

**Agreed note between South Cambridgeshire District Council and the Owners
of Land South of Babraham Road, Sawston**

Site H1/(c)

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan – Examination in Public

November 2016



1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to inform the Inspector and other parties about the areas of agreement between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cheffins as Agents acting on behalf of the landowners of Site H1/c – land south of Babraham Road, Sawston. It supplements the Council matter statement for SC5A Residential Site Allocations.

The site is due to be discussed at the Hearing Session concerned with Matter SC5A.3 on 29th November 2016. The site owners have requested attendance at this Session but that has been declined as no objections were submitted to the Submission Plan.

2. Background

Site H1/c – land south of Babraham Road, Sawston is owned by three separate landowners. Those landowners, and their approximate ownerships are as follows:

Owner	Nature of Organisation	Area Owned (Ha)	% of Total Site Area
The R.J Driver Trust	A local family trust which owns and farms agricultural land in the Sawston area	7.29	61.0
Ward's Charity or Church Lands (Reg No: 231091)	A Sawston Church charity which helps to maintain the fabric, running and mission costs of the Parish Church.	2.52	21.1
John Huntingdon's Charity (Reg No: 118574)	A Sawston charity established in 1554 which runs 22 almshouses, provides support services, and gives grants/bursaries for those who live, work or study in Sawston who are in need, hardship or distress	2.13	17.9
Total	-	11.95	100.0

It should be noted that the RJ Driver Trust owns additional land, beyond the draft allocation, both within and adjacent to the Sawston development framework including land adjacent to Icknield Primary School which is specifically mentioned in the local plan policy approach.

The main landowner supported the allocation of the site in the Local Plan Issues & Options public consultation in 2012. The site was, at that time, somewhat larger and subsequent to that public consultation exercise, it was reduced in scale to the site now proposed in the Submission Plan.

None of the three landowners submitted representations to the Proposed Submission Local Plan because they were content with the proposed allocation as published by the District Council in 2013 and supported the allocation of the site for residential development. The draft Allocation did not feature in the Main Modifications and therefore the owners had no need for any response at that time. South Cambridgeshire District Council has already undertaken a thorough Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) that assessed land for residential development including this site. The charities have, historically, contributed their thoughts to the SHLAA process and contributed to the annual housing monitoring exercise carried out by the District Council.

The process of site identification, assessment, consultation and refinement was comprehensive. The Council is confident that significant issues associated with the development of this site have been identified and that, in principle, any site-specific issues remaining can be addressed through a detailed planning application process.

The Council is confident that the site can be developed in the plan period and, it is quite likely that a part of the site can be developed within a five year period.

The three landowners are working together to ensure the successful delivery of Site H1/c. Cheffins are assisting the landowners and the owners have agreed common objectives as follows:

- To jointly promote development of the site in the short term;
- To formally tie their interests together in the form of a Landowners Agreement;
- To seek a development partner who would prepare, submit and negotiate a suitable planning application on their behalf;
- To embark on that process once the Local Plan process has reached a further stage of certainty; and
- To then dispose of their land for residential development, retaining some direct interests such as almshouses, community provision and small scale commercial facilities.

It should be noted that two of the landowners are local Sawston charities and have a strong desire to involve the local community in the formulation of plans for the site and also to consider opportunities to expand their local presence through actual development of the site. The charity Trustees have strong links to Sawston and all but one are resident in the village. The landowners also see the benefits of working with developers of other proposed housing sites in Sawston for the overall benefit of Sawston residents.

3. Site Description

The site subject to this Statement is a roughly rectangular area of land located to the east of Sawston and south of Babraham Road. It measures approximately 11.95ha (29.23 acres) and is in arable use and is intensively farmed. The site is bounded by houses to the west and partially to the north along with a separate field that has also been allocated for development (Site H/1(b)). A hedgeline defines the eastern boundary beyond which lies

further agricultural land. A public footpath runs across the southern part of the site linking to Sawston and a second path crosses SW to NE through the middle of the site.

The site adjoins the defined development framework for Sawston along its entire western boundary although no part of the draft site allocation lies within the development framework and is thus considered as open countryside and defined Green Belt at present. The Dales Manor Business Park lies close by on the northern side of Babraham Road, within walking distance. Nearby are other research employment centres at Babraham and Abington and there is a good network of existing and planned cycleways in the area.

Rights exist for the proposed development to be linked to the existing built up area of Sawston on the western side via potential new road connections to Plantation Road and Stanley Webb Close, which could provide connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

4. Areas of agreement

- i. The housing allocation site is in agricultural use. The charity land is currently let to a tenant farmer on a rolling annual basis and the ownership and occupation of the Driver Trust land is within the same family. The whole site will therefore be available for development on a short term basis ;
- ii. The landowners have already been approached by a number of housebuilders and developers expressing their interest in acquiring this site. It is clear that there is strong market interest in the site already;
- iii. The size of the site means that a comprehensive master planning exercise will be needed and that this process will involve consultation with the local community (including Icknield Primary School, Sawston & Babraham Parish Councils and the Education Authority) and an appropriate Design Enabling Panel assessment via the District Council;
- iv. Transport matters, including the stage which the relocation of Cambridge City Football Club has reached, will be important and there will be an early Transport Scoping Assessment with the County Council Highway Authority to inform formulation of development proposals for the site;
- v. The conclusions of the Sawston Transport Modelling Exercise January 2014 published by Cambridgeshire County Council (RD/H/050) are noted and will act as a starting point to inform further transport assessment work;
- vi. Full consideration will be given to encouraging means of transport other than the private car including pedestrian/cyclist connectivity and an appropriate public transport strategy;

- vii. Landscape and visual impacts are recognised as important and the site will need a suitable landscaped buffer on its eastern and southern sides given the adjacent open countryside beyond;
- viii. The site will be brought forward in a comprehensive manner with a single planning application covering the whole area allocated for development;
- ix. The District Council agrees to proactively engage with the land owners and prospective developers to assist in the early delivery of the allocated housing;
- x. The District Council agrees to consider the wishes of the landowners that the John Huntingdon's Charity wishes to develop further almshouses as part of the affordable housing provision on the site, and other community facilities;
- xi. It is agreed that the principle of the allocation of the site for residential development purposes is robust and justified; and
- xii. It is agreed that the issues identified in Chapter 7 of the Proposed Submission Local Plan are the main relevant issues that development of the site will face and that they do not fundamentally prevent or constrain development of the site.

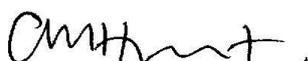
5. Outstanding Matters (areas of disagreement)

There are no areas of disagreement between the parties.

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AGREEMENT

Signed by:



Caroline Hunt on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council

Dated: 25th November 2016



Signed by:

Ian Smith of Cheffins on behalf of The RJ Driver Trust, Ward's Charity & John Huntingdon's Charity

Dated: 25th November 2016

