



Ref 13/0751/COND15A & 13/0751/COND16A

Linear park parcels 15 and 18 Clay Farm Development Site, Cambridge

Application details

Committee Date: 19 July 2023

Report to: Joint Development Control Committee

Lead Officer: Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Ward/parish: Trumpington

Proposal: Submission of details required by condition 15 (Linear Park details) of planning permission 13/0751/REM & Submission of details required by condition 16 (LAPS) of planning permission 13/0751/REM

Applicant: Vistry Homes

Presenting officer: Julia Briggs

Reason presented to committee: Third party representations

Member site visit date: N/A

Key issues: 1. Design, layout, and landscaping
2. Play provision

Recommendation: Approve

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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The application seeks to discharge conditions 15 and 16 of planning permission 13/0751/REM which require submission of detailed design plans for the linear park and the Local Area of Play (LAP) within the park. The reserved matters permission was granted in 2013 for development of parcels 15, 17 and 18 of the Clay Farm outline permission.
- 1.2 The submitted plans meet Local Plan policy and comply with the Clay Farm Design Code, the Clay Farm Play Strategy and the Public Art Delivery Plan for Parcels 15-18.
- 1.3 Officers recommend that the Planning Committee discharge conditions 15 and 16 in full.

2.0 Site Description and Context

- 2.1 The site is located in the Clay Farm development on the southern fringe of Cambridge City, on the border between Parcels 15 and 18. The site is approved as a linear park in the reserved matters permission 13/0751/REM with details to be submitted under conditions 15 and 16 of that permission.

2.2 The site is currently grassed, with a line of trees planted along the northern edge and with two diagonal paths situated towards the western end of the park.

2.3 To the east the site connects with Southwell Drive, with Hobson's Brook beyond. A new pedestrian bridge opposite the linear park site connects the site with the country park. To the north are residential properties, and to the south the site is partially bordered by Baker Lane and with residential properties. To the west is Whittle Avenue and Cornwell Park which is a 'Super Local Equipped Area of Play' (SLEAP).

3.0 The Proposal

3.1 The submission encompasses a detailed design for the linear park and the Local Area of Play (LAP) which is within the linear park, as required by conditions 15 and 16 of reserved matters permission 13/0751/REM. The design provides the following elements:

- Tree planting along the northern boundary
- Soft landscaping including shrubs, planting beds, wildflower turf and grass areas
- Resin bound paths to the north and south that include public art patterning and an informal hoggin path providing access into the eastern part of the park
- Seating
- Cycle parking in two locations
- A mound with logs as the LAP

3.2 Prior to submission the proposal was subject to pre-application advice which positively evolved the scheme. During the course of the application the scheme has been further refined to address representations and consultee comments.

4.0 Relevant Site History

Reference	Description	Outcome
07/0620/OUT	Residential development of up to 2,300 new mixed-tenure dwellings and accompanying provision of community facilities; sports and recreation facilities and landscaped open spaces including 49 ha. of public open space in the green corridor, retail (A1), food and drink uses (A3, A4, A5), financial and professional services (A2), non-residential institutions (D1), a nursery (D1), alternative health treatments (D1); provision for	Approved

	education facilities; and all related infrastructure including: all roads and associated infrastructure, alternative locations for Cambridgeshire guided bus stops, alternative location for CGB Landscape Ecological Mitigation Area, attenuation ponds including alternative location for Addenbrookes's Access Road pond, cycleways, footways and crossings of Hobson's Brook.	
12/0754/REM	102 new dwellings and associated landscaping, including central open space pursuant to outline approval 07/0620/OUT.	Approved
13/0751/REM	295 new dwellings and associated landscaping, pursuant to outline approval 07/0620/OUT. Parcels 15, 17 (part) and 18 Clay Farm Development Site, Cambridge.	Approved

4.1 The conditions 15 and 16 were subject to previous discharge of condition applications 13/0751/COND15 and 13/0751/COND16 which were refused under officer delegation in 2018 due to unsatisfactory planting details and pergola structure details and the potential for vehicles to access the park.

5.0 Policy

5.1 National

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Equalities Act 2010

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

5.2 Cambridge Local Plan 2018

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy 18: Southern Fringe Areas of Major Change
Policy 36: Air quality, odour, and dust
Policy 55: Responding to context
Policy 56: Creating successful places
Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm
Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development
Policy 82: Parking management

5.3 **Neighbourhood Plan**

N/A

5.4 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Landscape in New Developments SPD – Adopted March 2010
Public Art SPD – Adopted January 2009

6.0 **Consultations**

6.1 **Cambridge City Streets and Open Spaces Officer - No Objection**

6.2 Initial comments advised that the layout is generally acceptable and the LAP design is suitable. Further information required regarding seats and picnic tables, play logs, streetlights, and minor changes required to grass seed mix, and the shape of the wildflower turf area. Some comments were provided about areas to the east outside the site boundary.

