

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee

5th July 2006

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

**S/0828/06/RM - Impington
10 Flats, 18 Houses and Associated Garages
Parcel N1, Arbury Camp, Kings Hedges Road, Cambridge
For George Wimpey East Anglia Ltd**

**Recommendation: Approval (Major Application)
Date for Determination: 27th July 2006 (13 week)**

Site and Proposal

1. The 0.52 hectare application site is towards the eastern end of Arbury Camp where the site starts to narrow between Kings Hedges Road and the A14. It is situated between the two eastern most new vehicular accesses into the site closest to the new road (No. 6) near Buchan Street. The application site is bounded to the north by a new road (No. 8) with an area of public open space (POS 5) lying beyond the north. The south western boundary is marked by a straight line which was formerly marked by a line of conifer trees (now removed). A further parcel of land to be developed for housing (Parcel G) lies beyond this tree line and adjacent to the principal access (Road No. 6D) from Kings Hedges Road.
2. The application dated 27th April 2006 seeks reserved matter consent for siting, design, means of access and landscaping to 10 flats and 18 houses. The majority of the 28 dwellings are 3 storey buildings (9 are 2 storey). Those fronting the principal internal road (No. 8) are predominantly 3 storey except the 4 units adjoining either side of openings in development. A key focal building is proposed for the western corner where road No. 8 enters the area of the "hedges". This will provide a gateway entrance to the site with a mirror image on parcel P opposite. The site includes a small frontage of 4 dwellings to the route of the Cambridge Guided Bus and Kings Hedges Road. A centrally located LAP (Local Area of Play) is overlooked by the surrounding dwellings. The site area is 0.5 hectare and the density equates to 56 dwellings to the hectare. The 28 dwellings comprise 10 two bedroomed properties, 16 four bedroomed and 2 five bedroomed properties.

Planning History

3. Outline planning consent was granted 14th June 2005 following the signing of a Section 106 agreement that covered the full range of matters including education, transport, affordable housing, sustainability, community facilities, public open space and design guidance.
4. Full planning consent was granted 13th May 2005 for strategic infrastructure comprising spine roads and footways, cycle ways, surface water drainage, foul water drainage and strategic services.
5. At the 2nd November 2005 Development and Conservation Control Committee Members refused reserved matter consent for 6 flats (affordable housing) on land

parcel A1. Under delegated powers reserved matter consent has been granted for a total of 160 dwellings on land parcels A2 (Persimmon Homes), A3, (Willmott Dixon Affordable Housing) L1, and M1. (Wimpey)

6. A reserved matter planning application for land parcels P and N1 was withdrawn 6th March following officer's advice that the proposal was too close to the line of trees proposed along the southern and western boundary.

Planning Policy

7. The development of the Cambridge Northern Fringe (CNF West) is the first of a number of major developments on the edge of Cambridge. The site was allocated for mixed use development in the 2004 Local Plan.
8. Structure Plan 2003 policy p1/3 requires a high standard of design for all new developments, provides a sense of place which creates distinctive skylines, focal points and land marks, includes variety and surprise within a unified design.
9. A Design Guide has been prepared which shows the site for a mix of 2½ /3 storey housing. The draft Design Guide identifies that the site should contain a key building and a LAP (Local Area of Play).

Consultation

10. **Impington Parish Council** recommends refusal based on the following:
 - (a) Unexciting design, particularly unhappy about those fronting Kings Hedges Road.
 - (b) Mix of housing types with too many properties with four or more bedrooms.
 - (c) No parking provision for the amount of bedrooms.
 - (d) Lack of provision for waste and recycling bins.
 - (e) Canopy over the front door.
 - (f) Object to flat design and concern about materials.
 - (g) Unnecessary variety of window styles within a small area of space.
11. **The Local Highway Authority** has no objection in principle. Thought should be given to protecting pedestrians from vehicles reversing from garages, perhaps by careful siting of cobles. The applicant is encouraged to address a number of small details.
12. **Cambridge City Council** comments are awaited.
13. **The Police Architectural Liaison Officer** has commented:

“Whilst a degree of permeability is necessary for community interaction, too many footpaths and through routes in the development make crime easier to commit, providing escape routes. Car parking hidden from view and from active dwelling frontages can increase crime. The mews type development may assist natural surveillance by providing frontages in what is predominantly a rear dwelling area and

the degree of natural surveillance may further be enhanced by the taller buildings. However, it is noted there are proposals to include ground floor windows on dwellings adjoining entrances to the site without the provision of semi-private/defensible space, perhaps in the form of a planting strip. There is a danger that conflict may arise between resident's enjoyment of their living rooms and those using apparently public space immediately outside. Street lighting in the mews and parking areas should be column mounted, white down lighting to BS Standards."

