

Introduction

We welcome you to this exhibition which illustrates proposals for the submission of a planning application for a mixed use development, comprising:

'Residential development for up to 70 new homes; and new business units (Class B1); provision for public open space; alterations to existing vehicular access off Reach Road; new cycle / footpath links to Reach Road and Swaffham Road, Burwell.'

on land formerly occupied by D S Smith Limited.

As you may be aware the existing industrial / distribution premises have been vacant for some 15 years following the relocation of D S Smith from Burwell to Fordham. Part of the extensive premises was then developed for new housing, including the modern homes on Railway Close and Station Gate.

The remaining premises have been available for industrial and warehousing use since 1997. In 2010 Januarys Commercial Surveyors commenced formal marketing of the premises following discussions with East Cambridgeshire District Council. No serious interest has been identified by commercial developers or potential occupiers in redeveloping the site. The existing buildings are now too dilapidated and out dated for re-use, as such any new industrial or warehousing use would be a redevelopment of the site. Below are some photographs of the premises in their current state of dereliction.



Planning Considerations

National planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework at paragraph 22 states:

'Planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations should be regularly reviewed. Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.'

It is the conclusion of Januarys that there is no reasonable prospect of the entire 7.5 acre (3 hectare) site being redeveloped for industrial or warehousing purposes.

The adopted East Cambridgeshire District Council Core Strategy 2009 allocated the site for mixed use redevelopment principally for industrial and business purposes compatible with the surrounding areas. The Burwell Master Plan identifies the following issues:

- Small employment sites need in the village
- Former D S Smith site in Reach Road needs redeveloping
- Needed for start up and small scale units in the village



The Master Plan proposes to:

- Identify a jobs target of 630 additional jobs by 2031 to increase containment levels
- Allocate the former D S Smith site for light industrial development (Class B1) and general industrial development (Class B2) use

The emerging East Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan allocates the former D S Smith site for light industrial (Class B1), general industrial (Class B2), warehousing and distribution (Class B8). Objections have been made to this allocation by the landowner. It is envisaged that the Local Plan will be subject to independent examination in Spring 2014.

In March 2013 East Cambridgeshire District Council commissioned Carter Jonas, Commercial Surveyors, to consider a valuation and feasibility of the allocation. Carter Jonas considered:

- No immediately identifiable demand for such allocation in Burwell
- The demand is for smaller units

Carter Jonas did not undertake any form of viability assessment for the redevelopment of the D S Smith site which is an important planning consideration (The Framework para 173). Januarys consider that redevelopment of the entire site for industrial and warehouse site would not be a viable development proposition.

Planning Considerations continued....

In the context of the scheme illustrated on Board 5 it is proposed that the area of the site shown for new business units could be made available to the District Council to undertake the provision of small units.

The emerging Local Plan refers to the need for 'safe and secure vehicular access to the site from Reach Road'. Our transport consultants have considered the scale of HGV traffic that might be anticipated on Reach Road during a 12 hour day in the circumstances envisaged by the emerging local plan as compared to this proposal:

- Emerging Local Plan allocation (Class B2 General Industrial and B8 Warehousing and Distribution) – 91 HGV two-way trips during a 12 hour day
- Proposed mixed use (Class B1 light industrial) – 16 HGV two-way trips during a 12 hour day

It is considered that if modern Class B2 / B8 development is sought in the village, that a location adjacent to the proposed housing location (BUR1) on Newmarket Road would have less impact in traffic terms on residential amenity due to the location relative to access onto the A14 to the east. Such a location could provide for larger units and have a better relationship with housing.



Following the publication of the East Cambridgeshire District Council draft Local Plan (February 2013), two key new documents have been published:

- Technical Report on Population, Housing and Employment Forecasts; and
- 'All Homes' chapter in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

These documents identified a total housing need of 93,000 dwellings in the Cambridge Housing Market Area between 2011 and 2031. This resulted in a higher housing need in East Cambridgeshire of 13,000 dwellings rather than 10,000 dwellings, as set out in the draft Local Plan. East Cambridgeshire District Council liaised with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Authorities and it has been agreed between them that East Cambridgeshire District Council will need to provide 11,500 dwellings between 2011 and 2031 – an additional 1,500 dwellings to the 10,000 dwellings as set out in the draft Local Plan.

The former D S Smith site is considered to provide a suitable site for redevelopment for mixed use for the following reasons:

- Develops the previously developed land for housing with the employment proposal on partly brownfield and partly greenfield land
- Well located in Burwell as the 4th largest settlement in the District
- Will provide a range of dwelling types including 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed homes
- Provide affordable housing to meet identified local housing needs
- The proposed scheme makes provision for a range of small units as identified in the Burwell Master Plan

Environment and Infrastructure

Ecology

In order to accurately assess the potential ecological impact of the proposed development an initial site scoping visit was undertaken in May 2013 followed by an Ecological Appraisal of the site on 27th June 2013. The purpose of these visits was to ascertain any features of ecological interest and to identify the need for any further detailed species surveys.

