

Landscape Consultation Response

Reference Number:	20/02929/OUT
Proposal:	Outline planning for the development of land for a retirement care village in Use Class C2 comprising housing with care, communal health, wellbeing and leisure facilities, public open space, landscaping, car parking, access and associated development and public access countryside park with all matters reserved except for access.
Site Address:	Land Between Haverhill Road and Hinton Way Stapleford Cambridge
Planning Case Officer:	Michael Sexton
Landscape Architect:	Carol Newell
Date:	17/08/2020
<p>Additional comments</p> <p>As part of the application, the applicant has included a Landscape and Visual Appraisal which I have considered within my consultation response. As per appraisal I have evaluated the site as two component parts</p> <p>Area A – the retirement village and</p> <p>Area B – the landscape semi natural park</p> <p>In association with the methodology outlined in Appendix 1.</p> <p>Area A – the retirement village</p> <p>I would disagree with the applicant’s assessment that the development with landscape mitigation measures after a 1yr period would be major/moderate adverse effect & after a 15yr period would be moderate neutral based on the following criteria:</p> <p>Development of a retirement village upon agricultural land would be contrary to the Statement of Environments Opportunity as outlined within NCA 87</p> <p>SEO 1: Maintain sustainable but productive agricultural land use, while expanding and connecting the chalkland assemblage of semi-natural grasslands, for example by sensitive management of road verges and extending buffer strips along field margins, to benefit soil and water quality, reduce soil erosion, strengthen landscape character and enhance biodiversity and pollinator networks.</p> <p>SEO 3: Conserve and promote the landscape character, geodiversity, historic environment and historical assets of the chalklands, including the open views of undulating chalkland, large rectilinear field pattern and linear ditches, strong equine association and the Icknield Way prehistoric route. Improve opportunities to enhance people’s enjoyment of the area while protecting levels of tranquillity.</p> <p>SEO 4: Conserve the settlement character and create or enhance sustainable urban drainage systems and green infrastructure within existing and new developments, particularly in relation to the urban fringe and growth areas such as</p>	

south-east Cambridge, to provide recreation opportunities, increase soil and water quality and enhance landscape character.

The village of Stapleford primarily comprises residential development either detached or semi detached properties. Development of a main village centre does not reflect similar developments within or adjacent to the site particularly upon the edge of the settlement.

Existing residential units upon the settlement edge are typically 1 and 2 storey – a 12m high main village centre would appear overbearing and incongruous particularly upon the edge of the rural village. It would be a noticeable encroachment into the countryside and an extension of the village framework.

Development would be major change, a permanent removal of an open agricultural field and a prominent new feature in the landscape particularly upon the edge of the village.

I agree with the applicant that views to the site are limited due to the presence of roadside hedges, surrounding woodland and limited number of public rights of way. However, due to the undulating nature of the topography the mass and scale of the development would be visible particularly from the south east and north east.

Even with landscape mitigation measures the harm would be significantly adverse, unacceptable and contrary to policy NH/2 Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character and HQ/1: Design Principles. These policies seek to ensure that all new development is of a high quality design that preserves or enhances the character of the area, respects the local context and local distinctiveness of the area and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the village and landscape character.

Area B – the landscape semi natural park

I agree with the applicant's assessment that the development with landscape mitigation measures after a 1yr period would be major neutral effect & after a 15yr period would be major beneficial effect. This area will change from arable to semi-natural grassland and trees/scrub and would be more in keeping with objectives for landscape improvement and recreational / biodiversity benefits.

Carol Newell 13/12/2020

Revised comments

Drawings and reports reviewed within the application: *Site Location Plan 011, Parameter Plan Access And Movement 010, Parameter Plan Landscape 009, Parameter Plan Land Use & Building Heights 008*

Previous comment still apply

Carol Newell 21/09/2020

Comments:

Drawings and reports reviewed within the application: *Site location plan 011, 009 PARAMETER PLAN LANDSCAPE*

Policy CSF/5 Countryside Enhancement Strategy of Cambridge Southern Fringe AAP

I welcome the creation of the country park to the north of the site. The applicant has indicated a number of landscape features which reflect the policies enhancement strategies. However, the development of a retirement village with access to the south of the site would be an encroachment into the countryside and have significant adverse effects to the landscape character. This would be contrary to policy CSF/5 Countryside Enhancement Strategy its vision and development principles.

Policies NH/2: Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character and HQ/1: Design Principles.

The site is currently an open agricultural field outside the development framework. The landscape enhancement measures proposed within the country park would be acceptable and welcomed.

However, the development of a retirement village with access to the South of the site would be an encroachment into the countryside and have a significant adverse effect upon the local landscape character and local views. The development conflicts with Policies NH/2: Protecting and Enhancing Landscape Character and HQ/1: Design Principles. These policies seeks to ensure that all new development is of a high quality design that preserves or enhances the character of the area, respects the local context and local distinctiveness of the area and would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the village and landscape character.

Policy S/4: Cambridge Green Belt

The site is an undeveloped open agricultural field within the Green Belt and I have commented on the principle of development.

However, the development of a retirement village with access to the south of the site would cause permanent significant harm to the sites rural character and openness. This would be contrary to the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Therefore, development of a retirement village with access would be contrary to Policy S/4: Cambridge Green Belt.

Carol Newell 17/08/2020

Recommended planning conditions