

**LAND BETWEEN HAVERHILL
ROAD AND HINTON WAY,
STAPLEFORD**

**STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY
AND STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT**

Outline planning application (with all matters reserved apart from access) 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 the provision of land for use as a countryside park for public access

Axis Land Partnerships

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement supports an outline planning application (with all matters reserved apart from access) 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 the provision of land for use as a countryside park for public access.
- 1.2 The application is made by Axis Land Partnerships Ltd to South Cambridgeshire District Council ('the Council').
- 1.3 The purpose of this statement is to describe the phases of pre-application public consultation undertaken in the preparation of the planning application and to describe and analyse the responses received by the local community, along with the steps which the applicant has taken to positively address the matters which have arisen.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 There are two matters to consider here: the purpose of community engagement and the purpose of statements of community involvement as they relate to the planning process (of which this is an example).

Community engagement (public consultation)

- 2.2 Community engagement, which in this case has taken the form of public consultation, is increasingly encouraged in the planning process. The National Planning Policy Framework places particular emphasis on developers and prospective applicants engaging with the communities who lie close to or may be affected by their development proposals. Used in this way community engagement usually takes place at some point prior to the submission of a planning application.
- 2.3 There are many reasons for undertaking pre-application public consultation. The main reasons are as follows:
- To inform people about a proposed development prior to a planning application being submitted;
 - To engage the local community and stakeholders in the planning process;
 - To give interested parties the chance to express their views on the proposed development;
 - To gain particular insight or detailed information which is relevant to the scheme;
 - to gauge local opinion in view of the status of comments of interested people as a material consideration in the planning decision making process; and
 - To identify ways in which a proposed development could be improved.
- 2.4 It is worth noting that pre-application public consultation is not, and does not, function as a referendum on the development proposals. Planning law states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The views of local communities and the wider public are just one such material consideration. Accordingly, in deciding a planning application, the outcome of the public consultation exercise must be weighed in the planning balance along with what the relevant planning policy says and all other material considerations.
- 2.5 It is also worth noting that community engagement, including pre-application consultation, is not a statutory requirement. The outcome of the community engagement process does not bind the developer to any particular course of action. However, whether the developer observes the findings of the process or not they remain a material consideration in the determination of any related planning application, as is the extent to which the developer has observed them.

Statement of community involvement

- 2.6 Statements of community involvement as they relate to the pre-planning and planning application process are intended to:
- explain the purpose of the community engagement process as it relates to the particular proposal;
 - explain how the developer or prospective applicant has engaged with the local community and the relevant stakeholders;
 - report on and analyse the output from of the community engagement process (in this case the consultation responses);

- provide a response or responses on the behalf of the community engagement initiator/organiser (usually the developer) if appropriate; and
- recommend or identify actions which may be necessary or appropriate in view the output of the community engagement process.

3. CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 3.1 Axis Land Partnerships Ltd have undertaken an extensive consultation process with the local community and Parish Council. Two public consultation periods have been held (November/December 2019 and February 2020), which were preceded by engagement with Stapleford Parish Council.
- 3.2 Following the first consultation period, the applicant made changes to the scheme, which were again presented to the public in February 2020.

Consultation Process Timeline

- 3.3 The timeline in Table 1 details the engagement taken with Stapleford Parish Council (light grey), the public (blue), the local authority (dark grey) and other bodies (green).

Table 1: Actions taken

DATE	ACTION/EVENT
July 2018	Attendance at Parish Council meeting to discuss proposals at a public forum
September 2018	Informal meeting with Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council to discuss proposals
November 2018	Attendance at Parish Council meeting to discuss proposals at a public forum
December 2018	Formal presentation to the Parish Council of draft proposals
25 th March 2019	Submission of site to Call for Sites consultation
25 th March 2019	A copy of the Call for Sites submission sent to Stapleford Parish Council
22 nd May 2019	Meeting with spokesperson for CAM
May 2019	Telephone discussion with Chair of Parish Council
11 th October 2019	Meeting with spokesperson for CAM
30 th October 2019	Publicity starts for first set of exhibitions
19 th November 2019	First consultation event held, Great Shelford Sports Pavilion
22 nd November 2019	Second consultation event held, Stapleford Pavilion
25 th November 2019	Submission of pre-application scheme to South Cambridgeshire District Council
11 th December 2019	Closing date for consultation responses
3 rd February 2020	Pre-application meeting with South Cambridgeshire District Council
14 th February 2020	Publicity starts for second set of exhibitions
12 th February	Meeting with Wildlife Trust
13 th February 2020	Meeting with Cambridge Past, Present and Future
27 th February 2020	Meeting with Gog Magog Trust
20 th February 2020	Promotion of site at Issues and Options consultation
28 th February 2020	Consultation event held, Stapleford Pavilion
13 th March 2020	Closing date for consultation responses

Engagement with Stapleford Parish Council

- 3.4 Axis Land Partnerships Ltd have been engaging with Stapleford Parish Council since July 2018. The applicant has attended formal and informal meetings with members of Stapleford Parish Council to present the merits of development on the land holdings they represent.
- 3.5 Initial discussions were based around the ambitions of the emerging Great Shelford and Stapleford Neighbourhood Plan and whether delivery of a development on the site would go some way to meeting these aims. Discussions were open-ended as to the form that any development could take.
- 3.6 A number of meetings were held with the Parish Council in order to ascertain whether there was further merit speaking with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group given their local housing needs assessment and their desire to increase access to the open countryside in the local area.
- 3.7 A meeting with the Parish Council in December 2018 discussed the merits of a retirement village and the benefits this could bring to the area.
- 3.8 Continued dialogue was maintained with the Parish Council who confirmed they would analyse the merits of our proposals during public consultations and upon submission of a planning application.

