

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

1st August 2007

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Corporate Manager - Planning and Sustainable Communities

CAMBOURNE PHASE 7 UPPER CAMBOURNE DEVELOPMENT BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Purpose

1. To seek delegated powers to approve / refuse the Cambourne Phase 7 Upper Cambourne Development Briefing Document ("the Brief") for Development Control purposes as part of the Cambourne Design Guide.

Background

2. The draft Brief has been prepared by the Cambourne Developers' masterplanners, Randall Thorp, and has been discussed and amended following Planning Officers' advice. It is intended to guide the continuity of development in Upper Cambourne in accordance with the Outline planning permission for 3,300 dwellings. Phase 7 is the last phase under the 3,300 permission, and future phases will have to comply with whatever requirements are set out in the new outline planning permission and associated Section 10 Agreement, the application for which is due to be submitted this summer. Nevertheless, in view of the advanced status of the Local Development Framework (LDF), this phase also needs to be as compatible as legally possible with progress towards the future growth of Cambourne making efficient use of land. The Brief complies with the approved Housing Schedule which gives the potential dwelling numbers for parcels in this Phase.
3. The Brief covers housing parcels in the northern part of Upper Cambourne, between the Vine School / village green and the A428, wrapping around the development sites allocated for Phase 6. The phase 7 parcels are private house-builder sites UC07, 08 and 09, and housing association sites UC10, 11 and 12.

Local Development Framework

4. **Core Strategy** – sets the scene within the context of the Community Strategy aims of active, safe and healthy communities, building successful new communities, good access to services, quality homes for all, and a high quality environment. The Core Strategy asserts the Cornerstone of Sustainability and states Strategic Objectives including (g) To ensure development addresses sustainability issues, including climate change mitigation and adaptation issues, maximising recycling and reuse of resources, and reduce waste and pollution, and (i) To ensure that any new development results in appropriate provision for the protection and enhancement of native biodiversity. Opportunities for increased access to the countryside and enjoyment of biodiversity should be viewed as integral requirements of new development.
5. Cambourne is identified in **Policy ST/4 Rural Centres** as a rural centre; since these "comprise the most sustainable villages in South Cambridgeshire there is no strategic constraint on the amount of development of land for housing that can come forward within the village frameworks, provided that the proposals are in accordance with the policies in the Plan."

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (Local Plan)

6. **Cambourne 1** – Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan
Cambourne 2 – Development in accordance with Cambourne Design Guide
7. **SE2** – Rural Growth Settlements – Development should provide an appropriate mix of dwellings in terms of size, type and affordability and should achieve a minimum density of 30 dph unless there are strong design grounds for not doing so.
8. **SE7** – Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide.
9. **HG10** – housing mix to include a range of types and sizes, including 1 and 2 bedroom dwellings, making the best use of the site and promoting a sense of community which reflects local needs. The design and layout should be informed by the wider character and context of the local townscape and landscape. Schemes should also achieve high quality design and distinctiveness, avoiding inflexible standards and promoting energy efficiency.
10. **TP1** – Promotion of sustainable transport choices, restriction of car parking to the maximum levels in appendix 7/1.
11. **EN5** – retention of natural features, new planting appropriate to the character of development, its landscape setting and the biodiversity of the locality.
12. The approved **Cambourne Master Plan** identifies this area for housing.
13. The approved **Cambourne Design Guide** describes the character of Upper Cambourne as the quietest and most secluded of the villages being “self-contained at the end of the village road with no further connection except for buses. ”The Design Guide emphasis is on the rural character, both in materials used and the structural tree framework and spacious layout.
14. The **Cambourne Highway Design Guide** picks up the above theme, and describes the spine road having a wide corridor up to the Green, the section up to the Green to be very green, with trees planted as a “remnant avenue”, and the paths and buildings set back from the carriageway, generous front gardens with medium/tall enclosures mainly hedges. Features to capitalise on are the entrance to the village and the proposed pond at the south end of the village green.
15. **South Cambridgeshire Design Guide Draft supplementary planning document 2005** – at section 2.4 emphasises sustainability by resource efficiency, inclusiveness, biodiversity, and local facilities. Further advice on resource efficiency is given at section 3.5 Housing Design. Part 3 deals with larger development sites and picks out some of the elements of urban design which help to create distinctive and usable places; particularly helpful in Phase 6 will be the use of “landmarks” and waymarkers” which would emphasise, for example, the arrival of the spine road at the village green, and a few of the more important corner buildings at junctions.

