

Appendix 7 – Statement by Rob Hopwood to Portfolio Holder Meeting

11 February 2014

Presentation made 16.34pm in respect of policy SS/4

My name is Rob Hopwood, I'm a planning partner at the Cambridge office of Bidwells and I'm here presenting on behalf of Brookgate (the Development Partner) of Network Rail, Lafarge Tarmac, DB Schenker and Freightliner (land owners and operators at Chesterton sidings.)

I'd like to thank the portfolio holder for allowing me to speak.

The Cambridge Northern Fringe East policy (page 57 and Orange area on page 62 of the plan) relates to land surrounding the proposed Cambridge Science Park Station. We have 2 important issues relating to the draft policy:-

Maintain residential use in policy

Firstly, upon reading the agenda for this meeting, it would appear that officers seem concerned about the inclusion of the residential element within point 2 of the policy. We find this surprising. This site represents the most sustainable urban location within South Cambridgeshire district. It is entirely made up of railway sidings within the urban form of the city. You do have a town in SCDC, Cambridge. Edge of Cambridge is the most sustainable location. That has been said three times at this meeting today by your officers.

The new station will be the centre piece of the regeneration of the area and in our view it would be poor planning to isolate a station and deprive it of all of the benefits a residential neighbour would bring. We have all seen examples of isolated stations and the unwelcoming and indeed hostile environments they present to late night users. A lively residential population would completely change the feel of the area making it far safer in the evenings. We want a sustainable community with housing, jobs, and transport together.

The policy as drafted accepts housing subject to environmental constraints. No environmental evidence has been produced since the last drafting to show that housing is unacceptable. We can't understand why SCDC would not wish to deliver housing here when developers are pushing for allocations and potential applications, in the rural area and in the green belt.

No need for an AAP

Secondly, we are concerned of the need to prepare an Area Action Plan on the basis that a master plan and development brief (much is as what being undertaken at CB1 through a working group approach with stakeholders), would cut through the unnecessary delay which an AAP would bring and which will not be adopted earlier than Winter 2016. Why should sustainable development on previously developed land be delayed?

We hope that common sense will prevail by members maintaining the words 'residential use' for this site under point 2 in the policy.

Finally, we are committed to working with stakeholders, SCDC and local members, but should not lose sight of delivering something beneficial early on in the process. The AAP could be seen to be a hindrance if not managed correctly by allowing green belt or Greenfield development before this urban brownfield site.

Thank you

Figure 8: Illustration of Major Development Areas at Cambridge Northern Fringe East and land surrounding the proposed Cambridge Science Park Station

