

LAND TO WEST OF CAMBOURNE (EXCLUDING SWANSLEY WOOD)

To: **Economy and Environment Committee**

Meeting Date: **21st April 2015**

From: **Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**

Electoral division(s): **Bourn**

Forward Plan ref: **N/a** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To consider the key issues arising from the consultation on planning application S/2903/14/OL concerning land to the West of Cambourne (excluding Swansley Wood).**

Recommendation: **The Committee is invited to:**

- a) Consider and approve the County Council's response to the Cambourne West planning application consultation as set out in Appendix 2; and**
- b) Delegate to the Executive Director: Economy, Transport and Environment in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Economy and Environment Committee the authority to make any minor textual changes to the consultation response.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cambourne is situated approximately 8 miles west of Cambridge on the A428 corridor, within the administrative area of South Cambridgeshire. It is a new settlement which was originally conceived in the 1990s for up to 3,000 dwellings (with a 10% reserve) and associated supporting infrastructure such as shops and schools. Construction commenced in 1998 and by 2010 a further planning permission had been granted for an additional 950 dwellings – making a total of 4,250 dwellings. Today, approximately 3,500 dwellings have been built and it is home to around 7,000 people.
- 1.2 The settlement has been designed on a principle of linked villages or fingers (being Upper Cambourne, Lower Cambourne and Great Cambourne) with adjoining landscape corridors and a common core. This planning application consultation relates to a fourth new finger.
- 1.3 Part of the land to the west of Cambourne which this planning application relates to was put forward for consideration in the Local Plan process and eventually proposed for approximately 1,200 dwellings in the emerging South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City Local Plan, which is currently being examined (emerging Local Plan Policy SS/8).
- 1.4 MCA Developments (the site promoter and applicant) propose that a larger housing allocation is appropriate (see Figure 1 below) and in December 2014 submitted an outline planning application (all Matters Reserved) for the development of up to 2,350 residential units including affordable housing; retail, offices/light industry, community and leisure facilities, two primary schools and one secondary school (up to 11.28 ha); three vehicular access points including the extension and modification of Sheepfold Lane, a four arm roundabout provided on A1198/Caxton Bypass and an access point off the A1198, south of the Caxton Gibbet to serve the proposed employment uses; a network of segregated pedestrian and cycle routes; sustainable drainage system and other infrastructure; together with associated earth works, parking, open space, including equipped play, playing fields and landscaping.



Figure 1: Cambourne West Location Plan

- 1.5 Details of the proposals and planning application are available on South Cambridgeshire District Council's website or by clicking [here](#).
- 1.6 A copy of the applicant's parameter plan identifying the main features of the proposed development is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.7 County Council officers were consulted on the planning application between 13th January and 20th February 2015 and comments duly submitted, subject to Member approval at today's Committee. The officer response for approval is attached as Appendix 2.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The Council recognises that additional housing will come forward on this site, the quantum of which will be determined by a decision on this planning application or adoption of the new Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire, expected late 2015.
- 2.2 It also comes forward in the context of the wider City Deal aspirations for the A428 corridor and will increase the pressure on that corridor.

Section 106 Contributions

- 2.3 The applicant has completed and submitted a Planning Obligations Heads of Terms document which states the development will provide (in so far as they relate to County Council matters) the following :-
 - i. Up to 40% affordable housing, subject to viability;
 - ii. An indoor community facility and up to two sports pavilions;
 - iii. Land for up to two primary schools and a secondary school;
 - iv. Off-site highway works, new bus shelters, improving off-site pedestrian and cycle routes and implementation of a full Travel Plan;
 - v. Local Planning Authority (LPA) and County Council monitoring; and
 - vi. Legal fees.
- 2.4 All of the above contributions are stated as "*level of contributions to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority post submission*".
- 2.5 County officers have identified further Section 106 items which are detailed in the officer response in Appendix 2 and which include:-
 - i. Libraries and Lifelong learning;
 - ii. Strategic Waste; and
 - iii. New Communities (community, locality, children's centre workers and social care provision).
- 2.6 Transport provisions will need to take account of measures to mitigate the development's impact which are likely to include contributions towards schemes such as the A428 – M11 segregated bus route and Maddingley Road bus priority scheme and potentially a proposed new park and ride site in the corridor.

- 2.7 Education costs for the three schools will need to be agreed.
- 2.8 The Local Planning Authority has requested the applicant to submit details of the viability assessment to justify the level of affordable housing and Section 106 being offered. To date, no information has been received. The County Council will require access to this information when it is available in order to evaluate the potential impact of viability on infrastructure.

Holding Objections

- 2.9 **Transport** – although officers broadly welcome the Transport Assessment and Residential Travel Plan provided as part of this application, significant additional information and clarification is required before the County Council can give a view on the full impact of the development, including a reassessment based on the actual development proposals in the planning application. Without this, the incremental impact of the development cannot be understood and any required mitigation measures identified.
- 2.10 Further consideration will also be required on the relationship this development proposal has with wider County Council proposals to accommodate developments, including land west of Cambourne, on the A428 corridor. Such proposals include the A428 – M11 segregated bus route and Madingley Road bus priority schemes and potentially a proposed new park and ride site in the corridor for which proportionate contributions will be sought from this development. Officers recommend a holding objection on this development until this additional information has been provided and fully reviewed by the County Council.
- 2.11 **County Archaeology** officers require trenching of the site prior to determination of the planning application due to the potential significance of finds. However, the applicant is currently resisting this requirement on the basis that they consider trenching the entire site unreasonable before they know if their scheme is acceptable in principle to South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). Officers are discussing this matter with SCDC and the applicant to see if a way forward can be agreed. A holding objection is recommended until such time as officers are satisfied that appropriate mitigation is being put in place.

Quality Panel

- 2.12 The vision for land to the west of Cambourne makes reference to the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth and the 4C's (Character, Connectivity, Climate and Community). It is understood that the proposals are being considered by the South Cambridgeshire Design Enabling Panel.

Summary Conclusions

- 2.13 Officers broadly support the proposals coming forward (the quantum of development to be determined by *due process*), subject to overcoming the archaeology and transport objections and the provision of appropriate Section 106 contributions to adequately mitigate the development impact.

- 2.14 Officers would support further considerations by the applicant on master planning to ensure the development as a whole and in particular the schools and employment opportunities.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

The redevelopment of the area will bring many benefits to the local economy including new housing and supporting infrastructure, business opportunities and improved transport links.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

The development of the area will help support healthy and independent lives through an emerging new and expanding community and supporting infrastructure including new pedestrian and cycle linkages.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

The redevelopment of the area will bring many benefits to the local economy including new housing and supporting infrastructure, business opportunities and improved transport links.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Although land to the west of Cambourne is an important part of the development of Cambourne, the costs of bringing forward its infrastructure, its transport impact, fit with the City Deal and archaeological implications will need careful consideration to ensure the County Council's objectives are fully met. Viability of the scheme will be an important consideration in order to ensure any development is deliverable but also contains all the important services and facilities.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications for statutory, risk and legal.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications for equality and diversity.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

The following bullet point sets out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The proposals for land to the west of Cambourne are subject to the statutory planning consultation process. This has included consultation by South Cambridgeshire District Council with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees, including Parish Councils and the local community (including local public exhibition events).

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

Members and the local community have a number of opportunities to be involved in the development of this area.

4.6 Public Health Implications

The inclusion of health considerations forms part of the Council's response and would benefit the proposals as they move forward.

Source Documents	Location
Land to the West of Cambourne planning application	Room 304, Shire Hall, Cambridge and https://www.scambs.gov.uk/content/cambourne