

The site proposal (existing HELAA site reference 40158, which does not contain any red flag site issues) is submitted for consideration as an allocation in the local plan for 2.33 ha commercial/employment use redevelopment as the site represents existing 'previously developed land' in the Green Belt.

To be considered 'appropriate development' within the Green belt in NPPF terms the proposal would need to reflect the requirements of paragraph 149 of the NPPF subject to:

not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified ...need within the area of the local planning authority.

It is important for any appropriate development proposal within the green belt to demonstrate that the openness of the green belt is maintained or enhanced with no resulting detrimental impact.

Landscape and Townscape issues register an amber flag on HELAA form 40158 for the site. Further initial assessment by Bidwells Landscape Architecture adds the following information-

The site appears well enclosed by existing hedgerows and tree blocks along the whole boundary. There are some long-distance views available from the northern area of the site as topography provides an advantage over the vegetative cover. Conversely, visibility of the site from the surrounding landscape appears limited as the contextual public footpaths and roads are in topographical disadvantage and therefore do not afford a clear view into the site. Views from the opposite rising ridge at Harlton are unlikely due to intervening distance.

The existing hard surface and storage facilities extends the perceived developed area beyond the building's footprint. Coincidentally, both features contribute to a local sense of enclosure which constraints views outwards.

It is believed that the site is capable to accommodate redevelopment if the following design principles are applied:

- 1 – Where available, retain long distance views towards the contextual countryside;
- 2 – Locally reinforce the existing landscape structure to mitigate possible visual impact.

The existing site contains numerous commercial and associated buildings and uses (including a cement plant) which have accumulated over many years. The proposed allocation provides the opportunity to plan a well-designed and sustainable redevelopment package for the longer term, providing appropriate local benefits in terms of local jobs and services within this major transport corridor between Cambridge and St Neots. The Site is central to the A428 corridor and strategic road network with the new planned Cambourne to Cambridge guided busway to pass immediately to the Site's southern boundary. A bus stop at this location should be considered a local benefit enabling direct access to and from Cambourne, Bourn Airfield, Hardwick, Coton and Cambridge by public transport.

2.33 ha of Mixed Commercial Use Classes E and B and associated uses (including offices, R&D, light industrial, last mile logistics, EV Charging centre, retail (food & drink) wildlife habitat creation, amenity open space and tree planting).

The site, given its location on the A428 and adjacent the planned guided busway, may also provide the opportunity for housing on the site in whole (approx. 60 dwellings) or in part (approx. 30 dwellings) as part of a mixed development option.

RO Property Management Ltd would seek to ensure that any proposal would be in line with adopted policies Policy NH/9 (redevelopment of previously developed sites and infilling in the GB) and potentially Policy E/16 (expansion of existing businesses in the countryside).