

REPORT TO THE NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	9 th March 2011		
Application Number	10.04039.REM		
Site Address	Land of Sandpit Road, Calne		
Proposal	Erection of 285 dwellings and associated works		
Applicant	Redrow Homes		
Town/Parish Council	Calne / Calne Without		
Electoral Division	Calne Chilvester & Abberd	Unitary Member	Tony Trotman
Grid Ref	400579 171607		
Type of application	REM		
Case Officer	Tracy Smith	01249 706642	tracy.smith@wiltshire.gov.uk

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This application has been called to committee by Councillor Trotman due to the size of the application together with issues of design of the houses, access into the site and highways impact.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission be APPROVED subject to conditions.

Calne Town Council express concern in respect of parking and road widths and note the requirement of some residents for a green buffer along the western edge.

11 objections have been received.

2. Main Issues

This application follows the granted of outline permission allowed at appeal in 2009. The outline approval for 350 dwellings on the site based on a masterplan reserved all matters with the exception of access and thus the principle of development and its general form together with main access to the site has already been established.

The reserved matters which form part of this application comprise: appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

In light of the above the main issues considered in the determination of this application are:

- Impact on the character and appearance of the area
- Scale, Design and layout
- Impact of residential privacy and amenity
- Access, highway safety and parking
- Ecological impact

3. Site Description

The application site is located on the north eastern edge of Calne, less than 1km from the town centre. It is situated between Sandpit Road in the north east and Woodhill Rise in the south west and Abberd Lane in the south with a change in levels of some 12 metres between these areas.

Sandpit Road is located to the east of Oxford Road (the A3102), which links Calne, via Wootton Bassett, to the M4 motorway in the north. The road serves an existing waste site.

The site is surrounded by existing residential development to the north west, west and south west. Fields and farm houses are situated to the north east, east and south east.

Abberd Lane and existing mature hedgerow vegetation define the southern boundary of the site.

There is little discernible style or character in the immediate surrounding context. The existing dwellings comprise a range of types and sizes, including detached, semi detached and terraced houses.

The dwellings are predominantly 2 storey's high with some 2.5 and 3 storeys' and some bungalows. The surrounding context is of a medium density.

There is a large industrial development apposite the roundabout junction on Oxford Road with Sandpit Road. This development comprises brick and metal profiled cladding. Looking further afield, in the heart of Calne there are many well designed traditional buildings and streets that create a distinctive character in this area.

The site comprises approximately 10 hectares.

4. Relevant Planning History		
Application Number	Proposal	Decision
08/02438OUT	Outline application for residential development, including infrastructure, ancillary facilities, open space and landscaping. Construction of a new vehicular access.	Allowed at appeal.

5. Proposal

The application seeks approval for reserved matters following the grant of outline permission at appeal. The reserved matters are appearance, landscaping, layout and scale.

The application has been the subject of revision since its original submission with changes principally made in respect of the internal layout in respect of plots, road widths, parking areas including courtyards and landscaping along the north eastern boundary. At the time of writing this report, potential further amendments are in discussion in respect of the landscape buffer along Sandpit Road together with the insertion of additional ground floor windows for two units adjacent parking courtyards.

The proposed development seeks to provide some 285 dwellings, considerably less than the maximum of 350 dwellings approved at outline. The developer has confirmed that this reduced number which represents 33 dwellings per hectare has been proposed as a result of a number of factors such as decreased land values in the current climate, changes to Government guidance regarding densities and the need to adapt to the demands of the public returning to houses which

have parking on plots rather than shared parking courtyards highlighting the return of the suburban renaissance.

The development is to be accessed via Sandpit Road as approved via the outline permission.

The development comprises largely 2 storey dwellings. There are some 2.5 storey dwellings arranged formally around the formal green and several other 2.5 and 3 storey buildings are used to respond to key spaces or views.

