

Cambridge Past, Present & Future

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Planning – Development
Control
South Cambridgeshire
District Council
Cambourne
CB23 6EA

FAO: Julie Ayre

22 February 2012

Dear Julie,

Ref: S/2559/11 - Site A (Q & HRCC) Land off Ring Fort Road and site B (E3,Comm2a, Comm2b & E4) Land off Chieftain Way, Orchard Park : Site for the erection of 112 dwelling, including vehicular access and Construction of a mixed use building involving 7 retail units (840sqm) and 28 flats, (2, 1 bedroom and 26, 2 bedroom) including landscaping and open space.

With reference to the above application, and after a visit to the recent public exhibition at Orchard Park, CambridgePPF would like to make the following comments:

- **Green space provision – the proposed green space is not acceptable.** This would significantly reduce the provision of accessible open space for the Orchard Park development overall. The verges labelled open space next to the B1049 Cambridge Road, as well as King's Hedges Road, are unacceptable as they have little community or recreational value: Some even have parking spaces illustrated and this is inappropriate and must be excluded from any calculations. We wonder if Plot B, the informal open space adjacent to the A14 (labelled 3), will have any informal surveillance or will it simply add to the existing problem areas within this new estate that are not overlooked? It would be better if both these green spaces were 'pooled' near to the main road (Plot B) to ensure easier management and enhanced community use. Any reduction of open space is unacceptable and not in accordance with either Council Policy or the Site Specific Policies (DPD 2010). We cannot see any mitigation proposals other than open space being proposed off-site to compensate for the additional needs of these new houses and flats, nor any Section 106 or similar planning gain proposals. CambridgePPF considers this totally unacceptable. The overall high quality of any new open space must be ensured and to date the details seen are both unconvincing and not in accordance with local guidance and policies.
- **Gates leading north to completed green space - this needs to be properly assessed to avoid desire-lines or pedestrian ruts appearing across this space with its formal playing fields.** This will be used as a direct route to the proposed shopping area as well as to the hotel/ bar etc. More careful siting of the gates is essential, as well as mitigation of the adverse impact on the existing green space (i.e. provision of paved paths, fencings and rails etc).

- **Noise and other pollution from the elevated part of the road** – this will have a detrimental impact and impede the enjoyment of the residential areas as well as the proposed nearby open space. In particular Plot A, the verge adjacent to B1049, will be adversely affected. CambridgePPF is not convinced that sufficient consideration has been given to ameliorating and mitigating such impacts. Developers should be expected to demonstrate that their design processes lead to the submission of proposals comprising uses and the orientation of buildings appropriate to a plots location close to the A14 or B1049 (e.g single aspect and south facing), as well as landscaping and other mitigation measures that are fit for purpose.
- **Garages to east and west of the square (Plot B)** – will these smaller access roads be sufficiently overlooked from nearby housing, as well as from road to south through proposed planting/ vegetation? Will informal access be safe enough or will cul-de-sac or alleys be created providing opportunities for anti-social behaviour?
- **Public art - it is unclear what additional public art, if any, is being proposed? Well integrated public art would enliven the area and its green spaces, square and other public spaces.** This needs to be covered by this application in accordance with the Council's policies prior to any approval.
- **Provision of retail floor space** – while we welcome that the long proposed retail space is now being considered, we consider what is being proposed of too small a size and perhaps in the wrong location. In contradiction to the approved PPG, Foodstore Provision for the North West Cambridge Area in 2010, as well as earlier outline planning permission, the current detailed planning application now proposes a retail area 50% smaller than originally proposed. This is totally unacceptable and will require local people to travel by car or public transport to obtain day-to-day necessities. The idea was to ensure that easily accessible and diverse retail units were accessible by means of sustainable transport (walking, cycling) and which would be affordable in this part of Cambridge (with a high population on low incomes). With the development changes proposed it is suggested that other retail locations within the site are scoped to ensure sufficient footfall and long-term viability of shops etc. The original recommendations, as per the approved NW Cambridge Foodstore Provision plan, should be implemented.
- **Square in front of retail units - will this be directly managed by the local community council? Will any space hire be affordable to the local community and who will hold the rights for events such as Markets or Fairs? Will it be SCDC, the County Council or City Council?**
- **Affordable housing statement** – the reduction of affordable housing by more than 10% is unacceptable. Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils have a huge underprovision of affordable housing within the city and immediate surrounds and it is essential that 40% minimum coverage is retained as per SCDC's Policy HG/3. No valid reason justifying the departure from the 40% affordable housing allocation has been provided. In addition, a proper mix of affordable housing with market housing should be provided and affordable housing not just allocated the worst sites (such as next to both of the main roads in solid blocks – Plot A, see also our comments made earlier).
- **Planning Obligation funding** - a significant reduction from the amount expected is being proposed by the developers; despite proposing additional housing. From discussions with the local community it is clear that an underpayment of Section 106 funding is not acceptable as further amenities ought to be provided; including enhanced child and teenager play facilities, more allotment space, enhanced playing field facilities, increased path and cycle routes etc.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



Carolin Göhler
CEO – CambridgePPF

Encl – none

Cc – Orchard Park Community Council Clerk; Applicant Gallagher

Cambridge Past, Present & Future — a local charity with over 1,700 members working to keep Cambridge and its surroundings special by positively influencing planning developments, delivering environmental education and managing the green spaces and historic buildings in its care — for the benefit of all.

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