

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report to: Planning Committee

12 June 2019

Authors: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

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<b>Application Number</b>	S/2709/18/DC	
<b>Parishes/Wards</b>	Cambourne / Caxton Parish	
<b>Target Date</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	
<b>Site</b>	Land to the west of Cambourne, Cambourne, CB23 6ER.	
<b>Proposal</b>	Discharge of condition 8 (Site wide Design Code) of planning permission S/2903/14/OL	
<b>Applicant</b>	Taylor Wimpey and Bovis Homes	
<b>Recommendation</b>	Delegate approval subject to receipt of further minor amendments and clarifications to the Design Code	
<b>Application Type</b>	Discharge of condition	<b>Departure:</b> No
<b>Officer</b>	Andrew Thompson Aaron Coe	

### Application brought to Planning Committee because:

The above application(s) have been reported to the Planning Committee for determination by Members in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation for South Cambridgeshire.

The Application is before you as an urgent item as there is an agreed Planning Performance Agreement timetable in place for this scheme and determination is required in June 2019 to comply with this agreement and to ensure that the effective delivery of the outline planning permission is achieved.

<b>Executive Summary</b>	The design code as revised (rev O) is required pursuant to condition 8 of planning permission S/2903/14/OL which granted outline planning permission for an extension of Cambourne to inter
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	<p>alia... deliver up to 2350 new homes and associated infrastructure (see section 2.1 for full description of development). The Design Code proposals are in accordance with the Outline planning permission for Cambourne as granted in 2017. The proposal is in accordance with sustainability and good design policies in the local plan and will contribute to delivery of a distinctive and attractive community to the west of Cambourne, but integrated into wider Cambourne in social and design terms.</p>
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## APPENDICES

- **Cambourne West Design Code Rev O DRAFT**
- **Quality panel comments and response**

### 1.0 SITE DESCRIPTION/AREA CONTEXT

- 1.1 The application site, which has an area of approximately 147.25ha, includes an area of land to the west of Lower Cambourne, the majority of which falls within the parish of Caxton. There are also parts of the site that fall within Cambourne and Elsworth parishes. The site wraps around Cambourne Secondary School and Cambourne Community Primary School and includes the existing roadway along Sheepfold Lane that serves them both. Swansley Wood Farm, which sits at the centre of the site and is now a small-scale employment site, is not included within the site. Although it is recognised that the majority of the site falls within Caxton parish for the purposes of this report the development is referred to as Cambourne West, reflecting that in planning terms it will function as an extension to the settlement of Cambourne. Also, for the purpose of this report where reference is made to 'the parish council' this would be Cambourne Parish Council and not Caxton Parish Council.
- 1.2. Northwards the site extends towards the dual carriageway of the A428. There are two bungalows and businesses to the south of the A428, which are not included within the site. Similarly the food outlets at Caxton Gibbet do not fall within the application site boundary. The A1198 defines the western boundary of the site and the Caxton bypass defines the southern boundary.
- 1.3 The eastern boundary of the site is defined by the mature landscaped boundary of Lower Cambourne. The site edged red includes the present vehicular access for Cambourne Secondary School. The spur that extends along Sheepfold Lane also includes part of the central green space between the northbound and southbound carriageways of Cambourne Road.
- 1.4. The site is predominantly in an arable agricultural use and is devoid of any significant vegetation other than the remnants of past hedgerows and mature trees and hedges along the A1198. There is a shallow valley running through the centre of the site that follows the topography of the land as it slopes to the

south. There are no significant areas of standing water within the site with runoff draining towards the Bourn Brook. Additional trees have been planted along the northern boundary as part of the A428 improvements and on bunds along the southern boundary of the site as part of the A1198 (Caxton Bypass) works.

- 1.5 There is a public footpath that extends from Caxton village to Swansley Wood Farm. A separate vehicular access off the A1198 serves the bungalows and storage container site to the south of the A428 and Swansley Wood Farm. There are also pedestrian and cycle routes through from Lower Cambourne to the secondary school campus.

