

# **Greater Cambridge Local Plan Regulation 18: Issues and Options Consultation 2020**

Submissions on behalf of  
Clare College, Cambridge

Land South of Ickleton Road  
Great Chesterford

February 2020

**Turley**

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**Client**

Clare College

**Our reference**

CLAC3008

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 These representations have been prepared by Turley on behalf of the Clare College, Cambridge (the College) and respond to questions set out in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Regulation 18: Issues and Options Consultation 2020 (the Consultation).
- 1.2 These representations are submitted pursuant to the promotion of land south of Ickleton Road, Great Chesterford (the Site) for residential development, as identified in red on the attached Site location plan at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 The Site comprises two linked triangular parcels of land located directly south of Ickleton Road, between the east side of the M11 and the west side of the rail line at Great Chesterford, as shown on the location plan. The south eastern boundary of the Site is located approximately 350 metres from Great Chesterford Station by direct line of sight and the northern boundary of the Site is located approximately 500 metres walking distance from the rail station, via Ickleton Road.
- 1.4 Great Chesterford lies within Uttlesford District. However the promoted Site, shown at Appendix 1, lies wholly within the South Cambridgeshire District. The rail line forms part of the boundary between the two authorities in this location, which then dog legs to the south of the Site. Other land owned by the College further west of the identified Site lies within Uttlesford. The promoted Site is located beyond the Cambridge Green Belt and has no other land designations or identified site constraints.
- 1.5 The proposal Site covers an area of 4.2 hectares, and is a highly sustainable location for residential development (including market and affordable housing) of around 100 new homes together with associated open space and recreational use. The nearby mainline train station at Great Chesterford is highly accessible from this location, as are a range of other local services within Great Chesterford. The Site also offers the opportunity to unlock the potential for a larger sustainable development on third party land within Uttlesford which adjoins the Site to the southeast.
- 1.6 The following submissions provide our client's responses to the main housing themes of the Consultation with specific reference to the College land at Great Chesterford. These representations support the sustainable development of the promoted Site as part of the growth direction for Greater Cambridge and all matters in the Consultation relevant to the Site are addressed in context within the following responses.
- 1.7 The College welcomes the opportunity to discuss any of the matters presented in these representations further with Council officers where this will be of assistance.

## 2. Consultation Responses

- 2.1 The following representations provide the responses of the College to the questions in the Consultation of most relevance to the Site promotion and are primarily focused on the number of new homes required and their location.

### HOMES

**Q31. How should the Local Plan help to meet our needs for the amount and types of new homes?**

- 2.2 It is a matter of basic soundness that the new Local Plan should meet housing needs over the Plan period by providing the necessary supply of housing. In doing so, the two Councils must allocate a sufficient number and scale of sites to provide realistically deliverable developments, which can come forward as and when they are required and thereby provide a consistent supply of housing.

- 2.3 Paragraph 59 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the objective of 'significantly boosting the supply of homes' and stresses the importance of providing 'a sufficient amount and variety of land ... where it is needed'. The Councils should therefore look to identify a wide range of sites across the full spectrum of development scales to ensure consistent delivery throughout the new Plan period.

**Q32. Do you think we should plan for a higher number of homes than the minimum required by government, to provide flexibility to support the growing economy?**

- 2.4 The Issues and Options document sets out that the next Local Plan period will be from 2017-2040. The currently allocated sites and planning permissions are likely to provide 36,400 new homes and a further 9,660 new homes may be built after 2040. A number of sites are already planned which will contribute to future housing need for the next Local Plan. However, the current calculations using the Standard Method indicate a minimum need for 1,800 homes per year or 40,900 for the plan period 2017-2040.

- 2.5 In addition, economic growth has been faster than expected and is likely to continue to grow further. Over the past two decades demand for housing has been exceptionally high but housebuilding has not kept up with this demand. The Issues and Options document identifies that if full jobs growth is to be achieved then 2,900 homes a year would need to be built, equating to a requirement for 66,700 new homes during the period 2017-2040. There is therefore likely to be an additional need (beyond the local housing need derived solely from the standard method) of an additional 30,300 homes.

- 2.6 Continued economic growth within the Greater Cambridge area is a key priority for the new Plan and the implication of this growth is the demand for more housing to meet the needs of those employed in the area. In this regard the Councils acknowledge this in the Consultation by reference to the higher requirement figures. It is clear that the need for housing and the ambition for economic growth are therefore inherently linked and in order to boost the economic output of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough over the next 25 years, additional housing at the upper end of the scale will be required.

