



J25 | BAR HILL

A LEADING-EDGE SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT PARK DEVELOPMENT

**Promoting a sound Greater Cambridge Local Plan:
response to consultation**

The opportunity

The emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) seeks to coordinate strategic and long-term growth across the Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire region. We want to support the GCLP.

As investors in Cambridgeshire and promoters of a significant employment/logistics site at J25 Bar Hill, we want to be an active contributor to the development of a strong and sustainable GCLP.

We are engaged in the plan process, sharing our evidence and insights to help create the most appropriate Plan. This document provides a summary of our submission to the draft GCLP consultation.

The risk

Large-scale logistics space provides business-critical infrastructure. Without it, businesses cannot be competitive. The GCLP needs to equip businesses to be effective and this means providing the right type, size and specification of facilities in the right location.

A lack of such space leads to a choke on employment and economic growth, constraining businesses that are expanding and require new space and risking businesses leaving and going elsewhere to find the space they need.

Our assessment is that the current draft GCLP policy and employment evidence (ELEDES 2020) behind it risk compromising economic growth and the servicing of an increasing residential population in Greater Cambridge.

The evidence the plan relies on assesses only the local, indigenous requirements for small businesses operating in storage and distribution-based sectors across the area and has underestimated the latest market activity and market developments.

Most significantly, it does not reflect the strategic employment use requirements that are identified across the appropriate market area as required by the NPPF and PPG.

Our Employment Assessment

Analysis by Lichfields – our Planning & Economic Consultants – demonstrates a substantial shortfall of logistics employment land (c 55 to 71 ha / c 136 to 175 acres) in Greater Cambridge, at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations, over and above the proposed GCLP site allocations.

This is also consistent with our commercial agents' demand evidence which demonstrates that there is both significant demand and a severe shortage of immediate and future available storage and distribution employment land to cater for these requirements.

There is also an opportunity for "clustering" such development on the A14 at Bar Hill which is not currently being exploited so as to scale up the associated economic, social and environmental benefits.

Furthermore, the fact that the logistics facilities servicing Greater Cambridge are currently located some distance from Cambridge is causing unnecessary freight miles which is resulting in avoidable carbon impacts.

Cambridge needs more and better logistics space on its doorstep to serve the city and the city region effectively and sustainably.

The structural shift in retail because of the growth of e-commerce and Brexit-related "just in time" supply chain challenges, in addition to the acceleration of industry trends caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, means the demand for high-quality logistics (B8) space is substantial, particularly in the Greater Cambridge market which is chronically under-supplied. The latest report from the BPF (Levelling up logistics, January 2022) reinforces the true picture of demand for such facilities.

Way forward

In our detailed representations to the GCLP First Proposals: Preferred Options consultation in December 2021, we have set out and substantiated the necessity to review the GCLP evidence on employment land need to 2041 and market demand (including the shifting trends in supply chains and logistics).

Our own assessment demonstrates that there is a **need to allocate in the region of 3 million sq ft just for logistics alone** as part of the overall Greater Cambridge employment land provision across the plan period to 2041. This is in stark contrast to the **proposed GCLP allocation of only c 260,000 sq ft of space.**

This additional need will require land which is suitable, available and deliverable, to service the needs of existing and new businesses/employers not currently provided for in the draft GCLP.

We believe the land at J25 of the A14 at Bar Hill can and should have a role in a strong, successful and sustainable GCLP, achieved by its allocation to meet the significant need and demand for employment growth.

This need and the corresponding substantial commercial demand can be satisfied by the creation of a sustainable strategic employment park at J25 Bar Hill, providing leading-edge facilities for businesses and generating opportunities across a range of different employment sectors. It would ensure businesses in the region are served by the facilities they need.

What are the benefits of a strategic employment park in this A14 location?

1 | Placing new jobs closer to homes

Fundamentally, this is about locating strategic employment growth near to existing and planned homes, connected by transport links, consistent with the NPPF and PPG requirements.

