

Paper for S.21/1875

Many thanks to John Chaplin for providing a thorough site assessment.

Cam Parish Council acknowledge that both national and local planning policy actively encourage sustainable growth, particularly in locations with strong transport links. With this site being in very close proximity to Cam & Dursley railway station, we recognise that any resistance will likely fail at appeal. As such, the Parish Council takes a pragmatic and forward-looking position to ensure the inevitable development is fit for purpose, meets the infrastructure needs of an expanding parish, is in keeping and of high quality.

Therefore, we would like to raise the following observations –

1. Density and Layout

The proposed development, particularly within Phase 1, presents a notably higher density than comparable schemes in Cam. The lack of green space within the central layout and the relegation of public open space to the site's outer edges creates a concentrated, overly urban feel which detracts from the local character. Such visual intensity risks overpowering the existing street pattern and eroding Cam's character.

We recommend that density be reduced to create a more balanced layout, with public open space better integrated into the fabric of the development, rather than pushed to its boundaries. There should be a balance of houses and green space throughout the whole site to align with the Cam Neighbourhood Development Plan.

2. Design

The site borders mature landscapes and existing housing. It requires architecture and materials that seamlessly blend into the local palette and the mixed materials are welcome.

We continue to object to the inclusion of three-storey homes within this phase. These are not in keeping with the surroundings nor the Cam Neighbourhood Plan and should be removed from the scheme.

3. Green infrastructure and connectivity

Cam's network of snicket-ways, footpaths and short cuts is central to our identity and key to active travel, linking homes to key destinations such as schools, churches, and community facilities. Whilst some effort has been made to create pathways around the site perimeters, we disagree that there is adequate connectivity within the proposed site layout. The design lacks meaningful connectivity internally as well as

opportunities to exit the site boundaries. Any connecting paths should be constructed of a surface suitable for cyclists and well lit.

The location of the proposed school, positioned along two site boundaries, creates a hard edge and offers no opportunity for pedestrian or cycle movement from the southwest corner. There is an opportunity here to connect a pedestrian link to Jubilee Close opening up access to the wider village network.

Greater consideration should be paid to Cams NDP and Design Codes to ensure key characteristics around pedestrian and cycle movement options are maximised. The existing interconnecting PROWs should be acknowledged in the site design. We would like to highlight again the pinch point across the A4135 at the railway bridge. Improved pedestrian access and safety is a necessity here for greater connectivity throughout the wider area. Restrictions regarding the new population that were previously agreed at the planning application stage must be honoured.

4. Phasing strategy and cumulative impact on highways

Cam Parish Council acknowledge that the DCC report has comprehensively addressed highways-related matters. However, we note concern that GCC have not formally commented on the application.

We wish to raise concerns regarding the way this scheme is being delivered in phases. We fear that a phased approach lacks clarity and coherence, which risks creating confusion. This disjointed approach could lead to important elements being overlooked or the cumulative impacts of development being underestimated. A clear example is the incomplete spine road, which will not be fully delivered until a second developer proceeds with their portion. The Robert-Hitchins site is comparatively small yet has a potentially expensive highways addition. There is concern that without prior commitment to deliver the roundabout, the spine road will never be connected. This leaves a major route unfinished and undermines the functionality of Phase 1.

We strongly urge that further engagement with Robert-Hitchins is pursued to ensure delivery of essential infrastructure early in the build programme. This major access and connectivity concern must be addressed as a condition of planning permission being granted.

We welcome the recognition of the need for crossing points at the site entrance across the A4135 and request that these improvements are delivered early on in the build to ensure public safety.

5. Public Open Space and Community Assets

Phase 1 omits many community infrastructure elements identified in the wider outline planning application, including most LEAP/NEAPs, the school, the car park, orchard, and the allotments. This compounds the concerns over the concentrated urban feel, density and character of Phase 1. There will be a delay in delivering these essential community obligations until the developers proceed with phase 2.

We welcome the inclusion of allotments in the scheme and would consider managing them on behalf of the community. However, we request that they be:

- **Securely enclosed with a suitable perimeter fence and access gates**
- **Provided with a water supply and multiple taps (boxed and with a NRV) at regular intervals**
- **Built as raised beds to ensure accessibility**
- **Developed as an allotment site i.e. levelled and with decent topsoil**
- **A decent access road and parking**
- **Their proposed location adjacent to the M5 is unsuitable due to noise, air quality, and user experience**

We request that a more appropriate location be identified, and an alteration made to the outline application prior to permission being granted. A practical location would be opposite the proposed car park where there is currently a small play area. This would create a meaningful community infrastructure area within the development with educational benefits and an opportunity to connect with the school. Alternatively, a more central location within phase 2 could be considered.

6. Access to Jubilee Playing Fields

The proposal provides only pedestrian access to the adjacent Jubilee Playing Fields. However, vehicular access remains an unresolved issue. Everside Lane, the only current access route, is not an adopted highway and presents longstanding safety concerns.

We had hoped that this development could provide an alternative vehicular route. At the very least, the safety of the proposed pedestrian links must be reconsidered as exits through established hedgerows would obstruct sight lines onto Everside Lane.

Furthermore, the proposed car park for the Jubilee Fields does not appear in Phase 1, and we request that this element be brought forward earlier in the phasing plan to support community use. The car park should be built to a suitable highways' standard and lit. This will inevitably become a multi-use car park servicing the school, (hopefully relocated) allotments and jubilee playing fields so should be of a suitable size.

Recommendation

Cam Parish Council does not object to the principle of development on this site but would like to work more closely with the developer to ensure a quality build. We therefore recommend that planning permission not be granted until the following issues are addressed:

- 1. Reduction in housing density and integration of meaningful green space throughout the entire site layout**
- 2. Removal of three-storey dwellings to reflect local character**
- 3. Improved internal and external connectivity, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, in accordance with Cam's Design Code to ensure public safety and access to existing facilities in the wider parish**
- 4. Revision of the phasing strategy to ensure critical infrastructure specifically the spine road, is delivered**
- 5. Repositioning of community infrastructure specifically the allotments, to ensure a positive user experience**
- 6. A clearer, safer access strategy for the Jubilee Playing Fields, including bringing forward the delivery of the associated car park.**