

Appendix A: Potential Additional Sites within the Existing Urban Area of Cambridge

1. Introduction:

- i. The purpose of this Appendix is to demonstrate that there are additional sites within the existing urban area that have potential for residential development, which have not been included in the CCC submitted Plan. The Appendix identifies the larger sites known to CambridgePPF, assesses their status and development potential, and their deliverability.
- ii. According to the Plan's preferred development sequence, if any of these sites were to come forward within the plan period, their contribution to the housing target would offset the necessity to release more land at the city fringe to make up the shortfall in urban area sites.
- iii. The SHLAA exercise undertaken by the City Council was a comprehensive process and we accept its outcome. Two of the three sites we propose were not included in the SHLAA and the third was rejected on a misunderstanding of the site being suggested.
- iv. It is CambridgePPF's contention that there may well be a number of other sites in the city where land is currently under-used which could be appropriate for development. The most obvious example are the large areas given over to surface car parking, where the simple expedient of stacking cars in a multi-storey car park, can made available valuable development land. Such sites may be difficult to do with multiple ownerships and soil contamination, but with determination and leadership from the Council, we do not see why they may not be deliverable in the plan period.
- v. For sites to be included in the submitted Plan, they must have a high probability of being both deliverable and developable. As a local charity, CambridgePPF does not have the capacity to undertake such detailed examinations. We therefore are seeking to identify potential, rather than proven, development opportunities. However, our review has been undertaken with sufficient diligence to justify raising the potential of these sites which now needs a more vigorous and detailed investigation. This should certainly be done before more Green Belt land is released at the city fringe

2. Potential Sites within the Existing Urban Area:

- i. Sites less than 0.5ha are assumed by the Council to contribute towards the windfall allocation, so this review looks only at larger areas. It also excludes land categorised as Protected Open Space or playing fields, or identified as Protected Industrial Sites.
- ii. CambridgePPF believes the three sites listed below warrant more rigorous assessment. Their combined potential housing provision could be as much as 2,000 additional homes, more than adequate to offset the need to release land at the city fringe. The proposed sites include:

2.A SHLAA Site 481 - Newmarket Road Retail Parks West of the railway together with Site 541 - The Beehive Retail Park

2.B Linking Plan Site R40 with Site R41 North of Church End, Cherry Hinton

2.C Cambridge Northern Fringe East Area of Major Change

2.A Site 481 The Newmarket Road Retail Parks Car Park, and Site 541 The Beehive Centre Car Park

Area: 23ha

Potential Housing Provision: Approx 750 – 1,000 new homes at a density of 75dph

SHLAA: Subject to scrutiny in the SHLAA but dropped because:

- owners have expressed opposition to the loss of retail use

- serious ground contamination on a former landfill site with associated gas problems
- public transport and traffic congestion problems along Newmarket Road

Analysis:

The primary reason for rejection presented in the SHLAA assessment is that these sites are: *'not considered to be suitable for residential development as they would result in the loss of the Cambridge Retail Park, which makes a major contribution to the retail economy, and employment situation in Cambridge. Residential development of these sites would mean the loss of the retail units and the jobs therein, and would diminish Cambridge's status as a regional shopping centre'*.

This explanation assumes replacement of the retail parks by residential development which clearly is unacceptable. However, CambridgePPF is proposing to keep the retail parks and to site the residential development on the extensive area of under-used surface car parking between the stores and Newmarket Road.

The outline plan in **Figure 1** below has been prepared by the architects NRAP on behalf of the Cambridge Association of Architects. It shows how the existing retail and its car parking provision can be retained whilst at the same time making available land for the development of some 750 – 1,000 new homes with communal gardens. This would be achieved by raising the housing and gardens on columns, allowing car parking below. This option of combining both retail with residential has not been put to the owners.



Figure 1: Possible Residential Development of the Car-Parking Land of the Newmarket Road Retail Park and Beehive Centre (by NRAP Architects)

Raising the residential units above ground level would also help mitigate the serious ground contamination, especially when combined with the latest remedial technologies. An example of this sort of raised development on a heavily contaminated site is provided by the Coin Street community development at London's South Bank on an old landfill site.

