

HEARING STATEMENT

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

MATTER CC7A – SITE R12, RIDGEONS, 75 CROMWELL ROAD

ON BEHALF

RIDGEONS LAND LLP

REPRESENTATION ID – 27222 AND 27225

Carter Jonas

May 2016

Prepared by: Paul Belton BA (Hons) DipTp MRTPI

Carter Jonas, York House, Dukes Court, 54-62 Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8DZ

Tel: 01223 326812 Fax: 01223 329346 email: paul.belton@carterjonas.co.uk

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
RESPONSE TO INSPECTOR'S QUESTIONS.....	1

APPENDIX 1 - Extract from, Cambridge City Council Draft Affordable Housing SPD
June 2014.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement is submitted on behalf of Ridgeons Ltd and is lodged in respect of Matter CC7A - Site R12 Ridgeons, 75 Cromwell Road. This Hearing Statement follows the submission of supportive representations lodged on behalf of Ridgeons Land LLP in September 2013 in respect of the Draft Local Plan 2014 Proposed Submission (representation ID 27222 and 27225). Ridgeons have reviewed the key Issues recently identified by the Inspector within the Matters and Issues for Cambridge City Local Plan specific hearing sessions document that relate specifically to the Hearing Sessions planned for Matter CC7. Given the original representations reflect many of the key points that are now set out within the Inspector's questions, this Statement provides additional information and appropriate updates in respect of the work undertaken since September 2013.
- 1.2 A significant amount of additional work has been undertaken since 2013. This has primarily focused on the preparation of the Draft Planning and Development Brief, Supplementary Planning Document (DPADB) that has now been prepared and published in draft form (as required by draft Allocation R12). The DPADB has been informed by extensive public consultation that has included three consultation events staggered through the preparation of the document and 7 weeks of public consultation hosted by the Council. A detailed review of the site's opportunities and constraints has been undertaken as well as a careful review of the site's context. This detailed work is clearly of relevance to many of the issues identified by the Inspector. A copy of the Draft Planning and Development Brief has been provided to the Inspector by the Local Planning Authority so is not attached to this Statement.

2.0 RESPONSE TO INSPECTORS QUESTIONS

Question (i.) - "Is the proposed high density of the development and the associated housing mix justifiable in this location".

- 2.1 As set out within our earlier representations, this is a site that is found to be suitable for the proposed housing development. The draft allocation of the site (allocation R12), states that the land has a capacity of 245 dwellings with development to be brought forward at a density of 75 dwellings per hectare (dph). The work undertaken in respect of the site and its context has demonstrated that this is an appropriate capacity of development and that the proposed density of 75 dwellings will not be out of keeping with the surroundings.

- 2.2 Section 2.9 of the DPADB provides an assessment of Character and Form. This assessment advises that in order to accommodate 245 dwellings at a density of 75dph, a combination of houses and flats will be required with some buildings being 4 storeys+ tall. Figures 99-106 (pages 50 and 51) of the DPADB provide an assessment of 8 local character areas. These assessments consider the number of houses provided, the scale of buildings and the density of development in nearby locations. As these assessments show, the residential sites that have been developed to the North of the site (Winstanley Court (Figure 100), Hampden Gardens (Figure 101) and Pym Court (Figure 102), have been constructed at densities of 88dph, 90dph and 111dph respectively. The development clearly forms part of the context of the site. Assessment of other character areas at Fairfax Road (Figure 103) and Catherine Street (Figure 104), sites located to the east and south of the Ridgeons site have been developed at densities of 29dph and 72dph respectively. The character area of Cromwell Road (Figure 99) has a density of 40dph.
- 2.3 The detailed assessments undertaken have therefore demonstrated that the site's context is varied. Higher rise flatted developments sit to the north, alongside the railway, and more modest, but in places tight knit 2 storey development exists to the east and south.
- 2.4 The site's size and shape provides great opportunity to deliver a mix of building types and sizes, together with extensive areas of public open space. Figure 135 (page 77) of the DPADB sets a framework for delivering lower rise development (2-3 storeys) to the east and south of the site with taller flatted development located to the north and west, adjacent to the railway. The indicative character and form diagram (Figure 136 page 79) shows how such an approach might be practically laid out. Such an approach allows the development to respond positively to the varying scales of built form provided locally and demonstrates that adopting a development density of 75dph can respond to both the site opportunities and constraints and relate positively to its context.
- 2.5 In relation to the proposed housing mix, the plans set out within the DPADB have been developed in association with the work now being undertaken in respect of the emerging outline planning application that we plan to formally lodge with the Council during the Summer of 2016. A draft illustrative masterplan is in the process of being developed. By adopting the design principles set out within the DPADB, an indicative housing mix has been produced which accords with the Council's most up to date guidance provided within Appendix 6 of the Council's