The buildings on site were noted as having a low potential to support bats and no further survey in respect of bats was considered necessary. Medium potential for both great crested newts and reptiles was identified and detailed surveys for these species have been carried out. 4 visits were made during June 2013 to the pond within the development site as well as ponds within the neighbouring Pauline's swamp, but no great crested newts were recorded although a small number of smooth newts were recorded in ponds within Pauline's Swamp. Smooth newts are only afforded protection from sale under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, no legal protection is afforded to the individuals or their place of shelter. Reptile surveys have been on-going at the site from June 2013 and are continuing into October. To date, no reptiles have been recorded within the site and the remainder of the visits are expected to be complete before the end of October.



Smooth Newt

The remaining features of ecological interest at the site relate to the existing hedgerows and the rough grassland field (which adjoins the boundary with Pauline's Swamp) for their potential to act as foraging, commuting and shelter for notable species that may be present in the area such as polecat, hedgehog, nesting birds, smooth newt, terrestrial invertebrates and potential reptiles. One final point to note is that the barn owl box within a barn in Pauline's Swamp was checked in June 2013 and no evidence of use by barn owl was noted.

Flood Risk

The vast majority of the site is located as lying within Flood Zone 1 and therefore at the lowest probability of fluvial (river) flooding. The north western extremity of the site is indicated as lying within Flood Zone 3 (the floodplain) and therefore potentially at risk of fluvial flooding in a 1 in 100 year, or worse, rainfall event.

The closest source of flooding is represented by the Weirs Channel, lying approx. 1 km to the north west of the site. The Weirs Channel is a tributary of the Burwell Lode. Flood defences in this area are provided by virtue of raised banks/embankments allied with the management of water levels within the Lodes via a combination of sluice gates and pumping stations to regulate discharges to the River Cam. All defences are closely monitored by the Environment Agency and the various Internal Drainage Boards and therefore provide a good standard of protection.

We are not aware of any records to suggest that the site has been subject to fluvial flooding in the past. The site is therefore considered to be at a low risk of flooding from all sources.

It is proposed to locate the proposed residential (highest risk elements) within the area of the site at the lowest risk of flooding. Consequently, the proposed light industrial units will be located within the small area of defended Flood Zone 3.

Drainage

Foul water flows generated by the new development will discharge to the existing public foul sewer network that runs through the site and ultimately discharges at the pumping station to the north of the site. This principle has been accepted by Anglian Water Services as the existing system has capacity to accept this development.

A restricted surface water flow generated by the development will discharge to the existing 600mm drain located to the north of the site.

A Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems will also be considered within the final drainage proposals, however we are aware that the existing formation may not be suitable for the use of traditional infiltration methods such as soakaways.

Layout Plan



Proposed Accommodation:

70 no mixed 1,2,3 and 4 bedroomed units
With associated garages and parking—2.000 Ha

Green and open space—0.25 Ha

Light Industrial - mixed small and larger units—0.625 Ha

Architects Perspective Illustrations



Indicative view at the entrance to the site



Indicative view from 'The Green' and play area

What Happens Next?

The intention is to seek outline planning permission for a mixed use. The outline application will be with some matters reserved. Approval will be sought for access. The layout and design are therefore only indicative and would be subject to a further detailed application.

Once submitted, East Cambridgeshire District Council will announce receipt of the application. Details will be publically available on the Council's website www.eastcambs.gov.uk The Council will undertake a formal consultation on the submitted application and will invite written representations.

The planning process is expected to last 13 weeks from the point of submission and validation.

The planning application will be accompanied by the following documents and technical reports:

- ◇ Design and Access Statement
- ◇ Planning Statement
- ◇ Transport Assessment
- ◇ Travel Plan
- ◇ Statement of Community Involvement
- ◇ Flood Risk Assessment
- ◇ Ecology Assessment
- ◇ Commercial Viability Assessment
- ◇ Affordable Housing Assessment

There will be a legal agreement entered into with East Cambridgeshire District Council (called a Section 106 Agreement) which may secure the delivery of, amongst other things, affordable housing, public open space/play facilities, a contribution towards education and health facilities, as may be necessary and justified by the Local Planning Authority.

We welcome your views on the proposal and would ask you to complete and return a comments form if you wish to express an opinion on the proposals at this stage. All comments received will be compiled and submitted to East Cambridgeshire District Council in a Statement of Community Involvement. The purpose of the Statement of Community Involvement is to outline how the Applicant has undertaken consultation with the local community and to comment upon the views that have been expressed for and against the scheme.

A copy of these exhibition boards will also be available on the Framptons website – www.framptons-planning.com

Thank you for taking the time to attend this public exhibition and should you have any questions please do not hesitate to speak with a representative on hand to answer your questions.

If you require further details please contact Framptons on 01295 672310 or email enquiries@framptons-planning.com