



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

SOUTHERN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS (COTTENHAM): SUBMISSION OF REPRESENTATIONS TO THE GREATER CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN ISSUES & OPTIONS CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF LAND AT BROAD LAND TO THE NORTH EAST OF COTTENHAM

On behalf of Southern and Regional Developments (Cottenham), Claremont Planning have been instructed to submit representations to the Issues and Options Consultation of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The representations made relate to the site under their control at land north east of Cottenham which is available, suitable and deliverable as a site for residential development. It is considered that the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan should consider the site's residential allocation given its sustainable location that will provide a material benefit in meeting the strategic residential need of the new Plan period.

The site identified to the north east of Cottenham has been previously submitted to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan through the Call for Sites exercise conducted in March 2019 as land off Broad Lane, albeit the red line has slightly amended since that time. The representations made to the Issues and Options Consultation maintain that the site should be considered for allocation within the revised Development Framework at Cottenham as part of a review of the spatial strategy of the emerging Plan. The new Plan should ensure it engages with all options in achieving new development so that is able to identify sufficient land to meet strategic requirements.

The submission comprises of the following documents which provide a broad commentary to the consultation:

- Covering Letter
- Completed Response Forms:
1,2,4,5,6,7,8,10,24,31,32,33,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46,47,49,50
- Site Location Plan – Land north east of Cottenham, off Broad Lane

The Cottenham Site

The promoted site occupies an area of land extending across 13.1ha, which is currently laid to pasture. The site is bound to the east by Broad Lane, it borders Lode farm to the north and open fields in the west and adjacent to dwellings off Kingfisher Way to the south. This site promotion includes other land that has been promoted to the Council to the north of Kingfisher Way (Joscelyn), and seeks to demonstrate how a comprehensive area of expansion can be provided to the northeast of Cottenham.

The entire site is identified on flood maps as being influenced by Flood Zone 3 but benefitting from flood defences based on the New Cut Drain/Cottenham Lode. The flood defences here consist of man-made raised flood bank on the right-hand bank this is designated so that any possible over-topping of lower raised defences would flood the land to the north of Cottenham and away from the built-up area of the village. In November 2019 Claremont Planning submitted further information to the Councils regarding the suitability of the site and its influence by flood waters. Reference to the EA Flood Map for Planning identifies that the Site lies predominantly within 'Defended' Flood Zone 3, with a small localised area identified to be in Flood Zone 2 and the remainder identified to be Flood Zone 1.

There are Formal Flood Defences forming the banks of the Cottenham Lode. Southern & Regional (Cottenham) have employed WSP to review the flood environment to the northeast of Cottenham. WSP carried out investigations in accordance with best practice, actively consulting with the Environment Agency (EA) in regard to the potential fluvial flood risk to the Site. Through acceptance of a Model Scoping Note it was agreed with the EA to undertake a site-specific modelling study to enhance understanding of the potential fluvial flood risk. Based on the site-specific hydraulic modelling, the respective EA Flood Zones, assuming these to be equivalent to the 1 in 100 Year and 1 in 1000 Year 'defended' modelled extents across the site. The Site should be considered appropriate, in its entirety, for residential purposes in accordance with PPG and the NPPF.

It is considered 'best-practice' to locate all development outside of the maximum extents of the 1 in 100 Year plus 35% Climate Change allowance. The site-specific hydraulic modelling in the 1 in 100 Year plus 35% Climate Change allowance for the 'defended' scenario demonstrates that the site north of Kingfisher Way is fully developable. As such, the promoted site warrants consideration through the emerging plan. Through ongoing discussions with the Environment Agency, the extent of the flood risk has been questioned and found to be exaggerated. Once this has been confirmed clarification of the finite flood extent will be provided to the Council that will remove the extent of flood risk from the site. Otherwise, the site is unconstrained by any environmental, statutory, local or historic designations.

Access to the site would be achieved directly from Broad Lane, with an existing field access already in place. Broad Lane is currently at national speed limit and only becomes a 30mph limit as it enters the village further to the south of the site. The development of the site would extend the 30mph zone along the frontage to ensure that highway safety and safe pedestrian access is achieved.