Draft Affordable Housing SPD June 2014 (relevant extracts are provided within **Appendix 1**). This shows that the potential housing mix could be as follows:

- 1 bed units = 20%
- 2 bed units = 40%
- 3 bed units = 30%
- 4 bed+ units = 10%

2.6 By adopting the design principles set out within the DPADP the approximate split of flats/apartments to houses is at a ratio of 60:40. A diverse mix of housing types and sizes is therefore able to be provided when applying a housing target of 245 dwellings and a density of 75dph.

Question (ii) - “Is there a realistic prospect of achieving an acceptable level of open space provision on the site in an area of open space deficiency given a proposed residential development density of 75dph.”

2.7 As set out within our earlier representations it is our considered opinion that all detailed design and layout matters can be suitably addressed through the masterplanning process. This includes the provision of open space. The amount, shape and position of open space on the site has been the subject of much discussion during the preparation of the DPADB. There is a clear desire to deliver a large and useable area of open space that provides opportunities for different forms of recreation, be it informal play, walking or quiet sitting and relaxing areas. It was also clear that the open space needs to be designed so that it is useable and inviting for all and should form the heart of the development. In response, the DPADB demonstrates that a large central area of open space is able to be delivered which then extends to the north providing the opportunity for more informal and intimate spaces.

2.8 The work that is now underway in respect of the draft illustrative masterplan that will in time inform the outline planning application is showing that circa 0.7ha of public open space could be delivered on this site. The layout of the site, as set out within the DPADB, allows for a linear park to be delivered (Figure 132, page 73) which at its widest point could measure circa 40m in width. An “acceptable” level of open space is therefore able to be delivered on the site. By way of comparison, the three flatted developments located to the north of the site (Winstanley Court,

Hampden Gardens and Pym Court) have provided 335 additional dwelling but have delivered just 0.5ha of public open space between them. These areas of open space are spread throughout the developments and provide small landscaped spaces that are rarely used. The DPADB sets a framework that will allow a large area of open space to be provided in the centre of the site. It is of a size that will create a useable and desirable area of public realm. An appropriate balance is therefore considered to be struck between making the efficient use of this highly sustainable site and providing the necessary infrastructure to cater for the needs of the development.

Question (iii) - Would the proposed allocation put an unacceptable strain on existing services and facilities in the Romsey Area?

- 2.9 As set out within our original representations, the site is located within a highly sustainable location with good connections to existing services, facilities and infrastructure. The site lies very close to the neighbourhood centre at Fairfax Road. The District Centre of Mill Road is also a short walk away from the site only (circa 400 metres). These existing and established neighbourhood and district centre facilities are well placed to cater for the needs arising from the development and an unacceptable strain on the key services provided within them will not arise.
- 2.10 During the preparation of the DPADB, discussions have been held with the NHS and the Local Education Authority regarding existing facilities and capacity. The NHS has advised that the development of this site will generate additional demand on local health care facilities. A financial contribution towards providing new floor spaces and/or related facilities across the 4 local surgeries (York Street, Petersfield, Brookfields and Mill Road Surgery) is the preferred means of mitigating the identified impacts.
- 2.11 Meetings have also been held with the Local Education Authority. Strategic enhancements to primary and secondary school provision are being prepared that will deliver additional capacity to cater for the needs of this draft allocation and others identified in the emerging Local Plan. It has however been agreed that a pre-school facility should be provided on the site. This will be included within the masterplan for the site and in doing so will mitigate the demands of the development.

Question (i.v) - Would a housing mix at the proposed density result in a development that would be unacceptably out of keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area which includes the Central Conservation Area immediately to the south of the site?

- 2.12 As set out in response to the Inspector's first question (above), the detailed work undertaken in respect of the DPADB has demonstrated that the proposed housing mix and density can deliver a development of a mixed and varied character that can successfully respond to the site's context, including that of the Central Conservation Area located immediately to the south. The Indicative Character and Form Diagram (Figure 136 Page 79) of the DPADB demonstrates that when viewed from the conservation area, the provision of domestic scale streets will provide a successful transition from the tight knit streets to the south and the larger scale flat blocks to the north. The proposed flat blocks that are proposed within the centre of the site and located along the western boundary are set away from the conservation area boundary and will, as a result, not form prominent features when viewed from within the designated area. This proposed treatment of the site shows that a form of development can be delivered that is respectful of the conservation area to the south and offers significant enhancement opportunities relative to the large industrial sheds that are present on the site currently.

