

APP/W0530/W/23/3315611: Brookgate Ltd on behalf of the Chesterton Partnership

Speaker's Notes: Mike Bodkin MRTPI
Head of Planning
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Introduction

- I am Mike Bodkin, Chartered Town Planner and Head of Planning at TOWN. Together with LandsecU+I we are the master developers appointed by the landowners of the Core Site, Cambridge, now known as Hartree, Anglian Water and Cambridge City Council;
- The Core Site lies at the heart of the North East Cambridge AAP. It encompasses the land currently occupied by the existing Cambridge North Waste Water Treatment Plant WWTP (ie sewage treatment works); together with land owned by the City Council to the south of the WWTP currently occupied by a golf driving range, and various commercial uses;
- The bulk of residential development proposed in the NEC AAP is proposed for the Core Site (5,500 out of 8,350 units). So failure to deliver the housing on the Core Site risks not just the AAP but also the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan;
- Comprehensive redevelopment of the Core Site is predicated upon the relocation of the existing WWTP to a proposed new site at Honey Hill on the outskirts of Cambridge. A Development Consent Order seeking to enable the relocation was submitted in April 2023. A separate team appointed by Anglian Water is overseeing that process.

The redevelopment of the wider area (NEC)

- We share the aspirations for comprehensive regeneration of the area set out 'by the Local Planning Authorities in adopted local plan policy; the emerging NECAAP as well as the supporting note titled 'Evidence required to support Planning Applications ahead of the North East Cambridge (NEC) Area Action Plan (AAP)';
- Thus we support the notion that developments that come forward in advance of the adoption of the NECAAP should "...not compromise opportunities for the redevelopment of the wider area" as set out in Policy SS/4 4e of the Adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018;
- In considering whether proposals 'compromise opportunities for the redevelopment of the wider area' infrastructure contributions are clearly a significant part of this assessment, and I will return to the subject later. But they are by no means the only considerations – as we set out in our representations to application 22/02771/OUT;
- Based on the [Typologies Study and Development Capacity Assessment](#), which was published by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Services in December 2021, the plots forming part of the appeal site should be delivering a total of 730 homes. Instead there are 425 proposed;
- The *Typologies Study* is part of the NECAAP Evidence Base and arguably carries greater weight than the emerging AAP itself at present;
- **Build To Rent:** The emerging NECAAP seeks to cap the level of BTR across NEC at 10% of development. Along with the appellants, we believe that an increase on this level is

necessary in order to be commercially responsive and provide a balanced housing market;

- The appeal proposals seek to increase BTR above the 10% level. We would have concerns that if this is allowed, the LPAs would seek to reduce the level of BTR on the Core Site commensurately below 10% in order to maintain the level at 10% overall;
- If this were the case, it would further hamper our ability to deliver a balanced and equitable housing market on the Core Site;
- **Affordable Housing:** A reduction in the number of market homes overall would mean fewer affordable units being delivered. Similarly, the proportion of affordable units delivered via BTR would be lower. Hence the number of affordable homes being delivered by the appeal site is lower than envisaged in the emerging NECAAP and its evidence base. This would exacerbate the housing crisis currently experienced in the City;
- We therefore consider that on this basis the appeal proposals do not demonstrate that they would "... not compromise opportunities for the redevelopment of the wider area."

Infrastructure contributions

- Delivery of infrastructure to support growth across NEC is a major factor of concern for the Core Site;
- The emerging [NEC Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#) should be the vehicle for identifying what is needed to support growth of NEC as a whole. We are keen to work with the other developers and the NEC Landowners Forum in order to produce an IDP which identifies the infrastructure and fair and equitable mechanisms to fund that infrastructure;
- We note the contribution of the appellants to the Landowners Forum and its various working groups;
- However, it is the concern of the Core Site / Hartree team that those developments that come later in the process will have to pick up additional infrastructure costs as a result of earlier developments being able to benefit from (limited) capacity in infrastructure such as utilities or highways;
- This would be unfair and disproportionate and threaten the viability of developments, such as the Core Site, which come later in the process, hence compromising opportunities for the wider redevelopment of the area;
- It is notable that the emerging Heads of Terms for the s.106, as agreed between the appellants and the LPA, do not mirror the draft IDP or the level of contributions that would be expected to be required from the appeal site if the NEC/IDP were adopted;
- We acknowledge that our concerns touch on an area on which the planning system does not deliver well; it is regrettable that the IDP has not been progressed at pace and that only now a Community Infrastructure Levy is under discussion between the LPAs and the developers via the Landowners Forum;
- It is these systemic failures which above all threaten the viability of later schemes and in general compromise opportunities for the redevelopment of the wider area.

Conclusions

- In conclusion, I restate our grounds for objection that we do not consider that the provisions of Policy SS/4 4e of the Adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 have

been met. Specifically, we do not consider that it has been demonstrated that the development would not compromise opportunities for the redevelopment of the wider area;

- Thank you for the opportunity to address the Inquiry today.

Mike Bodkin

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