

## Greater Cambridge Local Plan

### Regulation 18 Stage: Preferred Options 2021

Representations on behalf of Wedd Joinery

By Eclipse Planning Services

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#### **Omission from the Draft Plan: Policy S/RSC: Policy Areas in Rural Southern Cluster**

**Eclipse Planning Services objects to the omission from the draft GCLP of land currently owned and operated by Wedd Joinery at 9 Granta Terrace Stapleford CB22 5FJ as a site for residential development.**

#### **Background**

These representations follow the submissions made at the Call for Sites and Broad Locations exercise in 2019 and the Issues and Options stage in 2020. The company's circumstances have changed since then, for reasons briefly described in the following paragraphs. These representations again seek the allocation of the existing joinery works site for residential use in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The reason for this proposal is to help finance the relocation of the existing business.

Wedd Joinery is a Cambridge-based family run business established in 1925 with a reputation for leading the field in manufacturing innovation and the production of first-class joinery. The company's website provides a succinct summary: "*Wedd Joinery combines traditional wood working skills with advanced manufacturing technology to create bespoke joinery*".

The company manufactures, using modern machinery, a very high quality product which has a wide range of uses in retail, commercial and residential developments, and in particular higher education and hospitals, where the Greater Cambridge area is home to world class institutions in both sectors. There is thus a significant and well-established local client base, making the company's continued operation in the vicinity essential.

The company's headquarters are at Granta Terrace, Stapleford. In order to extend its productive capacity, it acquired in November 2018 a site at Duxford Road, Whittlesford. However, the site was not ideal for an expanded joinery business and the site has been sold, with all staff and operations relocated to Granta Terrace whilst new premises are found to accommodate the company's long-term expansion.

Great care has always been taken in the company's operations to minimise any adverse effects on the amenity of nearby residential areas. Nevertheless, the raw materials used and the processes involved inevitably give rise to some adverse effects which, along with the traffic impacts of the larger vehicles, could be avoided altogether by the company's proposed relocation from Granta Terrace. The search

for a new site (or premises) and securing a beneficial use for the existing site are being pursued simultaneously.

## **The Proposed Development**

The development proposed at Stapleford is the same as that outlined in the Call for Sites and the Issues and Options stage, namely the demolition of existing workshops and the erection of 25 dwellings. These would consist of market and affordable housing in accordance with the Council's policies prevailing at the time. An element of public open space is also proposed. 25 dwellings on this site of about 0.81 hectare is equivalent to 31 dwellings per hectare (dph). This accords with adopted Local Plan Policy H/8, which seeks an average net density of 30 dph in Rural Centres like Stapleford.

## **Benefits and Constraints**

The representations made at the Issues and Options stage addressed the benefits of allocating land at Wedd Joinery for residential development and the potential constraints. The characteristics of the site have not changed since. These representations reaffirm the benefits of the site's redevelopment and address any constraints, doing so for ease of reference in the order set out in the Council's own assessment (**Site Reference 40477**).

## **Site Summary**

The Council grades the site as red for "suitable", but green for "available" and "achievable". Suitability involves the application of thirteen criteria and an additional four under the subheading "further constraints".

## **Red Category**

We note that the site is graded red in terms of access. On the Council's site assessment form, the comments state *"The proposed site does not to have a direct link to the adopted public highway" and "No possibility of creating a safe access"*.

First, there is clearly a word or words missing in the first quotation between "not" and "to", possibly "appear". The second quotation does not follow from the first and in any event is manifestly not true, as Wedd Joinery has been operating from the site without giving rise to any issue of highway safety for over thirty years.

SLR, who prepared the Transport Assessment for the site submitted at the Issues and Options stage, have produced the attached Technical Note, dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021, which states *"It is understood that the length of Granta Terrace between the end of the adopted road and the site itself is included within the deeds of the Wedd Joinery site as benefitting from a right of way at all times, and for all purposes, over the roadway"*.

