

Response from Frobisher Developments Ltd – DREP234

Little Park Farm, Segensworth West, Fareham, Hampshire

Statement on Paragraph 4.7 – Little Park Farm

1. INTRODUCTION

This Statement addresses Issue 4: Employment (including Development Site Briefs) and specifically, paragraph 4.7 of the Inspector's Issue and Questions (Document reference 1D-05), which states:-

Is the allocation of Little Park Farm (E2) justified? Can it be delivered?

It would appear that the question has been raised in response to Return Number 112 submitted by Mr Derek Marlow which is attached.

The Statement will set out why the site is suitable, achievable and deliverable in answer to the above questions.

2. SUITABILITY

Context

The site location, within the arm of the M27/A27 at J9, is ideally suited for B8 warehousing and distribution and B8 industrial development albeit subject to upgrading the access. A copy of the marketing synopsis prepared by Messrs Hughes Ellard, our appointed Agents for this project, is attached.

The site is excellently located for access to the National trunk road and motorway network. Equally good, but less visible, are public transport links both by bus and rail as identified in the Transport Assessment prepared by Gyoury Self Partnership. The site abuts the north platform of Swanwick Station.

Mr Marlow infers that the site may not be suitable because it is unduly undulating. However the site itself is generally flat, is adjacent to an existing industrial estate and forms an enclave of vacant land in an otherwise built up area of Fareham.

It is currently used for a mixture of low quality residential dwellings, commercial kennels, catteries, horse/pony grazing and otherwise derelict scrub land and so is currently under-used.

Allocations

The site has been examined on a number of occasions for its suitability. However, to suggest, as Mr Marlow has, that the site has been allocated for 30 years is grossly misleading.

Fareham Local Plan and Review

Fareham Borough Council has confirmed that the site was first allocated in the Local Plan 2000 having been added as a pre-enquiry amendment in 1998. It was then carried forward in the Local Plan Review in 2006. The site therefore has only been adopted as an allocation for 14 years.

HCC Minerals & Waste Plan

The site has been listed by HCC as a “Preferred Site” for waste management and processing under their Minerals & Waste Plan dated October 2013. A copy of the entry in the HCC Minerals & Waste Plan is attached.

The allocations in themselves confirm that the site is suitable for receiving development.

3. AVAILABILITY

Background

In order to understand why the site is deliverable now it is appropriate to understand the reasons why the site has been delayed in coming forward.

Segensworth North West” Project Timeline

The Timeline for the project to date is attached. This will be referred to from time to time in the script below. The work stages of land assembly, project design and in particular the necessary “optioneering” exercise undertaken with Network Rail are self-evident.

Land Assembly

The site including the access from the “adopted” highway comprises 17 separate Title parcels of which 14 have had to be acquired to bring the site into a deliverable state. This has taken some years negotiating with multiple parties. Land assembly was commenced in 2000 and part of the site was acquired as an adjunct to the acquisition by Frobisher Developments Ltd./J Sainsbury Developments Ltd. of Solent Business Park Phase 2, and completed in 2012.

All those necessary for implementation of the project have been assembled between 2000 and 2012, delineated on dwg no. 6504.001.C. Land parcel 3 comprising Lone Valley Dog Ranch is unnecessary for implementation of our proposals and land parcel 14, for which there is a conditional agreement to purchase, lies within the jurisdiction of Winchester City Council and thus outwith this representation.

Access Options

Various options for access improvements to the site have been considered over a period of time. The first comprised access off Park Gate relief road as per dwg no. 3791.05. The Park Gate relief road project was abandoned by HCC taking our access proposals with it.

Subsequently access was designed to come directly off M27/J9 including creation of a public transport link between Solent Business Park and Swanwick Station as per dwg no. 3791.06.A and 3791.10.B.

Since abandonment of direct access from M27/J9, on instructions from HCC, the options for reconstruction of the existing railway arch and Little Park Farm Road have been under discussion with Network Rail Infrastructure, Network Rail Engineering and HCC.

In 2006 initial discussions were held with Network Rail Infrastructure and dwg no. SK04 comprising replacement of the existing bridge arch with a flat inverted culvert, to a complete culvert was presented. This formed the basis of all discussions with Network Rail until 2011 when following the problems with moving bridge abutments on another scheme, we were instructed to abandon the concept of dwg no. SK04.