Local adopted policy identifies Cottenham as a Rural Centre, a top tier settlement within the spatial strategy settlement hierarchy. This establishes Cottenham as one of the most sustainable settlements in South Cambridgeshire given its wide and established service base which includes a primary school, secondary school as well as a range of shops, public houses and community facilities. Most of these amenities are within walking distance of the site and

therefore will reduce the need of any new residents to travel beyond the village to access everyday services. However, Cottenham benefits from good access to public transport, with the Citi 8 bus service departing every 15 minutes from the village centre to Jesus College in Cambridge city centre, the journey taking approximately 45 minutes.

The Site's Suitability for Development

It is considered that the site can provide an appropriate and comprehensive location to achieve new residential growth at Cottenham. To the south of Cottenham, the presence of Green Belt actively suppresses the development potential of the village and strictly limits the settlement's ability to grow. To the east there are highway access constraints, as such the northern limits of the village must be considered to provide a rare, but suitable option for future strategic growth.

The site is not designated as Green Belt and offers a good opportunity to provide additional housing within a sustainable location. It is considered that an extensive landscape strategy can be adopted for the site which will contribute towards the softening of the development edge. This will also mitigate any possible impacts on the landscape character of the site given its close proximity to the edge of the Fenland to the north of the New Cut Drain.

The site to the north east of Cottenham is available, suitable and with a robust and implementable strategy to mitigate the flood risks on site, it is achievable. The New Cut Drain that forms the northern boundary of the site is a physical asset that can be used as part of any development strategy as a new defensible and strong boundary of the village and would guarantee the openness of the countryside to the north of Cottenham, beyond the drain. This can be incorporated into any masterplan, with appropriate landscaping provided along this new boundary that will reinforce this boundary as a new line between the settlement and the countryside. This will also soften the edge of the development and ensure a smoother transition between the built form and urban environment of the village and the open countryside.

The emerging Spatial Strategy

It is considered that Cottenham as a top tier settlement within the adopted hierarchy should significantly inform the emerging spatial strategy of the new Greater Cambridge Plan. This position demonstrates that the village is one of the most sustainable settlements within the South Cambridgeshire District area to accommodate new levels of residential development. The emerging spatial strategy should duly consider Cottenham, and other sustainable villages in the Plan area for locations to accommodate new residential allocations. Although these allocations should be commensurate in size with their host settlements, reflecting their rural character and wider landscape position, if a reasonable number of allocations are made across these sustainable settlements, it will contribute a significant number of homes to the residential need of the new Plan period.

The preparation of the new Local Plan must also respond to the rapidly growing economy of the sub-region. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review has identified that the sub-region's economy has grown at a significantly faster rate than anticipated and therefore will exacerbate existing shortfalls and cost of housing in the area. As such, the emerging Plan must ensure that it acts to manage this increase in economic growth by ensuring that an adequate number of homes are delivered to meet this increasing demand in housing, so ensuring that housing costs do not spiral out of control.

It is imperative that the emerging Greater Cambridge Plan considers all options informing the new spatial strategy. This approach to distribution of development, as part of the spatial strategy, should take into consideration the suitability of villages to accommodate new growth. Sites such as land north east of Cottenham are appropriate to accommodate residential development and if the Plan does not consider villages such as Cottenham and their capacity to accommodate new levels of growth, it will fail to identify a sufficient number of sites that are suitable for development.

Conclusion

The site to the north east of Cottenham is an appropriate location for residential development. It is an available, suitable and deliverable site that will be able to provide moderate levels of growth that is able to both contribute towards maintaining a supply of homes to the new Plan period, but also not result in any harm to the village. Cottenham is recognised as a high order settlement and therefore its sustainability to appropriately accommodate development cannot be questioned.

The representations made in respect of the site at land to the north east of Cottenham are commended to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Team for consideration. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Katherine Else MRTPI Bsc Hons PG Dip
Managing Director