



## **CAMBRIDGESHIRE QUALITY PANEL**

### REPORT OF PANEL MEETING

#### **Scheme: Wing Design Code**

**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018

**Venue:** Cambridgeshire County Council, Room 128, Shire Hall, Cambridge,

**Time:** 9:30 – 12:30

#### **Quality Panel Members**

Robin Nicholson

David Birkbeck

Lynne Sullivan

Meredith Bowles

Luke Engleback

#### **Panel secretariat and support**

David Carford - Cambridgeshire County Council

#### **Local Authority Attendees**

Trovine Monteiro - Team Leader, Consultancy Unit, South Cambridgeshire District Council

Ed Durrant - Principal Planner, South Cambridgeshire District Council

#### **Applicant and Representatives**

Jamie Wilding – Hill

Teresa Borsuk – PTE Architects

Leo Hammond – PTE Architects

Daniel Cox – PTE Architects

Dawn Purves – Robert Myers Landscape Architects



## 1. Scheme description and presentation

Architect/Designer	Pollard Thomas Edwards / Terence O'Rourke / RMA
Applicant	Marshall and Hill Residential
Planning status	Draft Design Code

## 2. Overview

Land north of Newmarket Road or 'Wing' as the development site is known, has outline planning consent for up to 1,300 dwellings, a 2 form of entry primary school (providing 420 primary school places) and a local centre on an edge of city 65 hectare site. It forms part of the wider Cambridge East proposals for a new city quarter centred on and around Cambridge Airport.

Outline planning permission was granted by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) in November 2016, with a small, non-residential parcel of land also consented by Cambridge City Council at the same time.

The land owner – Marshall – has entered into a Joint Venture agreement with house builder Hill Residential to develop the first phase of the development, for around 450-500 homes, to include the local centre and primary school. They plan to submit two reserved matters applications in April and September 2018.

Hill Residential, in conjunction with their consultants, have lead the Design Code work for the whole site.

SCDC had convened a whole day Joint Workshop with the Wing applicant and the Cambourne West applicant to work together on the Objective and Purpose of their Design Codes and the presentation of them.

The Panel have previously considered the Wing Master Plan and outline planning application. More recently the quality panel saw an early draft of the Design Code (28<sup>th</sup> September 2017). This focused on the structure of the Design Code. This second review of the design code was to comment on a draft of the final document.



## 3. Cambridgeshire Quality Panel views

### Introduction

The Panel's advice reflects the issues associated with each of the four 'C's' in the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter. The comments below include both those raised in the open session of the meeting and those from the closed session discussions.

The applicant outlined their vision for the development as a sustainable, new area of family housing in east Cambridge and the history of Wing, the timeline for the development and recent amendments to the Design Code responding to the Quality Panels previous comments.

The Design Code is 85 pages, utilising a double page spread layout. A hierarchy in language has been defined as 'must' (mandatory), and 'should' (recommended). Future reserve matters applicants will need to justify any departure from that defined as 'should' and show proposals that represent an improvement. New sections have been added under 'Urban and Design Principles' and 'Landscape and Open Space'. Chapter 5 defines the now 3 character areas.

The Panel welcomed the clear structure and the changes made to the Design Code including those additions in response to the last review.

### Community

The Panel felt the use of green spaces and the benefits they bring to health and wellbeing, local environment and community, need to come through a lot stronger in the code. Landscape for health is a growing area and should be considered as part of the draft design code, e.g. green gyms. This can be expanded upon in page 45 of the draft design code.

A wider variety of green spaces can provide networking opportunities for all in the community for example more fruit trees and vegetables.

The Panel enquired as to the flexibility in the forms of development and if there were planned accommodation for the elderly. In reply the promoter explained this is planned to be part of phase 3, located close to the Community Hub.

### Connectivity

The Panel welcomed the addition of the map showing the connections for all modes of transport to the site and the removal of the last remnants of the original oval road layout.

The Panel was concerned about the benefits of the access road parallel with the Newmarket Road. The applicant explained that the space between the frontages and Newmarket Road created a buffer and helped with the acoustics. Furthermore the code should facilitate the potential for the space to accommodate spill-outs from commercial units, i.e. chairs and tables outside a café.

### Character

The panel enquired as to the refuse strategy and if underground storage similar to Cambridge North West had been considered. It was explained the decision to have more conventional storage was based on the fact underground storage is relatively new and the benefits need to be demonstrated. There are added difficulties in locating underground

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storage to be convenient for all residents, and it requires wider highways with lay-bys for the special refuse vehicles.

The Panel shared their concern regarding the timber cycle and bin storage shown in the design code and expected a higher standard for cycle parking.

