



CAMBRIDGESHIRE QUALITY PANEL

REPORT OF PANEL MEETING

Scheme: Wing Masterplan

Date: 15th May 2013

Venue: Shire Hall Room 126, Cambridgeshire County Council offices, Cambridge

Time: 9:30-12:30

Quality Panel Members

Robin Nicholson (Chair)
David Birkbeck
Steve Platt
Oliver Smith
Canda Smith
George Hazel

Panel secretariat and support

Antony Proietti (Cambridgeshire County Council)
Judit Carballo (Cambridgeshire County Council)

Local Authority Attendees

Melissa Reynolds (South Cambridgeshire District Council)
Edward Durrant (South Cambridgeshire District Council)
Afrieen Patel (South Cambridgeshire District Council)
Glen Richardson (Cambridge City Council)

Applicant and Representatives

Steve Sillery (Marshall)
Emma Fletcher (Marshall)
Andrew Baharrell (Pollard Thomas Edwards Architects - master planner)
Robert Myers (Robert Myers Associates - landscape architects)
Matthew Sanderson (Sanderson Sculptures - lead artist, public art strategy)



1. Scheme description and presentation

Architect/Designer	Pollard Thomas Edwards Architects
Developer	Marshall Group
Planning status	Pre-application, Masterplanning stage

2. Overview

The Marshall Group has commissioned a masterplan and development framework to be developed for a new eastern expansion to Cambridge. It is proposed that this new urban village, to be called 'Wing', will be a sustainable, mixed-use community, with strong ties to the immediate locality, to the City of Cambridge and to Marshall's adjoining businesses.

The site for Wing covers 63.6 hectares of land on the northern side of Newmarket Road directly opposite Cambridge Airport, to the South East of Fen Ditton Conservation Area and next to the Newmarket Road Park and Ride site. The Marshall Group owns the entire site, as well as the airport and other adjoining land.

In summary, it is proposed that the development will contain the following elements:

- Around 1300 new homes, 40% of which are to be affordable;
- New facilities for Marshall's motor car sales and related businesses employing some 500 people;
- A local shopping centre, including a food-store, farmer's market, support retail and replacement petrol filling station;
- A primary school and nursery;
- Other local community and education facilities, including a community centre, science centre, estate office, and potentially a health centre;
- High quality public realm, including a range of avenues, streets, lanes, courtyards and squares;
- Extensive landscape, amenity space, play space and sports fields;
- Integration with the existing Park and Ride facility.

The Prince's Foundation and Pollard Thomas Edward architects facilitated a series of Community Planning Workshops early in January 2013. This process allowed key stakeholders to contribute towards the developing proposals. In addition, Marshalls intend to undertake an exhibition prior to the submission of the outline planning application. The current timetable for which is submission of the application to SCDC in September 2013.

In terms of policy, an Area Action Plan (AAP) exists for this site, as part of the wider 'Cambridge East' area, which needs to be taken into consideration. SCDC are also currently working on a revised Local Plan.

Wing has a number of constraints, which include:

- Airport safeguarding area;
- Listed building to the South of Newmarket Road;
- Retention and relocation of some businesses and buildings.



3. Cambridgeshire Quality Panel views

Introduction

The Panel welcomed seeing the proposal for this development at such an early stage. Quality Panel involvement early on provides an excellent opportunity to ensure that the Quality Charter principles are embedded into the core characteristics of the scheme and can then be taken through to the more detailed planning stages.

The Panel's advice reflects the issues associated with each of the four 'C's' in the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter.

Community

The Panel welcomed the plan for long-term stewardship and neighbourhood management for the site including the idea of having a permanent estate office on site that is in charge of the site maintenance. Retaining long term ownership in a site allows for its development and to establish a sense of community and neighbourhood. However, the Panel questioned the cost and service charge implications for new residents, which need to be not overly onerous.

New developments need to integrate with existing communities. This is despite the current views that are often held by existing residents whose attitudes are likely to change over time. The Panel noted that community facilities will play a key role in the relationship between the new and existing communities. For Wing the primary school and local centre will be particularly important. The Panel considered that the primary school was in the right location within the site (although they required further details on the orientation of buildings which is key consideration). Overall the Panel thought that the relationship of Wing to the existing communities looked good.

The Panel welcomed the intention for the primary school and shops in the local centre, to come forward early in the development. In particular the use of subsidised rents to encourage firms to move into the local centre early was praised by the Panel. This commercial element will help establish sustainable travel patterns early as well as adding a vibrancy to the development which otherwise may seem little more than a dormitory estate.

The Panel welcomed the idea of having a Health Centre on site and recommended further investigations about the site needs. The Health centre will be an important meeting place, particularly in the early years of the development.

The Panel noted that there are currently ongoing discussions regarding the location of the secondary school for which children from this development would attend. Although this is a key issue that still needs resolving it was outside the remit of the Panel for this meeting.

The Panel particularly welcomed the appointment of a public artist from early stages, who have already set up an independent art Steering Group. This is positive approach which should help to engage with existing communities, and therefore a good mechanism for achieving community cohesion. Naming is important factor, which can help establish a sense of place, and could be a consideration of this work.

The Panel questioned whether more green space could be located nearer the local centre shops. Experience elsewhere has shown that when people purchase lunch from shops they will often not walk far distances to then eat. There needs to therefore be a good relationship and proximity between the shops and public open areas.



