

Your ref:
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e: Marcia.whitehead@bidwells.co.uk
Date: 24 May 2012



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Dear Sharon

Mixed Use Development comprising up to 1593 dwellings, primary school, community facilities, retail units (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 & A5) and associated infrastructure including vehicular, pedestrian and cycleway accesses, open space and drainage works. NIAB 1, Land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road, Cambridge.

Following our recent discussions I write to confirm, on behalf of my clients, Barratt Eastern Counties and the North West Cambridge Consortium of landowners, our position regarding the content of the planning application reference number C/07/0003/OUT which has been considered by your Council and awaiting completion of the required Section 106 planning obligation in the context of the publication on 27 March 2012 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

In essence and in summary, having reviewed in full the content of the planning application and the advice contained within the NPPF, no issues arise which need your Council to reconsider in any way its Decision in relation to the application.

NPPF does not change the basic planning law premise that any application for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this respect, the Cambridge City Local Plan was formally adopted in July 2006 and contains a variety of policies which the application is in full compliance with. In particular, Policy 9/8, Land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road, details how the site, now known as NIAB 1, should be brought forward and the application as considered by your Authority complies with that policy in full.

Sustainable development lies at the heart of the adopted Cambridge Local Plan and identifies the policies and proposals for development through to 2016. The Local Plan therefore remains relevant and is not outdated in respect of either the specifics of the application site being developed or the wider housing and economic growth strategy which has been advocated and adopted for many years across the Cambridge and wider Cambridgeshire growth area. The Council have now embarked upon a review of the Local Plan which at this stage, continues to identify the NIAB 1 site as an area for development and proceeds to identify a range of growth options to enable the City to continue to grow and meet local, national and indeed world wide economic aims.

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF identifies the presumption in favour of sustainable development which lies at the heart of the NPPF which, in relation to decision taking is identified as being two-fold.

1. Approving development proposals that accord with the Development Plan without delay; and

2. Where the Development Plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date granting planning permission unless adverse impacts outweigh identified benefits or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

In relation to the 3 dimensions to sustainable development identified at paragraph 7 of the NPPF namely the economic, social and environmental roles, these are fully dealt with through the NIAB 1 application submission and are addressed below in the remainder of this letter.

The NPPF identifies some 13 areas in relation to ensuring the delivery of sustainable development and each is briefly assessed below.

- 1. Building a strong, competitive economy**

Securing continued economic growth within the immediate Cambridge area and the wider Cambridgeshire region has been the focus of planning policy for many years and the adopted Cambridge City Local Plan provides for both the delivery of housing and jobs to facilitate such economic growth. The NIAB 1 mixed use urban extension site therefore complies in full with this objective.

- 2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres**

A number of urban extension sites now benefit from planning permission both within Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils. These urban extension sites provide for a range of facilities to meet the needs of the new populations and do not compete with or harm the uses and activities within Cambridge City itself or surrounding towns and villages.

- 3. Supporting a prosperous rural economy**

Cambridge City is essentially focused on the built elements of the City and therefore does not include any significant rural areas. However, in determining the growth levels and direction for the City, sites such as NIAB 1 have been designed to ensure that harm does not result to surrounding rural areas, and instead provide scope to support the rural economy.

- 4. Promoting sustainable transport**

At the heart of NIAB 1 negotiations was the overall transport strategy which relates to and sits with the wider transport strategies across the City and wider Cambridgeshire area. As a consequence the application includes a variety of sustainable transport measures including an extensive and innovative travel plan, car sharing/car club facilities and the promotion of walking and cycling as being at the heart of the development.

- 5. Supporting high quality communications infrastructure**

No conflict arises with paragraphs 42 to 46 inclusive of the NPPF.

- 6. Delivering a wide choice of quality homes}**

- 7. Requiring good design}**

Through the work being undertaken in relation to the Design Code which is required to underpin the future development of the NIAB 1 site and the subsequent reserve matters applications, a quality development in terms of design and choice is being driven forward. Accordingly this entire approach is consistent with paragraphs 47 to 55 inclusive of the NPPF.

8. Promoting healthy communities

The NIAB 1 development is fundamentally mixed use, providing a strong local centre, active street frontages and safe and accessible environments. This approach will foster community cohesion, delivering the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services which the new community and existing adjoining communities need.

9. Protecting Green Belt land

The NIAB 1 site has been formally removed from the Green Belt and no harm is therefore caused in this respect.

10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and costal change

The policies advocated by Cambridge City Council fully accord with those being advocated in relation to climate change and flooding with extensive work having been undertaken with the Environment Agency and Local Authority sustainability officers.

11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

The NPPF identifies when determining planning applications that Local Planning Authorities should aim to conserve and enhance bio diversity by applying some six principles. The scheme incorporates a range of opportunities to increase bio diversity both within the site and on adjoining land. Extensive work has been undertaken in relation to ecology and habitat assessment and protection and compliance with the NPPF is therefore achieved.

12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The NIAB 1 site does not contain or adjoin any statutory listed buildings or conservation areas. However, the site does adjoin an established part of Cambridge City and the character of the NIAB headquarters and Howes Place cul-de-sac, both on Huntingdon Road, have been respected through the development of the site wide masterplan. The site does include the former playing fields of Christ's College and Sydney Sussex College and the traditional, characteristic pavilion which the colleges' shared is to be retained as part of the masterplan development.

13. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

In ensuring that the proposed development is deliverable, considerable analysis has been undertaken by the applicants to ensure that the materials required for the development are available and able to be transported to and from the site.

Should you or your members have any queries regarding the content of this letter then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



**Marcia Whitehead BA (Hons) DMS MRTPI
Partner**