

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

2nd April 2008

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

S/0012/08/RM - CAMBOURNE

51 Dwellings and Associated Infrastructure at Land Parcel UC09, Upper Cambourne

Recommendation: Approval

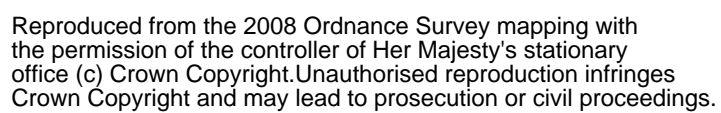
Date for Determination: 4th April 2008

Notes:

This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination because Cambourne Parish Council has recommended refusal of the application.

Site and Proposal

1. This 1.47 hectare site comprises a square shaped piece of land in the heart of the northern part of Upper Cambourne. It is bounded on the west side by a spine road set within the "northern greenway", specifically with an existing hedge along the site boundary. Beyond the southern boundary is presently a pre-existing concrete road which will eventually become the east-west greenway, and potentially part of the bus route in this area. To the north and east are further housing development parcels, within a future phase of development. The site is flat and vacant.
2. The application, received on 4th January 2008 and amended on 7th March 2008, proposes 51 dwellings and associated roads, garages and open space. These comprise 8 x 2-bed units (including 2 flats over garages), 22 x 3-bed, 16 x 4-bed and 5 x 5-bed. The density of the site would be 34.6 dwellings per hectare. As amended the layout shows an estate road running through the site roughly east-west with a central dog-leg that has minor access roads leading off it. Running through the dog-leg is a north-south line of trees, providing a green corridor through the site including a wider part which would be a Local Area for Play (LAP). Within this framework the houses are arranged to present frontages to the road and greenway beyond the western and southern boundaries and to face the LAP to provide natural surveillance. As well as the general north-south vista created by the run of trees through the site, the straight-line view from the access leads the eye along a private drive to a focal tree, and views back into the site from the adjacent parcels are provided with houses as visual stops.
3. The layout has been arranged to meet the density character requirements of the briefing Document, which requires high density in the western half, medium density in the north eastern quadrant and lower density in the south eastern quadrant. In the western half, this has resulted in more parking courts being provided as a way of achieving houses placed closer together. However these have been negotiated so that the northern parking court is more like a mews street, with a pedestrian / cycle route through and two overlooking flats-over-garages. The other 2 parking courts have been split up to have as few households as possible served off them and a condition will ensure they are well-lit.



Planning Committee April 2008

Planning History

4. Outline permission granted for 3300 dwellings in April 2004.
5. Phase 7 Briefing Document Revision E approved by Planning Committee in August 2007.
6. The approved Housing/Phasing Schedule shows parcel UC09 having an allocation of 51 dwellings.

Planning Policy

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003:

7. **P1/3** – Sustainable Design in Built Development, P5/4 Meeting Locally Identified Housing Needs.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies:

8. **Cambourne 2** – Development in accordance with Cambourne Design Guide.
9. **SE7** – Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide.

Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007:

10. **STa-k** Objectives arising from the Strategic Vision for South Cambridgeshire.

Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007:

11. **DP/1** requires development to demonstrate that it is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.
12. **DP/2** requires the design of new development to be of high quality, with criteria listed, and content for design and access statements.
13. **DP/3** sets development criteria, a checklist to ensure all requirements are met.
14. **DP/6** sets criteria for the sustainable construction methods to protect resources and amenities.
15. **NE/6** requires positive biodiversity gain.
16. **NE/14** sets standards for lighting proposals.
17. **TR/1** encourages planning for more sustainable travel through accessibility, alternative modes, and parking levels. **TR/2** sets parking standards.

Consultations

18. **Cambourne Parish Council** recommended refusal of the original plans on the following grounds:

- a) “The Council considered that the layout was unimaginative and had a regimented appearance, which was below the standard of design expected in Cambourne and the Design Guides.
- b) The site is laid out to give the maximum overlooking and appears to be number led rather than design led contrary to the Development Briefing Document.
- c) The proposal appears to take no account of the connectivity, permeability and cohesion with adjoining parcels of land contrary to the Development Briefing Document.
- d) It is not clear how the adjacent development parcels merge to ensure that UC09 connects visually with adjoining parcels
- e) The access from the spine road gives the impression of a canyon and does not give the impression it is the route into a large number of dwellings.
- f) There is no clear definition of the route through the site especially adjacent to the LAP where access roads converge.
- g) The siting of the visitors parking adjacent to the LAP is a safety hazard and will cause an obstruction on route to the adjoining parcels.
- h) Long narrow drives are impractical for parking of multiple cars.
- i) The Lap although sited in accordance with the design guide and play strategy the layout and shape does not appear conducive of safe creative play.
- j) Plots 36- 41 appear to be sited too close to the southern boundary restricting access to the Carports especially if visitor parking is used and adjoining properties have their cars in their carports. There is also insufficient turning space for cars using the visitor spaces.
- k) Central parking courts should be avoided as they cause safety concerns, and require management schemes to manage which cause concerns in the future. These should be designed out where possible. If they cannot be designed out alternative management schemes should be investigated.
- l) The parcel does not appear to be pedestrian friendly area.
- m) The Parish Council considered that the application was of poor quality. The Council considered that the application would have benefited from pre-planning consultation with the Parish Council so they could understand the design process for the parcel.”