We note that the site is also graded red in terms of strategic highways impact. SLR have also investigated this matter in their Technical Note and concluded that the redevelopment of the site for

residential use would reduce rather than increase any impact on the strategic highways network. This therefore is not a constraint to the redevelopment of the site for housing.

## **Amber Category**

### *Flood Risk*

The Council sets out the proportions of the site in the three Flood Risk Zones. Detailed proposals for residential development could accommodate 25 dwellings and at the same time avoid the land in Zones 2 and 3; which could make provision for open space and/or biodiversity.

### *Biodiversity*

Some increase in biodiversity could result from the redevelopment of the site for housing. The Council acknowledges the existence of some beneficial features but these are on the boundaries; there is little permeable surface or vegetation within the site in its present use.

### *Historic Environment*

The redevelopment of the site for residential use has the potential to significantly improve the character and appearance of the area which would benefit the nearby Conservation Area. The Council itself considers that the impacts of development could be reasonably mitigated.

### *Transport and Roads*

The Council's assessment says this: "*potentially part of a cluster and, therefore, may require a cumulative assessment*" and "*any potential impact on the functioning of trunk roads and/or local roads could be reasonably mitigated*".

The Council does not appear to have identified other sites which are potentially part of a cluster and therefore require cumulative assessment.

The second quotation is entirely inconsistent with what is said under "Further Constraints" about impact on the strategic highways network.

### *Noise, Vibration, Odour and Light Pollution*

The Council's own assessment refers only to the first of these considerations. It does not take account of recent residential development nearby, for which noise pollution cannot have been considered a problem. Nor does it specify the nature of any noise pollution.

### *Ground Contamination*

Wedd Joinery anticipates the need for this to be assessed, by condition or otherwise, at the planning application stage.

## **Green Category**

Eclipse Planning Services agrees with the Council's assessment in respect of all the matters for which the site has been graded green – in respect of adopted development plan policies, landscape and townscape, open space and green infrastructure, archaeology, accessibility to services and facilities, and air quality. The comment in respect of adopted development plan policies we consider to be especially significant as in itself it has the effect of undermining possible objections to the allocation of the site for residential development.

## **Overall Assessment**

In respect of the red category, we conclude that the issues do not constitute overriding constraints, rather, they are not constraints at all.

In respect of the amber categories, Eclipse Planning Services considers that individually and collectively these do not represent significant constraints. In some cases they are in our opinion, for the reasons given above, less severe than the Council believes, and indeed in others the Council itself appears to acknowledge that they could be overcome without difficulty.

## **Conclusion**

It is concluded that the site is suitable, available and achievable and should be allocated for residential development in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, in accordance with national guidance on the use of previously developed land and in particular paragraph 142 of the NPPF.

# TECHNICAL NOTE



**Project:** Wedd Joinery, Granta Terrace, Stapleford

**Site Reference:** 40477

**Subject:** Response to HELAA Regarding Access

**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021

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The following Technical Note (TN) presents a response to the comments of the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership (GCP) as Local Planning Authority (LPA), in respect of promotion of the Wedd Joinery site at Granta Terrace, Great Shelford for residential redevelopment through the Call for Sites and Broad Locations submissions as part of the preparation of the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

The original submission has been the subject of a Transport Statement (TS) prepared by SLR Consulting Ltd (reference 406.07339.00003).

The LPA's comments and objections to the proposed allocation in respect of the access and transport impact may be summarised as follows:

Site Access:

*The proposed site does not have a direct link to the adopted public highway.*

*No possibility of creating a safe access.*

Strategic Highways Impact:

*Within Highways England Zone 8 - M11 North*

*No capacity for growth. Sites would need to ensure no net increase in vehicles trips on the Strategic Road Network.*

## 1. Access Provision

The LPA's comments state that the site does not have a direct link to the adopted public highway, nor is a safe access able to be created.