The dwelling mix is as follows:

Open Market

- 15 x 2 bed apartment
- 18 x 2 bed house
- 78 x 3 bed house
- 80 x 4 bed house
- 4 x 5 bed house
- 4 x 6 bed house

Affordable - Social Rent

- 14 x 1 bed apartment
- 34 x 2 bed house
- 14 x 3 bed house
- 7 x 4 bed house

Affordable - Intermediate Tenure

- 9 x 2 bed house
- 8 x 3 bed house

The affordable housing is distributed across the site in clusters of no more than twelve dwellings.

There are 3 character areas proposed. These will add legibility to the scheme and help create a varied public realm.

The Central Green - This is the largest area of open space on the site in which a Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) will be provided as required by the legal agreement approved as part of the outline permission. A formal arrangement of tree planting will define the open space. A regular arrangement of dwellings will front onto the open space, set behind new hedgerow planting which will define the front gardens of the properties. The buildings will be finished in brick and render.

The Village Green - The Village Green is an informal open space defined by existing hedgerows and new dwellings, located in the centre of this application. The new planting will be informal with groupings of trees, shrubs and some wildflower and bulb planting. The existing public footpath will meander through this space and the view down to the existing church, along the alignment of this path, will be retained. Buildings will front onto the open space providing natural surveillance. The buildings will be predominantly finished in brick and render.

The Formal Green - This rectangular open space is defined by the formal disposition of the detached dwellings, the formal arrangement of tree planting and together with black metal railings creates a space quite distinctive to the two other areas. The buildings framing the space will be rendered. The materials proposed to be used include brick, render, reconstructed stone detailing with some timber effect boarding together with a mix of Double Roman and plain concrete tiles. The development facilitates a bus loop within the site and it is anticipated that some services may be diverted into the site.

The existing public right of way is facilitated within the development with the existing entrance/exits from the site maintained.

There are no proposals to do any works to Woodhill Rise or Abberd Lane.

Hedgerows are to be retained with some limited cut back as shown on the plans.

All trees along the existing north eastern boundary, some of which are the subject of preservation orders are to be removed to enable the adoption of the highway and to provide visibility splays. Substantial planting to compensate for this loss is proposed on that part of the development which fronts Sandpit Road.

6. Planning Policy

North Wiltshire Local Plan Policies C3 and NE15

7. Consultations

Calne Town Council – The design is not objectionable but concerns need to be addressed/further investigated in respect of:

- Access to the development – only one route in and out.
- Impact on highway from increased traffic
- Possibility of provision of a green buffer zone around the southern and eastern boundary as suggested by the Save Calne Marsh Group.

Highways Officer – following negotiations and submission of revised plans no objections subject to conditions.

Landscape Officer – following negotiations and submission of revised plans no objections subject to conditions.

Urban Design Officer – following negotiations and submission of revised plans no objections.

Drainage Engineer – comments waited.

Environmental Health officer – no objections subject to conditions regarding noise mitigation measures compliant with the approved Noise Assessment submitted and approved as part of 08/02438OUT.

Principal Ecologist – no objections.

Environment Agency – no objections.

Wessex Water – confirm that options for foul drainage are currently being explored with the developer following modelling to ascertain the scope and nature of off-site reinforcement necessary to support the development. Accordingly, conditions regarding the submission of a foul and surface water drainage strategy.

Wiltshire Police Architectural Liaison Officer – no objections subject to the insertion of windows the side ground of plots 84 and 85.

8. Publicity

The application was advertised by site notice, press advert and neighbour consultation.

11 letters of objection have been received on the following grounds:

- No need/demand (due to housing market/availability of RAF Lyneham)
- Drop in property values
- Provision of a 4 metre green buffer needed along western edge of development together with a 6ft high wooden fence
- Drainage – buffer to absorb run off
- Highways impact including that of additional quarrying at High Penn
- Ecological impact
- Flood risk
- Foundations – piling needed and noise levels would be intolerable
- Lack of local jobs
- Loss of privacy
- Loss of security
- Allotments should be provided
- Increased use of unadopted Oxford Road
- Ecological Impact
- Concern hours of construction – noise nuisance
- Poor location of access
- Insufficient infrastructure to cope with development

CPRE submitted detailed comments which can be viewed on the file. Questions were raised regarding the layout, refuse collection points, over provision of green spaces, general landscaping and the failure to employ a local landscape architect, energy saving, design and lack of outstanding design pattern, materials, unsuitability of the site for 3 storey development, need for two storey terraces, small house types of Plymouth and York being too small, public realm and whether there will be encouragement for a community land trust so residents take ownership of the public realm around them.

