

Fiona Bryant
Strategic Director
Cambridge City Council
Guildhall
Market Square
Cambridge
CB2 3QJ

15 September 2017

Dear Fiona,

Re: Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) – Cambridge Northern Fringe East

Thank you for your letter of 1st September regarding the City Council's application for Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to support the Cambridge Northern Fringe East (CNFE) development site.

As a brownfield site of 48 hectares GCGP is already aware of the potential at CNFE and has been involved in discussions for some time regarding infrastructure requirements to bring its development forward. The LEP recognises the unique opportunity in Greater Cambridge to deliver circa 5,200 new homes on the core site plus a potential for 2,400 additional new homes in the wider CNFE area.

During 2017 the Local Enterprise Partnership has carried out a review of the Strategic Economic Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, as well as an Area Review of Skills. This research has highlighted the forecasts for continued strong growth in the Greater Cambridge area. From 2003 to 2016, despite the financial crisis and recession, Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire delivered 20% job growth and more than 29,000 net new jobs. Projected to 2022 a further 6% jobs growth is expected representing an additional 10,000 net new jobs. Together with replacement, there are an expected 50,000 job openings over that time. Given current developments around the Biomedical Campus, this may be an underestimate. The CNFE site will itself provide substantial opportunity for circa 1.7m square feet of commercial development.

However, the success of the Greater Cambridge economy has had direct effects in terms of house price inflation. The unaffordability of housing acts a brake on further commercial investment and continued growth and businesses are reporting difficulties in recruiting enough staff with the right skills. Increasing the rate at which the area delivers new housing, as well as the range of tenures, is essential to ensuring businesses can relocate existing staff and attract new. The ability to unlock major brownfield sites within this area of growth is critical to continuing Cambridge's role as a centre for inward investment, innovation and business start-up.

GCGP has already invested significantly to improve infrastructure and transport in Greater Cambridge, allocating £50 million of its Enterprise Zone receipts to the upgrade of the A14, and £9 million of Growth Deal funds to transport infrastructure along the A428 corridor as part of the City Deal programme. The Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zone, awarded EZ status in April 2016, provides continued growth opportunities in five locations surrounding the city, including at Northstowe, to deliver a pipeline of quality commercial sites outside the centre of Cambridge.

Having reviewed the proposals for Cambridge Northern Fringe East, GCGP strongly supports the scheme and looks forward to working with the City Council and its partners to deliver new homes and jobs in this location.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact myself or Alex Francis, Growth Deal Programme Manager via alex.francis@gcgp.co.uk at the earliest opportunity.

Your sincerely

Adrian Cannard

Adrian Cannard
Director of Strategy & Planning