The J25 Bar Hill site is close to the new and proposed settlements of Northstowe (6,345 new homes across the Plan period alone), Cambourne West (2,590 homes), Cambourne (1,950 homes), Bourn Airfield (2,460 homes), Darwin Green (478 homes) and Eddington (3,142 homes). It is also in close proximity to the Waterbeach New Town. As such it is a highly sustainable location where jobs will link to homes.

The benefits of co-locating jobs and homes are well understood, especially in terms of minimising workforce commuting, reducing transport-related greenhouse gas emissions and maximising opportunities for people to walk or cycle. 'Active travel' complemented by Shared Travel opportunities with shuttle service links to key settlements and the Busway network is the way forward – as evidenced by the Government's launch of 'Active Travel England' (Jan 2022) – as well as the opportunities to embrace micromobility solutions such as ebikes and escooters.

Linking jobs to homes and creating accessible and well connected employment opportunities underpins our approach.

2 | Opportunity for an A14 economic cluster

Agglomeration and clusters allow businesses to achieve more and the benefits to be greater than the sum of their parts.

Development at J25 Bar Hill will complement existing businesses along the A14 including at Bar Hill itself and Trafalgar Way, both of which are identified as an important advanced-manufacturing cluster in the north of Greater Cambridge. In addition, the two emerging

employment allocations 'S/RRA/SAS Land to the south of the A14 Services' and 'S/RRA/CR Land at Buckingham Business Park, Swavesey' demonstrate that Greater Cambridge already recognises the dynamics of this location along the A14.

The allocation of J25 Bar Hill as an Employment site will help to exploit these agglomeration benefits and will complement the employment and business space along the A14 corridor.

3 | Well-connected, sustainable development

With direct connections to the recently upgraded A14 and the Strategic Road Network, the site is ideally suited as a location for a major sustainable employment park to meet local, regional and national needs.

It combines the best of both worlds because it is near to existing and future (planned) homes, enabling employees to travel easily by more sustainable modes of transport (by walking, cycling and by public transport), and occupying businesses can move products efficiently,

serving Cambridge and the region's needs for more logistics space and cutting down on overall freight miles travelled.

The provision of new logistics space at J25 Bar Hill will serve the City and City region's needs and avoid reliance on logistics facilities situated in other locations some distance from end users in Cambridge. New facilities at J25 Bar Hill will support the businesses (present and future) in Cambridge that need sustainable, swift and competitive supply chains.

There are many other reasons why the site at J25 Bar Hill is suitable:



1 | Site size

The site has the capacity to deliver around 60 ha (or 148 acres) of developable space, contributing to meeting the logistics land shortfall of 55-71 ha across the plan period (to 2041).

A single and large allocation is sustainable and offers the capability and flexibility of a range of unit sizes to respond to the spatial needs of different sectors, including the fast growing and rapidly innovating logistics sector. This may not be possible for a series of smaller allocations.

Further the site size offers the opportunity for extensive landscaping and greening with potential for achieving a c 12-20% biodiversity net gain.

2 | No major environmental and heritage constraints

The site is outside of the Green Belt and there are no major environmental or heritage constraints preventing its delivery.

3 | Highway network

Given the location just off the National and Strategic Road Network, it would minimise the extent to which larger delivery vehicles would use the local highway network contributing towards decreasing congestion, improving air quality and tackling the climate crisis.

4 | Climate change and cutting carbon

The sustainable site location would be complemented by high quality designed contemporary energy efficient buildings within an exemplar landscape-led development layout based on green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement principles.

More about us

Lolworth Developments Ltd ('LDL') is a subsidiary of Salhia Real Estate. LDL and its professional team are promoting and bringing forward land at J25 Bar Hill for a "best in class" sustainable strategic employment park. This will draw upon the team's expertise and experience in the planning, designing, funding and phased delivery of a major logistics-led development.

LOLWORTH
DEVELOPMENTS



Further information

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