Question (v) - Would ingress and egress to and from the site be solely from Cromwell Road?

- 2.13 Vehicular access is to be taken solely from Cromwell Road. This is the existing vehicular access point for the site through which a significant volume of motorised traffic passes. A draft Transport Assessment has been prepared and this shows that there are very high volumes of traffic generated by the existing use. The impact of the proposed residential led development on the site can, following the relocation of the Ridgeons store, be successfully accommodated within the local road network.
- 2.14 Given the narrow nature of the streets to the south, it has been agreed during the public consultation events held in respect of the DPADB that vehicular access will not be provided into the constrained road network to the south from Cavendish Road/Place. In order to deliver a permeable form of development however a second access will be provided off Cromwell Road that will deliver an emergency vehicle access point, together with a pedestrian and cycle link. An additional cycle

and pedestrian link will then be provided that will link onto Sedgwick Street. To the south, a cycle and pedestrian link is also to be created that will connect with Catherine Street. It is through this new access point that the Chisholm Trail cycle route will pass. The combination of all these access points will successfully promote the use of sustainable means of transport, particularly cycling, (given the alignment of the Chisholm Trail through the site) and will also ensure a well-connected and permeable development is able to be delivered.

Question (vi) - Should the site be included in the Mill Road Opportunity Area to the south?

- 2.15 We have no comments to make in respect of this question as we have not commented on this matter in our original representations.

Question (vii) - Given its edge of centre location, should the nature of the allocation be changed to a mixed use arrangement with potential commercial uses as well as residential?

- 2.16 As set out within our initial representations, Ridgeons consider this to be a suitable site for housing. It is a large brownfield site that is located within a central location with excellent connections to local facilities and services, the railway station and City Centre. With other employment allocations being promoted within the Local Plan it is considered that a proposal to make the efficient use of the land as a residential site is an appropriate and justified approach. The surrounding area is predominantly in residential use and the proposed allocation is considered to represent an appropriate use of the land that responds positively to the mix of uses provided locally.

Appendix 1

Cambridge City Council



Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

June 2014

Appendix 6 – Cambridge Sub-Regional Strategic Housing Market Assessment

Introduction

A6.1 The Cambridge Sub-Region Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) pulls together data from a wide range of sources to provide a comprehensive assessment of the housing market across the Cambridge housing sub-region. It was last updated in 2012, based on 2009/10 data. The current SHMA and any further updates can be seen in full on the web at:
<http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/shma>

A6.2 This appendix gives a summary of headline information in the SHMA which supports the council's requirements for provision of affordable housing, as well as providing guidance on the mix of sizes of affordable housing to be provided. Reference should always be made to the latest SHMA information and this appendix will be updated accordingly, if the SHMA identifies significant relevant changes to the market.

Need for affordable housing

A6.3 The SHMA identifies a significant shortfall in affordable housing provision in Cambridge, with high levels of need for new affordable homes over the life of the Local Plan. (*SHMA Chapters 12 & 13*). However, a balance needs to be struck between affordable and other tenures to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities as required by the NPPF, and recognising the need for developments to be financially viable.

A6.4 Data shows that demand for housing in Cambridge is high:

- Average and lower quartile house prices are considerably higher than nationally and in the rest of the housing sub-region (*SHMA chapter 5*);
- Ratios of average and lower quartile house prices to local incomes also remain high, and a significant proportion of local people are unable to afford to buy even a lower quartile one bedroom flat. (*SHMA chapter 10*);
- Private rent levels are also significantly higher than the national average and again the highest in the Cambridge housing sub-region. They are also rising faster than in any other part of the sub-region. (*SHMA chapter 6*);
- The way that Local Housing Allowance rates are calculated means that there are very limited numbers of properties available in the private rented sector in Cambridge for which the rent is fully covered by housing benefit. This, together with the reluctance of some landlords to let to benefit

claimants makes it very difficult for those on low incomes to access private rented housing. (*SHMA chapter 6*).

- The city's population rose by 15,000 (15.6%) between 2001 and 2011, and is projected to increase by a further 22% between 2011 and 2031 which will further increase housing demand.

