

SC1/SCDC – Supplement 3



Examination into the Soundness of the
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

Matter SC1: Strategy for the Rural Area – Supplement 3: Council’s Response to Further Written Representations

South Cambridgeshire District Council

July 2017

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Matter SC1: Strategy for the Rural Area – Supplement 3
Statement by South Cambridgeshire District Council
July 2017

Introduction

1. The Council has considered the further written statements submitted by objectors in relation to Matter SC1: Strategy for the Rural Area relating to omission sites that have not been subject to an examination hearing. This Supplement to the Council's Matter SC1 statement sets out the Council's position in relation to the Further Written Representations.

Further Written Representation dealt with at the Matter SC1 hearing

2. Castlefield International had provided a Further Written Representation in respect of (i) the village classification of Fulbourn and (ii) the omission site on land between Teversham Road and Cow Lane, Fulbourn. The hearings programme was revised after the submission and publication of the Matter SC1: Strategy for the Rural Area statements to include Matter SC1.3C Fulbourn as part of the examination hearing on 7 June 2017. Castlefield International (represented by Barton Willmore) attended this hearing session and presented their case as set out in their further written statement (FWR-SC1.3C-18235). The Council therefore responded to this further written statement through its evidence presented to the examination hearing on 7 June 2017.

Hearing statements being dealt with as Further Written Representations

3. The Council has not had an opportunity to respond to two hearing statements from Babraham Research Campus (SC1.5A-21428) and Messrs Sheldrick (represented by Bidwells, SC1.1D-SC1.4F-17544) as the representors decided not to pursue them at an examination hearing, and therefore these hearing statements have been considered by the Council as further written statements.

Council's Response to Further Written Representations

4. The Council is content that its hearing statement and the evidence presented at the examination hearings in relation to the general policy issues provide an appropriate response to the issues raised in the following written statements:
 - FWR-SC1.1A-18323 (General Policy Issues): Gladman Developments
 - SC1.1D-SC1.4F-17544 (General Policy Issues & Fowlmere): Messrs Sheldrick
 - FWR-SC1.3A-3125 (Bassingbourn): Mr Roger Worboys
 - FWR-SC1.2C-21149 (Great Shelford): Shelford Investments
 - FWR-SC1.4L-3111 (Hauxton): Harrow Estates
 - FWR-SC1.4Q-19229 (Orwell): Volac International
 - FWR-SC1.5I-1583 (Pampisford): Solopark Ltd (formerly Yardline Ltd)
 - FWR-SC1.3I-3126 (Swavesey): Mr John Shepperson
5. The Council considers that it is necessary to provide additional information to respond to the issues raised in the following written statements:
 - FWR-SC1.3C-19047 (Fulbourn): KG Moss Will Trust
 - SC1.5A-21428 (Babraham): Babraham Research Campus
 - FWR SC1.2D-21155 (Histon): Mr Chris Meadows

FWR-SC1.3C-19047 (Fulbourn – land off Home End and land at East Court Meadows House, Balsham Road): KG Moss Will Trust

6. Carter Jonas (on behalf of KG Moss Will Trust) refer to the conclusions of four recent appeal decisions for sites in Swavesey, Balsham, Duxford, and Over.
7. The two omission sites being promoted by KG Moss Will Trust in Fulbourn are within the Green Belt. None of the planning appeals relied upon concern sites within the Green Belt. All have been determined in the context of South Cambridgeshire District Council not currently being able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, taking particular account of paragraphs 14(2) and 49 of the NPPF. As set out in the Council's Matter SC1 hearing statement (paragraph 25), the Local Plan is considered in the context of paragraph 14(1) of the NPPF, and in particular the tests of soundness set out in paragraph 182 of the NPPF. As such, the Council is clear that the context in which planning applications are considered given the lack of a five year supply is significantly different from the considerations in which the soundness of the Local Plan is assessed.
8. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF establishes a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' applying to both plan making and decision-taking. The presumption is stated to apply unless a specific policy in the NPPF indicates that development should be restricted. Footnote 9 specifically identifies that Green Belt is one such policy.

SC1.5A-21428 (Babraham – Babraham Research Campus): Babraham Research Campus

9. Bidwells (on behalf of Babraham Research Campus) outline that without the certainty of the site being identified as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt, the future growth of the campus would be at risk.
10. As outlined in the Council's hearing statement for Matter SC4B.iii, the NPPF (paragraph 89) changed the policy approach to infilling in the Green Belt. Previously only 'major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans' were the only sites where redevelopment would be allowed in the Green Belt. The Development Control Policies DPD (adopted in July 2007) therefore includes Policy GB/4: Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt. The NPPF (paragraph 89) sets out that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt, however exceptions to this include *'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.'*
11. The Council responded to this change in national policy by not carrying forward Policy GB/4: Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt, and instead including Policy NH/9: Redevelopment of Previously Developed Sites and Infilling in the Green Belt. Policy NH/9 is actually more flexible than the adopted Policy GB/4, as that policy included

more restrictive criteria regarding additional floor area, footprint and height. This provides an appropriate policy framework for considering proposals at Babraham Campus and the Council has and will continue to work constructively with the Campus in respect of its development.

12. Bidwells (on behalf of Babraham Research Campus) state that the site should be added to the list of sites include in Policy E/9: Promotion of Clusters.
13. This issue has not been raised previously. Policy E/9 was considered at the Matter SC7 examination hearing, and in particular Question SC7I.v which considered the case for listing further sites. The Council responded that cluster related firms were present in a wide range of locations in the district, and it was not appropriate to list them all. Policy E/9 highlights the most significant planned growth opportunities at Northstowe and North West Cambridge.

SC1.2D-21155 (Histon - Land west of 113 Cottenham Road): Mr Chris Meadows

14. Carter Jonas (on behalf of Mr Chris Meadows) refer to the consultation response to the emerging Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan as indicating some support for development in the Green Belt provided affordable housing is delivered.
15. The Council would like to clarify that the consultation referred to relates to a questionnaire survey undertaken on behalf of the Parish Council to understand the issues local residents consider should be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan. The consultation asked a number of questions on issues, including in relation to future housing needs in the village over the next 15 years and potential locations for any new housing, including whether development should be built on Green Belt. The results of the consultation will be used to inform a draft Neighbourhood Plan; it is not a consultation on a draft Neighbourhood Plan or policies therein. Of course the Neighbourhood Plan will need to ensure it is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, including in respect of Green Belt.
16. Carter Jonas has been selective in how they have interpreted the consultation response; the full report is available on Histon and Impington Parish Council's website¹ and a summary of the key findings can be viewed on pages 5-11.
17. At paragraph 6 of the consultation response there is reference to Cambridgeshire County Council proposing to relocate the infant school to the Buxhall Farm site, which will increase capacity and be located close to the promoter's site.
18. As outlined in the Council's hearing statement for Matter 1.2D.iii.a. Land at Buxhall Farm, Histon, the situation regarding the relocation of the school remains unresolved and cannot be assured at the current time.²

¹ The Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Report (November 2016) can be viewed in full at: <http://www.hisimp.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Histon-and-Impington-Neighbourhood-Plan-Consultation-Report.pdf>

² Paragraphs 375-377, pages 81-82, Council's Matter SC1 Hearing Statement (SC1/SCDC)