

Waterbeach Hearing Matter SC6A Policy SS/5 Waterbeach New Town

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Issues:

1. General Policy

i. Public Consultation was for 8,500 – 9,000 dwellings Policy SS/5. At the time of consultation only one developer RLW Estates/MOD. Issue more complex now Urban & Civic have been engaged by the MOD to develop barracks land and airfield. RLW Estates green field land. Both developers have submitted information to SCDC that up to 12,000+ dwellings could be built on the proposed area of Policy SS/5. This raises many questions as to how a New Town would be delivered. Who would control the Masterplan? Developer contributions and responsibility for the infrastructure will be key to ensure the New Town comes forward in a timely and ordered fashion. It is also key that the developers cooperate with each other to ensure that the vision of Waterbeach New Town is delivered as a whole not two separate or piecemeal developments. Responsibility of SCDC to oversee two developers and control development in a timely and ordered fashion will need a strong lead and development control.

ii. Cambridge Research Park was initially envisaged to provide 2,000 jobs for the New Town. The Research Park is already filling up with workers commuting along the A10 North and South to the site.

iii. Local people are already being priced out of the housing market. Affordable housing and the lack of supply being a major factor. Affordable housing is currently and often out of the reach of local people and workers moving into the area as the local economy grows. This forces people further away from their place of work who then have the necessity to commute to Cambridge or London by road or rail. Bus services are infrequent. Please See further comments at para v.

iv. Inevitably it will result in the loss of prime agricultural land.

v. Phasing in the original proposals for 1400 dwellings by 2031 is the most sensible option. The A10 corridor study will not be completed until July 2017 and then released for public comment which will delay it even further.

Huntingdonshire, Fenland, East Cambridgeshire, and Ely all have proposals within their Local Plans for thousands of new dwellings to be delivered in the same timeframe as Waterbeach New Town that are sited along the A10 corridor or close to proposed new/improved rail infrastructure. The A10 is not included in the first tranche of the City deal. Cambridgeshire County Council's budgets are being cut. Funding for the railway is being cut. How can funding be through grants or bidding process be guaranteed? Proposals for new rail and road infrastructure if delivered may not come forward until 2030. Any build will need to have a transitional phase to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and essential services are maintained.

Waterbeach village infrastructure is currently creaking at the seams. The surgery is under stress, increased patients, funding being cut. The primary school has four places available based on recent evidence. School funding being cut. Passenger numbers at Waterbeach station have vastly increased resulting in overcrowding at peak times. Out of school club has waiting lists for child care. Sewage works apparently have capacity for 570 new dwellings. Bannold developments approved for approximately 300 new households. Planning application for 235 single occupancy bedrooms plus living accommodation in 27 blocks for NHS workers in conversion of ex barracks. Planning applications approval/pending for another 60 dwellings in the village = 595 possible new households. Infrequent bus services not easily accessible to some members of our community such as the less mobile or older people. Bus fares are expensive.

vi. Not only the site of the River Cam which is a designated County wildlife site on the banks North of Bottisham Lock but how a New Town sits on the edge of the Fens and proximity to the Cam Washes an area of SSSI to the North and Wicken Fen.

ix. As mentioned in para v it is essential that existing shops and businesses including the Industrial Estate are protected and encouraged to thrive in Waterbeach village. It is also important that any New Town has a balance of shops and businesses that do not compete with Cambridge and Ely.

x. xi. Due to the nature of the natural water content of the proposed site and surrounding land and the nature of the Fens it is imperative that there is a policy specifically for flooding, surface water and foul water drainage. This will protect community and the environment.

## 2. Future Area Action Plan Development Plan Document

i. An AAP will be a more time consuming document to prepare but I believe more thorough and fairer than SPD. I also believe that due to the size of the proposed development it is worth taking the time to ensure that whatever is decided will be positive both economically and environmentally for future generations.

iv. Cambridgeshire/Peterborough Environmental Records Centre have very detailed information of the ecology and biodiversity of the barracks land and airfield that identify some rare flora and fauna. The records can be requested to include the Cam Washes and Wicken Fen which fall within five kilometres of the outer edge of Policy SS/5. This will be even closer if infrastructure is required outside the New Town

boundary in an AAP. The barracks land and airfield have mainly been untouched by human contact since the barracks closed in 2013 which may have enabled nature to prosper during that time. Walk over studies rather than desktop studies should be conducted by an independent body to ensure that the ecology and biodiversity are correctly assessed and addressed.

v. There is a denser population living close to the existing station than that being proposed for the New Town. It will naturally increase travel distances from Waterbeach village by a sustainable mode of transport especially for the less mobile and older members of our community, mums with children who made not be able to cycle or walk to a new station.

vi. Yes. It is not sustainable or economically sound to let uncontrolled development occur without the necessary infrastructure in place. The New Town is being proposed in an area where there is currently no capacity in the existing infrastructure.

x. What implications could this have on the existing parish and community? Currently there is an emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The designated area is the whole of Waterbeach parish land and boundary which includes Policy SS/5 and the village of Chittering to the North. Are there legal implications associated with this? Will it be a separate governance from Waterbeach Parish Council? How would Waterbeach and Chittering be protected and included to keep their identities and unique qualities? Would Waterbeach and Chittering receive S106/CIL monies required to support as existing villages?

xi. Here is some anecdotal evidence I have gained from speaking to people who have personal knowledge of the site. I have also been informed that to local knowledge there has never been a contamination study/report on the barracks land and airfield as at 2012/2013. The MOD may know different - or not. The Airfield was used continuously for flying for over twenty years. It is believed that the extent of contamination and where it might be on the site is generally unknown.

Aircraft flew from 1941 until the early 60s. It would be the truth to say that some of the lakes on the golf course showed signs of oil leaking from somewhere. Information received first hand from wartime veterans that fuel was dumped from planes on many occasions. Also there were wartime aircraft accidents and also later crashes where fuel would definitely have spilled. A full survey has been carried out for any unexploded devices (late 2012 early 2013).

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xii. Due to the rich history of the area especially the presence of the Romans, Denny Abbey, Carr Dyke and the medieval settlement of Landbeach there should be a policy for a pre-development archaeological evaluation.

Not to introduce new evidence but since the proposal of policy SS/5 an established recycling centre has been greatly expanded to the North of the proposed site. The site is run by a company called Ameycespa and has the potential to expand in the future. The site currently takes material from many places in the country. There have been issues with odour and other

matters. Legal proceedings against the company have been taken by the Environment Agency.

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