6.3 Subsequent comments confirmed the willow tunnel was not supported due to the intensive maintenance required.

6.4 **Tree Officer – No objection**

6.5 No objection to this discharge of condition.

6.6 **Landscape Officer – No Objection**

6.7 Initial comments required specifications for benches and accessible picnic tables, and objected to boulders, seeking bollards instead. Comments also raised concerns about willow tunnel maintenance.

6.8 Subsequent comments advised details were acceptable, however specifications for picnic benches and tables were still outstanding.

7.0 **Third Party Representations**

7.1 Two representations have been received in objection. One from an individual and another signed by a group of 25 third parties from around the site area. During the course of the application, the group submission was updated to reflect comments on the updated plans.

7.2 The objections have raised the following issues:

- Proposals do not reflect previous collaboration with residents
- Soft landscaping fails to deliver interest throughout the year, does not complement maintenance regimes, and fails to provide a visual transition from rural to urban environment.
- The existing planted trees violates an easement for a surface water drain and are unable to be competed due to proximity to a highway.
- The layout fails to frame views into the park from the surrounding streets.
- The hoggin path severs the visual link between the linear park and the rural Hobson's Park.
- The hoggin path compromises the park; it becomes a thoroughfare; causes safety issues for those using mobility aids and for young children; allows access by cyclists; and the access may be flooded.
- The proposed paths compromise play value of the surrounding area for activities that require larger open spaces.
- The central mound and bench are set in a space that is currently open space that children are using for play.
- The mound and logs are too structured for this park; play should be less formal and free.
- Cycle parking in the centre of the linear park should be moved to Southwell Drive end where demand will be higher.
- Cycle parking does not provide for non-standard cycles.
- Placement of bins is remote from needs and too close to housing.

7.3 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council's website.

8.0 Assessment

9.0 Principle of Development

9.1 The applications seek discharge of planning conditions 15 and 16 of a reserved matters permission pursuant to the Clay Farm outline permission 07/0620/OUT. The reserved matters permission 13/0751/REM approved plans for a linear park and play area. The conditions require details for the linear park and LAP, and the submitted information provides these details.

9.2 The principle of the development is acceptable subject to details assessed below.

10.0 Design, Layout, Scale and Landscaping

10.1 Policies 55, 56 and 59 seek to ensure that development responds appropriately to its context, is of a high quality and includes appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment.

- 10.2 The reserved matters design and access statement shows the linear park as part of a pedestrian link through the parcels from the primary road through the SLEAP to the country park. The proposed arrangement of the park has evolved since the reserved matters masterplan stage; however, the proposed layout retains a similar percentage of grassed areas to paths and planting, and includes landscaped mounds, and many of the same soft landscaping species.
- 10.3 The proposed layout includes footpaths running parallel to the residential dwellings on the north and the south boundaries and two diagonal paths on the west section of park. These elements are consistent with the indicative layout of the park at the reserved matters stage. They allow access to the front of the dwellings that face on to the park and are acceptable. In addition, an informal hoggin path is proposed on the west of the park, connecting the northern and southern paths and allowing access for all users into the centre of the park. Third party comments object to the path stating that it severs the visual link to Hobson's Park and that it compromises the play value of the mounds and breaks up the open space that is currently used for informal play. The path is considered acceptable as it allows accessibility of the park to all users and does not sever visual links to the country park beyond. The play value of the park is discussed in the play provision section of this report, and safety objections related to the path are discussed under the highways section of this report.
- 10.4 A third-party comment objects to the soft landscaping species proposed. The soft landscaping is supported as it provides variety and biodiversity through species which have been selected as proven landscaping plants due to their colour, growth, and ease of maintenance. The mix will provide year-round interest and is suitably naturalistic for this site on the edge of the residential development.
- 10.5 Third party comments state that the proposal fails to frame views into the park from surrounding streets. The proposal is supported as the strategic view from Cornwall Park (the SLEAP) through to the country park is not compromised and is enhanced by the visual line of the row of formal trees on the northern boundary of the park. There are no side streets that connect into the park, but there is access to car parking, which is not considered to be a strategic view.
- 10.6 Overall, the proposed development is a high-quality design that would contribute positively to its surroundings and be appropriately landscaped. The proposal is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policies 55, 56, 57 and 59 and the NPPF.

11.0 Play provision

- 11.1 Condition 16 requires a LAP within the linear park. The proposed LAP consists of a mound in the centre of the eastern section of the park, with three logs arranged on the mound. The approved outline Strategy for

Youth Facilities and Children's Play strategy identifies that play areas should be naturalistic and designed to complement the specific context of the site. It further specifically states that natural play elements may include boulders, logs, ditches, and mounds which provide climbing balancing and movement coordination opportunities for young children. Third party comments object to the LAP stating it is too structured and seek a less formal LAP provision. The proposed LAP is situated between the SLEAP and the country park, and it is considered the mound and logs provide a suitable transition from the more urban SLEAP to the informal country park and are well incorporated into the overall landscaping of the park. Further play value is also provided by the public art paths that are discussed further in the public art section of this report.