Tenure of affordable housing required

A6.5 The greatest need for affordable housing in terms of numbers of applicants is for social and affordable rent homes. However, there is also strong demand in Cambridge for intermediate tenures – including shared ownership. The mix of social and intermediate tenures required by the SPD is based on balancing expressed need (through applicant registers) and projections of changes in household type and incomes, with the need to provide mixed communities.

Size of affordable housing required

A6.6 The SHMA contains a range of data which points to the sizes of homes required.

A6.7 Some data indicates a need for smaller affordable homes to be provided:

- The Census 2011 showed an occupancy rate of 2.54 people per dwelling, which is projected to fall in future years. (*SHMA Chapter 14, and New Development Surveys*)¹².
- The greatest future increase in households is projected to be in single person households, and in those in the 45-64 and 65 plus age brackets. (*SHMA Chapters 12 & 14*).
- There is a higher number of applicants for social housing on the Home-Link housing register requiring one bedroom properties than other property sizes. Two bedroom properties are the next highest in demand, with lower need for three bedrooms or more. (*Strategic Housing Key Facts*).
- On the Homebuy Intermediate Housing register, the majority of applicants are one and two person households, and the local market for one bedroom homes is currently strong. (*SHMA Chapter 8*).
- Households aged over 85 showed the largest percentage increase between 2001 and 2011 compared with other age groups. Couple households had the largest numerical increase 2001 to 2011 compared to other household types. (*SHMA Chapter 3*)

A6.8 By contrast, other data points to the need for larger properties:

- The greatest projected need across all tenures in Cambridge is for homes with three bedrooms or more. (This is based on past trends, and does not take into account actual population change recorded in the 2011 Census, but it gives a starting point for assessing the actual mix required in the local area). (*SHMA Chapter 14*);
- The number of single person households in the city is projected to decrease slightly up to 2021. (*SHMA Chapter 3*)

¹² Cambridgeshire New Development Surveys: <http://www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/housing/new-development-surveys>

- Cambridge currently has a generally younger population than the rest of the sub-region. The largest numerical increase between 2001 and 2011 was in the 0-19 age group. (*SHMA Chapter 12*);
- Turnover of larger properties for rent tends to be lower – more one bedroom properties are let each year than other property sizes. (*SHMA Chapter 7*);
- Applicants for intermediate housing are permitted to apply for one more bedroom than their household is deemed to require, and purchasers – as is the case with market housing - will generally buy the largest home they can afford. (*SHMA Chapter 8*).


A6.9 This range of data needs to be understood in the context of the current supply of affordable housing. For example, nearly thirty per cent of the council’s homes (the council being the largest social housing provider in the city) are currently one-bedroom properties, with around one third having two bedrooms. The council’s supply of one bedroom dwellings includes some sheltered housing for older people, and other temporary and specialist housing. (*SHMA Chapter 7, and local data*). For historic reasons, the profile of the affordable housing may differ from that of private housing

Required size mix, based on data and issues

A6.10 The SHMA indicates the size mix of new housing between 2011 and 2031. The SHMA tends to overstate the need for larger homes for affordable housing as studies show that market housing is generally under-occupied by one bedroom in relation to the size of the household. The council has therefore undertaken further analysis of SHMA data to provide a more reasonable split of the size mix of new affordable housing. This involves reducing the percentage of 4 bedroom properties by half, and adding this percentage to the three bedrooms, then repeating this process for the smaller properties to dampen the number of larger properties and increase the number of smaller ones as follows:

	Four bedroom	Three bedroom	Two bedroom	One bedroom
Starting point (SHMA) - summarised	19%	43%	33%	6%
Applying ‘Dampening’ effect	10% (19%-10%)	31% (43%-22%+10%)	38% (33%-16%+21%)	22% (6+16%)
Resulting Recommended mix	9%	31%	38%	22%

SHMA Chapter 12, Table 12 – summarised and ‘dampened’



A6.11 It could be argued that the estimated dwelling mix should be further 'dampened'. However, the above allows a realistic - and progressive - degree of under-occupation on new affordable housing: i.e. around 10%.

A6.12 The following mix should be taken as a guide:

- No more than 20% one bedroom general needs
- At least 40% two bedroom general needs
- 30% three bedroom
- 10% four bedroom

A6.13 In view of the ageing population and the need to provide a better range of options to enable older people to down-size, a percentage of the smaller properties should be provided for older people, or as other forms of specialist housing to meet the needs of disabled or vulnerable people.

A6.14 This should be seen as a guideline for the mix on new developments. However, variations from this may be required from site to site, depending on issues such as: the size and character of the site; the character of the wider area; existing housing provision, housing need in the local area; etc.