9. Planning Considerations

Principle of development

This application relates solely to the details appearance, landscaping, layout and scale in respect of 285 dwellings.

The development of the site for up to 350 dwellings with the access as proposed has been allowed at appeal and thus matters of need, loss of countryside, general visual impact, impact on highways, ecology and drainage are not factors which can be considered at this juncture.

For clarification, impact on property values from the development and siting of any affordable housing adjacent to existing housing are not material considerations.

The development will be constructed to required Building Codes. Higher levels cannot be secured via this application and thus comments regarding energy saving cannot be considered further.

In relation to impact on infrastructure, a legal agreement attached to the outline permission secures the provision of affordable housing, education contributions and provision of open space. Highways contributions have also been secured in terms of public transport revenue support and off-site works if and where necessary and could be used to provide pedestrian crossings with the approval of the Area Board.

In terms of surface water and foul drainage, details have been submitted and discharged in conjunction with the Environment Agency for the site, together with an application having been submitted and approved for an attenuation pond, access and sewers (10/03389FUL refers).

In accordance with condition 6 of the outline permission an Ecological Management Plan has been prepared and is supported by the Council's Principal Ecologist. The plan subject to on-going discussions regarding the maintenance and management of hedgerows across the site before it can be discharged.

Character and Appearance of the Area

The principle of development has been approved as mentioned above. Therefore the fundamental change to this part of Calne and the rural character and appearance has been approved.

The applicants have confirmed their reasoning for seeking permission for a considerably less dense development than the 350 dwelling limit. This has been to secure a more suburban development rather than slavishly adhering to high densities which have now been removed from Government guidance.

Existing hedgerows are to be largely retained on the site with some limited cut back and removal for access purposes largely within the site but also along the north eastern boundary.

It is unfortunate that all the trees along the north eastern boundary is required, some of which have tree preservation orders. However, many of the trees are planted above existing services; and or are required to secure the adoption of the road and provide the necessary visibility splay.

A significant tree belt is to be provided along the site frontage with the road and this will mitigate the loss of the trees without undermining highway safety or the visual impact of the site within the immediate or wider landscape so as to warrant a refusal.

Having regard to factors such as the density of the development, retained landscape features and proposed landscape mitigation, it is considered that the change is not detrimental, having regard to adjacent residential character.

Scale, Design and Layout

The design and layout of the development has been the subject of considerable negotiations prior and since its submission, the effect of which is that it has been the subject of numerous revisions. Calne as an evolving town has developments which reflect all period of growth from the historic core to the estates and developments of the inter and post war years, most recently with the significant expansion of North Calne. North Calne enclosed by the road contains a variety of house types and densities which largely reflect the high density requirements of the late 1990's, early 2000's.

The scheme as proposed is no longer objectionable on highways, urban design or landscape grounds. Additionally, the Architectural Liaison Officer from Wiltshire Police is unable to sustain an objection as the scheme is proposed.

The scheme represents a low density development of some 33 dwellings per hectare. The majority of the development comprises 2 storey dwellings, with limited 2.5 and 3 storey (23%). This is considerably less than approved in the design and access statement submitted with the outline application.

The development is set out in to distinct character areas as highlighted above and responds to the character and topography of the site.

The palette of materials proposed which include predominantly brick and concrete tiles/slate of varying shades as per the outline details.

These materials are reflected in the immediate built context. The development does not attempt to create a Cotswold pastiche but draws reference to the adjacent context and aspects of the central historical context which is also reflected in towns to the north and east.

The development has been designed to facilitate a bus loop through the site should services be diverted/extended into the site. Pedestrian access to Woodhill Rise is facilitated which in turn will link into Penn Hill Road and Oxford Road.

As with most major development proposals of this nature, some loss of hedgerow is proposed as mentioned above and reflects the masterplan and design and access statement submitted with the outline application.

