

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

Dear Sir or Madam

**Re: Review of the Bedford Local Plan 2030 – Call for Sites Submission for Town Farm, Stocking Lane, Souldrop**

On behalf of our client, Bedfordia Developments Ltd, we are pleased to submit details of the above site for consideration as part of the Review of the Bedford Local Plan 2030 – Call for Sites submissions

In commencing an immediate Review in accordance with Policy 1 of the adopted Plan the Council is, as required, seeking to ensure that future needs for growth are provided for in-line with government policy i.e. local housing need calculated using the standard method. This will entail meeting a significant (up to c.35%) increase in the minimum annual requirement for development for at least the period 2020-2040 upon adoption of the Review, expected in 2023.

The Review of the Local Plan is an important opportunity to address issues regarding flexibility and choice in a variety of locations for growth, as well as ensuring a balanced allocation of land for development sufficient to meet future needs.

The scope for the Review has been enhanced as a consequence of the foreshortened plan period of the current Plan, and its strategy of apportioning specific (albeit minimum) values for the distribution of housing across the settlement hierarchy and the deferral of site allocations to Neighbourhood Plans. Equally, the challenges of housing delivery must also reflect realistic timescales to 'unlock' developable sites in the Urban Area, as well as ensuring necessary supporting infrastructure in other locations.

The Borough Council has acknowledged this through consideration of a diverse range of spatial options to inform the Local Plan Review. As stipulated by national policy this is an opportunity to ensure that Plans are positively prepared in terms of seeking opportunities for sustainable development.

Our client's site at Town Farm, Souldrop should be considered in this context. The details submitted illustrate the opportunity for a sustainable contribution towards an appropriate spatial strategy that would satisfy key elements of the proposed Sustainability objectives and requirements for development.

As part of the details submitted for our client's site at Town Farm, Souldrop we confirm that this location is free from overriding constraints to availability or suitability and that access can be provided.

The land provides an opportunity to provide for a carefully considered residential development of up



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to 10 dwellings, which is well located relative to the core of the village, village green and existing services. The site could provide for a mix of dwelling types that would respect and strengthen the structure, form, and character of the village. The site also has the potential to accommodate small office or storage and distribution development with associated landscaping and parking. This would support the local economy and business growth in the area.

The site is within a short walk of the centre of the village of Souldrop and within reach of local amenities, facilities and services such as the village green and the Bedford Arms, public house. A bus route connects Souldrop to Bedford, Rushden and surrounding villages such as Riseley and Sharnbrook. Residents of the village are able to utilise the services available in Sharnbrook, including John Gibbard Lower School and Sharnbrook Upper School.

This site provides a sustainable location and natural extension to the village of Souldrop, which is well related to the existing pattern of development along Sharnbrook Road. Similar development has been seen elsewhere in the village, such as at the High Street – Green intersection.

In light of the extensive scope for the Review of the Local Plan 2030 we consider that an appropriate strategy will require a combination of multiple spatial options over the plan period. In the case of our client's land at Town Farm, Souldrop, this would achieve appropriate levels of growth in accordance with the size of the village.

We look forward to future updates regarding preparation of the evidence base for the Local Plan Review. We would be happy to answer any questions or requirements for clarification as part of the Council's assessment of the site within the next version of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment and ahead of future stages of consultation regarding the Local Plan Review.

Yours Sincerely

Managing Director