

7th March 2024

Dear Sir / Madam

Call for Sites Submission Update – Land to east of Horningsea Road & west of Ditton Lane, Fen Ditton

Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd, now part of the Vistry Group, hold a legal interest by way of an Option Agreement over the land at Fen Ditton as shown in red on the attached plan (Appendix 1). The site is situated south of the A14, straddling both east and west sides of Horningsea Road to the north of the Fen Ditton village.

Countryside, together with the existing landowner, have promoted the site for development to the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, through the previous Call for Sites process and Regulation 18 First Proposals consultation, held in December 2021. The site was considered under site references 47647 and 40516 and includes proposals for at least 1500 homes, accessible open green space and educational, leisure and community facilities. Since the previous submission, an updated Vision Document has been prepared, which is appended to this letter.

Also, since that time, Countryside has been acquired by Vistry Group, which combines the skills, commitment and values of Bovis, Linden, and Countryside Homes under one umbrella. Vistry is the UK's leading mixed-tenure developer, capable of delivering sustainable homes and communities, across the UK, at pace.

The Strategic Land team of Vistry (previously Countryside) has earned a high reputation for high-quality, innovative landscape-led design, where considerate masterplanning has created award-winning developments. We do this through our unique approach to building homes, by working with a range of partners, both public and private, who know what homes are needed most and where.

We also use Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) to build our properties, which will assist in increasing the rate of delivery for this site, versus that normally associated with traditional methods of construction. The MMC model is a great example of how timber frame construction can be key to delivering housing targets in a sustainable manner. This strategy maximises the number of homes, including quality affordable homes, that we can build every year.

Cambridge has long been identified as a key location for growth. In the 2024, the Labour party allocated £10million of funding to enable the Cambridge Growth Company to develop an ambitious plan for the housing, transport, water and wider infrastructure Cambridge needs to realise its full potential. It also announced further growth ambitions for housing across the UK, as well as significant planning reforms, relating to housing targets and Green Belt policy. As a result of these changes, the local housing need figure for South Cambridgeshire District Council has increased, compared to the previous standard method, meaning more dwellings will be required for Greater Cambridge than the current Local Plan requirement.

As such, it is our assertion that to meet the Government's growth aspirations in a sustainable way, further allocations will be required near the existing city. Fen Ditton is located within walking and cycling distance of the city centre, and railway station, and is therefore located in a prime location to meet these goals.

The key emerging strategic locations for growth, set out in Greater Cambridge Local Plan, which were endorsed by both Councils through the Development Strategy Update papers in January/February 2023 are in north-east Cambridge – on the site of the existing wastewater treatment plant, and at Cambridge Airport. Fen Ditton is strategically located between these two locations and represents the final piece of the puzzle for growth within this area. The Marleigh Park development is also underway, immediately to the south of the site. And to the north, a DCO application for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Works is also being considered.

The land at Fen Ditton offers an unparalleled opportunity to deliver sustainable development which can build on the proposed opportunities in this area, and in the emerging Local Plan.

Vistry Group therefore invite Greater Cambridge Planning Service to identify this site as a suitable location for growth and propose it as an allocation through the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Project Director.

Project Director (Planning) – Strategic Land
Vistry Group