## **2.0 THE PROPOSAL**

- 2.1 Outline planning permission was granted in December 2017 (subject to conditions and a S106 agreement) for Development of up to 2,350 residential units including affordable housing; retail, use classes A1-A5 (up to 1.04 ha); offices/light industry, use class B1 (up to 6.25ha); community and leisure facilities, use class D1 and D2 (up to 0.92 ha); Two primary schools and one secondary school (up to 11 ha), use class D1; three vehicular access points including the extension and modification of Sheepfold Lane, a four arm roundabout provided on A1198/Caxton Bypass and an access point off the A1198, south of the Caxton Gibbet to serve the proposed employment uses; a network of segregated pedestrian and cycle routes; sustainable drainage system and other infrastructure; together with associated earth works, parking, open space, including equipped play, playing fields and landscaping.
- 2.2 The planning permission incorporates a number of strategic- site wide conditions that must be discharged prior to, or alongside consideration of the first submission of reserved matters; the wording of Condition 08 is set out in full in annex 1 to this report.
- 2.3 The design code sets out a series of requirements or design “rules” that are either mandatory or recommended with ‘must’ being used for the former and ‘should’ being used for the latter. In the case of requirements where ‘should’ is used it would need to be demonstrated at the detailed planning stage for an alternative design to be considered acceptable. Within the code three character areas are identified as different districts with a different design approach to each reflecting the different context of each area.
- 2.4 The Council and the applicant team have been engaged in regular dialogue over the submission of the first Phase of the Reserved Matters and ensuring that this is consistent with the Code with a Design Quality Panel taking place on 3 June 2019.

## **3.0 SITE HISTORY**

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
S/2903/14/OL	Extension to Cambourne as set out in para 2.1 for up to 2350 residential units and supporting development.	Approved
S/1430/19/RM	Reserved Matters for Strategic Engineering (Highways & Drainage) for phase 1 for appearance, layout and scale following Outline planning permission S/2903/14/OL.	Under Consideration/ Awaiting amendment.
S/1358/19/NM	Non material amendment of planning permission S/2903/14/OL to amend the parameter plans.	Refused
S/1775/19/NM	Non material amendment of planning permission S/2903/14/OL to amend the parameter plans (revised submission).	Pending determination

A number of discharge of condition applications have also been submitted which have been or are being considered. Whilst some have been approved, a number have been refused and amendments are awaited to other aspects.

#### **4.0 PUBLICITY**

4.1 This application has been subject to consultation with statutory consultees.

#### **5.0 POLICY**

##### **5.1 Central Government Advice**

National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Planning Practice Guidance 2014

Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions (Annex A)

##### **5.2 South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan 2018**

- HQ/1 Design Principles
- HQ/2 Public Art- subject to a site wide condition discharge within the outline permission
- SS8 Cambourne West- part 2 specifically refers to master planning and design coding as well as supporting text.
- Chapter 4 relating to design to accommodate climate change although the site wide sustainability strategy, site wide flood risk strategy, site wide sustainable construction, Suds/ water use strategy, Construction management plan are subject to separate condition discharge requirements within the outline permission.
- Chapter 5 delivering high quality places
- Chapter 6 Protecting and enhancing natural and historic environment- specifically NH/2, NH/4 Biodiversity, NH/14 heritage assets.

## **Supplementary Planning Documents:**

Biodiversity SPD (July 2009)  
District Design Guide SPD (March 2010)  
Landscape in New Developments SPD (March 2010)  
Open Space in New Developments SPD (January 2009)  
Public Art SPD (March 2009)  
Trees & Development Sites SPD (January 2009)  
Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (November 2016)

### **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

Comments on the condition discharge submission

6.1 Cambourne Town Council - no formal comments received however the Town Council are meeting on 11 June 2019 to discuss the matter. Any updates will be reported accordingly.

6.2 Cambridgeshire County Council Highways  
A series of comments have been received from CCC as highway authority the latest of which was dated 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in response to rev. K.

Comments received in respect to inter alia;

- Design speeds
- Highway widths (carriageways, cycleways and footways)
- Appropriate highway materials and specification for adoption by CCC
- Clarification of terminology used with the code
- Relationship of highway drainage swales to highway trees

All of these matters have been addressed in revisions to the Design Code preceding revision L and followed through into Revision O. The CCC comments in respect to revision K/L are set out below; within which comments were made in relation to proposed parallel parking along adopted roads in Sheepfold (high density residential area), County Council not in favour of this being incorporated into the Design Code, as an approved parking solution, but could consider individual instances within reserved matters submissions- on planning merit.

### **7.0 Quality Panel comments**

7.1 An initial draft of the Design Code was tested at a quality panel meeting on the 27 June 2018. Resulting comments related to the following aspects of the code as needing further clarification.

- Relationship to employment site off Sheepfold Lane (northern part of the site)
- Clarification of scale and built form of educational campus square.

Alteration to illustrations and wording in respect to architecture and built form.

Wider palate of materials

Clarification re boundary

Simplification of strategic areas

The full testing day briefing text and meeting notes are included at annex 2.

