

Date: 21.03.19

By email: planningpolicy@scambs.gov.uk

Reference: JJ/016-92

Dear Sir/Madam

Land to the North West of Ely Road, Milton – Representations on behalf of the College of West Anglia

This 6.7-hectare site is being promoted for commercial development comprising roadside facilities comprising a petrol filling station and associated retail unit. The remainder of the site will be used for B1 and B8 uses. The proposed site has the potential to accommodate circa 20,000m² of commercial space. The site represents an underused part of the College of West Anglia landholding, which is somewhat divorced from the main campus which is located 140m to the south. The development of this site will provide an important resource of employment land and roadside. The site has an existing access from the A10 Ely Road with an alternative access from Landbeach Road. A segregated cycle access exists from Milton across the A10 to Landbeach Road. The fields which are the subject to this proposal are surplus to requirements and their development can be undertaken without curtailing existing college activities.

It must be recognised that colleges of further education have suffered significant cuts in funding and such facilities are increasingly having to look at alternative ways to raise revenue. The development of this site will allow the College of West Anglia to upgrade the existing facilities at Milton and also undertake improvements to their other campuses at King's Lynn and Wisbech. This is a clear community benefit arising from this proposal.

It must also be recognised that the northern boundary of the site is open and that the development of this site will allow a significant landscape buffer to be provided which will result in this part of the site being subject to habitat and bio-diversity enhancements. The existing landscaping on the remaining site boundaries would also benefit from augmentation.

It is acknowledged that the site falls within the Cambridge Green Belt and any allocation for commercial uses would have the effect of removing the site from the Green Belt. However, subject to the provision of a landscape buffer on the northern boundary the site has clearly defensible boundaries in the form of the Ely Road (A10) and Landbeach Road. augmentation. Therefore, it could be argued that this proposal would represent a logical self-contained extension to this part of Milton and would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.

Benefits arising from this site

From the above it is clear that the benefits arising from this development are wide-ranging when considered against the economic, social and environmental objectives as detailed at paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

In terms of the **economic objectives** the proposal will give rise to significant employment during the construction phase of the development. Future occupiers of the development would be likely to use local services and facilities in Milton making a positive contribution to their vitality and viability. The proposal will also provide long term employment opportunities for the occupiers of the commercial units and businesses associated with the servicing of these.

Partners:

M W Hamilton Ltd, E W Lee Ltd, J G L Law Ltd, M Walshe Ltd, P G M Claydon Ltd, N R Harris Ltd, W King Ltd, S J Lewis Ltd, C M B Ashton Ltd,
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The **social objectives** are the supply of commercial units to provide the Council with business units to meet the needs to a diverse range of businesses. These units are also accessible to residents living in the locality. This will also help prevent a potential mismatch between housing and employment, helping to reduce commuting into Cambridge.

The **environmental objectives** include the sustainability credentials of the site in terms of access to local services and facilities. Good pedestrian links are available from the site to these facilities, which are within walking and cycling distances. It is important to stress that Milton has a high-quality cycle network and is located very close to the Milton Park and Ride, offering viable alternatives to the private car to access Cambridge. The Park and Ride site can be accessed via a bridge over the A10, offering a safe cycle and pedestrian route. The nearest bus stops are located 140m to the south of the site.

The proposals will also allow the bio-diversity of the site to be enhanced and the provision of structural landscaping will not only soften the impact of the development but also create new habitats.

Site Capacity

It is considered that the site has capacity for approximately 22,000m² of new buildings, which is appropriate for this site and allows the built development and car parking to be broken up and allow for open space and potentially a public art or water feature to be created.

This density of development is considered appropriate for this edge of settlement location and the need to incorporate structural landscaping and bio-diversity enhancement. The above figure relates only to the built development and will allow for infrastructure such as access, landscaping, open space and any necessary mitigation measures. Any planning allocation will need to make it clear that this is an indicative capacity and that this capacity should be informed by a master planning exercise.

Access

Vehicle access could be taken from the existing access from Ely Road, which will need to be altered if a petrol station is to form part of the proposal. Alternatively, access could be provided from Landbeach Road. It is clear that the access to this site would need to be improved and an application would need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment. However, it must be recognised that the site has an extensive frontage to Ely Road and a safe means of access could be secured. A segregated pedestrian and cycle access from this site could also be achieved.

Bio-diversity

The majority of the site is used for agricultural production and is devoid of natural features and it would appear to be of limited bio-diversity value. The development of the site would have the potential to enhance bio-diversity at and adjacent to the site.

Contaminated Land

The majority of the site comprises greenfield land, which is unlikely to be contaminated.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The entirety of the development site falls within Flood Zone 1, which is at the lowest risk of flooding. As such residential development is appropriate in this location. Due to the scale of development a flood risk and drainage strategy will need to accompany an application for the development of this site.

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Heritage

The site is located to the north east of the Milton Conservation Area and North Lodge, a Grade II Listed building. The Listed Building and Conservation Area are spatially separate from proposed development site. In view of the above it is clear that the character and appearance of the Listed Building and Conservation Area will not be compromised. It is recognised that any application for the development of the site will need to be accompanied by an archaeological assessment, although there is no reason to believe that this will limit development.

Landscape Impact

The site is well screened from Ely Road by mature trees, with similar screening on the western boundary. Longer distance views from the north are open and it is recommended that structural landscaping is provided to soften views from the north. Planting in this location will not only provide screening but also enhance the bio-diversity of the site.

Services and Utilities

The site is located adjacent to the existing development framework for Milton and it is considered that connections can be made to existing services, including electricity, sewerage, gas, water and telecommunications. The site is not crossed by pylons/telegraph poles and the site is also not crossed by pipelines or similar.

Public Rights of Way

The public footpath network within Milton is limited. However, as part of the development a footpath could be created from the site to Milton.

Topography

The site is flat with no significant changes in levels. This means that development would not be prevented in whole or part.

Availability

The entirety of the site is in the ownership of The College of West Anglia who are committed to promoting it for commercial development. It is confirmed that the site is immediately available for development.

It is considered that this site represents a sustainable location and will help assist the viability and vitality of local services. As stated the site is attracting interest from promoters who are interested in delivering development in this location, with particular interest having been expressed by an operator of roadside facilities.

There are no known legal constraints which could delay or prohibit development.

Deliverability

The site is within the sole ownership of the College and it is considered that the development at the site could be delivered within 5 years. The site is greenfield and there are no constraints at the site which could prohibit delivery within the time period. Work undertaken to date has confirmed that the site is viable and deliverable.

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Viability

Given the character, location and nature of the site we do not consider that there would be any issues associated with the viability or deliverability of the site.

Supporting evidence

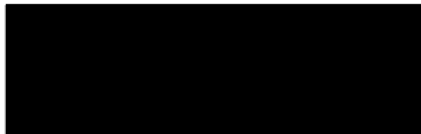
The following plans/documents are attached in this representation, which further demonstrate the site's suitability for development:

- Site location plan – land subject to these representations
- Flood Zone map
- Email from clients confirming their support for the submission of these representations

Conclusion

It is considered that this site is suitable for commercial development and is located within walking and cycling distance of the facilities and services located within the village of Milton. However, it is of sufficient distance from residential properties to ensure that their amenity will not be harmed. The site will result in significant community benefits, facilitating the enhancement of the facilities operated by the College of West Anglia. The College is also committed to using profits from the sale of this land to benefit the educational needs of the wider community. Other benefits arising are the creation of jobs and habitat creation. It is considered that the site is suitable for commercial development and is capable of being delivered within 5 years.

Yours faithfully



Jon Jennings
Director - Planning



Enc.

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