Amended plans – comments to be reported verbally.

19. The **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** is concerned about too much permeability which might provide offenders with additional access and escape routes together with the anonymity they seek. The northern parking court area has increased vulnerability of dwellings and parked vehicles to crime, and similarly the path between plots 45 and 46. Parking in courtyards should be avoided as this provides criminal access to the rear of dwellings via fences or gates. Such courts should be protected by a gate and seen as private rather than public so that uncontrolled through passage should not be available. Similarly, adjoining parking courts create the opportunity for access between them by using cars as climbing aids.

To guard against vandalism, dwellings should have clearly identifiable defensible space such as planting strips along exposed elevations, especially where there are ground floor windows adjacent to public space such as plots 15, 36 and 49. The areas to the rear of plot 11, and rear of plots 9, 10 and 12 should be gated off to

provide additional security and prevent the area becoming attractive for people to gather unseen. Roads, communal driveways, footpaths and parking courts should be lit.

20. **County Archaeologist** – no further archaeological investigation necessary.

Representations

21. None received.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

22. This reserved matters application continues the build out of Upper Cambourne under the original outline permission granted in 1994. It is not dependant on the new application for 950 extra homes, which is currently under consideration. It complies with the approved Phase 7 Development Briefing Document in that the western half of the site has a higher density character than the east, and the roads and play spaces are provided as required. A distinct advantage of the scheme is the north-south green corridor through the site which gives is visual legibility and provides a route for wildlife rather than simply creating isolated greenspace habitats. The hedge on the western boundary is retained, and a strong frontage is presented to the southern boundary with the greenway.
23. The sites falls within the “northern area” character zone which it notes as having a strong association with the boundary woodlands. The Briefing Document requires layouts to allow views through to the woodlands which will be achieved by the green corridor which can be continued to the woodland through the adjacent parcel. It also requires timber elements within the materials pallet, which have been provided in the elevational treatments. There is also variation in height as required by the Brief.
24. The Parish Council’s concerns are noted. However, the required connectivity with adjacent parcels is provided, through the road link to the east, and the pedestrian links to the north, west and to the greenway to the south. The adjacent parcels have yet to be designed so visual connection with them will be dictated by this parcel. Nevertheless, the layout allows for runs of houses to be continued into the next sites, and there are no awkward relationships with boundaries that would make the design of the adjacent parcels difficult. The requirements of the Briefing Document will assure visual connectivity. The entrance to the site from the spine road is similar to many others in Cambourne and is in some ways a consequence of the need for houses to face the spine road rather than the estate road, that being the priority in terms of the street scene. In positive terms it means that the main route along the spine road is more obvious, leading to less confusion as to the routes through the settlement. The definition of the route through the site will be achieved through a condition requiring the agreement of surfacing materials, so that side roads ending in a cul-de-sac are surfaced differently, leaving the main route clearly defined. The visitor parking adjacent to the LAP has been removed in the amended plans. Parking standards are met appropriately and the LAP has a clear 100sq.m. square shape within its overall larger shape so that it is useable, and will be appropriately fenced for safety and access. The concerns about parking for plots 36- 41 appearing to have restricted access to their carports has been demonstrated by a “swept path” drawn over the layout, although the length of access is short enough for vehicles to reverse out into the cul-de-sac access road. It is not agreed that the parcel does not appear to be pedestrian friendly area, as several of the footpaths through the site, especially north-south, are segregated from the highway by verges. There are clear pedestrian routes on footpaths and shared surfaces in cul-de-sac locations.

25. The Police Architectural Liaison Officer's comments have been partly addressed through the amended plans, and landscaping and lighting conditions will be added.

Recommendation

26. APPROVE reserved matters of layout, scale, appearance, access and principles of landscaping (see condition 1) as amended by plans received 7th March 2008. Outline permission S/1371/92/O, 20th April 1994. Additional conditions:

Conditions

1. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of landscaping, which shall include indications of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development.
(Reason – Because insufficient information was submitted with the application; to ensure the use of appropriate species in accordance with the Upper Cambourne Phase 7 Development Briefing Document and the context of the site, and to enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/1 and DP/2.)
2. No development or site clearance shall take place during the bird breeding season until a suitably qualified ecologist has checked the site for the presence of nesting wild birds and declared them absent.
(Reason – To prevent damage to or destruction of the nest of any wild bird whilst it is being built or in use, in the interest of the biodiversity of the site, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policy NE/6.)
3. No development shall take place until a plan showing the location and details of the contractors' building compound and parking area has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall be implemented as approved and no materials shall be stored, nor contractors' vehicles parked, outside the approved compound and parking area.
(Reason – To ensure that the compound and contractors' parking are adequately accommodated without an adverse impact on existing landscape features, amenity areas or existing residential areas, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/6.)
4. No development shall take place until a scheme showing access routes for construction traffic (deliveries and spoil removal) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently take place strictly in accordance with the approved scheme.
(Reason – In the interests of the amenities of existing residents in the vicinity, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/6.)