Furthermore, it should be noted that such features need to be considered in the context of their future management and liability with a balance between ensuring their retention together with the viable and not too onerous management for either the Council or existing and potential residents.

The approach of the scheme in respect of hedgerow retention is supported by landscape and ecological officers and reflects that approved at outline.

A buffer has been sought along the north western boundary of the site to the rear of the Kilns and running parallel with Oxford Road. The hedge has been requested on privacy, amenity and drainage grounds.

The provision of such a buffer would cause significant concern in terms of future management and maintenance. The existing hedge along this boundary is to be retained in any event, albeit it marginally reduced in width. Additional tree planting in the vicinity of The Kilns is also proposed.

The creation of such a buffer is not needed for privacy reasons as is discussed below and as an expansion to Calne it need not be separated to this extent. Such an approach as not been sought in respect of other expansions in recent years in the town or other towns such as Corsham or Wootton Bassett.

Furthermore, the Inspector did not consider a buffer to be necessary when considering the design and access statement and masterplan.

Affordable housing has been laid out in a variety of clusters with the largest being 12 dwellings and the smallest being 3 dwellings.

Accordingly, the scale, design and layout of the development reflects the approved masterplan together with the design and access statement submitted with the outline application and its acceptable having regard to the character of the site and residential amenities, the latter discussed in more detail below.

Residential Amenity and Privacy

Given the outline permission, the view for many residents will be forever changed as is the way with urban extensions such as this.

The development is very true to the illustrative masterplan submitted with that application and plans contained within the design and access statement.

The scheme proposes minimum window to window distance of at least 22 metres between the existing and proposed dwellings backing onto properties on Oxford Road and The Slades. This distance applies to a handful of properties and where this occurs the distance is not wholly direct.

The retention of existing hedgerow features will assist in mitigating this further but the distance is acceptable. Conditions regarding levels will be attached to any permission to ensure levels are as per the cross section details submitted. These minimum distances are only acceptable if the existing and proposed plots at this location are at the same or very similar level and the developer should be mindful of this when discharging the condition. As the hedgerows are shown to be retained as part of the landscaping proposals, permission would be required for their removal.

Access, Highway Safety and Parking

The access to the site in terms of its location has been approved as part of the outline permission and its location is not for consideration as part of these matters.

Additionally, the highways impact of this scale of development is not a matter for consideration with the site having been considered acceptable for up to 350 dwellings. This applies notwithstanding future quarrying activities at High Penn which have recently come about. The extant outline permission cannot be revisited as part of this application.

The development does represent a departure from the high density residential schemes approved over the last five years within the northern part of the Council and the associated parking courtyards where parking is generally hidden from view.

This scheme delivers a more suburban development with a return to attached and detached garages within curtilage, with some formal on street parking and some pockets of parking courtyards.

The road widths and pedestrian routes through the site have taken account of this. The existing right of ways is preserved through the site. Highways officers under their own legislation (Section 38) have secured the provision of a footway to be provided in the existing verge on the northern side of Sandpit Road which will link into the existing footpath/bus stop on Oxford Road.

The development has been scrutinised in terms of garage and parking sizes and is not considered to be objectionable either in this respect or on any other highways grounds.

In the absence of any objections on highways grounds, the scheme is considered to be acceptable.

Impact on Ecology

The site contains no nationally or locally designated wildlife features or species

The impact of the development on the ecology of the site has been accepted by reason of the outline permission. The ecological impacts on the development are to be mitigated and secured via an Ecological Management Plan conditioned as part of the outline permission.

Details have been submitted in respect of Condition 6 of the outline permission and discussions are ongoing in respect of the Plan which has the support of the Council's Principal Ecologist who also raises no objections to this application.

Bat and bird boxes are required and are proposed to be secured via condition.

