

# Land North and South of Benefield Road, Oundle, East Northamptonshire



Red line boundary for identification purposes only

## Strategic Residential Development Opportunity (Subject to Planning)

- Land to the North of Benefield Road extends to 4.325 ha (10.69 acres)
- Land to the South of Benefield Road extends to 1.151 ha (2.84 acres)
- Attractive market location lying on the western edge of Oundle
- Proposals sought for a Promotion Partner by way of Promotion Agreement only

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# Land North and South of Benefield Road, Oundle, East Northamptonshire

## The Opportunity

On behalf of our Landowner clients, Hawksmoor are instructed to seek a Promotion Partner to promote this strategic residential development opportunity, lying on the western edge of Oundle, East Northamptonshire.

Land to the north of Benefield road comprises 2 individual fields separated by mixed hedgerows, currently in permanent pasture and extending to approximately 4.325 ha. The eastern boundary of the site abuts sports playing pitches, part of Oundle School. The northern and western boundary abutting up to open countryside. This parcel is accessed directly off Benefield Road.

Land to the south of Benefield Road extends to 1.151 ha, with the southern boundary bordering the Lyveden Brook, with the western boundary extending further into open countryside. Access is provided from Wakerley Close to the north.

## Location

Oundle is an historic market town located towards the northern edge of East Northamptonshire. The town lies approximately 6 miles north of Thrapston and 12 miles south west of Peterborough. Oundle is connected to Thrapston (A14) and Peterborough (A1) by the A605, which runs along the line of the former railway line to the east of Oundle. The town is located on rising ground above the River Nene.

The town has a population of approximately 6,000. It acts as a rural service centre for several smaller villages in the surrounding area, which will rely on the town for shopping and a range of services.

There are a number of commercial and employment areas within the town, the most prominent being Nene Valley Business Park lying to the east of the town with direct access to the A605, which is home to a variety of businesses. Further commercial areas exist along East Road, The Wharf and Oundle Marina. Oundle School is the largest employer in the town with over 700 employees operating from 100 buildings across the town. Oundle town centre is primarily home to retail and service businesses with a mixture of national chains and independent stores.

In addition to the Independent School of Oundle, the town also has a Secondary School (Prince William), located on Herne Road providing education for around 1,200 pupils (age 11-18). This school became an academy in 2015, sponsored by the EMCL Academy Trust.

Oundle Church of England Primary School is located west of Cotterstock Road and provides education for around 450 pupils (age 4-11).

The town itself provides a wide range of services and facilities to residents and neighbouring villages. Public services include Town Council offices, a Community hub, doctor's surgery, library, police and fire services, located on Fletton Way.

The town has two medium sized supermarkets. The Co-operative is located in the town centre on St Osyth's Lane with a Waitrose located on East Road, towards the eastern edge of the town. Independent traders include butchers, gift shops, restaurants and florists, centred around the Market Place and adjoining streets. A local market is held in the town centre every Thursday and a farmers' market on the second Saturday of every month.

Oundle sits on 2 bus routes operating throughout the week. An hourly service passing through Oundle operates between Peterborough and Milton Keynes. A second hourly service operates between Thrapston and Peterborough. The nearest railway station is at Corby, some 9 miles to the west of the town. Peterborough railway station is some 12 miles to the east.

## Technical

Both areas of land are considered to be located in Flood Zone 1 in accordance with the latest Environment Agency flood risk map, meaning this land has a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year.

At the time of writing no further intrusive ground investigation has been undertaken.

## Planning

Land to the north and south of Benefield Road fall within the administrative area of East Northamptonshire Council (ENC).

There are 2 relevant adopted plans for this area, being the Local Plan part 2 – Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (adopted July 2011) and the North Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 1: Joint Core Strategy (adopted in July 2016). The land has no planning status other than open Countryside at the present time.