14. **The Ecology Officer** has a holding objection. No provision has been made for biodiversity. No consideration appears to have been given to the Arbury Ecological Management Plan nor the Design Guide.
15. **The Arts Officer** has noted consultation with representatives of George Wimpey plc regarding public art is in progress (via Commissions East) and a response is awaited.
16. **The Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service** has commented that additional water supplies for firefighting are not required.
17. **SCDC Commercial Services** have provided information on the required refuse collection points for the flats. The refuse collection vehicle would need access to the car park and the mews to empty the bins from the refuse store and the houses. With regard to the houses, as there is insufficient space at the front of all houses to store wheeled bins, they will have to be collected from the rear, all houses will therefore require an access gate into the rear garden, accessible from the car park.
18. **SCDC Environment Health Officer** comments require the applicants to demonstrate they conform to condition 10 of the outline permission relating to noise attenuation.
19. The **Arbury Camp Design Review Panel** were presented with Wimpey's housing schemes for L1, M, N1 and P in January 2006. The current designs for N1 and P remain principally the same in this resubmission. The Panel felt that it was not easy to assess the detail of these proposals given their fragmented nature and the shortness of time for the presentation and discussion. However, it was felt that they appeared to respond well to the Design Guide in their overall planning and layout. The question of the different character areas was raised. These plots fell within 'The Hedges' neighbourhood, and it was not immediately obvious how this area was to be made distinct from the other neighbourhoods. Some concern was expressed about the amount of colour that was being proposed in this scheme, with large areas of deep blue and light blue shown.
20. The **Consultant Landscape Design Officer** has commented that the trees and hedge line are now all within the boundary of the adjacent plot G. Confirmation that this can be delivered is suggested. It is requested that the plans show the trees to be planted adjacent to the site are shown to ensure key windows are not adversely affected by the approved structural tree planting. Full landscaping details are still required.

Representations

21. None received.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

22. The principle of residential development on the site has already been established by the granting of outline permission. The number of dwellings accords with the phasing plan, Condition 3 (housing mix) of the main outline planning consent and with the Design Guide. The proposed mix is for 16 four bedroomed properties and 10 two Bedroomed properties. This relatively high number of larger properties is compensated by the approved scheme for Wimpey on parcel M to the East which has a higher number of 2 bedroomed properties.
23. This application (together with S/0829/06/RM parcel P on this agenda) is a resubmission following a withdrawal of a previous application for the combined parcels, N1 and P. The previous application encountered difficulties due to the close proximity of the dwelling units to the line of trees proposed along the south western boundary. The Parish Council had previously made no recommendation but raised concerns regarding the management of car parking outside the site, ensuring the developers verbal commitment to eco homes is honoured, wishing to see a managed approach to the use of colour throughout the site and wishing to see vertical features as discussed with regard to A3 carried throughout (including L1 and M) to give continuity to the street scene. Officers' single concern at the time of withdrawal was the proximity of the buildings to the line of trees to the southwest. The current application has repositioned the trees onto the adjoining parcel G and it has been confirmed that they are a minimum of 6 metres from the building frontages. The applicants have been asked to extend the line of trees to link with the front edge of the site with the Cambridge Guided Bus. This is to give a clear and strong visual feature viewed from all parts of the site. If the line of trees is such extended then one tree will be closer than the required 6 metres away from the building. I have asked the applicant to look again at the design at this point and redesign Plot 22. Provided this matter is satisfactorily reconsidered then no objection is raised. With regard to the Parish Council's concerns, this design has already been accepted with respect of Parcels L1 and M. The designs have the support of the Design Review Panel and propose a contemporary design with clean lines and I can see no reason to object. With regards to the Police Architectural Liaison Officer's comments it is acknowledged that increasing permeability can increase potential for crime. The addition of windows is designed to increase surveillance but where they are on the ground floor and unnecessary I will ask the architect to look again as to whether they can be omitted. The housing mix is in accordance with the overall requirements and the car parking numbers are only just short (6 spaces) of the 1.5 per dwelling indicated in the Design Guide. I am seeking classification from the applicant's architect regarding the provision of storage for refuse bins. I cannot agree that there is a design problem with the canopies over the door which are simple and unobtrusive. The application is deficient in the way it deals with the provision of landscaping detail, Public Art, Ecology and, as the Parish Council previously raised, there needs to be a check that the Eco Homes standard is honoured. These matters can be addressed via planning conditions.

Recommendation

24. Subject to receipt of an amended plan with regards to Plot 22 adjacent to Kings Hedges Road, approval of reserved matters (siting and design of buildings and layout of site and access detail) pursuant to outline permission S/2379/01/O.

Additional conditions:

1. Sc5a – Details of materials for external walls, roofs and all surface treatments (Rc5a);
2. Sc51 – Landscaping (Rc51);
3. Sc52 – Implementation of landscaping (Rc52);
4. Sc60 – Details of all boundary treatment (Rc60);
5. Ecology
6. Arts
7. Sustainability

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: S/2379/01/O
- Draft Design Guide May 2006

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