

Breckland Local Plan – Examination in Public

Statement of Common Ground

Policy EC 02 Snetterton Heath

This Statement of Common Ground is an Agreement made between the following parties:

- Breckland District Council
- Snetterton Park Limited

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is to identify areas of common ground and any remaining areas of uncommon ground in relation to the discussions with the landowners following the submission of the Council's General Employment Areas & the Approach to Snetterton topic paper (EX 83).

2. Background

- 2.1. Snetterton Heath is located four miles to the south west of the market town Attleborough and lies both north and south of the A11, with existing, well-constructed asses to the dual carriageway in both directions through an all-movement junction. Snetterton is identified as a strategic site within the Cambridge Norwich Tech Corridor and is home to Snetterton Race Track and Motorsport Vision. The A11 Corridor Study (LP/V/8) identified Snetterton Heath as a 'major development site' within the A11 Corridor. The site is considered a strategically important site within Breckland for future employment development.
- 2.2. The land in question, Snetterton Park (LP[087]011), was first submitted during the Preferred Directions consultation (LP/S/8) . However, through the Preferred Sites and Settlement Boundaries consultation (LP/S/12) it was proposed to allocate sites LP[087]009 and LP[087]010. At the time of site selection these two sites were considered to be the most appropriate sites for allocation through the site selection process.
- 2.3. In order to recognise the importance of Snetterton Park in the overall context of Snetterton Heath as a key employment location, a land swap was proposed to remove a landfill site from the General Employment Area (GEA) and extend this designation over existing retail permissions on Snetterton Park. This approach sought to regularise the uses on the site and promote uses falling within Class B of the Use Classes Order (1987) as amended, coming forward. Through discussions with the landowners, this designation was intended to provide support when marketing the site for development.
- 2.4. A representation on behalf of Snetterton Park Limited was submitted in response to the Inspectors Matters and Issues questions under the reference RS9. This representation submitted by Snetterton Park Limited Supported the overall employment strategy as set

out in Policy EC 01 and the proposed allocations as set out within the plan. However, the statement also raised soundness objections to the proposed General Employment Area extension in that it did not cover the entirety of their site, much of which is brownfield land. The representation also raised objections to Policy EC 03 stating that the wording was too restrictive by setting out that B1 and B2 uses would be preferred.

2.5. The issues raised by the landowners were discussed during the Matter 10 Hearing Session of the Local Plan Examination in Public, at this session the Council was directed to author a topic paper on the approach to all of the General Employment Areas and the approach to Snetterton Heath. This topic paper has subsequently been submitted as part of the examination library under the reference EX.83. The Council had sought to designate land at Snetterton Park within the GEA; however, this was not fully aligned with the methodology as set out within the topic paper. As a result, the council proposed withdraw the GEA land swap and instead strengthen the policy wording of Policy EC 02 to provide a level of support for applications coming forward in the area to the South of the GEA. Following discussions with the landowners, it was agreed between the parties that this policy wording alone would not provide the certainty that the landowners would desire when seeking to attract investment to the site. Snetterton Heath is of strategic importance to the Council and as part of the wider Cambridge Norwich Technology Corridor. Therefore, it is appropriate to consider further alternative solutions to assist the achievement of these aims.

2.6. The Council has sought to reach an understanding with Snetterton Park Limited over the issues raised, and amendments required in order to address their concerns. The approach is supported by evidence as set out in the Council's response to the Inspector's additional questions for Matter 9 and 10. This statement identifies where areas of agreement have been reached including, where relevant, revised wording to policies and/or supporting text.

3. Proposed modifications to EC 02 – Snetterton Heath and Snetterton Employment Allocation 3.

3.1. The proposed modifications to policy EC 02 seek to direct particular types of activity within the B-use classes to specific areas of the site to promote clustering and capitalise on the inter-relationships between the activities carried out across the site. Snetterton Employment Allocation 3 is also proposed on the land that was formerly designated as General Employment Area through the Pre-submission publication version of the Local Plan. Through discussion between the Council and Snetterton Park Limited, the parties agree that modifications to policy EC 02 and an allocation is required to meet the Council's strategic ambitions for Snetterton Heath and to provide further certainty when marketing the site.