Work is currently being undertaken to produce a new district wide Local Plan Part 2. Preparation of this Plan started in January 2017. It is intended for this plan to provide additional specific detail to support the North Northamptonshire JCS (Local Plan Part 1). The latest published LDS (September 2020) suggests that a Pre-Submission Local Plan consultation (regulation 22) will commence in January 2021, with a targeted Local Plan examination in late Summer 2021, with adoption of the plan intended for late 2021, albeit there is some uncertainty on these dates at the present time.

In the Consultation Draft (November 2018) of the Local Plan Part 2, Oundle is identified as the main market town and service centre for the rural north of the district. It is closely related to other larger urban centres to the north and east, namely Stamford and Peterborough.

Draft Policy EN1: Spatial Development Strategy includes Oundle within Urban Areas alongside Rushden, Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough, Raunds and Thrapston. For Oundle *"Development will be directed towards delivering the outstanding allocations. Further development proposals, to meet the Joint Core Strategy requirements for the latter half of the Plan period (2021-2031), will come forward in order to enhance Oundle's role as the main service centre for the rural north of the district."*

Representations on behalf of the landowners have been made during the course of the preparation of the Local Plan Part 2, including the following:

December 2018 – in response to the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2: Draft Plan Consultation

January 2019 – in response to the East Northamptonshire Local Plan (Part 2) Sustainability Appraisal: Interim SA Report on Strategic Options for Oundle

January 2019 – Local Plan Part 2: Background Paper: Oundle Site Assessments

As part of the above process it is worth noting that in the Oundle Site Assessment Detailed Reassessment of Shortlisted sites (July 2019), the land off Benefield Road performed better than the draft allocated Gladman site (East of Cotterstock Road, where planning permission has now been granted) and land off Stoke Doyle Road, again which is a draft allocation but has not yet been progressed via a planning application.

In addition to the emerging Local Plan Part 2, representations were also made to the Oundle Neighbourhood Plan. The final draft plan that was submitted to the Inspector for review included 2 parcels of land for development in our clients' ownership. Firstly, 10 units were allocated on the land south of Wakerley Close and 130 units were allocated on land to the north of Benefield Road, including provision for a festival field of up to 5.5ha.

These draft allocations were achieved through detailed representations and consultation with the Town Council. Whilst the plan was found not to meet the Basic Conditions and was therefore not recommended to proceed to referendum, it is important to understand and appreciate the local support that was gained for the principal of development of the land that is part of the opportunity that is being presented at this time.

In summary, whilst the land north and south of Benefield Road does not have a draft allocation, it has been well presented through the various consultation phases of the draft plan and does have support locally, as evidenced by the submitted (but not "Made") Neighbourhood Plan. We therefore firmly believe there is a strong case to see the land come forward for development in the future and therefore represents an exciting strategic opportunity.