Attached to this TN is an extract of the highway maintenance sheet for Granta Terrace, showing the extent of the public highway of that road. Between the end of the adopted highway and the site is a length of carriageway that has recently been upgraded to service a residential development to the east. This new access road has been laid out to the appropriate design standards of the Local Highway Authority (LHA) to serve the associated residential development of that land, and photographs of that upgraded access road is included on Page 2 whilst the residential development from the site itself is shown in the photo on Page 3.







It is understood that the length of Granta Terrace between the end of the adopted road and the site itself is included within the deeds of the Wedd Joinery site as benefitting from a right of way at all times, and for all purposes, over the roadway.

The redevelopment of the site will therefore have a suitable and appropriate access from the end of the existing adopted highway through to, and including, the site itself for the purposes of enabling access. This therefore accords with the findings of the original Transport Statement (TS) prepared by SLR Consulting Ltd (reference 406.07339.00003).

## 2. Strategic Highways Impact

The LPA’s comments state that there is no capacity for growth and that sites would need to ensure no net increase in vehicles trips on the Strategic Road Network.

The original Transport Statement (TS) prepared by SLR Consulting Ltd (reference 406.07339.00003) contains a full and detailed assessment of the traffic generation implications of the existing and proposed uses of the site and the key findings can be summarised as follows.

To determine the existing traffic generation of the existing Wedd Joinery operation, traffic and movement surveys were undertaken in February 2020 whilst to determine a predicted traffic generation of the site when in a residential use, for comparison purposes, standard traffic generation rates as contained within the TRICS database were used.

In summary, in terms of peak hour and overall traffic movements, Table TN-1 provides the peak hour and daily traffic movement comparison for reference.