3.2. The following modifications to policy EC 02 and the addition of Snetterton Employment Allocation 3 are recommended for consideration by the Inspector as proposed by Snetterton Park Limited and Breckland District Council:

Modification 1

Reason for modification – To ensure that the policy provides the certainty for the landowners in order to help deliver proposals that are associated with motorsport, automotive and advanced engineering.

Proposed modification – Revise policy wording as follows with new additions highlighted in red:

Policy EC 02 – Snetterton Heath

All proposals at Snetterton Heath will be determined subject to criteria a) to e) of Policy EC 03 General Employment Areas.

The distribution of employment development across the site is subject to the following:

1. Within area LP[087]010 as defined on the policies map, 20ha of land is allocated for B1 and B2 use. The layout of any development should not prejudice future expansion of the site;

2. Within the southern extent of the Snetterton General Employment Area, including LP[087]011A as defined on the policies map, proposals for employment use within classes B1 and B2 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred. Proposals that are associated with motorsport, automotive and advanced engineering will be encouraged;

4.3. Development proposals, for compatible uses, immediately adjacent to the southern extent of the General Employment Area, including LP[087]011A, as defined on the policies map, will be supported where they contribute to the overall vision for the A11 corridor;

3.4. Within the eastern extent of Snetterton General Employment Area as defined on the policies map, proposals for employment development within class B8 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred; and

5. Proposals that create a new edge to the employment area shall be expected to provide appropriate boundary treatment to minimise the impact on the landscape, having regard to the principles of the Landscape Character Assessment.

Modification 2

Reason for modification – To ensure that land at Snetterton Park has the certainty to come forward for B1 and B2 class uses within the plan period.

Proposed modification – Insertion of a new policy, Snetterton Employment Allocation 3

Snetterton Employment Allocation 3

Land to the west of the Southern extent of the General Employment Area (LP[087]011A).

Land amounting to 4.3 hectares (net) is allocated for employment use (within Classes B1 and B2 of the Use Classes Order) to the west of the southern extent of Snetterton South General Employment Area. Development will be subject to compliance with the following criteria:

1. Provision of safe highway access from the Snetterton Park roundabout;

2. Proposals for employment development within classes B1 and B2 of the Use Classes Order (as amended) will be preferred;
3. Appropriate design and layout in keeping with the site's location as a key gateway into Snetterton South General Employment Area; and
4. Development is laid out in a manner that does not preclude the potential for future development in the vicinity.

Modification 3

Reason for modification – To provide clarification on the policies map and Figure 6.1 as to the areas where Policy EC 02 and Snetterton Employment Allocation 3 apply.

Proposed modification – It is proposed to replace Picture 6. 1 on page 188 of the Pre-submission Local Plan (LP/S/1) with the following map. This would also be reflected within the Policies Map for Snetterton Heath.



4. Conclusion

4.1. This Statement sets out the areas of agreement between Breckland District Council and Snetterton Park Limited with regard to policy EC 02 Snetterton Heath. With regard to the areas of agreement, the Council have put forward proposed modifications to policy EC 02, including a new proposed allocation. It is considered that this Statement of Common Ground, and the amendments proposed, overcomes the objections raised by Snetterton Park Limited through the representation RS.9. This approach is considered to be the most appropriate strategy and seeks to ensure that Snetterton Heath remains a key employment site within Breckland over the entire plan period and provides certainty to the landowners of Snetterton Park.

5. Declaration

The content of this document is agreed between the undersigned for the purpose of the Breckland Local Plan Examination

Signed on behalf of Breckland District
Council:

Signed on behalf of Snetterton Park
Limited:

Strategic Planning Manager
Date:

Snetterton Park Limited
Date: 23.08.2018