

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee 2nd February 2005
AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/6276/04/RM Cambourne - 30 Dwellings and Associated Works at Area GC27, Jeavons Lane, Great Cambourne

Recommendation: Approval
Date for Determination: 2nd February 2005

Site and Proposal

1. This 2.36 acre (0.95 ha) site lies in the south western sector of Great Cambourne, with access off Jeavons Lane. The sites to the north and south of it have yet to be constructed, although planning permission has been granted for the one to the north (GC13). The site is relatively narrow, with the south western end overlooking the open land allocated for a golf course.
2. The application, submitted on 8th November 2004 and amended on 22nd December 2004, proposes 30 dwellings, 14 two-bed and 16 three-bed. The site is a “developer affordable” site, which means that the houses will be built by the developer and sold to a housing association for shared ownership use. That is why only 2 and 3 bedroom houses are proposed.
3. The amendments, as a result of negotiations with the officer, are the addition of chimneys, the finishing of the whole of plots 29 and 30 in weatherboard (not just one elevation) and, a change of surfacing to the road at the southern end of the site from block paving to tarmac with buff chippings.

Planning History

4. 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 1,590 dwellings being occupied to date.
5. On this site, planning permission was refused last year for 30 dwellings, mainly due to poor quality layout with no legibility or character, poor frontage to the golf course, insufficient attention to context, slope, views and landscaping; poor relation of car spaces to houses served by them; poor house design and detailing; no attention to energy efficiency or ecology; and exceeding the number allocated in the Masterplan (23). An appeal is outstanding.

Planning Policy

6. **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; and **Policy HG10** requires high quality design and layout with a mix of unit types and sizes reflecting local needs.

7. **Policy P1/3** of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (“The County Structure Plan”) requires sustainable design in built development.

Consultations

8. **Cambourne Parish Council** recommends refusal: “Application is refused due to non-compliance of legal agreements. Residential development of market dwellings beyond the infrastructure trigger points is contrary to the agreed Masterplan, as applications for approval of details of reserved matters in each tranche must be in accordance with the Masterplan”
9. I asked the Parish Council to confirm what their objection was, assuming it related to the “embargo” which does not apply to affordable housing. This is the reply from the new Acting Clerk: “So far as I am able to ascertain, the intention was to recommend refusal of this application on the grounds that it represented a substantial increase on the original number of dwellings scheduled for this site. I am not aware of any suggestion that the “embargo” was relevant, whilst it is recognised that an embargo would not in any event apply to low-cost dwellings. The reference to “trigger points” may well have been used to indicate the Parish Council’s general objection to development being approved in cases where community facilities have not been provided in accordance with the Masterplan.”
10. Regarding the amended plans: “No objection to the chimneys and weatherboarding, but the Council objects to the proposed change in road surfacing on the basis that it would be detrimental to children’s safety, and that a more compacted surface dressing would be more appropriate in this location.”
11. The Council’s **Environmental Health Officer** states that there are no significant impacts of the proposal in terms of noise and environmental pollution.
12. The **County Archaeologist** states that the site has already been subject to an archaeological evaluation and no further investigation is considered necessary.
13. The Council’s **Ecologist** is satisfied that measures to enhance biodiversity have been adequately provided.
14. The **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** is concerned that plot 19 cannot supervise its own parking space; planting areas near parking spaces should not prevent natural surveillance; main concern is plots 29 and 30 where the house frontages face the golf course so are not open to natural surveillance from neighbours or the street, exacerbated by the walkway between the two units and the low fence adjacent to the golf course which allows access and escape routes for offenders; vehicles at those plots also affected.
15. The Council’s **Landscape Design Officer** raises queries about detail, including location of trees, details of LAP and verges, more space needed in front of wall at plot 5 to allow sufficient room for hedge, and details of transition area to golf course.
16. The Council’s **General Works Manager** is concerned that the southern road is too narrow for refuse collection lorries to gain access to the plots there.
17. The **Environment Agency** has no objection in principle.

Representations

18. None received.

Planning Comments - Key Issues

19. The layout of the site has been much improved since the last refusal, especially at the southern end of the site, which now has a barn-style building facing the greenway, set in spacious surroundings to appear low-density. Overall, the layout fits in well with its context provided by the scheme approved on the adjacent site to the north, continuing the rows of houses from the adjacent site, and in particular continuing a line of frontage parking from the adjacent site. The site provides a good sense of form, and a change in character from medium density strong form to the north, to more rural low-density to the south. There are strong focal points in views along roads from adjacent sites, provided by the orientation of certain building and a large LAP (Local Area for Play).
20. The Parish Council has raised two issues: the number of dwellings and the surfacing of the road at the southern end of the site. In terms of the number of dwellings, the Masterplan allocates 23 units, yet 30 are proposed. However, this is one of the “developer affordable” sites which are allowed by the Cambourne outline planning permission to total 250 across the whole village. After this site, only 2 further developer affordable sites remain, and there is sufficient flexibility in these to reduce some numbers to ensure the 250 unit limit is not exceeded. In particular, area UC04 which is the very prominent first site at the entrance to Upper Cambourne, can take some reduction in numbers to present a less dense entrance to that part of the village. In terms of the road surfacing, which changed from block paving to tarmac, the Parish Council has misinterpreted the description of the surface “buff chip tarmac” as a gravel surface whereas it is simply tarmac with buff stone instead of black, which will still be a compact surface, and provide a more ‘rural’ appearance which I welcome.
21. The Police Architectural Liaison Officer’s comments are noted. The parking space for plot 19 is overlooked by other dwellings. Plots 29 and 30 do have rear windows that overlook the access to their plots and their parking areas. I shall add a condition to provide windows into the walk-through. Other than that, the dwellings have been specifically designed to face the golf course to comply with the requirement of the Briefing Plan to present a good frontage to it.
22. Additional plans have been requested to resolve the refuse collection issue, and this will be a condition.

Recommendation

23. APPROVE, subject to a Section 106 Agreement for affordable housing, and to conditions requiring details of materials, parking, landscaping, ecological enhancements, removal of permitted development rights to the front gardens of plots 29 and 30 facing the golf course, windows to the walk-through of plots 29 and 30, and details of refuse collection.

Informatives

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:**
SE2 (Development in Rural Growth Settlements),
HG10 (Housing Mix and Design)
2. The development is not considered to be significantly detrimental to the following material planning considerations which have been raised during the consultation exercise:
- Highway safety
 - Visual impact on the locality
 - Biodiversity
 - Safety
 - Landscaping
 - Refuse collection
 - Compliance with Cambourne Masterplan and Design Guide

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/6276/04/RM

Contact Officer: Kate Wood - New Village / Special Projects Officer (Cambourne)
Telephone: (01954) 713264