

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 4 JUNE 2014

PLANNING APPLICATION F/2013/0355/FUL – LAND AT KENNETT PARK,
KENTFORD (PARISH OF MOULTON)

Economic Development and Growth Comments following the
Development Control Committee on 14 May 2014

1. At the Development Control Committee on 14 May 2014, Members chose to defer their decision on Planning Application F/2013/0355/FUL until the following Committee meeting to give Officers from the Economic Development & Growth Team an opportunity to consult with the applicant and their agents and then advise the Committee on the question of the Marketing of the site.
2. Since the Committee meeting on 14 May 2014, we have now received more information from the applicant's agents about the marketing work that has been undertaken to date for the site.
3. Specifically, we have received copies of a letter from Bidwells, the commercial agents for the site, to Wrenbridge, the developer of the site, dated 22/5/14, detailing the marketing activity undertaken. We have also received a copy of a letter from Armstrong Rigg Planning (ARP), the planning consultants engaged by the applicants for the site, dated 22/5/14, that contained information about the web-based marketing undertaken for the site.
4. In addition a meeting to discuss the marketing activity with the applicant and their agents took place at FHDC's offices on 23 May 2014. We have also received emails from ARP including a copy of a spreadsheet showing a total of 30 low level enquiries relating to this site since September 2009. Only 6 of these enquiries occurred since the beginning of 2013 and only 2 have occurred in 2014. The bulk of the evidence supplied by the applicant and their agents suggests that in the majority of cases the enquirer was looking for a ready-built solution rather than a development opportunity, a lower cost lower quality option or a site closer to Newmarket/Cambridge.
5. At time of writing these comments we are still awaiting further information from the applicants agents about the number and quantity of leaflet drops made to the neighbouring Lanwades Industrial Park, but notwithstanding this information, it would be difficult for the Economic Development & Growth team to suggest that any further marketing undertaken would produce a more positive outcome, given that we are aware of the availability of a number of vacant B1 (office) spaces (in

varying sizes from 600 to 1500 square feet) in Kings Court, Newmarket that would compete for potential clients for the Kennett Park site.

6. The Council is keen to drive forward growth in the local economy, having made growth in the local economy as one of its three key "corporate" priorities. The Economic Development & Growth team has been tasked with supporting this objective throughout the District over the next few years. As a team we are therefore keen to see any potential employment site taken forward but on the basis of the evidence we have reviewed, the discussions we have had with the applicant and their agents and the current availability of other B1 space elsewhere in district it would be difficult for us to suggest to Members that further Marketing of this site would produce a more positive outcome.

30 May 2014