

Your ref:  
Our ref: GK/acb/45934  
DD: [REDACTED]  
Date: 22/3/19

Planning Policy Team  
Planning Services  
Cambridge City Council  
Cambridge  
CB1 0JH

Dear Sir/Madam

**GREATER CAMBRIDGE STRATEGIC HOUSING AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT, CALL FOR SITES AND BROAD LOCATIONS – EMMANUEL COLLEGE SPORTS GROUND, 15 WILBERFORCE ROAD, CAMBRIDGE, CB3 0EQ**

I write to you on behalf of my client, Emmanuel College Cambridge, in relation to the submission of land at Emmanuel College Sports Ground, 15 Wilberforce Road, Cambridge, CB3 0EQ, to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Call for Sites consultation. The remainder of this letter provides a site description, sets out the context and background of the site, describes and justifies the potential development proposals that the site could accommodate, and lists the benefits that the development could deliver.

**Site Description**

The site is located in the Newnham Ward of Cambridge and thus lies within Cambridge City. The site measures approximately four hectares (ha) and is currently used as a playing field.

The site is bound to the east by Wilberforce Road with residential development beyond, to the south by Stacey Lane with meadowland beyond, to the west by sports pitches and tennis courts, and to the north by residential development. There are a number of mature trees located along the site's western and northern boundaries, with nine being protected under a Tree Preservation Order.

The site is not subject to any further environmental designations and is located within Flood Zone 1, as indicated by the Environment Agency's Flood Maps, and therefore has a 0.1% chance (low probability) of flooding.

The site is located within one of Cambridge's Conservation Area and a Grade II listed building (Emmanuel College Sports Pavilion, including Groundsman's House and Stable) is located in the south-eastern corner of the site. In addition, a further Grade II listed building (9 Wilberforce Road) is located to the east of the site beyond Wilberforce Road.

The site is currently designated as Protected Open Space by the adopted Cambridge City Local Plan (2018).

**Relevant Planning History**

The site has no history of planning applications pertaining to residential development on the site. It should be noted, however, that part of the site was discounted from the Council's previous SHLAA in 2013 (Site 182). This was due to the Planning Inspector for the 2006 Local Plan concluding that there

was no reasonable prospect of the site coming forward for college or university faculty development. It was concluded that the site's environmental and recreational value merited continued protection against the needs of the spatial strategy at that time.

Site 182 included the Emmanuel Sports Ground but also the Cambridge Lawn Tennis Club and disused hockey pitch; the proposal is now focussed to the Emmanuel Sport Ground.

### **Development Proposals & Justification**

It is considered that the site could accommodate a development of up to 60 residential units. This would include 40% affordable housing, the provision of a community facility, landscaping, vehicular and pedestrian access and formal and informal open space. It is considered that the development of this site would represent a logical extension to the existing settlement.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the land is designated as protected open space in the adopted Cambridge City Local Plan (2018) and has been discounted in the previous Call for Sites exercise, the site's circumstances have since changed. Emmanuel College attained planning permission (REF: 08/0873/FUL) for the change of use of agricultural land to a playing field at land adjacent to Rutherford Road, which was implemented in 2011. This playing field is considerably larger (over 7 hectares) in comparison to the site at Wilberforce Road and could comprise a greater quality of sports pitches due to the ability to include a contemporary sustainable drainage system. Consequently, it is Emmanuel College's intention to relocate the existing sports ground provision at Wilberforce Road to the land adjacent to Rutherford Road, in order to make more efficient use of the land and concentrate the College's sport provision in one location.

Such justification is therefore considered to satisfy the criteria set out in Paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework (pertaining to the development of open space, including playing fields), as it has been demonstrated that the playing field at Wilberforce road is surplus to requirements, and the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location (at land adjacent to Rutherford Road). Consequently, it is considered that the principle of relocating the existing sports provision at Wilberforce Road to the land adjacent to Rutherford Road would be acceptable.

Although it is noted that Emmanuel College Sports Ground is located within the Conservation Area and comprises and is adjacent to a Grade II listed building, such constraints can be overcome through an appropriate masterplan. The Listed Buildings on site could be put to a long-term beneficial use whether this be residential or community uses. In terms of respecting the character and setting of the aforementioned heritage assets, the development would comprise a similar palette of materials to that of the Conservation Area, whilst being set back away from the listed buildings. A landscaped buffer could also be incorporated into the scheme which would reduce the visual impact on the listed buildings.

Any proposed development would seek to retain and protect the nine TPO-protected trees on-site.

### **Benefits**

It is considered that the development proposals could deliver numerous social, economic and environmental benefits to the local area, including:

- The opportunity to deliver a substantial amount of market and affordable housing to help meet the needs of Cambridge;
- Locating residential development in a sustainable location. The site is located approximately 1.6km from Cambridge City Centre and is well placed for future residents to be able to walk and cycle, rather than travel by private car, to access higher-order services and facilities. In addition, the site benefits from being located within 500 metres of a bus stop, which is served

regularly by services travelling to Cambridge City Centre, Cambourne, and various University of Cambridge institutions;

- A landowner who wishes to provide community facilities in order to promote social cohesion and positive impacts arising from development;
- Making efficient use of a site in a sustainable location;
- Supporting Cambridge's economy, including local shops and services; and
- Enhancing biodiversity levels across the site through proposed planting and increasing natural capital.

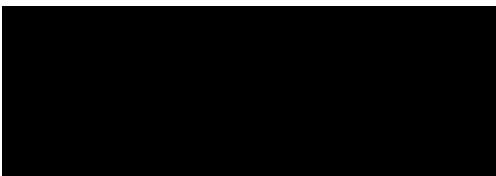
### **Conclusion**

The submission has been prepared by Bidwells LLP on behalf of Emmanuel College Cambridge to submit land at Emmanuel College Sports Ground, Cambridge, to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Call for Sites. The site is located close to Cambridge City Centre and is within a sustainable location. The development proposed is for residential development of up to 60 dwellings of which 40% would be affordable, as well as community facilities. It has been demonstrated that the development would not result in the loss of playing fields because there will be a greater quantity and quality of playing field space formed on accessible land nearby in Cambridge which is also under the ownership of Emmanuel College Cambridge with an extant planning consent to be used for sports purposes. Lastly, the proposed development is achievable, available and deliverable and has the potential to deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to Cambridge.

If you have any queries regarding this submission or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Yours faithfully



Partner, Planning

**Enclosures**    **Call for Site Forms**  
**Site Location Plan**