

# SC7/SCDC – Supplement 1



Examination into the Soundness of the  
South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

**Matter SC7 – Building a Strong and  
Competitive Economy**

**– Supplement 1: SC7c. ii.**

**Could the Council clarify whether the outline  
planning permission for the Pampisford: West  
of Eastern Counties Leather site is still extant?**

South Cambridgeshire District Council

February 2016

## **Introduction**

1. With regard to Policy E/3b of the Submitted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, the Inspectors sought an update on the status of the planning permission on the Pampisford: West of Eastern Counties Leather site.

## **Further Information**

2. The Council has received a letter from the land owners confirming that they intend to bring the site forward for employment development. The letter is attached to this supplement.
3. This is further evidence that the allocation remains a sound and deliverable element of the Local Plan.



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Jonathan Dixon  
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Dear Mr Dixon

I am writing on behalf of Howard Group to confirm the situation with regards to Policy E/3(b) of the emerging Local Plan. This policy proposes to continue the adopted Local Plan's employment allocation of vacant land adjacent to, and to the west of, the Sawston Trade Park at the southern end of Sawston.

The Sawston Trade Park is an industrial, distribution and trade scheme which Howard Group have owned since 2009.

In 2013 Howard Group acquired the adjacent Iconix Park, which comprises three existing buildings totalling circa 45,000 sq ft of office, R&D and laboratory accommodation, and two parcels of vacant land to the south and west of Sawston Trade Park which respectively had full and outline planning permission for further employment development. The latter of these, which benefitted from outline planning permission, is the site that is currently allocated for employment land and is proposed to be allocated under Policy E/3(b).

The three existing buildings at Iconix Park were vacant when Howard Group acquired them. We have invested heavily in the buildings and the landscaping in order to secure new tenants. Some £1 million has been invested in refurbishing and fitting out the buildings and they are now fully let, bringing significant numbers of jobs and investment to the local area. The planning permissions on the two vacant parcels of land recently expired because significant detailed design was still required (to secure approval for reserved matters and discharge of conditions) and the enabling works necessary to deliver them were extensive (including off site highways works, ecological mitigation, flood compensation and decontamination). We are keen to look at this area holistically and come up with fresh proposals.

To this end we have commissioned an architect to masterplan the site and a planning consultant to advise on how to progress proposals. We have researched the site's constraints and opportunities, including commissioning detailed technical advice on contamination, ecology, flooding and highways.

We are in ongoing discussions with the Council about how best to realise the site's potential.

The agents who worked with us to find occupiers for Iconix Park continue to actively market the potential of the adjacent land. They have identified interest in the site and are confident of locating operators as proposals for the site become clearer.

We are firmly of the opinion that the site is deliverable. Our confidence is demonstrated by the fact that we expect to submit a planning application in 2017.

Confirming the allocation under Policy E/3(b) is important as it would provide us with the confidence that the Council are committed to helping bring this site forward for development.

We have made representations to the emerging Local Plan regarding the inclusion of this site and adjacent land/buildings within the Pampisford Village Framework. We are concerned that inclusion within the Pampisford Village Framework, and the related restriction on the scale of employment development, could act as a break on development and runs contrary to the aspirations of the Local Plan of supporting employment development. Our planning consultants, ShrimplinBrown, have made representations to the relevant policy and have indicated their desire to appear at the Local Plan Examination to discuss this.

We can provide further updates on the progress of proposals for the site as the local Plan Examination continues.

Yours sincerely

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Director, Property Development

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