**Q33. What kind of housing do you think we should provide?**

- 2.7 It is important that a wide range of housing types are provided in the new Plan which is facilitated both by additional allocations and by an appropriate policy framework in the new Local Plan. There is a general need for both market and affordable housing, but it is also important that the new Local Plan provides for other types of housing.
- 2.8 The Consultation sets out the need for a diverse range of housing, including housing for older people. It is considered that this type of provision is key to ensuring that older people are able to downsize into appropriate accommodation in the right locations, such as in the villages, either within South Cambridgeshire or adjoining its boundaries. This would in turn release housing stock for other households in other areas.
- 2.9 With regards to the Site at Ickleton Road, Great Chesterford, the development of the site would provide an opportunity to deliver conventional family homes and more diverse housing given the availability of nearby public transport. This could be either in combination with market and affordable housing or as an allocation in its own right.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Q37. How should we encourage a shift away from car use and towards more sustainable modes of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking?**

- 2.10 This questions relates very closely to the following section; determining where to build new development. In order to encourage more sustainable future modes of transport, development must be delivered in locations that provide opportunities for alternative means of travel to the private car.
- 2.11 Development at the Site would help to facilitate a shift away from car use. The nearby station at Great Chesterford affords direct access to both London and Cambridge and is highly accessible from the site for pedestrians and cyclists. There are also regular bus services which serve the village, providing access to other nearby large towns such as Saffron Walden.
- 2.12 The Consultation places a key emphasis on the need to meet the net zero carbon target by 2050. It is therefore most logical to direct development to locations where the need to travel by car can be reduced and where there are other sustainable travel options. The Site clearly benefits from a wide range of public transport opportunities, as well as being accessible by foot and cycle from the proposed residential areas to existing facilities within the Great Chesterford.
- 2.13 Importantly, the development of the Site opens up the prospect of the enablement of further sustainable development in the direct vicinity of Great Chesterford station, as illustrated on the Plan provided at **Appendix 2**. The indicated area of third party land falls within Uttlesford District and is not owned by the College. However whilst the residential allocation of the promoted Site is sustainable in its own right, it can also provide a new access from Ickleton Road to this additional sustainable site, adjacent to the station, which is currently landlocked. This presents a wider opportunity under the Duty to Cooperate (DtC) to open up a highly sustainable land parcel for additional development, within an average 150m walking distance of the station.

## WHERE TO BUILD

**Q39. Should we look to remove land from the Green Belt if evidence shows it provides a more sustainable development option by reducing travel distances, helping us reduce our climate impacts?**

2.14 The most sustainable locations for development will logically be adjacent to existing development and in particular, adjacent to Cambridge itself. This is where the majority of services and facilities are located, together with public transport opportunities, employment and housing. In order to meet the target for net zero carbon by 2050, the most realistic option is for development to be delivered in locations that offer the most sustainable transport options. Given that the Green Belt wraps around Cambridge, in order to deliver sustainable development some Green Belt release may be necessary.

2.15 Furthermore, the Green Belt consumes the boundaries of many villages that surround Cambridge, which also restricts growth in these locations. Some of these settlements are sustainable for further growth in their own right, as well as by reason of their close proximity to Cambridge and can similarly help to reduce climate impacts.

2.16 However, as Green Belt should only be released in exceptional circumstances, as part of this assessment it is incumbent upon the Councils to consider all other reasonable alternatives to reduce the scale of Green Belt release potentially required. This needs to include an evaluation of all sustainable growth options on land beyond the Green Belt and an assessment of any non-Green Belt opportunities which may be available via co-operation with other neighbouring Planning Authorities under the DtC.

2.17 The residential development of the Site promoted by Clare College would create an immediate opportunity to develop circa 100 new market and affordable homes in a sustainable location on a non-Green Belt site. The site is available for development, is achievable and deliverable early in the plan period. However, as stated, the Site also has the gateway potential to unlock an even more significant sustainable development opportunity on other land to the south of the station which is currently landlocked.

2.18 The availability of a site which is both sustainable in its own right and which opens up the prospect of a larger, highly sustainable non-Green Belt alternative is a significant consideration to be taken into account when contemplating the overall scale of Green Belt release required across the Greater Cambridgeshire area. The promoted Site at Ickleton Road fulfils this function and is commended to the Council as an opportunity site for both early development and the wider opportunity available under the DtC.

**Q40. How flexible should the Local Plan be towards development of both jobs and homes on the edge of villages?**

2.19 As stated, many villages both within and adjoining the Greater Cambridge area are sustainable in their own right, with existing local services and public transport facilities. Therefore the new Local Plan should look to allocate appropriate levels of employment and housing to the edges of sustainable villages, to help reduce the scale of any further Green Belt release required. This includes the sustainable villages in adjoining districts, such Great Chesterford, where the land in question falls within South Cambridgeshire and high quality public transport options are available.

**Q42. Where should we site new development?**

2.20 The Consultation explores 6 different locations where growth could be focused. These include the following:

- Densification of existing urban areas
- Edge of Cambridge: outside Green Belt
- Edge of Cambridge: Green Belt
- Dispersal: New settlements
- Dispersal: Villages
- Public transport corridors

2.21 Sustainable growth should be delivered in all of these locations. Many of the locations also overlap, for example, public transport corridors will also be likely on the edge of Cambridge and through villages, as well as in the Green Belt. It is however clear that there are limited opportunities for major growth on the edge of Cambridge outside the Green Belt, with the only significant site being Cambridge Airport. This is however a very strategic scale of growth and reliant on the relocation of the airport after 2030.

