

# CAMBOURNE WEST GOVERNANCE



*Figure 1.0: Current Parish Boundaries as at June 2015.*

## **Summary.**

This report recommends a community governance review be initiated by South Cambridgeshire District Council with a view to changing the boundary of the Parish of Cambourne so that any development on land identified as Cambourne West falls within the administrative boundary of the Parish of Cambourne.

## **Introduction.**

The purpose of this report is to set forth the case for the boundary of the Parish of Cambourne being extended to incorporate the development site of Cambourne West as set out by MCA Developments Ltd – Planning reference ([S/2903/14/OL](#)).

Cambourne Parish Council was formed under the Parish Council of Cambourne Order 2004 and became part of the Bourn Ward comprising the Parishes of Bourn, Cambourne, Caxton, Croxton and Eltisley. The original masterplan for Cambourne put the number of houses to be built at 3,300. In 2011 a further 950 homes were approved bringing the total number of occupied houses expected to be in Cambourne upon completion to 4,250 when considering approved applications.

However, at time of writing, a planning application (referenced above) submitted by MCA Developments Ltd in December of 2014 for development at land identified as Cambourne West for up to 2350 new dwellings, is being considered. Furthermore the emerging Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire is being scrutinised by a government appointed Inspector. The Local Plan proposes 1,200 homes at the same site. Consequently it seems likely that the number of homes in Cambourne is set to increase significantly unless both the Local Plan and the present application are rejected.

***Currently, the site identified for the development of Cambourne West, be it the version set out by MCA Developments Ltd or the version set out in the emerging local plan, sits wholly within the Parish of Caxton.***

It is the view of Cambourne Parish Council that should any development take place on that site, be it 1,200 new homes or 2,350 new homes, then careful thought will need to be given as to logistics with regard to the management of open spaces and community facilities that are likely to emerge. It also seems likely that the burden of managing and maintaining said new open spaces and facilities will fall to Cambourne Parish Council regardless of which Parish the development is situated in.

Should MCA's application to develop Cambourne West be approved, the final number of occupied dwellings in Cambourne is likely to be circa 7,000, giving rise to a total Parish population of approximately 19,320 using the current household multiplier of 2.76 as set out in the 2011 census.



*Figure 1.1 – Cambourne West Boundaries as proposed by MCA Developments Ltd*

### **Open Space & Community Facilities**

The Design and Access statement for Cambourne West purports to offer approximately 155 acres of public open space, including a number of specialist sports pitches. This will require careful management and generate a need for specialist knowledge and equipment particularly when it comes to the maintenance of sports pitches and allotments.

Furthermore there are a number of community buildings planned, all of which will become rateable assets, and need to be the subject of robust care and management plans. There will also be an administrative workload generated once the community start to use them.

Cambourne Parish Council currently maintains approximately 200 acres of open space, including multiple specialist sports pitches, and employs a dedicated full-time team of Grounds Maintenance operatives, many of whom have professional qualifications. The Parish Council also boasts an impressive array of grounds maintenance equipment and vehicles and thus considers the infrastructure necessary to look after large areas of open space to be already in place.

The Parish Council also employs a number of full and part time administrative staff, cleaners and caretakers and therefore is already set up to manage extra community buildings and take bookings.

It is envisaged, that should the development go ahead, then the Parish Council will need to expand its workforce in order to cope with the extra workload, possibly opening a second grounds maintenance headquarters closer to the site. This will be extremely difficult to achieve if the Parish Council is not the recipient of any precept the development generates.

### **Community Identity**

The Development will be viewed as part of Cambourne. Indeed, the Design and Access Statement produced by MCA Developments Ltd describes the development as “a high quality extension to Cambourne.”

It is likely that residents of Cambourne West will view themselves as Cambourne residents, and come to Cambourne Parish Council as the first port of call should contact with the immediate local authority be necessary. However, as stated above, the development sits entirely within the parish of Caxton, and therefore dwellings would pay Caxton precept to Caxton Parish Council. It is envisaged that this could create identity problems and attenuate any sense of emerging community within the development.

### **Conclusion**

A governance review to include Cambourne West within the Parish of Cambourne is essential to support the community identity as it will be an extension of Cambourne sharing existing and new infrastructure. The clear community identity is important in developing a sustainable community, building on what has been achieved in Cambourne. Cambourne Parish Council is well placed to take on the challenges of governing a large scale development of this nature. Trained staff are already in place, and a substantial investment has been made in vehicles and equipment over the last 11 years. It is envisaged an expansion of the workforce will need to occur, and further investment in plant and machinery will be required. The Parish Council would not be able to effectively manage this without the precept generated by the development.