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Dear Sirs,

## **STRATEGIC HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT – LAND AT FEN ROAD, CAMBRIDGE**

### **SUBMISSION BY SAVILLS (UK) LIMITED ON BEHALF OF CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM**

Savills (UK) Ltd Planning Team in Cambridge are instructed by the Conservators of the River Cam to submit representations on their behalf to promote land for future development to the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment.

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.

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Indeed this is particularly relevant in the context of the land being promoted by The Conservators of the River Cam in the context of this submission where the land in question straddles the two authorities on Fen Road on the edge of Cambridge.

The site is located on Fen Road, Cambridge and comprises 1.896 hectares of undeveloped greenfield land. The site is bound to the north by Fen Road and to the south by the River Cam. To the east of the site lies a residential dwelling known as 'The Barn' and to the west is Fen View Court which comprises a number and range of residential dwellings. A tow path runs parallel to the site's southern boundary which runs along the River Cam towards Ely.

Vehicular access into and from the site would be sought from Fen Road, as shown on the accompanying Site Layout Plan. There are no heritage assets on or in proximity to the site, although it is noted that the Fen Ditton Conservation Area runs along the River Cam to the south of the site. Clearly any new development would need to acknowledge this issue. There are no ecological or landscape designations on or in proximity to the site. The site does lie within Flood Zone 2, to the north of the site and Flood Zone 3 to the south of the site as it meets the River Cam. The site's boundary is surrounded by tree and hedgerow although there are no trees scattered within the site. 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.

This representation is accompanied by an Indicative Masterplan ([Appendix 1](#)) and a CGI Plan ([Appendix 2](#)) which promotes the land for a mix of uses comprising new residential development and a new residential marina for permanent residential moorings. The accompanying Indicative Masterplan which incorporates 16 Town Houses, 38 1-Bed Apartments and 42 2-Bedroom Apartments. A total of 96 dwellings. The Masterplan also incorporates a 49 berth residential marina.

The site lies in a highly sustainable location on the edge of Cambridge in close proximity to both Cambridge North railway station, 0.95km walk from the site, which provides a regular service to London, Kings Lynn and Ely as well as the Guided Busway which provides a number of regular services to Huntingdon, St Ives and across Cambridge, 0.65km from the site. The towpath which runs parallel along the site's southern boundary makes up part of the Chisholm Trail and the wider Halingway. It is already used by a number of cyclists and pedestrians for commuting and leisure purposes.

There are a range of services and facilities within Chesterton near to the site including places of worship, convenience stores, public houses, doctor's surgeries, primary schools and a secondary school amongst other facilities. There are a number of employment opportunities across Cambridge which can be accessed sustainably using the Guided Busway or train. The site is linked in to the series of cycleway and footpaths that connect this part of the City to other parts of Cambridge and to the edges of the City and clearly it can demonstrate high levels of accessibility and sustainability. The Greater Cambridge Partnership Chisholm trail, of which work has recently commenced on, this will connect Cambridge North railway station and the surrounding area including the site to Cambridge City Central railway station, but also will include access to employment opportunities within the east and south east Cambridge. A connecting bridge has been proposed to provide access along this trail.

In terms of policy, within the recently adopted Cambridge Local Plan (2018), the western part of the site (which falls within the administrative boundary of Cambridge City Council) is allocated under policy 54: Residential Moorings, allocation RM1 as shown in [Appendix 3](#). The site was also previously allocated in the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan for use as residential moorings. The extent of the allocation comprises 0.98 hectares. Within the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) the eastern part of the site is allocated for residential moorings within the Special Policy Area policy H7 as shown in [Appendix 4](#). This part of the site is also subject to a Green Belt designation. Both policies support the development of a marina at the site.

The policies both state that development of a marina should come forward across the entire site as one, *"if developed together with the adjacent allocation for residential moorings within South Cambridgeshire District Council's administrative boundary, Site RM1 at Fen Road could provide off-river moorings for residential and*



*leisure boating purposes,*" (paragraph 6.53 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018). The client, Conservators of the River Cam continue to support this allocation, but are now promoting the site for residential use incorporating a residential marina.

The Cambridge City River Moorings Policy 2017-2023 Technical Document identifies the site within the supporting text of policy RMP 1 – Type of Moorings stating that the (at the time of writing) draft Cambridge Local Plan had identified a site at Fen Road which is the site being promoted. Within the policy, RMP 1.3 it is stated that, *'The Council through its planning function will support the development of offline moorings in appropriate locations. Therefore, should there be private or organisational interest in developing offline mooring facilities within the administrative boundaries of CCC these would be supporting through the planning policy function in principal.'*

The Council is aware of the issues around the availability of both narrow and wide berth boat licences. There is currently a 10 year waiting list for residential narrow boat licences and a 20 year wait for wide berth boat licences. Furthermore, the current facilities are substandard along the river with no refuelling station existing within Cambridge City. This results in boat users having to take their boats to Ely over 15 miles away to refuel. There is only one pump out point, where boat users can dispose of their raw sewage close to Jesus Green Lock. The only water point to fill the boat up with clean water is also located at Jesus Green Lock.

The proposed uses at the site could alleviate the grave issues currently faced by boat users on the river as there is potential for the site to offer a water supply which is connected to the mains water supply as well as a refuelling station. As well as providing a residential marina with a significant increase in moorings. In order for this site to come forward with much required residential marina, the residential dwellings are required to enable this development. Ongoing revenue from the development of both the marina and residential development will be reinvested back into the river, the surrounding area and the facilities for the river users by The Conservators of the River Cam.

