

S/4619/18/RM – Land East of Highfields Road, Highfields Caldecote, Cambridge CB23 7NX.

Comments from Cllr Dr Tumi Hawkins, District Councillor for Caldecote Ward

When this application was first consulted on, my response in January 2019 was one of strong objection. The developer has since made modifications to their original submissions, which have addressed some of the issues but not all of it. The major objections remain as follows:

1. **Principle and phasing of the development.** The Applicant originally brought forward a proposal for the entire site, and later split it without explanation.

This application is for Phase 1 comprising 66 dwellings. The original outline permission S/2510/15/OL granted at appeal is for maximum 140 dwellings on the entire site.

The permission granted did not envisage a phasing of site delivery. Please refer to the Appeal Decision notice, page 6 para 27 & 28, and page 13 Condition 4

Condition 4 of the Appeal Decision Notice requires that the: ***Details of the dwelling mix of housing for the entire scheme hereby approved including market and affordable housing shall be submitted with any reserved matters application The details submitted shall provide the housing mix for all dwellings to be implemented on the site***

2. **Design Code, Building Heights, Caldecote Village Design Guide:**

The design incorporates two 3-story buildings, (blue rectangles) in plan 1154707-907234. This is out of character with the rest of Highfields.



The northern one of the two is in a very prominent and visible location on entry into the new development. The residents call it a monster. It is ugly and inappropriate for that location.

The Caldecote Village Design Guide is close to adoption. It has gone through public consultation, with no objections to it. The committee should confirm

with the Planning Policy team the status of the VDG. A lot of work and financial resource has gone into the VDG. Caldecote was chosen to participate partly because of this development. To ignore it now is to reject all that community work and the aspirations. The VDG has planning weight.

Planning Condition 28 (i) includes the sentence “the height of dwellings shall not exceed 2 storeys except in limited defined nodes as an aid to direction finding and to contribute to a sense of place”

Please refer to Drawing No. 1154707-907236 (coloured street scene) and 1154707-907271 (Flat Block A type).



Whilst I am pleased to see that it provides balconies for outside space, its bulk does not enhance the sense of place. It is the first thing anyone sees coming into the new development. I note paras 61 & 62 of the committee report but strongly disagree with the conclusion.



The flat block dominates the street scene in a negative way. The residents who have to live with it and see it every day object very strongly and have done all along. See example below



The character of Highfields is subject to a high degree of harm due to the inclusion of this building at such a prominent location. Height should be reduced.

Furthermore, the **Affordable Housing are in big clusters**, contrary to the preferred option of the council of dispersing within market housing to help with community integration and cohesion. The affordable housing units are marked with a blue dot on the plan drawing.

3. Local Roads – Highways Authority

In update report, the Local Highways Authority stated it would not seek to adopt any of the roads within the development. This will be a disaster! The plans drawn up by Applicant does not comply to adoptable standards. Although applicant states their intention to get the roads adopted, this is no guarantee that the roads will be built to the required standard.

We request that the committee, if minded to approve, to impose condition that the roads must be built to adoptable standards by Local Highways Authority.

If this is not done, the cost will be additional to the Council Tax levied by the County Council. There is already one such development of 33 houses in the village in this situation and the additional £300+ being paid is highly resented. Management companies are not the solution for our rural communities.

4. **Footpath to Primary School** – The original plans included a safe pedestrian path through the site, linking to a 2m wide footpath down to the entrance to Clare Drive where there is a safe pavement. The omission creates a safety issue for children walking to school who would have to try and cross the busy main road to the Western side of Highfields Road.
5. **Discharge of Conditions** – The community is concerned about the discharge of a number of conditions in the original Appeal Decision Notice. In particular the following:
 - 15 (Car parking and secure cycle storage),
 - 18 (Upgrade of shared foot/cycleway on western edge of Highfields Road),
 - 19 (Bus stops upgrade),
 - 21 (Onsite renewal energy),
 - 23 (Surface water drainage system),
 - 27 (Travel Plan)

We request that the PC be consulted on these prior to approval