2.22 Whilst densification of urban areas can provide for sustainable development, there will be a finite limit as to how much growth can be delivered in this way. In addition, property prices in the urban area of Cambridge do not provide for the full range of households and tenures that need to live in the area. As such it is important that development is delivered at the edge of the city, as well as within sustainable villages both within and adjoining the Greater Cambridge area, to ensure that a full variety of housing to meet local needs can be delivered.

**Q47. What do you think about growing our villages?**

2.23 As stated, many villages located within and adjoining the Greater Cambridge area are sustainable in their own right, with local services and good public transport facilities. As such, several villages within the Greater Cambridge area are sustainable for the development of both jobs and homes, including the adjoining large village of Great Chesterford. Therefore the new Local Plan should look to allocate appropriate levels of future housing growth to the edges of the most sustainable villages, particularly those connected by rail, as part of an overall balanced spatial strategy.

2.24 Paragraph 72 of the NPPF sets out that ‘the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.’ As such there is national policy encouragement for the growth of villages. Paragraph 78 adds that ‘planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby’.

### 3. Summary and Conclusions

- 3.1 The Site comprises two linked parcels of land located directly south of Ickleton Road, between the east side of the M11 and the west side of the rail line at Great Chesterford, as shown in red on the Site location plan at Appendix 1. The south eastern boundary of the Site is located approximately 350 metres from Great Chesterford Station by direct line of sight and the northern boundary of the Site is located approximately 500 metres walking distance from the rail station via Ickleton Road.
- 3.2 Whilst Great Chesterford lies within Uttlesford District, the promoted Site lies wholly within South Cambridgeshire. The rail line forms part of the boundary between the two authorities in this location and third party land, southeast of the identified Site (the opportunity site) lies in Uttlesford. The Site is located outside of the Cambridge Green Belt and is not known to have any constraints or have any other land designations.
- 3.3 The proposal Site covers an area of 4.2 hectares, and is a very sustainable location for residential development of up to 100 new (market and affordable) homes together with formal open space and recreational use. The nearby proximity of the mainline train station at Great Chesterford is highly accessible from this location as are a range of local employment opportunities and other services from within Great Chesterford.
- 3.4 With regard to the number of new homes required to 2040, currently allocated sites and planning permissions are likely to provide only 36,400 new homes and a further 9,660 new homes may be built after 2040. The Standard Method indicates a minimum need for 1,800 homes per year or 40,900 for the plan period 2017-2040. However economic growth has been faster than expected and is likely to continue to grow further. Accordingly, if full jobs growth is to be achieved then 2,900 homes a year will need to be built, equating to a requirement for 66,700 new homes during the period 2017-2040, or an additional 30,300 homes. We therefore commend this higher growth target to the Councils as the correct requirement for the Greater Cambridge area.
- 3.5 With regard to infrastructure, the Consultation places a key emphasis on the need to meet the net zero carbon target by 2050. It is therefore logical to direct development to locations where the need to travel by car can be reduced and where there are other sustainable travel options. In this regard, the development of the Site would help to facilitate a shift away from car use. The nearby station at Great Chesterford affords direct access to both London and Cambridge and is highly accessible from the site for pedestrians and cyclists. There are also regular bus services which serve the village, providing access to other nearby large towns such as Saffron Walden.
- 3.6 With regard to the location of new homes and the flexibility required by the new Local Plan, we consider that as a number of sustainable locations are located in the Green Belt, some release of Green Belt may be justified where this can help to reduce climate impacts. However, as Green Belt should only be released in exceptional circumstances, it is incumbent upon the Councils to consider all other reasonable alternatives to reduce the scale of Green Belt release potentially required. This should include an evaluation of all sustainable growth options on land beyond the Green Belt and an assessment of any non-Green Belt opportunities under the DtC.



- 3.7 With regard to the suitability of new development adjacent to existing villages, Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that 'planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.
- 3.8 The residential development of the Site promoted by Clare College would create an immediate opportunity to develop circa 100 new market and affordable homes in a sustainable edge of village location on a non-Green Belt site. The site is immediately available for development, is achievable and deliverable early in the plan period. Importantly, the Site also has the gateway potential to unlock a more significant sustainable development opportunity to the south of the station which is currently landlocked, as hatched in yellow on the plan at Appendix 2.
- 3.9 The availability of a site which is both sustainable in its own right and which opens up the prospect of a larger, highly sustainable non-Green Belt alternative is a significant consideration to be taken into account when contemplating the overall scale of Green Belt release required across the Greater Cambridgeshire area. The promoted Site, south of Ickleton Road fulfils this function and is therefore commended to the Council as a highly sustainable site both for early development and for the wider potential opportunity it can make available under the DtC.
- 3.10 The College therefore welcomes the opportunity to discuss any of the matters presented within these representations with Council officers where this can be of further assistance.

**Appendix 1: Land South of Ickleton Road,  
Great Chesterford:  
Site Location Plan**

**Appendix 2: Land South of Ickleton Road,  
Great Chesterford:  
Wider Opportunity Area**

Cambridge Office

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