



Cambridgeshire Quality Panel

Eddington Lots S1 & S2

Thursday 28th January 2021

Virtual Meeting

The Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth sets out the core principles for the level of quality to be expected in new development across Cambridgeshire. The [Cambridgeshire Quality Panel](#) provides independent, expert advice to developers and local planning authorities

against the four core principles of the Charter: connectivity, character, climate, and community.

Scheme Description

Architect/Designer: Jo Cowen Architects

Applicant: Present Made

Planning status: Pre Application for Reserve Matters Application

Issue date: 9th February 2021

Declarations of Interest

Panel members are required to declare any interests they may have in relation to the development before the Panel and any such interests are recorded here.

None.

Previous Panel Reviews

The Panel has reviewed a number of applications that relate to the Cambridge North West development, referred to as Eddington. This has included the Design Code, and a number of reserve matters.

Development Overview

Lots S1 and S2 form the northern edge of the Phase 1 development of Eddington, North West Cambridge scheme. It is proposed to submit a reserved matters application pursuant to the outline planning permission (LPA ref: S/1886/11 and variation LPA ref: S/2036/13/VC), for circa 111 houses and 249 apartments, alongside an ecological corridor along the northern boundary, a landscaped podium garden court, car and cycle parking and sustainable urban drainages systems. The proposals are for 100% market housing which will be owned and managed under a build-to-rent model.

Both Lots have frontages onto The Ridgeway (primary pedestrian/cycle route), The Avenue (secondary road) and Neighbourhood Park. Lot S1 shares a boundary with existing residential dwellings along Huntingdon Road.

Cambridgeshire Quality Panel views

The Panel has been issued with background reference information from the applicant and local planning authority ahead of the review session. This information is listed at Appendix A.

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

Overall, the Panel was pleased to see the thoroughness of the preparatory design work and the early engagement of the landscape architect however the overall impression created by the drawings and the lack of detailed plans, sections and elevations raised concerns, possibly unjustifiably, that other aspects had not been fully considered.

Community – *“places where people live out of choice and not necessity, creating healthy communities with a good quality of life”*

The Panel had concerns the layout will promote conflict between different users. It was noted the proposals included ambassadors on site, but the spaces would need to be very carefully managed. For the houses on S1, there were questions as to whether the liveable streets were trying to do too much. A number of landscape features, providing play spaces as depicted in the delightful images, whilst also providing vehicular access for residents' on-plot car parking and refuse collection. How would this work in detail?

The aspiration of the S2 Podium garden court is very welcome but the Panel could foresee conflict; for example noisy play and parties in the podium garden could create a nuisance to other residents.

The inclusion of the kitchen garden on the podium was welcome but the Panel was concerned about the impact of overshadowing.

The sunken podium games court has potential but was rather difficult to comprehend. Whilst a good amenity, there were concerns whether there would be enough light.

Connectivity – “places that are well-connected enable easy access for all to jobs and services using sustainable modes”

The Panel wanted to better understand traffic movement generally and how people would circulate within S1. More detailed plans of the Liveable Streets and the Tertiary Roads on S1 would have helped the Panel understand what the streets are catering for.

It was noted that swept paths for refuse vehicles had been considered as part of the design but the Panel was sceptical about the winding routes through the liveable streets in S1.

The proposals for SUDs is very welcome. There was however some caution as to the use of the grasscrete-like product as it only really works as overflow parking. It was noted the proposals were to use a structural soil base and Stockholm tree planting approach.

Character – “Places with distinctive neighbourhoods and where people create ‘pride of place’

The Panel felt there were lots of good ideas, but there was a need to filter/edit these to calm down the design. The developer needs to demonstrate how the landscape and public realm will work. The aspiration is very welcome but it has to be deliverable and maintainable.

There are some tight spaces in the development and some of the proposals will be costly to deliver. The Panel was concerned it will be difficult for the residents to enjoy the landscaped routes without a large management cost.

With a single entrance to the car park as part of S2, it gives the impression of a gated community.

The modular forms of the houses in S1 create difficulties turning the blocks around corners but the Panel thought the modules could be applied in S2. However, if the closed perimeter block typology of S2 was further broken down, this could provide

clearer entrances to apartments, reduce the length of the corridors and provide views in, out and through in different directions.

Climate – “Places that anticipate climate change in ways that enhance the desirability of development and minimise environmental impact”

The Panel liked the surface water treatment and SUDs plans which is likely to be cost effective as well as having a lower carbon footprint. The quantum of trees in S1 was welcome too.

The Panel were divided on the treatment of the buffer zone on the north boundary of S1. Whether this was a missed opportunity for the greater enjoyment of the residents, or shut off as proposed.

The Panel was delighted to see that orientation had been taken into account in the design of the elevations but were frustrated they were not able to appreciate the impact these studies had had on the architecture as a result of the lack of comparative elevations.

It was noted the orientation of roofs had been optimised for PV panels and battery storage is being considered as part of the houses in S1. The houses will be connected to the district heating system.

The Panel was concerned about overheating in the south and west facing apartments in S2, noting there were a lack of shading. Most of the apartments are single aspect with less opportunity for natural ventilation.

Panel Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the main conclusions and recommendations of the Panel were:

- 1) The Panel would have welcomed plans, sections and elevations in order to better understand how the proposals would work.
- 2) The aspirational proposals need editing to calm the design.
- 3) The Panel were impressed with the SUDs proposals.
- 4) The landscape vision approach, tree planting and community gardens are welcome.
- 5) There is built in conflict in the community spaces that may require significant maintenance and management if not resolved.

- 6) The Liveable Streets in S1 need detail design to show how they would work.
- 7) Detailed traffic movement plans are needed.
- 8) Potential conflict in the S2 Podium court needs to be resolved.
- 9) Potential overheating in S2 apartments is a concern.
- 10) Can the continuous nature of the blocks in S2 be broken up?

References

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Next Steps

The Panel would welcome the opportunity for ongoing engagement with the developer and design team as proposals for this site progress.

Attendees

Chair: Robin Nicholson

Panel Members: John Dales

Simon Carne

Kirk Archibald

Lindsey Wilkinson

Steve Platt

Panel Support: Judit Carballo and David Carford

Local Authority: Guy Wilson – Planner, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

Chris Carter – Delivery Manager, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

Annemarie de Boom – Urban Design, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

Dinah Foley-Norman – Landscape Architecture, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

Applicant Team: Alan Penfold, Family Director (Applicant – Present Made)

Chris Hollidge, Development Manager (Applicant – Present Made)

Joanne Cowen, CEO – Jo Cowen Architects (Architect)

Gareth Smith, Associate – Jo Cowen Architects (Architect)

Andrew Thornhill, Director – Churchman Thornhill Finch (Landscape Architect)

Guy Kaddish, Planning Partner – Bidwells (Planning Agent)

Rebecca Smith, Principal Planner – Bidwells (Planning Agent)

Gustavo Brunelli, Associate Director – Hurley Palmer Flatt (Sustainability)

Glynn Irvine - Robert Bird (Civil Engineering)

Observers: Louise Lord - Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing, South Cambridgeshire District Council

Appendix A – Background Information List and Plan

- Main presentation
- Local authority background note
- Developers cover note

Documents may be available on request, subject to restrictions/confidentiality.

Plans

S1



S2