The site presents as a logical place for new development, having regard to its location on the edge of Cambridge and in a location with development on both sides. There is built residential development to the north, east and west of the site. As a consequence of its existing designation within the Green Belt and given its existing character and the role that this site could play in terms of accommodating new development in the next plan period, it is considered that the review of Green Belt boundaries should reconsider this site within such a designation. The opportunity to remove this land from the Green Belt and allocate for new development in a highly sustainable location on the edge of Cambridge should be grasped by the authorities, whilst also providing a residential marina to provide much needed mooring points for boat users and alleviating the lengthy waiting lists.

The accompanying computer generated image identifies how the development could overcome the flooding issues at the site. This would include flood proofing the dwellings to ensure that they are protected in case of flood which incorporates a site specific design solution to minimise the risk of flooding within the habitable rooms, such as an inbuilt garage at the ground floor level. Despite the flooding constraints, the site presents a sustainable opportunity for residential development, whilst also delivering much needed housing on the edge of Cambridge.

The opportunity is afforded to deliver a new residential development with a residential marina on the River Cam. In the context of policies which support the former, the site which is the subject of this representation is available now and The Conservators of the River Cam would be pleased to engage in dialogue with officers to assist in delivering this exciting project.

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

**Garth Hanlon**



Director



Appendix 2: CGI Plan



ROVINTX

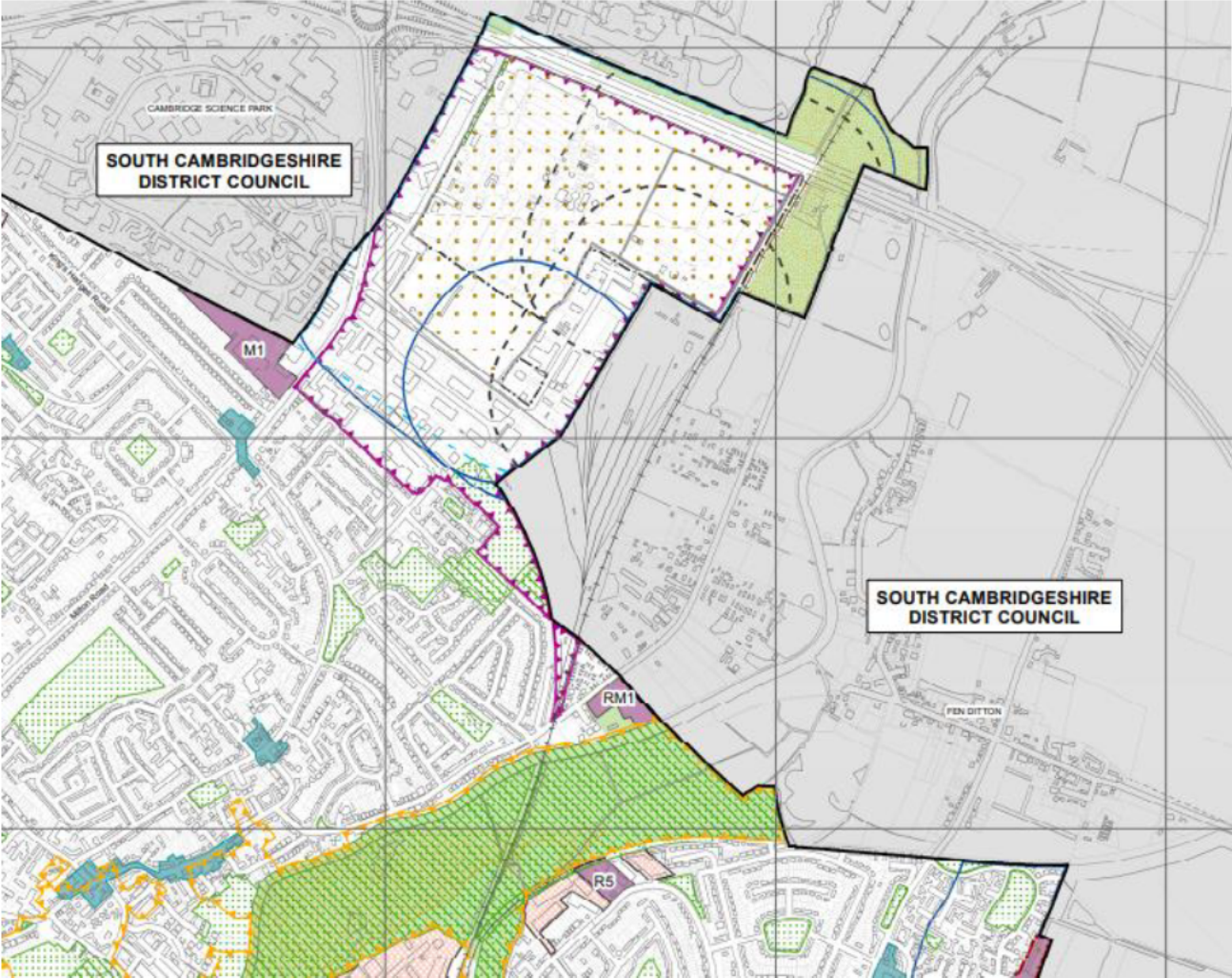
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Appendix 3: Extract of Cambridge Policies Map 2018



Appendix 4: South Cambridgeshire Adopted Policies Inset Map 80: Milton Residential Moorings