## **8.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

8.1 No third party representations have been received.

## **9.0 ASSESSMENT**

9.1 Having regard to the consultation responses and inspection of the site and its surroundings, it is considered that the main issues raised by the design code are in terms of its ability to provide clear guidance that will aid designers in the preparation of reserved matters submissions and officers and other interested parties in considering reserved matters submissions; ultimately the aim of the code is to ensure the delivery of a high-quality well-designed development. The Design Code has been subject to several rounds of consultation and negotiations since it's initial submission. Revision 'L' was produced following a meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 and incorporates the final revisions to wording and illustrations requested by officers. This report considers the code on the basis of the following headings

Vision

Land use

Movement

Urban design principles

Materials

Landscape and open space

Character

It is noted that the outline planning permission requires a number of site wide pre-commencement conditions to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. There is a level of overlap between the design code and a number of these separate condition discharge submissions- however the design code is the coordinating document.

## **10.0 Vision**

10.1 The fundamental vision of the development is as set out in the planning application for a sustainable urban extension to the existing village of Cambourne, it is envisaged to include a range of new homes as well as necessary associate community services and facilities. The development is divided into 3 main character areas those of Sheepfold, Swansley Park and Woodfield, with a green infrastructure network linking them.

## **Land Use**

- 10.2 The prevailing land uses for the approved West Cambourne development are set out in the outline planning permission and the approved parameter plans. The design code is consistent with this requirement in terms of the uses, their spatial relationship and the quantum of development that it will deliver. The parameter plans from the planning permission are appended to the Design Code document itself.

## **Movement and Access**

- 10.3 The principles of the access and the key routes into and through the development are set out in the 'access and circulation' parameter plan, the design code is consistent with the general principles and provides additional details in respect to design and technical specification of the various routes and their relationship to the proposed built form.

Section 3.6 movement network sets out the key aims

- The overall strategy is to encourage walking and cycling within the development and to ensure effectively links to the rest of Cambourne.
  - Majority of roads to be designed to 20mph- parts of spine road to 30mph.
  - Comply with Cambridgeshire County Council adoption standards.
  - Provision of bridleway.
  - Accommodate a local bus route through the development (with indicated stop positions) as well as make provision for the proposed high-speed bus route within the northern periphery.
  - Minimise street clutter and signage.
  - Provide parking in accordance with development plan policy within a number of typologies.
- 10.4 The code identifies a street hierarchy and appropriate design specifications that will be incorporated into detailed designs within reserved matters. It incorporates a network of footpaths, and shared use paths (footway and cycleway) within the green infrastructure which provide the main routes through the site with links to the key social and educational infrastructure. The code also requires links to and from the housing parcels to enable convenient and safe access to the highway and footway network- the working detail of which will be incorporated into reserved matters submissions.

## **11.0 Urban Design Principles**

- 11.1 The Design Code is predicated on 4 key design principles, those of Character, Community, Connectivity and Climate and within the document these are recurring threads and inform spatial relationships and design responses within the Code.
- 11.2 The urban design principles within the Design Code follow closely the approved parameter plans within the outline permission, these parameter plans define and fix the following aspects of the development;

- Principles and parameters
- Tree retention
- Access and circulation
- Open space
- Landscape and ecology
- Development areas
- Building heights

## **12.0 Materials**

- 12.1 The code contains a section in relation to the general material palette proposed for the development as well as area specific details highlighting varied material palettes for the differing character areas.
- 12.2 In addition to identifying appropriate material and combinations the code is also explicit in respect to material and features which will be unacceptable- such as small area of 'stuck on' cladding or render.
- 12.3 Overall the materials proposed and the respective palettes proposed in relation to the character areas.
- 12.4 The materials for the public realm included material that will be adoptable by the County Council as Local Highway Authority and ensuring that the highest quality environment is secured.

## **13.0 Landscape and Open Space**

- 13.1 The landscape core of the development is considered to be critical to the design success of the development, the parameter plans set out the landscape areas and net developable areas in accordance with development plan policy.
- 13.2 Within the design Code the relationship of building blocks to the strategic open space is in design and access terms is identified as being critical - a point raised by the Quality Design Panel. Subsequent amendments to the code have addressed the edges and interaction between the landscape and the built form and improved the definition of key frontages.
- 13.3 Much of the strategic footpath and cycle way network for the development is incorporated into the open space network to link to the existing village of lower Cambourne, as well as enable and encourage trips with the site to be undertaken in a convenient and attractive environment.
- 13.4 The quantum of open space within the whole site is considered to be acceptable. Details of the provision of LAPs and incidental open space within the building blocks is a detail matter for reserved matters.

