

Bedford Borough Council
Planning Policy Team
Borough Hall,
Cauldwell Street,
Bedford,
MK42 9AP

Dear Sirs or Madam,

Call of Sites submission – Land to the South West of The Interchange Retail Park and North of the A421, Kempston MF, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK42 7AZ

We are the authorised agents acting on behalf of Arqiva and Bedford Borough Council in this joint submission for the above site in Kempston, who together are the freehold owners of sites. I have attached a plan showing the extent of the ownerships.

The combined site area approximately 33,050sqm which is made up of the larger north-east portion (22,400sqm) owned by Arqiva, and the smaller portion (10,650sqm) to the south-west, which is owned by the Council. It is located to the south-west of The Interchange Retail Park, and is bounded by the River Great Ouse and railway to the north-west and the A421 dual carriageway to the south.

The site is currently open land but includes a broadcasting agreement for a broadcasting tower which is expiring soon, and the site has retained access obtained from the service road to the rear of The Interchange Retail Park, however the access for this site would be achieved by utilising the existing abandoned road which runs from the B530 roundabout, meaning it could easily be reinstated and extended to serve the site. This road is owned by Bedford Borough Council.

According to the existing Environment Agency mapping, it shows that the site is partially at risk of flooding in the 1% and 0.1% AEP (Annual Event Probability) events, which places the site in Flood Zones 2 and 3.

A preliminary Flood Risk Assessment of flooding, which included obtaining and reviewing the hydraulic model used to prepare the flood risk mapping for the Elstow Brook, was commissioned in January 2020 and concluded that there was a high probability that the hydraulic model would not correctly represent flood Zones 1 and 2 and that improvements could be made to the model to give a more accurate assessment of flood risk to the site.

A number of changes were recommended to the hydraulic model to ensure that model instabilities were eliminated, and the model was appropriately schematised to ensure that there was accurate representation of the terrain and lakes, culverts and embankments. In addition, the inflows to the model were updated to reflect the latest Environment Agency guidance in estimating extreme flows.

The existing flood risk mapping places the development within Flood Zone 3 which as noted above places significant restrictions on the type and nature of development on the site. The updated hydraulic modelling indicates that the site lies outside of Flood Zone 3 but partially inside Flood Zone 2.

This is a significant result as it significantly reduces constraints imposed by flooding on the development of the site.

The assessment therefore concluded:

- The site would not be inundated in a 1 in 20-year event and the development site is not part of the functional floodplain and therefore not within Flood Zone 3b.
- The site would be flood free in a 1 in 100-year event and therefore not within Flood Zone 3a.
- The site lies partially Flood Zone 2 (Flood risk between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 years). These areas are at a low risk of fluvial flooding and would be within Flood Zone 2.

- The site is partially flooded in a 1 in 100-year event with an uplift of 25% and 35% on fluvial flows to take account of climate change to 2080. Accordingly, development on the site would have to be configured that finished floor levels were appropriately set to ensure that buildings remain flood free at the end of the development's lifetime.
- Flood hazard to the site is unlikely to present a significant problem in relation to safe access or egress from the site during flooding.

The site would be suitable for a range of employment uses including those from Part A and Part B classes, such as an extension to the existing retail park, restaurants and drinking establishments etc to complement the existing takeaway restaurants located within The Interchange Retail Park, or for a range of Part B employment uses. The site could also be used for Part D uses, or a combination of the above dependant on the requirements of an end user.

I trust that this is acceptable and all in order, however please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely