



CAMBRIDGESHIRE QUALITY PANEL

REPORT OF PANEL MEETING

Scheme: Approach to Wing Design Code

Date: 28th September 2017

Venue: Cambourne Marketing Suite, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambourne

Time: 13:00 – 15:30hrs

Quality Panel Members

Robin Nicholson (Panel Chair)

Steve Platt

David Taylor

David Pritchard

Oliver Smith

Nick James

Panel secretariat and support

Stuart Clarke – Cambridgeshire County Council

Judit Carballo – Cambridgeshire County Council

Local Authority Attendees

Ed Durrant, Principal Planner – South Cambridgeshire District Council

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

Elizabeth Moon, Urban Design – South Cambridgeshire District Council

Applicant and Representatives

Chris Flood – Marshall

Jamie Wilding – Hill Residential

Teresa Borsuk – Pollard Thomas Edwards

Alexis Butterfield - Pollard Thomas Edwards

Leo Hammond - Pollard Thomas Edwards

Daniel Cox - Pollard Thomas Edwards

Will Cobley – Terence O'Rourke

Robert Myers – RMA

Paul Cosford - WSP



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' (see Appendix 1 for Site Plan/Master Plan) 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 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 planning applications for infrastructure provision (by January 2018) and two reserved matters applications (in February and August 2018).

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

The presentation to the Panel is on the structure of the Design Code. The applicant proposes to return to the Quality Panel within the next six months.

The Panel have previously considered the Wing Master Plan and then emerging planning application.

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.

3. Cambridgeshire Quality Panel views

Introduction

The Panel's advice reflects the issues associated with each of the four 'C's' from 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 detailed the history of Wing, the timeline for the development and recent amendments to the masterplan. They have improved the master plan through emphasising the woodland setting, removing the Circus and permeating more tree planting into the site.

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The applicant was mindful of the Design Code needing to work for the whole site and not just phase one and that it needs to be clear what is mandatory and what “should” or “must” be done and what is “illustrative”. It has previously been agreed with SCDC that the Design Code should be no more than 100 pages, and the Panel supported this.

The applicant set out how their thinking had evolved and how they had responded to the Design Principles Guide. They had visited developments such as The Avenue, Saffron Walden, Nine Wells, Cambridge and Upper Cambourne and contributed to a workshop facilitated by SCDC to gain stakeholder views.

A proposed structure for the document was outlined with the main audiences suggested as the local authority, future developers, the local community and site-wide stakeholders e.g. County Council Highways.

The applicant stated that they would like the Code to be reviewed as and when required and the Panel supported this idea to improve the Code in the future.

Community

The Panel asked how the community will evolve and get to meet one another. The applicant responded that the development is intended to be a vibrant place where people live, work and play and that the local centre is community focused with the primary school and other community uses such as the hall/hub and proposed nursery. There will also be commercial uses such as a shop and café. The local centre, called Market Square, will be a place to meet and dwell and people will pass through to on-site uses as well as to access the neighbouring park and ride and/or the ice arena.

The Panel suggested that the Park and Ride may not always be *in situ* and therefore other future uses may enhance the development. The Code should think about managing change, since houses and the community within will be around for at least 200 years. It was suggested that pop up retail could be used to test the market and this was generally considered a good idea by all.

The applicant suggested that the Newmarket Road frontage is a challenging aspect of the development, because of the need for retained car dealerships, but is also an opportunity to improve the environment for the community. Consideration should be given in the Code as to how to integrate the car dealerships into the residential environment. The Panel suggested that there could be opportunities to provide residential above the car dealerships which can be considered as reserved matters and phase 2 applications come forward.

The Panel would have liked to see a plan of amenities and destinations in and around the development to show how residents will access the new Cambridge station, schools, supermarkets, the city centre and communal spaces /facilities in adjoining areas.

The Panel pointed out that communal spaces can be important event spaces and support interactions between the public. There needs to be further exploration of potential uses around Market Square and how this space will be used by different groups. It was also

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suggested that communal gardens between adjacent houses are a good way to foster community.



The Panel expect that the Design Code will explore health and wellbeing issues and to design for comfort, adaptability and change. It was highlighted by the Panel that the site is next to an airport and therefore the treatment of associated noise and air quality are important. The applicant recognised this and explained, for example, how the existing engine run up bay is being relocated and upgraded to a state-of-the-art facility elsewhere on the airport site.

