

Cambridge City Council

Planning - Pre-Application Developer Presentations

Date: Thursday, 17 July 2025

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

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Agenda

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Pre-Application Briefing by the Developer - Ekin Road

Purpose of the briefing and background

The purpose of this briefing note is to advise Members of a forthcoming full application which proposes the redevelopment of Ekin Road.

The proposed development involves the demolition of the existing buildings and erection of 134 new homes (58% affordable- 78 affordable homes, 56 market homes).

The Site

The application site is located in the Abbey Ward in the east of Cambridge. The site is currently in residential use consisting of 122no. existing homes which are in poor condition.

Ekin Road estate is part of the council's wider programme of work across Cambridge to improve accommodation standards for people living in existing council homes; to build council homes to meet local need and to address wider housing supply issues, including much needed larger family homes.

There is no relevant planning history on this site.

In terms of planning constraints the site is outside of all designated conservation areas and there are no listed buildings within close proximity to the site. There are a number of trees within the site boundary, none of the trees within the site are subject to tree preservation orders. However, a number of the trees are category B trees (moderate quality). The site is situated in an area of low risk of flooding from rivers and seas and the site is also an area of low surface water flood risk.

Policy considerations

Principle of development

A residential development on this site does not change the existing use of the site and the principle is therefore acceptable.

Policy 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 relates to new residential development in the city and is of relevance in determining the acceptability of the principle of this development proposal.

Policy 3 seeks to ensure that new residential development is appropriately located, and this includes with respect to surrounding uses, accessibility, and access to facilities. The application site is in a location which has other residential uses in close proximity, has good transport accessibility and is on land which already has a residential use.

Paragraph 124 of the NPPF further advises that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes. The proposed development will provide a meaningful increase in the number of high quality homes with healthy living conditions within the City. The proposals will help to address the local housing needs and contribute towards meeting housing requirements across Cambridge through the provision of 134 new homes.

With the above in mind, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with policy 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

Affordable Housing provision

Policy 45 of the Cambridge Local Plan requires for a scheme of this size 40% of dwellings to be affordable. The proposed development

includes 78 affordable homes which exceeds the policy 45 requirement by delivering 58% of the development as affordable.

Policy 45 and the Housing SPD requires that developments should include a balanced mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures to meet projected future household needs within Cambridge.

The inclusion of more family sized affordable dwellings within the proposed housing mix is supported by officers.

In terms of the affordable housing tenure proposed, the applicants have not provided any details in respect of the proposed split between social rent, 60% and 80% of affordable rent. This information must be included in the housing statement which will accompany the planning application, the applicants must demonstrate that the proposals comply with the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy 2024-2029.

Background

The proposals are currently at pre-application stage with a formal application to be submitted in due course. The applicants have worked collaboratively with officers and key stakeholders since pre application discussions commenced. The proposals have been subject to pre application meetings with the Council and several specialist workshops. Public engagement has also been carried out by the applicants.

Councillor attendance

Whilst any subsequent planning application relating to this site will be determined by the Planning Committee, all Councillors are invited to attend and take part in this pre-application developer presentation.

Purpose of the meeting

These meetings allow developers an early opportunity to present proposals for future planning applications to elected members of the Council.

The process allows Councillors to feed into the process at an early stage and raise any questions or concerns that can then be addressed by the developer prior to a formal planning application being submitted.

Whilst the meetings will be held in public, they do not form part of the formal decision making process. All planning applications will be determined in line with formal processes as adopted by Cambridge City Council.

Format of the Meeting

For each Briefing:

- Introduction by the Head of Planning Services or a Senior Planning Officer – up to 10 minutes
- Presentation by the developer of the proposal – up to 30 minutes
- Opportunity for Members to ask questions, raise issues, seek clarification, comment on the apparent positive and less positive aspects of the proposal – up to 40 minutes

During this part of the meeting it is important that Councillors who may ultimately make the decision on any subsequent planning application do not feel unduly constrained by what they can ask or raise. However they should avoid expressing views that might give any appearance that they are approaching the proposal with a closed mind. The discussion should not be used for negotiations with the developer. These should take place with officers separately from the meeting. Members of the public must refrain from entering into the discussion at the meeting.

- Summing up – up to 10 minutes

A Planning Department representative will take notes of the meeting, which will be a summary of the proceedings. Nothing said by Councillors at the meeting will in any way be binding on the Committee that subsequently determines the application. The notes will be uploaded to the City Council's website upon completion.

Planning - Pre-Application Developer Presentations Members and Ward Members

Information for the public

If you are interested in observing the meeting, please contact the case officer 2 working days in advance of the meeting so that joining details for the meeting can be sent to you. This meeting will be ran online but will not be livestreamed.

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