Subsequent to the above, the opportunity was taken to redesign the bridge as a box culvert widened to approximately 150% of the existing width in order to accommodate a combined footpath/cycle path, improving transport options. At the same time the box culvert was designed with sacrificial sub-base fill to enable laying of services without further reference to Network Rail.

4 DELIVERABILITY

Resolution of Access

We now have two access propositions for the site, "Option A" comprising a medium-term aspiration as set out in dwg no. F13878.P-.710.- and the short-term access improvements to facilitate bringing this land into Employment use comprising "Option B", as shown collectively on dwg no.'s F13878.P.715.P1, F13878.P.716.P2 and F13878.P.718.

Constraints to the delivery of the site comprise only that of reconstruction of Little Park Farm Road and either easing of the bridge clearance under the auspices of "Option B" or wholesale bridge reconstruction under "Option A", the outcome of which will be determined by ongoing discussions with Network Rail in respect of shared value compensation based on the precepts of Stokes-v-Cambridge.

Access improvements to the road identified on land parcel 17, dwg no. 6504.001.C, will be undertaken under the auspices of the Deed of Easement granted in 1926 enabling this

Company to reconstruct the road within the reservation identified in yellow on dwg no. F13878.P.710.-. A copy of the Deed of Easement is attached.

Feasibility Studies

In parallel with the bridge reconstruction design evolution various design and feasibilities have been undertaken on the site. Initially in 2005 feasibility studies were undertaken for Condor Logistics and Royal Mail, as per dwg no. 4225.19.C and 4225.21.B. These were both based on improvement to the road access shown on SK04.

For a period of some 24 months culminating in feasibility plans being issued, discussions were held with Express Energy vis-à-vis construction of a Biomass Power Station on site to generate approximately 35Mw of power. Copies of this plan, dwg no. 6504.002.A and Express Energy's synopsis in the document entitled 35Mw Biomass are attached.

Given the lead-in time for bridge reconstruction of some 24 months, we concluded that it is impossible to find a pre-let whose own forward planning matches such a long lead-in period. As a result this has drawn us toward speculative redevelopment.

Speculative development proposals deliverable to a limited extent under "Option B" access and in full as and when "Option A" access is incepted, are shown on dwg no.'s 6504.004D, 6504.007 and 6504.008.A.

Expenditure

Expenditure of £1,554,626 has been made in relation to land assembly together with £392,487 for accrued intra-group interest charges giving a total commitment to the site of some £1,947,113. The scale of the investment provides further evidence of our commitment to developing the site.

Pre-Application

The required pre-application procedure has been entered into with FBC last year and the proposals set out for the "Option B" access together with various development plans accord with their requirements. Details of the pre-application and consultation responses are attached. The submission indicates that the proposal is being driven forward.

Availability

The first industrial user has moved onto approximately 0.5 acres of the site. Within existing access constraints, the site is available for Employment Use now.

Quantum of Development

Our preferred scheme of development comprises a 4 no. building B8 project as shown on dwg no. 6504.005.A. This requires implementation of “Option A” access and can deliver a total of 19,675m² / 211,786 sq. ft. constructed B8 accommodation.

Prior to bridge reconstruction in accordance with “Option A” access improvements, “Option B” will be implemented. This will enable the creation of development platforms shown on dwg no. 6504.004.D for use for Depot users. The range of vehicles capable of accessing the site under “Option B” access is shown on dwg no. F13878.P.715.P1 together with a less extensive programme of improvements at Little Park Farm Road shown on dwg no. F13878.P.716.P2.

Timing of Development

On the attached Timeline, inception of “Option B” access and road improvements is anticipated in mid-2015, facilitating low density short to medium term use of the site for Employment purposes, with inception of “Option A” access works in 2018. This would indicate a 2020 project completion date.

Conclusion

The site is clearly suitable by virtue of its location on the urban edge, next to an existing industrial estate and adjacent to a major arterial road network. The earlier allocations also demonstrate the site is suitable.

The land assembly and the access have delayed bringing forward the allocation. However the land assembly is now sufficiently complete and the access arrangements have been resolved with the two options available showing that the development of the site is achievable.

The expenditure incurred to date has shown that we are seriously committed to developing the site. The feasibility studies and the pre-application discussion, and other investigations and the timeframe for development shows that the development is deliverable and available.