

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Development and Conservation Control Committee

6th July 2005

AUTHOR/S: Director of Development Services

S/6225/03/RM - Cambourne 35 Dwellings at GC16 for Circle 33 Housing Trust Ltd

**Recommendation: Delegated Approval
Date for Determination: 31st January 2004**

Site and Proposal

1. The site, which comprises 1.01 hectares (2.5 acres), is located on the eastern side of Great Cambourne, close to the proposed future golf course.
2. The application, received on 5th December 2003, proposes 35 affordable dwellings at a density of 35 dwellings per hectare. These have been designed to provide a variety of styles and types, ranging from bungalows to 1 ½ and 2 storey houses and 2 storey flats.
3. The houses provided would be 6 x 1 bed flats, 4 x 2 bed bungalows, 13 x 2 bed houses, 11 x 3 bed houses and 1 x 4 bed house. Most of the houses are for rent, but 8 are for shared equity ownership.

Planning History

4. This proposal has previously been considered at the Development and Conservation Control Committee on 4th February 2004. Approval was resolved subject to some layout changes which have been made, and to the conclusion of a Section 106 agreement. Subsequently the applicants, Circle 33 Housing Trust, were invited by Cambridgeshire County Council to participate in a demonstration project for sustainable drainage, for which European funding assistance would be offered. The FLOWS project seeks to demonstrate that surface water run-off can be detained within a residential development by use of such measures as porous block paving, swales and detention ponds, in order to reduce the risk of flooding within a site and further downstream in the river system. The layout was therefore adjusted to accommodate two landscaped swales (elongated depressions which collect surface water run-off and allow it to percolate slowly back into the ground or to buried drains), and two small detention basins which would hold storm water in extreme conditions and release it at a regulated rate to the Cambourne surface water system. In conjunction with those basins, an additional system of swales around the east side of the development would be landscaped into the Greenway and golf course margins to collect the run-off from the site. The inlet and outlet pipes and flow regulators are to be designed to blend into the landscaping, to demonstrate that sustainable drainage can be accommodated near housing without ugly or dangerous engineering structures.
5. These alterations have not resulted in any major alteration to the street scenes, and the houses are as previously approved.
6. This site is allocated in the masterplan as an area for housing identified as GC16. In the original masterplan, this area was allocated a notional 27 units. 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 of free, serviced land

allocated in tranches throughout the site, with the total number of dwellings on that land not exceeding 650. 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. The number of units on this site has increased from the notional 27 to 35 which helps address the shortfall in overall number of affordable units.

7. The detailed residential proposal was considered by the **Cambourne Design and Environment Group (DEG)** meeting on 23rd October 2003, and was generally accepted by all parties, with further work being required on some matters of detail including open space and footpath links.

Policy

8. Local Plan 2 (as modified) Policies Cambourne 1 and 2 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

Cambourne Parish Council – to be reported

The Cambourne Management Liaison Committee (MLC) – a forerunner of the Parish Council previously recommended refusal. The principal complaint was that this scheme is for more housing than the masterplan allows.

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service ask that adequate provision is made for fire hydrants.

The Police Architectural Liaison Officer has several comments to make. His principal concerns include the supervision of the parking court in front of plot 19-23, and the requirement for lighting on all parking areas, paths and through routes. These issues have been dealt with in the amended layout and by the recommended conditions.

The County Archaeologist has no adverse comments to make.

The Local Highway Authority has recommended standard planning conditions.

The Landscape Design Officer has no objection subject to landscape conditions.

The Environment Agency has no objection subject to conditions.

English Nature has no adverse comments to make.

The Council's Ecologist has commented that he would like to see some bird and bat boxes within the proposal site.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) no objection to the amended plans which have introduced stepped profiles for the detention basin slopes.

Representations

None received

Planning Comments – Key Issues

9. The scheme is generally in accordance with the Design Brief for the site, with an area of high density in the northern part, and lower density overlooking the golf course, with a large area of open space within the site. Houses face out onto the greenway and out onto the site allocated for the future golf course. There is a change in scale from 2 storey terraces and flats in the high density area to single and 1 ½ storey houses and bungalows in semi detached forms in the lower density area.
10. With regard to the issue of numbers, there has been a significant increase from the 'notional' allocation in the original masterplan, however it is important that schemes are design led.

The impact of the affordable units, which are “catching up” the affordable housing shortfall, on the overall total number of units, is being closely monitored. The issue will be addressed through the Local Development Framework and in the light of the eventual outcome of the appeal into the Cambourne Consortium’s proposals to increase development at Cambourne.