Other comments that the Panel had on the community aspects of the scheme are as follows:

- Delighted with the intention to use London space standards;
- Concern about the noise that the airport generates, has this been fully considered?
- Query as to how allotments and sports pitches will fully integrate with the rest of the development.

Connectivity

The Panel welcomed Wing's location and connectivity in relationship to the centre of Cambridge. The city centre is easily accessed by public transport and the routes are already in place with a local bus stop and links to the Newmarket Road and Park and Ride bus facilities. The Panel highlighted the Jubilee Cycle Lane that connects through from Cherry Hinton with the river and the easy cycling access to Cambridge centre. In addition, over the time there may be the opportunity for the site to connect with the future Chesterton Railway Station

The Panel agreed that the overall approach to transport as currently proposed is broadly correct. However, further work should be undertaken in order to identify how residents can be incentivised to use sustainable modes of transport and reduce car use. Examples includes; use of technology, and the use of car share schemes/car clubs/car lending schemes. The Panel suggested that a system of monitor and manage was used in order to identify whether mode share targets were being reached and if not implementing measures to address the problem.

The Panel made the other following comments:

- Maximise shared surface area, thereby minimising the amount of road space which is highway;
- Parking need to use maximum standards rather than minimum, which will allow greater flexibility later on;
- Noted that the main entrance will encourage high speeds, therefore need to be designed to reduce speeds;
- Access to the Park and Ride site. The Park and Ride have a lease with the County Council for another 19 years. But it would be important to consider walking access from the development;
- There is a 2002 study on the impact of traffic in Newmarket Road. The Panel queried if there is a current transport model/traffic survey and how the traffic will be managed.

Character

The Panel welcomed the character proposed for the scheme, particularly the urban square and the woodland walk, and the layout of the roads with their distinctive, committed spaces. They also welcomed the intelligent, architectural precedents which had been considered.

However, a number of issues were raised. This included the retention of the car businesses and how this area relates to the new development. The Panel considered that the edge to the car businesses is a critical area that needs further work.



The Panel also considered that there was a need to ensure that streets were being created, rather than roads. As cars enter they should feel that they are the guest (Exhibition Road in London was given as a good example of where this has been achieved).

Of particular consideration was the main entrance. Panel members appreciated both its former layout (as shown at the Inquiry by Design event) and also its current layout. However, it was noted that the layout in its current form will encourage high speeds. Particular attention needs to be given to designing out/reducing speeds without the use of chicanes.

The Panel acknowledged the importance of naming streets and areas in a new development and considered that this gives as much character as buildings. The Panel welcomed Marshall's idea about running a series of surveys to get the names of other character areas such as streets, square, etc (noting that this had already been used to good effect when naming the site itself).

After the meeting the Panel discussed the issue of the perimeter blocks. They considered that shared spaces in private courts could be problematic and generate tensions with residents. It was suggested that further work is required on the organisation of the blocks and parking, with further details on the perimeter blocks being provided at a subsequent Panel meeting.

For illustrative purposes the Panel would welcome a 3D massing diagram to be produced to help understand the character of the 'island' area of the site, and would like to see this at a future Panel meeting.

Climate

The Panel welcomed the intention to start with a fabric first approach in order to achieve sustainability standards and work towards Zero Carbon as regulatory standards increase. They acknowledged the difficulty of achieving Zero Carbon, particular given the specific site constraints, and appreciated that a number of different technologies had already been investigated. However, this is the reality and as an exemplar scheme further work needs to be undertaken to achieve this target.

The Panel made the other suggestions:

- Orientation needs to be considered, suggest work on this is provided at a future Panel meeting;
- That BREEAM Communities assessment not be used but instead funds were used on practical solutions;
- Berkeley Homes in Greenwich was used as an example of where a water permeable paving had been successfully incorporated;
- Further consideration of district heat/sustainability schemes using opportunities from the industry to south.

4. Conclusion

The Panel highly commended the current strategy and proposals for the Wing development. In particular praising; the iterative process and community engagement work that has been undertaken so far to reach this stage of design, the approach to the long-term management of the scheme, proposed relationship with the existing communities,

setting up of art steering group, and early delivery of key social and community infrastructure.



The Panel made the following specific recommendations (further details of which can be found above):

- Further work needs to be undertaken in order to identify how residents can be incentivised in order to achieve predicted mode shares (e.g. use of technology, and the use of car share schemes/car clubs/car lending schemes);
- A system of 'monitor and manage' is used in order to identify whether mode share targets are being reached and if not implement measures to address the problem;
- Parking need to use maximum standards rather than minimum, which will allow greater flexibility later on;
- Main entrance will encourage high speeds, therefore needs further work in order to reduce car speeds;
- How the edge to the car businesses relates to the development needs further work;
- Streets to be created rather than roads where cars should feel like they are guests;
- Issue of the perimeter blocks – shared spaces in private courts could be problematic and generate tensions with residents. Further work is required on the organisation of the blocks and parking, with further details on the perimeter blocks being provided at a future Panel meeting;
- Panel would welcome a 3D massing diagram to be produced to help understand the character of the 'island' area of the site;
- Further work on how Zero Carbon can be achieved;
- Question whether more green space could be located nearer the local centre shops.

The Panel welcomes the intention of the applicant to return to the Panel at a later stage (proposed for September 2013, before application is submitted). Ongoing Panel input is important and will help to refine and develop the general principles which are being set out in this review.