- 11.2 The third-party objections also state that the LAP and associated bench compromise the open grassed area that is currently used for play. The outline Strategy for Youth Facilities and Children's Play strategy states that a LAP is designed for children aged between 4 and 6 years old. The Streets and Open Spaces Officer supports the LAP layout as it provides smaller opportunities for younger children's play and adventure play for older children whilst not encouraging organised sports play that is not suitable for this linear park. It is noted that the adjacent SLEAP is designed for children aged 4-8 and 8-12 and the country park provides further informal space for play that requires more room. The bench close to the LAP provides seating for parents which is also supported in the outline Play Strategy.
- 11.3 The LAP provision is considered to meet the outline play requirements and is acceptable.

12.0 Water Management and Flood Risk

- 12.1 Third party comments raise concerns about drainage and the impact of a surface water easement on the location of the row of trees along the northern edge of the site. Drainage and flooding across the parcels were assessed and deemed acceptable under the reserved matters application. The reserved matters approved drainage strategy plans show an existing surface water sewer running through the length of the site, these plans also show the location of the row of trees and were considered acceptable by the Drainage Officer. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in accordance with Local Plan policies 31 and 32 and NPPF advice.

13.0 Highway Safety

- 13.1 Policy 80 supports developments where access via walking, cycling and public transport are prioritised and is accessible for all. Para. 111 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

13.2 The proposal does not include new roads but does contain pedestrian paths. A third-party comment objects to the hoggin path on the basis that it could become a thoroughfare; cause safety issues for those using mobility aids and for young children; and allows access by cyclists. The path is supported as it allows access into the park and the picnic area for those using mobility aids and for pushchairs. The full length of the path is visible from either end, allowing users to appropriately manage movements through the space.

13.3 The proposal accords with the objectives of policy 80.

14.0 Cycle Parking

14.1 The Cambridge Local Plan (2018) supports development which encourages and prioritises sustainable transport, such as walking, cycling and public transport. The reserved matters application and specifically condition 15 of the permission does not require cycle parking to be provided in the linear park. However, the proposal provides 6 stands (12 spaces) in the centre of the linear park and 7 stands (14 spaces) in the east of the linear park including a stand (2 spaces) for non-standard cycles. The spaces for non-standard cycles were added to address third party comments about the lack of spaces for non-standard cycles.

14.2 A third-party comment has been submitted stating that demand for cycle parking would be concentrated in the east and seeking all cycle parking to be provided in the east of the site. The provision of cycle parking in two separate areas of the park is supported as it provides parking for cycles that enter from both the east and the west of the park and would prevent cycles being taken through the linear park.

14.3 Subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to accord with policy 82 of the Local Plan and the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

15.0 Amenity

15.1 Policy 36 seeks to preserve the amenity of neighbouring and / or future occupiers in terms of odour. During the course of the application amendments were made to move a rubbish bin in the centre of the park to be further away from residents. This was undertaken to address third party objections to the siting of the rubbish bin.

15.2 The proposal adequately respects the amenity of its neighbours and of future occupants and is considered that it is compliant with Cambridge Local Plan (2018) policy 36.

16.0 Public Art

16.1 The proposal includes an element of public art through the geometric patterns on the bound resin paths to the north and south of the park. This element is consistent with the Public Art Delivery Plan for parcels 15-18 dated June 2012. This plan recognises that the linear park provides a link between the SLEAP and the country park. The Applicant has confirmed the path has been designed with the artists. This addition is considered positive and is supported. The proposal is considered to accord with the Public Art SPD.

17.0 Third Party Representations

17.1 The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third Party Comment	Officer Response
Proposals do not reflect previous collaboration with residents.	The Applicant undertook engagement with a group of interested residents who have moved into the area prior to submitting the proposal. Pre-application advice was also sought from Council Officers. It is understood that where possible feedback has been incorporated into the design.
The existing row of planted trees are unable to be competed due to proximity to a highway.	Trees that have already been planted are included within the proposed layout and are considered acceptable.

18.0 Other Matters

Bins

18.1 Policy 57 requires refuse and recycling to be successfully integrated into proposals. A third-party comment objected to the location of bins due to their proximity to residents. During the course of the application the bin in the centre of the park was relocated to be further away from residents. This revised location is not considered to impact on residential amenity. The location of the bin is considered acceptable as it is in a central location and is accessible from the highway for ease of collection. It is noted that a bin should not be placed near to picnic areas due to the risk of attracting wasps.

18.2 The other bin locations proposed are collection areas for residential bins that would be used one day per week.

19.0 Planning Balance

- 19.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 19.2 The scheme provides a park layout and LAP that meets the requirements of the outline play strategy, provides visual year-round interest, and meets maintenance requirements. There are not considered to be any elements of the proposal that are unacceptable.
- 19.3 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the proposed development is recommended for approval.

20.0 Recommendation

- 20.1 Approve the discharge of conditions 15 and 16.