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**By Email Only: [localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org)**

Dear Greater Cambridge Local Plan Team,

## **Representations to Greater Cambridge Local Plan on behalf of Trinity College, Cambridge Land North of Madingley Road, Cambridge**

### **Introduction**

This letter has been prepared by DP9 on behalf of Trinity College Cambridge for the submission of their landholdings at the Madingley Estate for B2 and B8 uses to the current emerging Local Plan process being ran by Greater Cambridge Planning.

It is understood that the Council are still accepting submissions for new sites until 5pm on 30<sup>th</sup> January, in line with the ending of the Regulation 18 local plan consultation being held at the same time. This letter not only forms a submission of a new site to the emerging local plan but also provides comment on the policies and wording within the Regulation 18 local plan draft consultation document which are most pertinent to the site.

### **Trinity College Cambridge**

Trinity College Cambridge (TCC) is a significant landowner within Greater Cambridge as well as further afield, and has been since their inception in the 1500's. TCC already hold a number of major assets across Greater Cambridge, including but not limited to their extensive College campus including student accommodation along the River Cam, Cambridge Science Park and a number of buildings within the city centre including retail units.

The above properties demonstrate Trinity College Cambridge's track record for providing strong landowner input into significant projects across the Estate and wider and demonstrate their willingness to be at the forefront of innovation and technology. This is demonstrated through the inception of Cambridge Science Park, which is a globally renowned centre of scientific excellence, and the first of its kind within Europe. Having this already proven track record provides strong evidence for the College's motivations and demonstration of deliverability of the site for industrial and logistics uses.



## **The Site**

The site is located within the administrative boundary of South Cambridgeshire District Council. The site comprises a number of agricultural fields, in addition to some small commercial and agricultural units which are accessed from Madingley Road to the south of the site. The boundary of the site is formed by Cambridge Road to the southwest, Madingley Road to the south, the M11 to the east and further agricultural fields and the A428 to the north. Adjacent to the south of the site across Madingley Road is a Garden Centre. Junction 13 of the M11 is located on the boundary of the south-east corner of the site. It is noted that you cannot currently join the M11 at Junction 13 going northbound or leave it going southbound due to no slip road availability.

The site falls within Flood Zone 1, which has the lowest probability of flooding, other than a small slither of Flood Zone 2 to the northeast corner of the site adjacent to the A14 slip road, when referring to the Environment Agency's Flood Maps for Planning.

The site is currently located within the Cambridge Green Belt, but has no landscape or environmental designations, when referring to the emerging local plan policies map. The site contains one known heritage asset, Grade II listed Moor Barns Farmhouse, which would be retained with a significant buffer as part of any proposed development. Adjacent to, but not within the site is the Grade I listed Registered Park and Garden, the American Military Cemetery. There are several other heritage assets within proximity to the site including Grade II\* Memorial at American Military Cemetery, Grade II\* Madingley Mill and Grade II Listed Madingley Hall Park and Garden in addition to a number of listed buildings in the village of Madingley but these are separated from the site by the A428.

## **The Proposal**

It is considered that the site is very suitable for an allocation for B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) uses, including but not limited to high technology industries such as digital infrastructure data centres and gigafactories.

One of the main reasons for this is due to the proximity of the site to key strategic highway routes, including the M11, A14 and A428 which all cross the site. Junction 13 of the M11 allows for direct access through Cambridge and Essex down to London. The M11 and A14 are strategic roads within Greater Cambridge for industrial and distribution uses at regional and national levels.

## The Needs Case

As highlighted within the Greater Cambridge Employment and Housing Evidence Update (September 2025), a total projection of 1,341,000sqm of employment floorspace is required to be delivered between 2024 and 2045. The report continues to state that the figures indicate substantial potential demand for floorspace of a variety of types. The Greater Cambridge 2025 consultation draft version of the emerging local plan identified a need of 317,999sqm of industrial floorspace across the plan period of 2024-2045. Currently allocated within the draft plan is only a supply of 29,000sqm demonstrating a significant shortfall of approximately 288,000sqm across the plan period. This is without factoring in suppressed demand, which increases the need for industrial space to between 686,804sqm and 994,267sqm over the plan period.