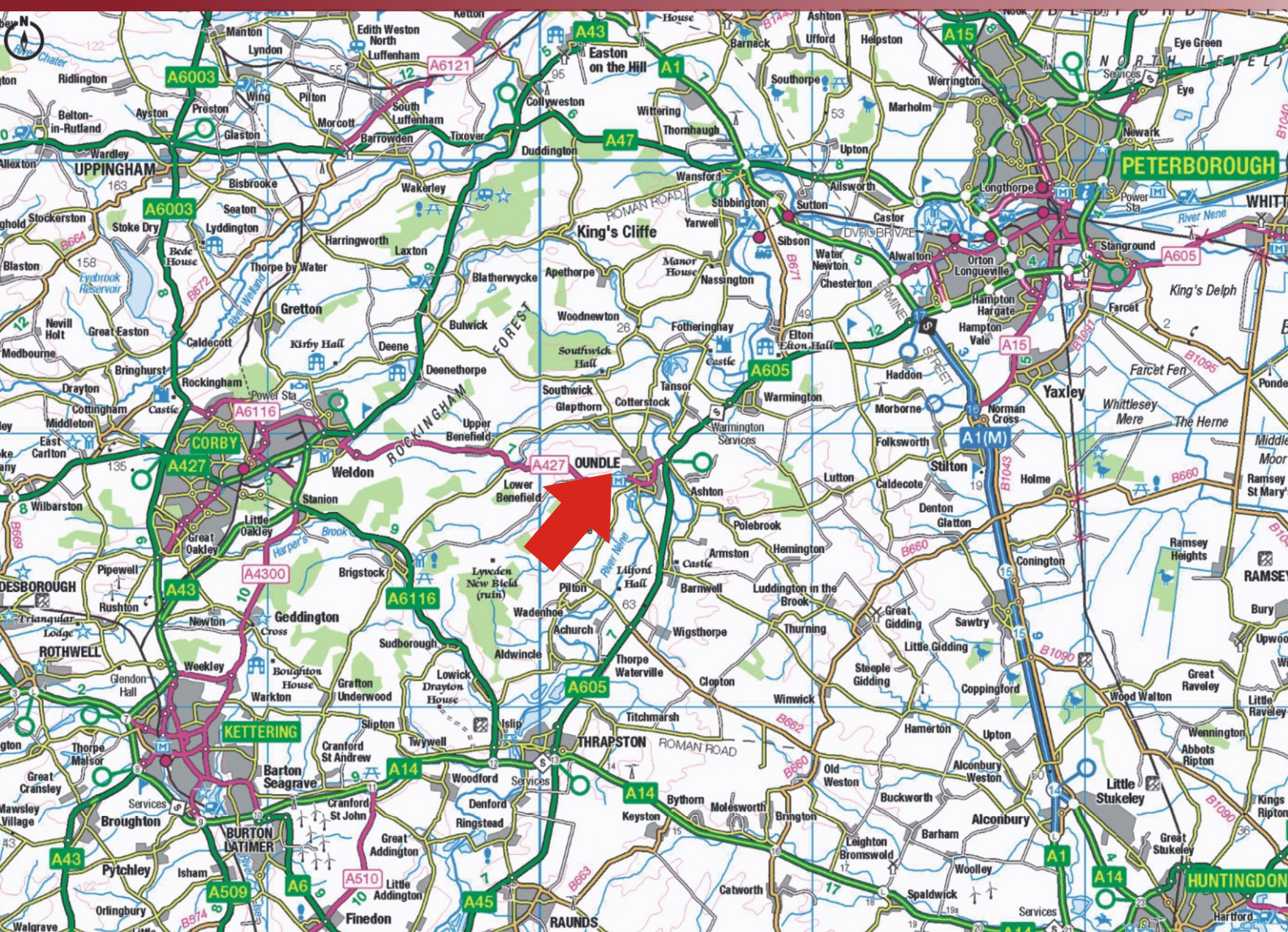
## Offers

If this exciting opportunity is of interest, please in the first instance register your interest with Richard Wain. Further details will then be provided in respect of any offer to be submitted, which will include the following:

- i. Confirmation that you are content to proceed by way of a Planning Promotion Agreement only.
- ii. Proposed length of agreement Terms, clearly indicating extension periods.
- iii. Promotion Fee payable in consideration of the initial term and extension periods
- iv. Level of return required under the Promotion agreement
- v. Confirmation that you are not promoting schemes elsewhere within East Northamptonshire
- vi. An outline strategy of how you propose to promote the site moving forward, in particular your strategy for engagement with the Town Council and consultation approach with residents of Oundle
- vii. Details of other sites that you are promoting of a similar scale to demonstrate your credentials in promotion of strategic land
- viii. Board Approval process.

Closing date for offers: Thursday 18th February 2021.





## Viewing arrangements

Due to the current Covid-19 restrictions, viewing must only be taken from the public highway. Interested parties should be aware inspections are made entirely at their own risk and the vendor and their agents accept no liability arising from any such inspection.

## Contact Information

If you would like to discuss this site in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact Richard Wain at Hawksmoor.

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