Planning Policy
Corby Borough Council
Deene House
New Post Office Square
Corby
Northamptonshire
NN17 1GD

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Housing Allocation
Land at The Gateway, Rockingham, Corby, NN17 5AF

We write on behalf of our clients Rockingham Automotive Ltd, in response to the six-week public consultation in relation to the Publication Draft 2 Local Plan for Corby in respect of land known as The Gateway Rockingham.

Our clients, are currently in discussions with your development management colleagues about the prospects of obtaining outline planning permission for the development of up to 500 dwellings, a community work space and the conversion of the grade II listed Weldon Lodge to a local centre comprising a convenience store and pub at land known as The Gateway, Rockingham.

The following documents are attached to assist in the identification of the site:

- Site Location Plan; and
- Pre-application masterplan and design context document (the masterplan is currently undergoing revision).

Site and Surroundings

The site comprises an undeveloped parcel of land which lies to the south of the former Rockingham Motor Speedway. The speedway closed in January 2019 with the speedway and associated car park site gaining planning consent 17 January 2019 for automotive logistics, including open storage of vehicles, vehicle parts and refurbishment of vehicles (Use Class B8). In addition, permission was granted for the removal of the external (open air) speedway stands under references 18/02061/FUL and 18/02062/FUL. The site is separated from the speedway by a landscape buffer.

To the east of the site lies Priors Hall a residential led development consented for over 5,000 dwellings which is currently under construction. The Priors Hall development lies some 79 metres from the site with the nearest part of Priors Hall to the site being the parcel of land developed by Francis Jackson Homes with executive style dwellings.

To the south of the site is undeveloped land and a Morrisons warehouse and to the west the site is bound by highway, undeveloped land and industrial/commercial developments.

The site forms part of Rockingham Enterprise Area as identified by Policy 27 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (see local plan extract below).
The Proposal

De-allocation of the site for employment use and re-allocation for residential development is sought. It is anticipated that the site could provide a mix of smaller homes, a shared workspace and a local centre.

The existing wooded glade to the northern boundary of the site would be managed as an amenity.
area with opportunities for walking and leisure created.

There is an opportunity to create a two-kilometre path around the site for leisure use by walkers / cyclists.

It is envisaged that following the recent planning approvals at the speedway and the speedway car park for automotive logistics development under East Northamptonshire Council references 18/02061/FUL and 18/02062/FUL, the development of this site would contribute to housing provision to support the some 800 employees supported by the speedway and car park sites, made up of existing and new jobs. The development of new homes alongside new jobs would create a truly sustainable community.

Planning Policy

National planning policy

Paragraph 120 of the Framework states that where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan they should b) in the interim, prior to updating the plan, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area. In this case there has been no up take of the allocation or historic consents for commercial development and the re-development of the site for residential use would make a valuable contribution to housing delivery for the Borough.

Paragraph 122 of the NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should support appropriate densities that make efficient use of land by taking account of the need for different types of housing. The indicative layout has sought to respond to the Borough’s need for smaller, more affordable homes.

In accordance with paragraph 192 of the Framework the refurbishment of the grade II listed Weldon Lodge to put it to a viable use would contribute to sustaining and enhancing the heritage asset.

Local Planning Policy

The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2011 – 2031) (NNJCS) was adopted 14 July 2016. It provides overall strategic planning policies in respect of the Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough administrative areas.

The site subject of this enquiry is located within the ‘Rockingham Enterprise Area’ as identified by Policy 27 of the NNJCS. The 2016 Core Strategy has in fact downgraded the type of employment development originally sought for the wider site from high performance technology employment in the motor industry to any employment development. The change to the policy is reflected in the recent approvals for the speedway and car park sites, whereby open storage of motor vehicles has been consented, this is a suitable and welcome use for these parcels of land however it is also a significant shift away from the original vision of a high performance technology park. The re-development of the site for residential development is supported by national planning policy which supports re-development of allocated land for alternative uses particularly where the development would fulfil a local need such as the need for new homes.

It is considered that the development offers the opportunity to create a sustainable, well-connected development, with well-connected streets and low speed design that encourages travel by means other than the private motor vehicle in accordance with Policy 15 of the NNJCS.
Corby Borough Council’s housing requirement is identified as being 9,200 dwellings over the plan period however in line with the opportunity for strategic growth it has been identified at Policy 28 that housing needs could grow to 14,200. In addition, Policy 29 relates to the distribution of new homes and advises that the Strategic Opportunity for 5,000 extra homes cannot be implemented anywhere other than Corby. The development of 500 new homes on The Gateway site will provide a significant contribution to Corby’s housing requirement and potential shortfall in relation to five-year land supply and the strategic opportunity requirement.

**Employment Land Review May 2018**

The May 2018 Employment Land Review for Corby recognises that there is a significant oversupply of employment land against future demand and need as well as poor investor confidence. The oversupply of employment sites could be used to address the pressure on supply for housing land.

**Five-Year Housing Land Supply**

Most recently published data for five-year housing land supply within Corby Borough indicates a five-year land supply of between 4.62 years and 5.3 years. The Council is aware of its potentially vulnerable position on demonstrating a five year land supply position particularly in light of the new definition of deliverable contained within the NPPF 2019 and consequently officers advised the local plans committee in December 2018 that the Council continues to closely monitor the delivery of new dwellings and take advantage of every reasonable opportunity to improve housing land supply in order to secure a more robust position for managing planning decisions.

**The need for smaller housing units in Corby**

The latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2015 projected a need for 9,200 new homes from 2011 – 2031. The identified requirement was primarily for 1, 2 and 3 bed homes. The need for one beds was identified as being 4,209 units, two beds 2,343 units and three beds 2,787 units. Policy 30 of the NNJCS was informed by the SHMA and subsequently identifies a need for around 70% one and two bed homes and 30% three bed homes with the need for 4+ bed dwellings being very few.

It is considered that the proposed development would respond positively to local housing needs by delivering primarily two and three bed dwellings.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]

DLP Planning Ltd