10. Conclusion

The reserved matters of appearance, layout, scale and landscaping accords with the outline permission granted under 08/02438OUT and would not result in the detrimental impact on any residential amenities, landscape, ecology or highways. The proposal thus accords with Policies C2, C3 and NE15 of the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

11. Recommendation

Planning Permission be GRANTED for the following reason:

The reserved matters of appearance, layout, scale and landscaping accords with the outline permission granted under 08/02438OUT and would not result in the detrimental impact on any

residential amenities, landscape, ecology or highways. The proposal thus accords with Policies C2, C3 and NE15 of the adopted North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby permitted, details of the following matters (in respect of which approval is expressly reserved) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority:

- (1) finished floor levels of all buildings;
- (2) finished levels across the site;

Where the development permitted is to be carried out in a phased manner, the development of each phase shall not start until details of the matters listed above have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority insofar as they relate to that phase.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details approved.

POLICY – C3 NE15

2. Prior to the commencement of development a tree and hedgerow protection plan in line with the requirements of **BS 5837:2005 – “Trees in relation to construction – Recommendations”** should be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The approved method and line of protective fencing should be erected around the approved Root Protection/Construction Exclusion areas before any construction operations are commenced on site. The plan should consider likely requirements for temporary access, compounds and storage areas etc.

This fencing shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: Necessary for protection of existing retained landscape features during course of construction phases.

POLICY – C3

3. Prior to the occupation of the 1st dwelling hereby permitted, details of the following matters (in respect of which approval is expressly reserved) shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority:

- (1) details of the play equipment to be installed on the "LEAP" in the position indicated on the drawing number PL-01 Revision Z.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details approved.

POLICY – C3 NE15

4. The north eastern landscape buffer fronting the residential development along Sandpit Road shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the commencement of development. All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the

approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

POLICY- C3 NE15

5. All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

POLICY- C3 NE15

6. (a) No retained tree or hedge shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree or hedge be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. Any topping or lopping approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998 (Tree Work).

(b) If any retained tree or hedge is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree/hedgerow shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species and shall be planted at such time, as may be specified in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

In this condition "retained tree or hedge " means an existing tree or hedge which is to be retained in accordance with the approved plans and particulars; and paragraphs (a) and (b) above shall have effect until the expiration of five years from the first occupation or the completion of the development, whichever is the later.

REASON: To enable the Local Planning Authority to ensure the retention of trees on the site in the interests of visual amenity.

POLICY- C3 NE15

7. The roads, including footpaths and turning spaces, shall be constructed so as to ensure that, before it is occupied, each dwelling has been provided with a properly consolidated and surfaced footpath and carriageway to at least base course level between the dwelling and existing highway.

REASON: To ensure that the development is served by an adequate means of access.

POLICY – C3

8. No dwelling shall be occupied until the parking space(s) together with the access thereto, have been provided in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety and the amenity of future occupants.

POLICY – C3

9. The development hereby permitted shall be constructed in accordance with the noise mitigation measures contained within paragraph 5.2.3 of the Noise Assessment prepared by ANV dated October 2008 unless otherwise approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenity of those residents fronting/adjoining Sandpit Road.

10. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Order 2008 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), the garage(s) hereby permitted shall not be converted to habitable accommodation.

REASON: To safeguard the amenities and character of the area and in the interest of highway safety.

POLICY- C3

11. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Order 2008 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), there shall be no additions/extensions or external alterations to plots 70-84 inclusive and plots 246-257 inclusive.

REASON: In the interests of the amenity of the area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to consider individually whether planning permission should be granted for additions/extensions or external alterations.

POLICY-C3

12. The construction of any part of the development hereby granted shall not include the use on site of machinery, powered vehicles or power tools before 08:00 hours or after 18:00 hours on any weekday, nor before 08:00 hours or after 13:00 hours on any Saturday nor at all on any Sunday or Bank or Public Holiday without the prior approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenity of local residents.

13. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, no permission is given for any access to the sales office. Such an access would require separate planning permission.

Reason: For clarification in the interests of highway safety and the provision and retention of the landscape buffer along this boundary.

14. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the submitted plans and documents listed in informative 2. No variation from the approved plans should be made without the prior approval of the local planning authority. Amendments may require the submission of a further application.

REASON: To ensure that the development is implemented as approved.

INFORMATIVES:

1. This decision should be read in conjunction with decision 08/02438OUT and the S106 agreement approved therein.
2. List of plans to follow as late observations.