## Policy Context

### National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 86 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024, as amended February 2025) states that planning policies “*should set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth*”. Part (c) states they should “*pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics*”. This is essential as it shows strong support for the proposal from a national planning policy perspective. The particular mention of data centres within paragraph 86(c) demonstrates their importance within the modern planning world as technologies including AI and social media grow in popularity and usage across the globe.

Continuing, Paragraph 87 of the NPPF identifies the importance of making provision for clusters and networks of data-driven, creative and high technology industries and the inclusion of new facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres). Cambridge is known as an area of excellence for science and technology sectors, including the large number of science parks located around the city and surrounding villages. It forms part of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, which is a globally significant growth corridor, labelled as Europe’s Silicon Valley. Major infrastructure projects such as the forthcoming East West Rail have added to the productivity and sustainability of the area. Therefore, it is considered that the construction of a data centre, or wider B2/B8 use on the Site would be in line with the requirements set out within national planning policy.

In December 2025, the Government published a draft version of an updated NPPF, with the consultation running until 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026. It sets out the Government’s aim and initiatives for plan making and decision making in England. The consultation draft includes a number of key new and updated policies which some could consider to be the biggest shift in policy making since the introduction of the NPPF in 2012.

Draft Policy S5 states that only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlement, which should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects. A certain form of development at part j states:

- j. Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:
  - i. be well related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; or
  - ii. comprise major development for storage and distribution purposes which accords with policy E3.



Within draft Policy E1, the inclusion of data centres as an important requirement within clusters and networks for technology industries remains and strong focus, within Section 7: Building a strong efficient economy. Furthermore, it supports storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations that allow for efficient and reliable handling of goods. Therefore, it is considered that with both the support of Policy S5 and E1 within the draft version of the NPPF, that the allocation of the site for B2/B8 uses would be supported in the context of the emerging local plan, particularly due to its close proximity to strategic highways networks and significant technology and data-driven clusters across Greater Cambridge and beyond.

### Greater Cambridge Emerging Local Plan

The Greater Cambridge Regulation 18 draft local plan began its consultation on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025. Its aims to create a joint local plan for the period of 2024-2045.

Policy S/JH: New Jobs and Homes identifies that development will be required to meet the objectively assessed needs in Greater Cambridge over the plan period of 2024-2045 for at least 73,300 additional jobs in order to support knowledge intensive sectors and provide a diverse range of local jobs. As stated within the Greater Cambridge Employment and Housing Evidence Update 2025, this figure equates to 317,000sqm of industrial and warehousing floorspace (Use Class B2/B8). Within the draft plan is only a supply of 29,000sqm demonstrating a significant shortfall of approximately 288,000sqm across the plan period.

As shown on the draft Policies Map, a section of the site is identified as being within the Policy CC/RE: Renewable energy projects and infrastructure zone. The policy states that the Council encourages proposals for renewable and low-carbon energy generation and associated infrastructure at all scales, provided they do not cause unacceptable impacts on a number of criteria, including Green Belt and the historic environment.

### **Conclusions**

Trinity College Cambridge are a strong and significant landowner within the Greater Cambridge area. They have a proven track record of providing key assets and developments which span the science and technology sector, including Cambridge Science Park.

The site, albeit currently within the Green Belt, does not have any major constraints which would consider it to be undevelopable. In addition, the allocation of the site within the Local Plan would remove its Green Belt designation. It is considered that the site would be highly suitable for allocation for B2/B8 uses as it is strategically located on Junction 13 of the M11, and close to the science and technical clusters that exist within Greater Cambridge. This is in line with the requirements set out in the draft NPPF consultation published in December 2025. Although the draft currently holds limited weight, it is still considered to be important as it directly reflects the Government's direction of travel on planning matters.

Furthermore, the allocation of the site would help Greater Cambridge meet their objectively assessed need, which according to their Employment and Housing Evidence Update 2025, the draft local plan is not currently meeting it.



It is therefore considered that the Land north of Madingley Road site should be allocated within the next draft version of the emerging Local Plan for B2/B8 uses.

Yours faithfully



**DP9 Ltd.**