## **14.0 Character Areas**

- 14.1 The Design Code identifies 3-character areas across the site, those of Sheepfold, Swansley Park and Woodfield.

### **Sheepfold**

- 14.2 Sheepfold is the northernmost residential area and incorporates the northern road link from the Sheepfold Lane into Cambourne West whilst not compromising the delivery of a principal route from the Cambourne Business Park.

- 14.3 Sheepfold is the highest density area with an increased density of 50-55dph from the approved outline planning permission density of 45dph. Building heights of up to 3 storeys set in a rectilinear format, tight to the urban form of streets with a contemporary approach which would respond to the existing secondary school and the Council Offices. It is also important that space for the community centre is retained.

### **Swansley Park**

- 14.6 Swansley Park is the southernmost residential area and incorporates the main pedestrian/ cycle way linkage to Lower Cambourne. It is predominantly residential and varies in density between 30 and 45 dph. Generally, the lower densities front open space with higher densities fronting transportation routes. Building heights are set within the parameter plans from the outline but will generally be 2 storeys with 2.5 and 3 storey development on key frontages. Phase 1 of the development (as set out in the phasing plan condition discharge) shows development within both Sheepfold and Swansley Park along the primary road (bus route) as being phase 1- for which reserved matters are being prepared. The entrance area (in a Crescent shape) would be a key and important entrance to Cambourne West and this requires high quality design in the landscaping and built form.

### **Woodfields**

- 14.8 Woodfields is the third residential area (and the largest- containing almost half of the total homes) and will be the last to be built, it forms the north western portion of the site and abuts the commercial development at Caxton Gibbet. In terms of density, building heights and overall character is it is similar to Swansley Park. The 3 residential areas are set within high quality green infrastructure structure which has been approved in outline within the parameter plans approved within the outline planning permission.

## **15.0 Other Matters**

- 15.1 Design responses to quality panels comments- the panel raised a number of points and criticisms in respect to the Design Code at its testing day in June 2018. In response the current version (O) incorporates;
- Reduction in the number of separate character areas.
  - Clarification in relation to the purpose and characteristics of key buildings and frontages.

- Inclusion of approved parameter plans from the outline planning permission.
- An expanded material palette.
- Further details and examples of good and bad detailing.
- Better understanding of the frontages of built form to the open space identifying different solutions to different edge functions.
- Clarity in respect to boundary treatments.
- Rationalisation and justification in respect to appropriate parking solutions and an acknowledgement that rear court parking should be avoided unless it is absolutely necessary.

- 15.2 There is also the matter of density (Figure 30) which is inconsistent with the proposed parameter plans and could lead to increased numbers. The submitted parameter plans require amendment to reflect a character to Sheepfold that does not appear in isolation. There are also a number of typographical errors and inconsistencies which require amendment.
- 15.3 Revision O DRAFT was submitted to the council in May 2019 and has been subject to final checking and review. A meeting was held with the applicant team on 29 May 2019 to highlight the issues and corrections required and it has been requested that they agree to the revisions and clarifications requested as a basis to keep the application on the agenda for the June meeting.
- 15.4 Revisions include:
- Typographical corrections
  - Amendments to the Parameter plans to reflect the latest submission under S/1775/19/NM;
  - Corrections to Sheepfold Character Area, in particular, Figures 74 and 75;
  - Corrections to ensure that diagrammatically the proposals meet the design aspirations and parameter plans
- 15.5 Rather than miss a committee cycle to secure revisions prior to presentation to committee it is recommended that delegated authority is granted to officers to secure the revisions and to approve the Design Code.
- 15.6 It is noted that the designs and layouts of the potential first phase have been submitted to the Cambridgeshire Design Quality Panel following extensive discussions.

## **16.0 CONCLUSION**

- 16.1 It is a condition of the Outline planning permission that the Design Code is submitted to and approved in writing by the council prior to or alongside submission of Reserved Matters. The design code is considered to be an essential tool to ensure design quality is encapsulated within the permission and maintained throughout a major development.

The applicants have been in discussion with the officers for some time and

through a series of revisions we now have revision 'O' which addresses the key design quality issues raised by officers. Officers are now satisfied that the Design Code (with the requested additions) is sufficiently detailed and robust to guide design and maintain quality throughout the construction of the development.

**17.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**That Committee delegate approval of the amended Cambourne West Design Code to officers pending the receipt of additional details and reassurances in relation to matters highlighted in section 15 above.**