainable location in the District. Cottenham has a range of facilities and services including primary school, village college, shops, public houses, pharmacy, bakery and a range of employment opportunities both within the village and to the south east of the site along Beach Road. A regular bus service (Citi 8) runs every 20 minutes into Cambridge City Centre where there are a vast range of services and facilities as well as employment opportunities. Cottenham presents as a settlement which can accommodate additional growth. Settlements need to grow to continue to be regarded as sustainable with new residents able to increase capital spending power within the village which in turn can drive investment back into the local community with facilities and services enhanced.

A Neighbourhood Plan for Cottenham has been prepared and has been submitted for Examination. Given that it has yet to be adopted, little weight can be afforded to the policies within, however, it should be noted that the site lies within the map shown in Figure 14 of the Neighbourhood Plan Submission identified as Cottenham's possible development sites.

The site presents as a logical extension to the existing village, particularly as it abuts the Development Framework with existing built residential development to the north and east of the site. Therefore we suggest that the site is removed from the Green Belt, the Development Framework is extended and the site should come forward to residential development. It should also be noted that the submitted Cottenham Neighbourhood Plan has been extended along the opposite side of Beach Road to beyond where this site lies.

The site could accommodate approximately 50 dwellings (32 dwellings per hectare of net developable area) which would include a policy compliant amount of affordable housing. There would be a mixture of tenures and house types and sizes accommodated at the site. The site could also come forward with the land outlined in blue, which abuts the site as shown in the accompanying Site Location Plan. This would be allocated for 90 dwellings. Therefore, the sites could come forward together or solely the site described above and outlined in red could come forward. We maintain that this site both singularly or together with the adjoining land presents an opportunity for development at an appropriate scale for the settlement of Cottenham.

With regards to landownership, there are a total of 5 landowners, all of whom support the promotion of this site. Due to the geographical location of some of the landowners, as discussed with planning policy prior to submission some landowner details will follow this formal submission.

We look forward to being kept informed of plan progress and should you have any queries concerning the contents of submission please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Planner