

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 Cross Weir Farm, Chapel Lane, Souldrop, MK44 1HB

On behalf of client, [REDACTED], 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.

Furthermore, as part of the Plan's overall strategy and requirement to provide for sustainable development, there is an inherent need for economic development and providing support to a prosperous rural economy and a post-Covid recovery, which this site could aid in delivering.

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 Cross Weir Farm, Chapel Lane, 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 Cross Weir Farm, Chapel Lane, Souldrop, we confirm that this location is free from overriding constraints to availability or suitability and that access



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can be provided.

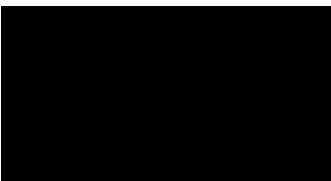
The site is considered suitable for residential development and would be able to accommodate approximately 20 dwellings, both market and affordable, with appropriate landscaping and access. The site lies within an established area of development, which comprises existing areas of housing on its eastern boundary. Residential development would appear the most logical form of development for the site as part of the Local Plan Review.

Furthermore, a key part of the development proposal on this site is the provision of sustainable residential development, which utilises an previously developed land that is not otherwise safeguarded and is available and deliverable and would materially contribute to boosting local housing supply.

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 Cross Weir Farm, Chapel Lane, Souldrop, this could achieve residential development on brownfield land and would provide an appropriate level of growth within a key rural settlement of Souldrop.

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