The Panel welcomed the inclusion of images of what not to do and suggested these could be useful in other sections. On more general terms the use of photos was welcome but there needs to be clarity as to whether they are illustrating a 'must' or a 'should'.

The Panel would like to see more explanation in the design code of how the shallow blocks will be treated. For example how would architects design the frontages of the blocks facing Kingsley Woods which would be different to the typical gable of houses shown for the Edge Character Area on Page 33 or how units would back onto the podium car parks shown on Page 76.

The Panel questioned whether the code precluded difference, allowing for activities that can add to a street scene and give a sense of place. The Panel asked if there is the possibility to include self-build plots that were not prescribed by the code. The Panel noted a majority of key landmark buildings being located on corners, and invited the design team to consider other significant locations within the street scene.

The Panel noted the importance of the school and there being a good dialogue with the County Council and school promoter, especially concerning the homes and gardens backing directly onto the playing fields, an arrangement the Panel supported.

The Panel questioned the heights of the ground floor frontages onto Newmarket Road as drawn on the sections as they need to be higher to be adaptable for non-domestic use.

It was confirmed a separate maintenance company would maintain the green space. The Panel stressed the importance of maintaining verges and any SUDs.

### Climate

The environment and landscape could come through a lot stronger throughout the design code. Change to 'The Copse' and the planting now coming into the site is very welcome. Equally the improvements to the green landscaping and terracing of the drainage ditch as part of Gregory Park.

The Panel would like to see more consideration of permeable paving materials and complementary features to attenuate water where the rain drop lands, e.g. rain gardens. These will help to mitigate overheating within the built environment, and add to the biodiversity on the site. Connected green spaces are more effective at addressing overheating.

There could be better links between trees and water to enhance the landscape and provide wider benefits to the environment and respond to climate change; tree trenches are better than tree pits. It was reported that the trees along the roads would not be adopted.

Recognising the part the built environment and its design can play in meeting 2030 carbon reduction targets, the panel would like to see the Code explain how this is being addressed in this development. The Panel enquired what consideration had been given to the pitch and orientation of roofs to maximise the benefits of solar panels and the Panel noted some illustrations show corner windows which can contribute to overheating.



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The Panel felt that the role of the landscape in improving air quality with health benefits to the population should be recognised in the design code.

The Panel noted the development is seeking to meet the energy levels of code 4 and that Marshalls have a real interest in making a sustainable development; the legacy of the development is an important part of the design team's approach.

There should be a consideration of roof pitches for future installation of PVs

Making developments and homes adaptable to climate change could include the infrastructure e.g. electric car charging points, to allow for installation at a later date.

## 4. Conclusion

The Panel welcomed the changes to the green spaces.

The Panel congratulated the team in producing a design code of less than 100 pages.

The Panel liked the do's and don'ts illustrated at the beginning of the design code and suggested don'ts could be included in other sections of the design code.

The definition of 'must' and 'should' was very helpful but there is a difficult balance to be kept to not preclude diversity of design and allow for changes over time.

It was felt Marshalls' long term interest in the development brings opportunities.

The Panel made the following recommendations, further details can be found above:

- The example image of bin and cycle storage should be replaced with something more aspirational that promotes the use of cycles rather than storing them with bins.
- More references to the health and wellbeing agenda needs to be included.
- Consideration should be given to green spaces and their role in providing the community with an opportunity to establish social networks.
- The school and square will play a critical role and needs to be carefully considered working with the County Council and School Promoter.
- Would welcome the inclusion of accommodation for the elderly.
- Welcome the removal of the oval and the green landscaping coming into the development.
- The developers are invited to consider the future of the car and showing how the development is adaptable to this.
- The Panel invited the design team to review the frontage to Newmarket Road and the parallel road. The illustration in the design code needs to be amended to show more detail, include ground floor extra height to accommodate non-domestic use such as retail and allow opportunity for spill out spaces adjacent to them.
- The environment and landscape could come through a lot stronger throughout the design code.
- Role of landscape to mitigate overheating, and bring benefits for biodiversity and health and wellbeing needs to be referenced in the code.

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- Use of tree trenches and water gardens to attenuate water where it falls is encouraged.
- Include in the landscape more opportunity for fruit and veg production can bring a community together.
- Roofs and pitches written into the design code to maximise potential use of solar panels.
- Include more detail of the podium parking, how adjoining properties should be treated and establish a minimum depth for gardens adjacent to the podium parking.
- Not all landmark key buildings to be located on corners.
- The Panel felt more detail of the frontages onto Newmarket Road.





Appendix 1