**Table TN-1:  
Traffic generation comparison exercise**

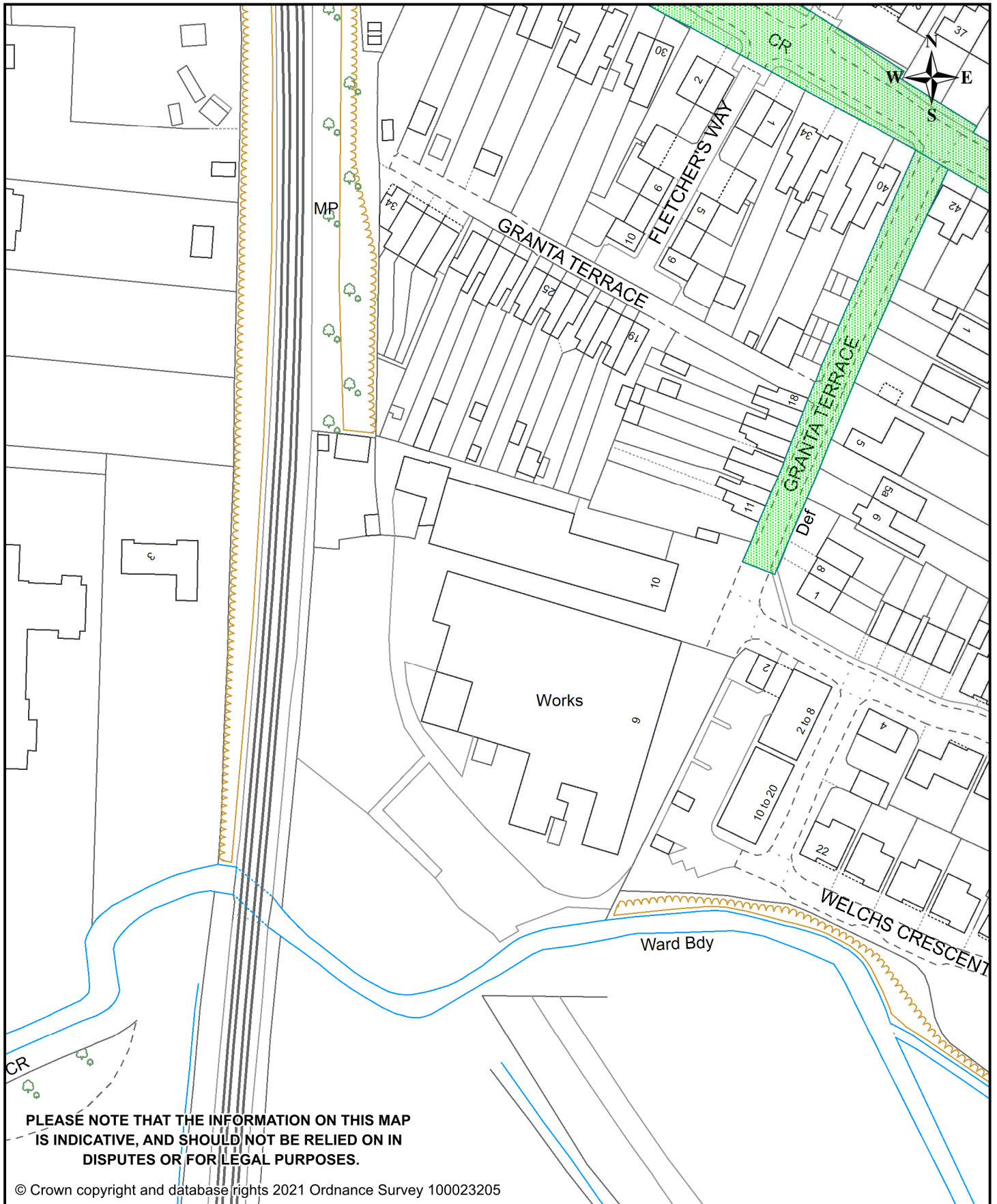
| Use             | AM Peak<br>(08:00 – 09:00) |            | PM Peak<br>(17:00 – 18:00) |            | Daily<br>(07:00 – 19:00) |            |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
|                 | Arrivals                   | Departures | Arrivals                   | Departures | Arrivals                 | Departures |
| Wedd Joinery    | 11                         | 4          | 0                          | 23         | 82                       | 80         |
| Residential     | 3                          | 9          | 8                          | 5          | 57                       | 58         |
| Nett Difference | -8                         | +5         | +8                         | -18        | -25                      | -22        |

As determined from Table TN-1, a residential redevelopment would result in fewer vehicle movements in the morning and afternoon peak hours and particularly over the course of a full day.

This assessment confirms that the redevelopment of the site for a residential use will therefore remove commercial type traffic and reduce traffic flows on Granta Terrace and on the wider highway network including the Strategic Road Network, with resulting benefits for the operation of the highway network and particularly users of Granta Terrace itself, which is found to be unsuited for modern commercial traffic types.

This therefore confirms that the redevelopment of the site would not result in a net increase in vehicles trips on the Strategic Road Network as required by the LPA’s comments.








Scale: 1:1250

Date: 29/11/2021

By: Ft305

Highway boundary plans are determined using Ordnance Survey (OS) mapping at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500. Please refer to OS's Statement of Accuracy when comparing with a site survey

## Legend

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Public highway (green) |  |
| Public highway (blue)  |  |
| Public highway (red)   |  |

The information shown in this search result is a depiction of the highway extent that has been investigated using the highway records available to the County Council. This research has been interpreted and displayed against current Ordnance Survey (OS) map data as accurately as possible. It is possible that the OS mapping for the area searched does not show features that typically form part of the highway boundary, such as (but not limited to) ditches, hedges, fences or embankments. Therefore, please note that owing to the tolerance of accuracy that must be applied to OS maps, the highway boundary 'on the ground' may not be in exactly the same position as the boundary features displayed by OS. If you require a site visit to determine the physical highway extent please contact [searches@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:searches@cambridgeshire.gov.uk). This service is provided on a cost-recoverable basis in accordance with our Schedule of Charges.