11. The only new issues raised by the amended plans for the FLOWS project are:
 - a) the design and appearance of the sustainable drainage features,
 - b) the adequacy of the system for drainage purposes,
 - c) the integration of the swales and basins adjacent to a play area and the greenway,
 - d) the coordination of this scheme with development on the adjacent site GC13 which has subsequently received planning approval.
12. The underdrained block paving to be used for the parking and street surfacing will appear the same as standard street surfacing in nearby areas. The swales are gentle depressions in landscaped strips similar to grass verges, and would only contain water in extreme weather events. The detention basins would be similar to the swales, with gently sloping stepped sides for safety purposes for the rare occasions when they contain water. This design is as advised by ROSPA, and recognises the proximity of the basins to housing and a Local Area for Play. The resulting rate of run-off from the site complies with Environment Agency’s overall requirements for the development of Cambourne, and demonstrates that relatively low-key simple engineering solutions can be employed even in a confined building site to absorb and regulate surface water drainage.
13. The amended plans tie in the porous paving streets on this site with the approach roads from Area GC13 by use of rumble strips to define the transition to “shared surface” road, and use of grey blocks to blend with the nearby carriageway and footways.
14. A Section 106 agreement has been prepared to secure the retention of the affordable housing and to ensure that overall responsibility for maintenance of the SUDS drainage will lie with the applicant (without precluding adoption by the Parish Council).

Recommendation

Approve subject to a Section 106 agreement to secure affordable housing and maintenance of the drainage scheme, and to the following conditions (additional to the Outline permission 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 – To enhance the quality of the development and to assimilate it within the area in accordance with policies EN5 and CAMBOURNE 2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004)

2. No development shall take place until a schedule of materials and finishes for the doors, windows, walls, chimneys and roofs of the dwellings and garages, and boundary walls and gates hereby permitted, samples of the materials, and method of window opening, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved schedule and samples.
(Reason – In the interests of amenity and quality the development in accordance with Policy CAMBOURNE 2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004)
3. No development shall take place until a scheme of surface water drainage, hard surfacing and road surfacing within the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall subsequently be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved scheme.
(Reason – In the interests of sustainable drainage, amenity and quality of the development in accordance with Policy CAMBOURNE 2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004)
4. No external lighting shall be installed on any part of the site except in accordance with a scheme which shall have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
(Reason – In the interests of the amenity, security and the quality of the development in accordance with Policies ES2 and CAMBOURNE 1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004)
5. 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 which may forage on the site and in accordance with the Section 106 Agreement dated 20th April 1994, and the Aims and Objectives set out in the Cambourne Master Plan Report and Policies EN13 and CAMBOURNE 1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004)
6. During the bird breeding season, no development or site clearance shall take place until a suitably qualified ecologist has checked the site for the presence of nesting wild birds and important plants and declared them absent.
(Reason – To prevent damage to or destruction of the nest of any wild bird whilst the development is being built or in use, and any important plants, in the interest of the biodiversity of the site in accordance with Policies EN 13 and CAMBOURNE 2 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.)
7. 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 Build Environment” (ESL, November 2000). The development shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme.)
(Reason – Insufficient details were submitted with the application, and to ensure the ecological enhancement of the site in accordance with the Section 106 Agreement dated 20th April 1994, and the Aims and Objectives set out in the Cambourne Master Plan Report and Policies EN12 and CAMBOURNE 1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.)

8. 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 and in accordance with Policy TP1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.)
9. 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 and in accordance with Policy TP1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.)
10. 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 Policy CAMBOURNE 1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.)
11. The permanent space to be reserved on the site for parking and turning of vehicles shall be provided before the respective houses are occupied and that area shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than for the parking and turning of vehicles.
(Reason – In the interest of residential amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy TP1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004)
12. 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 Policy CAMBOURNE 1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2004.)

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 – construction 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 – 39 – aquifer protection measures
2. This Approval will be accompanied by a list of Approved Drawings and a covering letter.
3. The Environment Agency's comments will be attached.
4. Any substitution of plant species or stock from those approved will require the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

5. No dwellings should be occupied until street nameplates have been erected in a location and to a specification which shall previously have been agreed with the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Officer.
6. All work on the site shall take place in accordance with Cambourne Ecology Working Paper 6: Safeguarding Statutorily Protected Species during the Construction Phase. (ESL, May 1997.)
7. The applicant's attention is drawn to the requirements of the Party Wall etc. Act 1996 if works are proposed to a party wall.
8. This approval is subject to the provision of legal agreements under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1991 dated 20th April 1994 and 2005 (to be finalised).

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)
 - **TP1** (Planning for More Sustainable Travel)
 - **EN5** (Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows)
 - **EN12** (Nature Conservation: Unidentified Sites)
 - **EN13** (Protected Species)
 - **ES2** (Road and Footway Lighting)
 - **Cambourne 1** (The Masterplan)
 - **Cambourne 2** (The 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:
 - The proper planning of Cambourne in accordance with the Master Plan
 - Highway and drainage design and safety
 - Visual impact on the local landscape and ecology

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: P1/3
- Planning file reference S/6261/04/RM approval for the adjacent site GC13.

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