Considerations

16. The number of houses intended for this phase complies with the approved Housing Schedule. It continues to concentrate the higher density areas (including these parcels) around the spine roads which could become public transport routes. The Brief sets out the context of the existing roads and established hedgerows and takes

advantage of these by ensuring their retention as part of the development. The opportunity taken within phase 6 to create a central greenway alongside the east-west hedge has also been continued within this phase. Affordable housing sites have direct access to a spine road, thus avoiding the “landlocking” of sites which might otherwise await progress on adjacent private housing parcels.

17. The movement network is set out to facilitate logical progression from the spine roads, easy access to the school and back towards the village centre for both vehicles and pedestrians, and the use of as few routes as possible through the existing hedgerows.
18. Within the parcels, the emphasis is on permeability for pedestrians and cyclists, and the provision of LAPs that could be linked as parts of narrower green corridors to enable continuous habitat.

Consultations

19. Cambourne Parish Council will be considering this document at its meeting on 7th August, hence my request for delegated powers to approve / refuse the Brief once the Parish Council's comments have been taken into account.
20. Highways Agency – it would appear that the application will not have a detrimental effect on the A428 at this location; therefore the Agency would not wish to comment further on the document.

Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives

21.	Affordable Homes	Facilitating the development of affordable housing Parcels UC10, 11 and 12
	Customer Service	Providing consistent and transparent planning advice
	Northstowe and other growth areas	Facilitating the continuing growth of Cambourne
	Quality, Accessible Services	Facilitating accessible layouts for service and transport providers.
	Village Life	Safeguarding the separate character of Upper Cambourne
	Sustainability	The LDF Core Strategy and SCDC Design Guide must be acknowledged and expressed.
	Partnership	Cooperation with the Cambourne Developer to deliver appropriate development.

Conclusions/Summary

22. The Brief has a difficult task to advise developers on appropriate development in what is effectively a state of policy limbo. The planning applications to be made for these parcels will be reserved matters under the original outline permission and S106 Agreement, so it is not possible to impose the new LDF policies upon them, except where those policies do not conflict with the previous local plan policies. Nevertheless, the developers acknowledge the importance of making a step change to more sustainable development in the next phases (which will be the subject of the new outline application to be considered under the new LDF). They have consequently made additions to the Brief to ensure this phase is an incremental improvement over Phase 6.

23. Overall, the Brief is a helpful framework for the movement network, the preservation and creation of green spaces and vistas, and the general density character of this Phase. It is therefore requested that, subject to the Parish Council's comments, delegated powers to approve or refuse the Brief be granted to the Corporate Manager (Planning and Sustainable Communities).

Recommendation

24. Delegated powers be given for approval or refusal of the Phase 7 Upper Cambourne Development Briefing Document Rev D, July 2007, subject to there being no additional or conflicting comments from the Parish Council that cannot be overcome by amendment or clarification.

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

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004
Local Development Framework 2007 Core Strategy
South Cambridgeshire Design Guide Draft supplementary planning document 2005
Cambourne Master Plan Report
Cambourne Design Guide
Cambourne Highway Design Guide
Phase 7 Upper Cambourne Development Briefing Document Rev D, July 2007

Contact Officer: Kate Wood, Principal Planning Officer (Major Developments)
Telephone: (01954) 713264