

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT Development Control and Conservation 7th July 2004
TO: Committee
AUTHOR/S Director of Development Services

S/6232/04/RM – Cambourne

26 Dwellings at GC20, Land off Jeavons Lane, Cambourne for Granta Housing Trust Ltd

Recommendation: Approval subject to the Signing of a Section 106 Agreement and Planning Conditions

Site and Proposal

1. The site comprises of a parcel of land 0.81 hectares (2 acres), located on the southern part of Greater Cambourne.
2. The Reserved Matter application was received on 7th January 2004, and proposes 26 affordable dwellings at a density of 32 dwellings per hectare. These have been designed to provide a variety of styles and types, ranging from bungalows, one and a half storey, two storey houses and 2 storey flats. The scheme was amended by drawings franked 24th May 2004.
3. The houses provided would be 6 x 1 bedroom flats, 2 x 2 bedroom bungalows, 13 x 2 bedroom houses and 5 x 3 bedroom houses with the provision of 44 parking spaces. The road within the site is in the form of a crescent, laid out in block paving and lined by trees. There are two pedestrian links within the site linking these proposals to GC18 and the existing built GC14. All of these houses are for rent.

Planning History

4. This site is allocated in the Masterplan as an area for housing identified as GC20. In the original Masterplan, this area was allocated a notional 22 units.
5. Cambourne has planning permission for 3000 houses + 10% reserve. Within the development, under the terms of the s106 agreement, the developers are required to provide 37 acres (15 hectares) of free, serviced land allocated in tranches throughout the site, with the total number of dwellings on that land not exceeding 650.
6. During the course of the development of Cambourne, it has emerged that the number of affordable housing units allocated in the Masterplan on that 37 acres only numbered 516, a shortfall of 134 units.

7. The number of units on this site has increased from the notional 22 to 26 in order to help address the shortfall in overall number of affordable units.

Policy

8. Policies Cambourne 1 and 2 of the Local Plan 2004 require development at Cambourne to accord with the Masterplan, Design Guide, and the themes embraced by Government guidance relating to the creation of sustainable residential communities.

Consultations

9. **Bourn Parish Council** – has no comment.
10. **Caxton Parish Council** - recommends approval.
11. **The Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC)** – a forerunner of the Parish Council recommends refusal. The principal objection is the density of the site in excess of that originally agreed in the master plan (30% increase).
12. **The Local Highway Authority** – has no objection subject to conditions.
13. **The County Archaeologist** – comments awaited.
14. **The Trees and Landscape Officer** – has no objection subject to landscaping conditions.
15. **The Council's Ecologist** – no comment subject to conditions.
16. **Angian Water Authority** – has no objection.
17. **The Environment Agency** – no objection subject to conditions.
18. **The Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – has several comments regarding the provision of car parking spaces within the site, and the orientation of the dwellings.
19. **Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service** – comments awaited

Planning Comments – Key Issues

Density Issues

20. There has been an increase from the 'notional' allocation in the original Masterplan, however, it is important that schemes are design led, and that the overall vision for Cambourne as a settlement is not lost. It is important to be mindful of the increase in numbers of dwellings and the MLC raises concerns regarding the increase in numbers. This has been explained under 'Planning History' and, as indicated above, will actually assist with making up the overall shortfall in the allocation of affordable housing.
21. The impact of these 'additional' numbers of affordable units on the overall total number of units is being closely monitored. The issue is likely to be brought to the fore and addressed later this year, through the Local Development Framework when the Council will revisit the issue, as required by the Inspector's Report for Local Plan No. 2 and the appeal into the Cambourne Consortium's proposal to

increase development at Cambourne due to be determined in September/October, 2004.

Design Issues

22. The scheme is generally in accordance with the approved Design Brief for the site, with an increase in density being within the built form of the development. The design of the individual units generally provides overlooking of public areas and parking courts. This provides a natural surveillance of those potentially vulnerable areas. The Police Liaison Architectural Officer highlights particular around the parking court and landscaping areas. However, the consideration of these comments should be read against the good design of the site and it is considered that the development proposals satisfactorily address all the planning design issues.

Parking Issues

23. The development indicates the provision of 44 parking spaces, 10 of which are identified as visitor parking, providing an average designated allocation to individual dwellings of 1.4 car parking spaces per dwelling. The South Cambridgeshire District Plan policy TP1 supports a maximum of an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, with an addition of further spaces for short-term parking.

Landscaping Issues

24. Concern has been raised by the Police Liaison Officer that, should the landscaping to plots 1 –2 remain, then visibility of these units is obscured and an element of natural surveillance is lost. However, these particular plots have their own front windows overlooking the parking area and natural surveillance of these plots can also be achieved by plots 4 and 5. He also draws attention to the link on the western border of the site which links to GC18 and raises concern regarding the provision of trees within that area. However, it is considered that the removal of trees from the development would create a harsh environment, which would fail to provide a sense of community and ambiance, which affords a pleasant environment in which to live.

Conclusion

25. The proposals offer a sustainable solution to the development of this area of land within Cambourne. As this is a scheme comprising of entirely affordable housing, the decision notice will be issued only once the conditions have been agreed and a Section 106 signed.

Recommendation

26. Delegated powers to approve as amended by drawings franked 24th May 2004, subject to:
 - a. The prior signing of a Section 106 agreement, and
 - b. The provision of the appropriate planning conditions relating to materials, landscaping, parking and highways, ecology, securing an appropriate contractor's compound, location of meter boxes.

Reasons for approval

1. The approved development is considered generally to accord with the Development Plan and particularly the following policies:

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003: P1/3
(Sustainable Design in Built Development).

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: SE7 (Cambourne), **HG10**
(Housing Design) TP1 (Sustainable Transport).

2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Residential amenity, including loss of light and overlooking/loss of privacy;
 - Affect on the character and appearance of the area;
 - Affect on wildlife;
 - Need for clarification of landscaping and boundary treatments; and
 - Housing need.
3. All other material planning considerations have been taken into account. None is of such significance as to outweigh the reason for the decision to approve the planning application.

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/1371/92/0 and S/6232/04/RM
Cambourne Master Plan and Design Guide

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