5. No development shall take place until there has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a scheme of ecological enhancement based on "Ecological Opportunities within the Built Environment" (ESL, November 2000). The scheme shall subsequently be implemented as approved before any dwelling is occupied.
(Reason – To ensure the ecological enhancement of the site in order to comply with the Section 106 Agreement dated 20th April 1994, and the Aims and Objectives set out in the Cambourne Master Plan Report, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6.)
6. No dwelling shall be occupied until the approved space for the storage and collection of wheeled bins for that dwelling has been made available for use.
(Reason – To ensure the provision of appropriate facilities in the interests of visual and residential amenity, and usability, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policy DP/3.)
7. No development shall take place until details of materials and finishes for the doors, windows, walls and roofs of the dwellings and garages; hard surfacing, roads, footways, seating for the LAP, and designs for the cycle stores have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
(Reason – Insufficient information was submitted with the application, and to ensure coordination and consistency with the adjacent parcels, and to enhance the visual quality of the development, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/3.)
8. No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision of external lighting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently take place strictly in accordance with the approved scheme.
(Reason – In the interests of amenity, security and the quality of the development, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2, DP/3 and NE/14.)
9. During the course of construction, outside a secure compound area (a secure compound is defined as an area with a security fence extending to the ground, and with a gate extending to the ground and locked at night), any steep sided trench of less than 600mm deep must have at least one end sloped, and any steep sided trench of over 600 mm in depth must be covered or fenced if left open overnight.
(Reason – To prevent injury or death to badgers that may forage on the site, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/1, DP/3 and NE/6.)

10. Meter boxes shall not be installed on any elevation facing a highway other than in accordance with a scheme that shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason – To avoid visual clutter in the interest of the quality of the development, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/3.)
11. Visibility splays shall be provided on both sides of all private drives and shall be maintained free from any obstruction over a height of 600 mm within an area of 1.5m x 1.5m measured from and along respectively the highway boundary.
(Reason – In the interest of highway safety, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/3.)
12. Visibility splays at road junctions and on the inside of bends shall be laid out and constructed to form part of the highway and not enclosed within the curtilages of adjoining properties.
(Reason – In the interest of highway safety, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/3.)
13. The permanent spaces to be reserved on the site for parking and turning of vehicles shall be provided before the respective dwellings are occupied and those spaces shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than for the parking and turning of vehicles.
(Reason – In the interest of highway safety, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/3.)
14. No dwelling shall be occupied until the access road and footways linking that dwelling to the existing public highway network has been completed to at least base course level, and such roads and footways shall subsequently be surfaced to wearing course level within 6 months of the occupation of the last dwelling to be completed on the site.
(Reason – To protect the safety of users of the access roads and footways, and to enhance the appearance of the built environment, in accordance with South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 saved policies Cambourne 2 and SE7, and South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Development Control Policies Development Plan Document policies DP/2 and DP/3.)

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,
P5/4 Meeting Locally Identified Housing Needs

- **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004: saved policies**
Cambourne 2
SE7 Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and design guide.
- **South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework, Development Control Policies 2007**
DP/1 Sustainable Development
DP/2 Design of New Development.
DP/3 Development Criteria
DP/6 Construction methods
HG/1 Housing Density
HG/2 Housing Mix
HG/3 Affordable Housing
TR/1 Travel
TR/2 Parking
TR/4 Non-motorised Modes
SF/10 Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments
NE/6 Biodiversity
NE/14 Lighting

2. The proposal conditionally approved is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material considerations, which have been raised during the consultation exercise: compliance with Briefing Document, design, safety, landscaping, ecological protection and enhancement.

Informatives.

1. It appears to the Council in respect of this proposal that the following conditions of the outline planning permission continue to apply, and the applicant's attention is drawn to these and all conditions of that permission:

Condition 6 (vi) – implementation of landscaping.
Condition 7 (b) – time limit for commencement.
Condition 19 – noise protection scheme with 100m of occupied properties
(NB: requires submission prior to commencement).
Condition 28 – roads and footpaths to base course level.
Condition 37 – concealment of cables, meter boxes, etc.
Conditions 38 – 41 – aquifer protection measures.

2. This Decision Notice is accompanied by a List of Approved Drawings.

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

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted January 2007)
- South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 (saved policies)
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- Planning File Ref: S/0012/08/RM

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