The congestion problem along Newmarket Road will need to be resolved to meet the increased traffic from the Wing development and from any eventual development in Cambridge East, irrespective of any further development at the retail parks.

The Cambridge Association of Architects wish to make it clear that **Figure 1** is just an outline proposal and is not a tested plan. What it does show is that these sites have sufficient potential to warrant further examination. A more modest scheme could involve the stacking of the cars in a multi-storey car park thus releasing the bulk of the area for development

Deliverability:

This is clearly a difficult site. Its implementation would require determined leadership by the City Council in brokering an agreement with the various owners, possibly even some form of private/public financial partnership. However, there are no insurmountable logistic reasons why it could not be done.

2.B Linking of Sites R40 and R41 to the North of Church End:

Additional Area: approx 10ha

Total Development Area: approx 20ha, comprising R40 8.8ha, plus R41 1.2ha, plus linking area of approx 10ha = 20 ha

Additional Housing Provision: additional approx 400 dwellings at 40dwh

Total Housing Provision: approx 800, comprising 350 from R40, plus 50 from R41, plus approx 400 from the linking section = 800 at 40dph

SHLAA: Sites R40 and R41 are proposed in the submitted plan: linking area has not been assessed by the SHLAA as owners, Marshalls, do not want to progress this area until their own internal plans are clearer.

Analysis:

The southern two-thirds of **Site R40** is owned by Marshalls and is likely to come forward for planning approval in 2015 to provide around 225 new homes. The northern third, owned by the White family, is likely to progress later in the plan period. The area is greenfield currently used for agriculture. It lies in the Safeguarded Area of East Cambridge (Policy 12) and outside the Green Belt

CambridgePPF believes that a significantly larger scheme might be possible comprising an ark of new housing running around the North of Church End with a spine road linking Cherry Hinton Road with Coldham's Lane. This would join the proposed Sites R40 and R41 with an area some 10ha providing some 400 additional new homes.

Such a scheme was proposed in the 1990s but was not pursued in the light of Marshalls plans at the time to re-locate from Cambridge. This site lies within the proposed Safeguarded Area at Cambridge East (Policy 12 of the Cambridge submitted plan). A small part of this extension to the West of Braybrooke Place was granted planning permission in 2002 but was not progressed so as to maintain flexibility for the development of the airport.

Deliverability:

The deliverability of this site depends on Marshalls putting it forward for development sometime during the plan period. This in turn will depend on resolving the problem of relocating its engine testing facility. This is likely to be decided in the near future so that the Wings development can proceed but probably not until after the examination of the submitted plan.

In addition, the radar navigation system at the southern end of the runway may have a shadow extending eastwards towards Church End that will need to be assessed.

In the light of the above, this site is obviously not a candidate for near-term development. If it does come forward for development, it is likely to fall into the second half of the plan period. However, depending on the subsequent noise implications arising from the re-location of the new engine testing facility, it does have development potential that needs to be assessed for post-2021.

2.C Cambridge Northern Fringe East:

Area: approx 15ha

Potential Housing Provision: approx 1,000 dwellings

SHLAA: the Northern Fringe East is an Area of Major Change covered by Policy 14. This calls for an employment-lead development through an Area Action Plan. However, from discussions with the developer it is clear that a significant residential element will be included. This is not included in the City's forward housing trajectory.

Analysis:

Brookgate Plc has been appointed as the development partner for the British Rail part of the site. This comprises the South-East third of the total area adjacent to the proposed Science Park Station and lies in SCDC. British Rail is moving its sidings to the North-East corner and the contract with the aggregates company Lefarge is being terminated.

Brookgate's initial thinking is for an employment-lead mixed-use development providing up to 1m sq ft of employment space and some 1,000 new dwellings.

Deliverability:

This will depend largely on the effectiveness of the odour mitigation measures that Anglian Water are introducing at its sewage treatment plant, together with a resolution to the railway sidings and aggregates uses. The site could come forward for outline approval as early as spring 2015.

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