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Planning and Development
Canterbury City Council
Military Road
Canterbury
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27th May 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

REPRESENTATIONS TO THE REVISED CANTERBURY DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN 2040 (REG 18 CONSULTATION) – LAND AT ASHFORD ROAD (EAST)

Iceni Projects Limited ('Iceni') is writing on behalf of our client, Quinn Estates (QE), to submit representations to the revised draft Canterbury District Local Plan 2040 (Regulation 18 Consultation). This representation follows a previous submission sent in the October 2022 consultation.

QE supports the continued allocation of Land at Ashford Road (East) within the revised Draft Local Plan for employment development under draft Policy R3 to assist with meeting the District's employment needs over the plan period to 2040.

This representation is made in addition to the representation made in respect of policy R3. QE is in discussion with the landowner whose holding includes the land directly adjoining the R3 site. QE believes that the land subject to this representation ("The Land") could accommodate a logical northern expansion of the R3 and allocation and car showroom, thereby increasing the district's employment land supply.

a. Site and Surroundings

The Land comprises a circa 3.8 acre parcel of orchard land bounded to the south by a car showroom and forecourt and The Site subject of policy R4. The car showroom and The Site front on to Ashford Road to the south. These adjoin the existing settlement of Chartham.

The Land therefore abuts a largely commercial area, with nearby occupiers comprising several car dealerships, storage facilities, a garden centre, a timber merchant, and some leisure uses. To the west are several residential properties along the A28 which leads into the centre of Chartham village.

Chartham is defined within the adopted Canterbury Local Plan 2017 as a Rural Service Centre and is a highly sustainable village where residents can meet most of their day-to-day needs within the settlement itself and is suitable for a scale of growth that supports its function. Facilities within the village include a train station, two surgeries, a primary school, two convenience shops, two pubs, a post office, and sports facilities.

The Land is within Chartham Parish Council area, who are progressing a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish area and conducted a Call for Sites from 18th Feb – 1st April 2022. The timeline for the Neighbourhood Plan aims for adoption by Q2 of 2024.

b. Policy R3 – Land at Ashford Road

QE supports the positive approach to growth in the District and considers that draft policy R3 – Land at Ashford Road (East) can assist in meeting rural employment floorspace needs given its strategic

location located off the A28. The potential exists to create a development that is attractive to the market whilst ensuring that the impacts of commercial development and associated vehicle traffic are minimised away from residential communities, with vehicles able to gain immediate access to the primary highway network.

The site is available, suitable and achievable. There are no obvious barriers to delivery, including that there are no constraints on the site such as ecology, trees, flooding and heritage, and the site is not dependent on the delivery of infrastructure before coming forward.

c. Proposed Addition to Allocation R3

Whilst the Plan constitutes an impressive and laudable detailed spatial strategy, somewhat inevitably for a document of this level of prescription and detail, there is a need to test the prescriptive infrastructure requirements of each development allocation through the Plan process to ensure that the draft policies are effective, flexible and suitable for the plan period. National planning policy guidance seeks plan makers to work in collaboration with the community, developers and other stakeholders to create realistic and deliverable policies and it is therefore sensible to consider the infrastructure requirements of Allocation R3 and whether these are correctly identified. This is particularly so given the allocation of draft policy R4 alongside.

The draft allocation criteria for Policy R3 is broadly supported in regard to development mix and design and layout. The amount of employment floorspace proposed is suitable for a site of this size and would relate to existing development in the area, particularly the adjoining commercial site to the east. The wording of 'commercial, business or compatible uses (such as a car showroom)' is welcomed, as it provides flexibility to ensure a suitable occupier can be found whilst simultaneously ensuring the end user is compatible with the character of the site and surrounding uses, particularly the residential property to the west. The site is currently being marketed by QE and has already received significant interest from potential occupiers who operate on a national basis.

However, QE would submit that by addition of The Land to the north of the policy R3 site, CCC has the opportunity to significantly increase its employment provision at this location. It is considered that this increase in employment provision would be ideally located given that this would result in expansion of an established commercial area, in addition to allocation of policies R3 and R4 alongside, which is directly accessed from the A28. As such, further allocation of The Land in addition to allocation of policies R3 and R4 would represent a logical expansion of the commercial offering at this location, accessed directly from the R3 allocation.

d. Summary

On behalf of QE, we thank you for the opportunity to input into the Canterbury District Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation.

As detailed above, the Land to the Rear of Land at Ashford Road identified under Allocation R3 is a deliverable and sustainable site and should be added to the R3 allocation in the emerging Local Plan for employment development. Quinn Estates support the allocation of R3, as set out in the parallel submission.

I trust that these comments are of assistance and that these representations will be taken into account in consideration of the current consultation. We also confirm that we would like to be involved in future stages of the plan-making process. However, should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely,

Nick Pellegram
Planner