

Objections

The background to this site is the draft Ampthill/Flitwick/Maulden local plan resolved to allocated the land to the North of the Station Road be designated as White Land. Policy 10 sought to allocate 1.3h of land for light industrial. This would have been in the 1980's.

The land at Station Road, Ampthill adjacent to the existing employment land was then previously considered by the Inspector who heard evidence into the Mids Beds Local Plan. He again concluded that the land should **not fall** within the Green Belt, In the First Revised Deposit Draft (MBLP.FR.DP). In his report, he commented at 14.21.7;

In response to separate objections I have previously indicated that land off Station Road, Ampthill, should not form part of the Green Belt. Moreover the suggestion that it should be allocated for employment development no longer seems appropriate given that the permission for the Doolittle Mill employment development has already been implemented.

He had earlier in paragraph 6.5.7 commented;

White the land is at the edge of Ampthill and is free of built development I am not convinced that it should form part of the Green Belt. So far as I am aware, in the past this land was never considered to serve a Green Belt purpose. Even if I am wrong on that, its contribution to the separation of the 2 towns is now less, it seems to me, following the completion of the B1 complex. In my opinion the logical and defensible boundary to the Green Belt in this locality is the embanked railway line to the west and Froghall Road to the South.

It is not clear why the land was subsequently allocated as Green Belt by the Council. It is not a defensible or large piece of land that can give any long-term protection and the earlier longer term boundary of the railway line appears to have been set aside.

The site has therefore had a series of planning promotions which have all concluded that the site would make a useful employment contribution. All the Inspectors have consistently sought to allocate the land and the planning merits of the land have on several times successfully concluded the land has planning permit. This is still a sustainable location for housing or employment and para 84 of the NPPF can be achieved by this land being released.

The Green Belt concludes that the site only serves three of the purposes of retaining the land in the Green Belt. Purpose 3-5 (FW5) do not correctly convey the position in respect of part of this Green Belt and the value of this land to the Green Belt. Additionally, the conclusions do not take account of the previous Green Belt assessments of this piece of land.

The site was promoted in the call for sites for housing and for employment. No assessment was made for employment purposes because the site is under 10h. This is not sound. A variety of employment sites, sizes, locations are required to give employment opportunities to the market place. Constraining supply to large sites limits the opportunities for smaller business locations.

It is important that supply is available in the communities who have experienced growth and recent developments. This follows the theme in Settlement Hierarchy (pg 103-5).

The Site Assessment Framework makes reference to the site being cut off from

the envelope as a result of the A507, however the employment area is the largest employment area supporting Ampthill and is well located to provide Employment opportunities. The existing employment area has prospered and has not suffered as a consequence of the A507.

The strategy in SP1, is objected to.

The development of Green Belt villages and the M1 Junction 11a and 13c.

The settlement approach to provide housing along an undefined part of a rail way link is a risk. It is a risk because the timing of this part of the east rail link is not defined. Even if it was defined the convention of putting such significant numbers of housing will lead to significant commuting patterns. Central Beds has a high level of out commuting and this will lead to a less sustainable pattern of development than one based on allocating land to the Major Service Centres.

The absence of an up to date policy dealing with housing provision means there is no full Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for Central Bedfordshire. Consequently, the Council rely on the OAN figure set out in the SHMA Update (Summer 2015), that being 29,500 dwellings over the period 2011 to 2031 or 1,475 dwellings pa. However recently these figures have been superseded by those in the SHMA Update (Summer 2017). This increases significantly the OAN for Central Bedfordshire to 32,000 dwellings for the period 2015-2035. Table 7.2 of the emerging LP also confirms a further 7,400 dwellings to accommodate a proportion of the unmet need from Luton. Some criticism has been made to the Luton plan as a result of the uncertainty from the unmet need.

As a result of the significant housing requirement uplift and irrespective of the buffer applied, it seems very unlikely that the Council can, as it stands, demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing. At the very least the 20% buffer should be applied.

The latest housing evidence indicates a significant uplift in the Council's housing requirements which far exceed the supply set out in the latest quarterly housing delivery update. The Council will not be able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites.