

**PLANNING COMMITTEE DATE: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022**

**APPLICATION NO: F/YR22/0919/O**

**SITE LOCATION: Land South Of 733, Whittlesey Road, March,  
Cambridgeshire**

### **UPDATE**

#### **Sequential and Exception Tests Provided by Agent**

The agent has submitted sequential and exception test evidence to be considered in respect of this application that was previously not submitted and hence generated a reason for refusal on the basis of flood risk. Below is the assessment of the submitted evidence.

#### **Flood risk and the application of the Sequential and Exception Tests**

The site lies within a flood zone 3 location and whilst the site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that the site could be made safe from flooding for its lifetime this does not obviate the need to demonstrate compliance with the sequential and exceptions tests.

There is a clear mandate in both the National and Local Planning policy that directs development to areas of lowest flood risk unless it can be demonstrated that there are no sequentially preferable sites available.

The submitted sequential test considers sites within Turves, and appears to demonstrate that there are no sequentially preferable sites available to accommodate the quantum of development proposed.

Notwithstanding, the agent fails to address the fact that when considering a site that does not meet the general settlement policy, i.e. it is not infill and it is located within the open countryside, the sequential test should be applied on a district wide basis and that would be the 'area of search'; accordingly, it is clear that the site does not have the potential to satisfy the sequential test.

With regard to the exception test, it is accepted that the information submitted indicates that the exception test may have been passed due to possible provision of renewable energy and the inclusion of flood mitigation measures.

Noting the adopted and indeed consistent stance of the LPA when applying the sequential test on sites which do not comply with the settlement hierarchy it is asserted that the scheme has no potential to satisfy the sequential test, as this would require the application of the Sequential test on a district wide scale. It is further identified in the updated NPPG (August 2022) that even where a flood risk assessment shows that development can be made safe for its lifetime the sequential test still needs to be satisfied, i.e. flood risk safety measures do not overcome locational issues.

Therefore, the scheme does not satisfy the requirements of the NPPF, the FLP and the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPG and should be resisted on flood risk grounds; hence the reason for refusal on grounds of flood risk should remain.

**Recommendation:** REFUSAL – The above update does not alter the original recommendation as set out on page 204 of the agenda.