Connectivity

The Panel broadly supported the improvements to the masterplan but noted that phase one will be served from a single access off Newmarket Road. This is to be discussed with the Highway Authority as to the acceptability of this approach.

The Panel asked for an explanation of parking and the applicant responded that there will be on-plot parking with visitor parking provided on street. Phase two may have podium parking due to the higher provision of apartments. There will be no courtyard parking. The Panel supported this approach.

The Panel felt there was a real opportunity to build on the Cambridge cycling culture and, looking forward, one Panel member speculated how current and proposed cycle links could be used for personalised travel pods in the future; this emphasised the importance of developing a process for managing change that permeated the discussion.

In general, it was considered that there are good transport links to, from and within the site.

Character

Currently, there are four character areas planned for the Code, a reduction from the twelve areas proposed before. The Panel supported this rationalisation but also encouraged the applicant to consider character areas defined by a road corridor for example or by other ways beyond the conventional.

The Panel explored with the applicant the vision for Wing and what they want the place to be. The architecture of the buildings will define the character of the development in terms of gables and typologies as well as be informed by different work patterns. Housing that can be adapted to different uses is to be welcomed.

The Code needs to consider the transition along Newmarket Rd from the petrol station to the car showrooms addressing the arrival to the site and the Market Square. It is suggested that the buildings along Newmarket Rd should be adaptable and capable of being used for retail and office uses as well as residential. The Code should set out requirements for higher ceilings, the incorporation of shutters, parking, landscaping, signage and external lighting.

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The Panel thought the Market Square is too hidden from views from Newmarket Rd and suggested a wider 'throat' which could have pop-ups that lead in to the Square encouraging exploration of the retail offer by the public.

The Panel asked how the primary school will fit into the development and the applicant explained that the school will front on to the Market Square with housing wrapping around the playing fields. The Panel acknowledge this approach which will reduce or remove concerns about school boundary treatments and fencing in street scenes.

The Panel asked if there will be senior living as this will greatly impact the character of Wing. The applicant responded that they recognise there is a strong market for such provision, but haven't yet agreed a development mix. There are no private rented sector dwellings planned.

The applicant has appointed a public artist to engage with the public art strategy which they envisage will be integrated within building designs rather than bespoke pieces of art.

The Panel emphasised that designing for streets not just blocks is important, especially where different house builders are used across a site and this was acknowledged by the applicant.

The Panel asked about management of the site. The applicant set out how Marshall will be responsible for open spaces, whilst roads and drainage will be adopted by the relevant authorities where-ever possible. The applicant is mindful of avoiding high estate charges which impact on the affordability of the site for families.

The Panel supported taking a simple approach to the character areas and encouraged the applicant to be aware of materials and colours which may become too prevalent such as Cambridge buff.

Climate

The Panel asked about the site wide energy strategy to which the applicant stated there will be one and the site will be built to code 4 levels, with SuDs features.

The Panel raised the issue of health and wellbeing, comfort and adaptability and the applicant was fully in support of what the Panel were suggesting. The proximity of the airport is being taken account of by the relocation of the engine test bay, and the public safety zone is not being built on.

The changing environment over the life of the development will need to be taken account of.

4. Conclusion

The Panel thanked the applicant for presenting to the Quality Panel at an early stage and were very encouraged by the approach to the Code. They noted that it is work in progress and encouraged the applicant to not let the Code knock the spirit of the place and to

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continue to be aspirational and remain aware of the longevity and need for change as they are designing for communities for the next 200 years.



The Panel felt that the Code had the potential to be an exemplar document that could potentially inform other codes across the County.

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

- Support a 100 page or less Code (and an A2 summary sheet).
- Emphasise importance of social spaces and communal gardens. It is important to understand how the new residents will start to build a community. Consider the amenities, connectivity, identity and social elements of how communities evolve. Think about how, who and where people will congregate?
- Consider how to soften the hard barriers, whilst respecting policy requirements, perhaps with views through the planting to the north and east
- Consider the quality of materials and keep it simple.
- Consider senior living tenure.
- Opportunity to improve Newmarket Road frontage should be taken and developed at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure road opposite car dealerships included in Code.



APPENDIX 1 – Wing Master Plan

