

Agenda Item 4

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

**UPDATE
REPORT TO:**

Extraordinary Planning Committee

28 June 2019

AUTHOR/S:

Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Cambourne West Design Code

1. The following updates to the main report considered on 12 June 2019 are set out below. The updates cover an update to the Town Council comments and clarification to comments raised by Members during the debate of the meeting.

Consultations

2. At their meeting on 11 June 2019, Cambourne Town Council raised no comment to the Design Code.

The purpose of a Design Code and its relationship to the outline planning permission

3. As set out in the National Planning Practice Guide, a Design Code is a type of detailed design guidance that is particularly useful for complex scenarios involving multiple parties in long-term development. A code can be a way of simplifying the processes associated with new development to give more certainty to all those involved and help to make high quality places. Code preparation can help to build consensus about what kind of place everyone wants to create.
4. Preparing a good code is about finding a balance between technical specificity and a succinct description of what is required.
5. Design codes seek to capture the specific requirements of a place and encourage interested parties to think together about each development in its entirety as a unique place.
6. Government guidance also aims to promote speed of implementation and avoid stifling responsible innovation and provide flexibility, design codes should wherever possible avoid overly prescriptive detail and encourage sense of place and variety.
7. Guidance also highlights that Codes should carefully distinguish mandatory from discretionary components, avoiding ambiguous aspirational statements, unnecessary jargon and they should define any use of key technical terms.
8. The Code submitted therefore aims to build on and deliver a development that reflects the best elements of Cambourne and learning from existing developments around Cambridgeshire and beyond.
9. The Code does not affect or override the amend the outline planning permission.
10. Matters such as the amount of development, flooding, transport, ecology and the amount of development are already considered and detailed in the outline planning permission and are not amended.

11. The Code has sought to include the approved elements of the outline planning permission within the Code (e.g. through appending approved outline parameter plans). There is no amendment to the outline planning permission.

Application of the Code

12. One area of clarification sought by members was the difference mandatory and discretionary components of the Code and how these would be applied. The Code clearly sets out what is mandatory and what is discretionary through the use of wording '**must**' and '**should**'. The definitions are set out below:

Mandatory elements which **must** be provided are indicated using the word '**must**' and the above symbol next to images/illustrations.

Where compliance is **recommended** the word '**should**' is used. If the developer/design teams do not follow recommended guidance the departure **must** be justified in future reserved matters applications. A divergence would need to be discussed and agreed with SCDC at pre-application stage and will only be considered if they meet the broad aims of the code and offer additional design benefits or design excellence.

13. As such, areas where divergence through the delivery of the scheme is necessary, agreement would need to be reached with Officers and that the design quality of the proposals has not been lessened. This allows for flexibility through change in legislation, innovation or excellence in architecture or design that are not currently foreseen and would retain control with the Local Planning Authority on design.
14. There is no change proposed to the Recommendation of the main report which is:

That Committee delegate approval of the amended Cambourne West Design Code to officers pending the receipt of additional details and reassurances in relation to matters highlighted in the main report which include:

-Typographical corrections

- Amendments to the Parameter plans to reflect the latest submission under S/1775/19/NM;

- Corrections to Sheepfold Character Area, in particular Figures 74 and 75;

- Corrections to ensure that diagrammatically the proposals meet the design aspirations and parameter plans