

MATTER 4 THE SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSING

1.0 ISSUE 4.1

How has the distribution of housing set out in Policy CS7 been arrived at?

- 1.1 NTC is concerned that RAF Mildenhall is rejected as a site for housing without adequate justification and investigation as part of the SIR. The closure of the base is planned for 2023 and hence during the lifetime of the plan. As a result of the closure there will be a net reduction of 2,000 US military personnel as confirmed by the US Department of Defence.
- 1.2 The consequences of RAF Mildenhall on both the local economy and the housing market do not appear to have been adequately factored into the plan. This is an alternative site of considerable size and impact upon the district. As stated in the RAF Mildenhall Vision the 400ha site has a range of potential land uses which includes up to 2,000 homes.
- 1.3 NTC also wish to highlight that the key service centre Red Lodge was developed in order to cater for the housing requirement in the District and prevent Newmarket from becoming further urbanised and overdeveloped. As it currently stands Red Lodge has the land availability to accommodate further development and this additional development will assist in providing the services required for both the existing and future housing numbers.
- 1.4 Due to the points highlighted above NTC consider the plan to be unsound.

2 ISSUE 4.3

Justification for the housing distribution between the three market towns of Newmarket, Brandon and Mildenhall and the two key service centres of Red Lodge and Lakenheath.

- 2.1 Newmarket is the most important centre in the world for the international horse racing industry, and is unique due the numbers of horses stabled in the town. It is the international birthplace and home of the horseracing providing around 9,000 jobs locally. This primary local industry is of growing importance both locally, nationally and internationally, as confirmed in various economic reports, and such is its success in bringing in foreign investment into the town and nationally (SWQ report of January 2014 and updated in 2017).
- 2.2 Furthermore, Newmarket is an unparalleled centre of breeding, training and racing and accounts for nearly 30% of horses in training in the UK. Internationally, Newmarket, when compared with other centres of racing from around the world, is a unique racing centre with an economic cluster of all aspects of the horse racing industry concentrated within and around the town.
- 2.3 No other town in the UK or even Europe has such a role. No other town has thoroughbred horses crossing through its centre on a daily basis.
- 2.4 The approach to the application of planning policy must therefore take this uniqueness into account and be sympathetic in its allocation of housing numbers and development.
- 2.5 NTC notes that Newmarket is the largest town in the district but due to its unique characteristics as outlined above any increased development will carry with it a considerable risk of harm to its core industry.
- 2.6 In addition to the above, there is a demonstrable lack of open space within the town as confirmed and identified within the proposed Newmarket Neighbourhood Plan under policy 3.1.

3 Issue 4.4 Housing growth at Newmarket and Brandon is quite low compared to other settlements. What is the justification for housing numbers at Newmarket and impact on the horse-racing industry as per points 4.4c – f inclusive

- 3.1 As highlighted in 2.0 above, the unique characteristics of the horse racing industry and its economic importance to the locality, as well as national and international importance, cannot be underestimated.
- 3.2 The Newmarket Neighbourhood plan highlights as objective 1 the unique character of the town and the priorities of the plan are to “preserve the distinctive character of the town, distinguishing it clearly from neighbouring towns, particularly the town’s historic core and unique features arising from the horse racing industry. Policy 1.1b specifically states that “any development shall have no adverse effect on the horse racing industry and its unique features”; policy 1.4a “any development shall have no adverse effect on the town’s monuments and key buildings”.
- 3.3 The traffic impact concern is noted by both Newmarket Town Council and also the horse racing industry. In this regard the horse racing industry has highlighted that increased congestion inhibits the movement of horse racing personnel which includes trainers, jockeys, owners, veterinarians plus horses etc. and ancillary businesses.
- 3.4 Greater housing in Newmarket would obviously increase traffic specifically on Newmarket roads, whereas housing growth elsewhere would distribute around the district.
- 3.5 In particular the Fordham road is well known locally for its extreme and increasing road congestion, with the Snailwell road used as route to try to additionally avoid extreme and ever increasing congestion at A14/A142 junction.
- 3.6 Both the A14 and the A142 have considerable queues at peak travel times and the Highways Agency has confirmed the junction is within the top 10 worst junctions **in the country**.
- 3.7 There are many businesses located in the north of the town and additional traffic along the A142/A14 junction will have an adverse impact on their operation and prosperity.

- 3.8 The increase in housing within Kennet and Kentford has been on the premise of using the services within Newmarket. However, the infrastructure and facilities within the town have not been increased and services within the town are oversubscribed and over stretched.
- 3.9 Newmarket is further complicated by the division between East Cambridgeshire District Council and FHDC. There has been considerable development within the East Cambridgeshire area of the town, for example along St John's Avenue. As per point 3.8, this development has only added further pressure upon the town's services and infrastructure.
- 3.10 The lack of consideration to RAF Mildenhall as an alternative housing location is addressed in 1.0 above.
- 3.11 In conclusion, any development within Newmarket needs to be appropriate and sympathetic, taking into account its uniqueness in terms of character and requirements and the economic well-being of an internationally important industry to this country and its economy