

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 5th January 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/6277/04/RM - Cambourne
32 Sheltered Retirement Apartments and Relocation of Community Centre Public Car Park. Areas W8/W9 and Part of Community Centre Site, High Street/Jeavons Lane, Great Cambourne

Recommendation: Delegated Approval
Date for Determination: 5th January 2005

Site and Proposal

1. The site comprises the southern corner plot at the east end of the High Street, fronting Jeavons Lane. It lies adjacent to the Community Centre, the construction of which is nearing completion. To the north, on the opposite side of High Street, is occupied affordable rented housing. To the east, on the opposite side of Jeavons Lane, is the land for the church and the portacabins (The Ark) presently used for that purpose. To the south is the first of the private houses in Jeavons Lane, which are 3 storeys high.
2. The application, received on 11th November 2004, proposes a block of 32 sheltered retirement apartments. This would be a private development by the same company as across the road on the north side of High Street, but in this case would be simply sheltered accommodation rather than "very sheltered" which has a greater personal care input. Also proposed is additional land onto which part of the community centre car park can be recolated, allowing some of the present community centre car park site to be used as part of the parking for this sheltered development.

Planning History

3. None on this [W8/9] site. Detailed permission for the community centre was granted in July 2003: its car park has been provided and the building is nearing completion. (In Cambourne overall, outline planning permission for 3,300 dwelling was granted in 1994, along with associated infrastructure and facilities. Building work as a result of detailed reserved matter and full planning permissions have resulted in a total of 1,520 dwellings being occupied to date.)

Planning Policy

4. **Policies Cambourne 1 and 2 and SE7** of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004 ("The Local Plan") require development to be in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide.
Policy P1/3 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 ("The County Structure Plan") requires sustainable design in built development

Consultations

5. **Cambourne Parish Council** recommends refusal; "not enough car parking spaces for residential homes, no visitor parking."

6. **The Police Architectural Liaison Officer** is unclear as to what degree of natural surveillance from nearby buildings will be provided to the re-sited community centre car park. Possible problems with unauthorised use of the car park by youths outside the hours of use as a car park are highlighted. Lighting should be provided to enhance security and facilitate supervision. He recommends that railings are raised from 1.5m to 1.8m to improve security.
7. **The Environment Agency** has no objection in principle.
8. **The Fire and Rescue Service** states that it is unknown at this time if additional water supplies for fire fighting are required at this location.
9. **The County Archaeologist** states that no further investigation is required.
10. **The Council's Landscape Design Officer** raises queries about continuing the hedge line along the proposed railings, and suggests a significant feature tree on the High Street/Jeavons Lane corner.
11. **The Council's Ecology Officer** expects the communal area to incorporate suitable bird boxes and feeding areas.
12. **The Council's General Works Manager** raises queries about refuse storage capacity and design.

Representations

13. From 16 Chaffinch Walk: The total length of my boundary fence will run adjacent to the proposed new car park layout. No provision appears to have been made in respect of screening or security measures: it worries me that this area could become a potential site for anti-social behaviour at the rear of a public car park. I hope that the applicant could include the provision of thorny hedging all around the perimeter fences and good lighting throughout the site in an effort to prevent any vandalism.

Planning Comments – Key Issues

14. The proposal is in accordance with the aims and themes of the Cambourne Design Guide and Masterplan. The design has been carefully executed to sit comfortably between the community centre and adjacent housing, whilst providing a robust corner feature when seen from the entrance to the High Street from Upper Cambourne to the East. It is set back in line with the Community Centre to enable a view of the church (when built) along the High Street from the west.
15. Because of the requirement for a size of building that can accommodate a sufficient number of flats to make the scheme viable, the land for the proposal, including parking, needs to incorporate some of the car park associated with the community centre, presently under construction. Therefore, the application includes additional land to enable that car park to be resited slightly. It will still be well-related to the community centre, and no objection is raised to this alteration. The works to re-arrange the car park will not hold up the handover of the community centre, as this will be done in two phases: the building followed by the exterior. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to add a condition to the effect that the new community centre car park is completed first, to ensure this is provided as soon as possible.

16. The main issue raised by the Parish Council is that of parking for the retirement apartments. It is commonly accepted that older people do not have the same level of car ownership as the average population, and this was reflected in the development of site CR02 on the opposite side of the High Street. That site was for very sheltered accommodation, where 50% parking (i.e. one space per 2 flats) was considered acceptable, catering for those occupiers who do own a car, plus staff. On this site, the use will be sheltered, but not “very sheltered” with a slightly younger minimum age limit. Therefore 75% parking is proposed. The Council’s standards require flexibility depending on circumstances, and in this case, any occasion where there is an additional requirement for visitors can be accommodated in the range of nearby public car parks, not only the community centre public car park but the Morrisons car park just across the road. A condition limiting the minimum age range will be applied to planning permission.
17. Other matters raised by consultees and representation, regarding landscaping and boundary treatment, lighting, ecology and refuse storage can be dealt with by minor amendments to the plans, and conditions.

Recommendation

18. Delegated powers of approval are sought, once the matters relating to refuse storage have been resolved, subject to conditions regarding landscaping and boundary treatment, lighting, ecology, materials, minimum age limit, and that the new community centre car park be provided first.

Reasons for Approval

1. The 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: Cambourne 1 and 2, and SE7**
(Development in accordance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide),
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
 - Residential amenity including noise, disturbance and overlooking issues
 - Highway safety
 - Visual impact on the locality
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/6277/04/RM

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