CAM / Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership

- 3.9 The applicant is aware of the emerging proposals for the CAM route and has sought to engage proactively with the Greater Cambridge Partnership. The applicant first made contact with the Greater Cambridge Partnership regarding the plans for the CAM route in April 2019, with two subsequent meetings held in May and October 2019.
- 3.10 The applicant has aimed to ensure that information has been shared at all stages of the planning process. The GCP is aware of the plans for the retirement village and the potential interface of the proposals with the CAM route.

Engagement with South Cambridgeshire District Council

- 3.11 Axis Land Partnerships submitted a request for pre-application advice to the South Cambridgeshire District Council on 25th November 2019. The submission comprised:
 - Pre-application advice request form
 - Location Plan
 - Concept Plan
 - Pre-application Statement
 - Preliminary Landscape Report
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report
- 3.12 A meeting was held between officers, the applicants and their planning consultants at South Cambridgeshire's offices on 3rd February 2020. The ensuing discussions, and the initial feedback from officers, is discussed in further detail in the Planning Statement which accompanies this application.

Engagement with Community and Voluntary Groups

- 3.13 Following the first round of public consultation, it was clear that the local community wished to have further detail on how the proposed open space was to be managed (see 5.15 below). As a result meetings have been held with the Cambridge Wildlife Trust, Gog Magog Trust, and Cambridge Past, Present and Future, to discuss the funding and management of the open space.
- 3.14 The clear feedback from the meetings was that the open space should be used for informal recreation together with managed areas of biodiversity and nature to enhance the natural habitat. Not only would this be welcome recreational space for the local community it would also go towards offsetting the carbon impacts of development.
- 3.15 With regards to future management and ownership of the open space, a number of options and scenarios were worked through and it was clear that a management fund and a long term financial commitment to the maintenance of the open space would be necessary.
- 3.16 Cambridge Past Present and Future provided an official consultation response as part of the second round of public consultation in March 2020 (see 6.16 and section 7 below).

4. FIRST PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Exhibition Publicity and Format

- 4.1 This section provides details of the consultation process including how it was publicised, what the process comprised and how responses were made.
- 4.2 Following the engagement with the Parish Council and submission of an initial masterplan to the Call for Sites, two public exhibitions were arranged in order to present the development proposals to local residents and the local community and to widen the consultation process.
- 4.3 The public exhibitions were held on:
- Tuesday 19th November, 10:30 – 20:00, Great Shelford Sports Pavilion
 - Friday 22nd November, 10:30 – 20:00, The Stapleford Pavilion
- 4.4 The choice of venues, dates and opening times maximised the opportunity for interested parties to attend the consultation in person.

Form of the exhibition

- 4.5 Both exhibitions followed the same format. The focus of the public exhibition was a series of 11 exhibition boards (see Appendix A), which aimed to inform interested parties about all aspects of the proposed site and development. More specifically, they:
- Welcomed people to the exhibition and explained who the applicants were;
 - Set out the purpose of the consultation and the timeline of the application;
 - Explained the concept of a retirement village;
 - Explained the need for a retirement village;
 - Explained the location of the proposed village;
 - Described the connectivity of the site;
 - Described the concept design;
 - Explained the proposals for the country park (two boards);
 - Outlined the wider community benefits that the development would provide; and
 - Asked for feedback and set out the methods for responding

Publicity

- 4.6 The public exhibitions were publicised in advance of the event by the following means:
- By a leaflet drop to every registered address in Stapleford, Little Shelford and Great Shelford (please find the leaflet attached at Appendix B), distributed two weeks prior to the exhibition date;
 - Editorial piece posted on the village website (staplefordonline.com/home), with a location plan, description of the proposals and details of how to respond online;
 - Posted to Great Shelford Facebook group
 - By contacting the Parish Councils of Stapleford, Little Shelford and Great Shelford on 6th November to invite them to the exhibition.

Attendance

- 4.7 Members of the project team were on hand to answer questions from local residents and those in attendance. This included the applicant (Phil Grant, Andrew Adams and Jon Knight of Axis Land Partnerships), the planning consultants (Richard Sykes-Popham of Carter Jonas), the communications consultant (Emma Drake of Henbe) and an ecology consultant (Christian Whiting of Mill House Ecology).
- 4.8 In terms of public attendance:
- 80 local residents attended the Shelford exhibition
 - 88 local residents attended the Stapleford exhibition
- 4.9 The 2011 census indicates the population of Stapleford Parish to be 1,871 people and Great Shelford Parish to be 4,233. Therefore, the total attendance at the exhibition was approximately 2.75% of the village population. This is considered to be a good attendance figure and representation.

Comments

- 4.10 Comments were invited from interested parties. Comments could be made by the following means:
- By submitting completed comments forms on the evening of the exhibition (completed comments are provided at Appendix C);
 - By submitting a completed comments form (or indeed a written email or letter) following the evening of the exhibition by email to stapleforddown@axislp.com;
 - By submitting comments on the dedicated website set up immediately following the event.
- 4.11 The comments form and website response form simply requested the age range and address of the respondent along with a number of open questions:
- What do you think of the retirement village concept?
 - What do you think about our design approach so far?
 - A 50 acre country park is being proposed as part of the development, how do you think you would use the country park? (Options given – walking / cycling / children’s play / general fitness / other)
 - What sort of health and wellbeing facilities would you be interested in having access to? (Options given – Swimming pool / gym / sauna/spa / hairdressers / outdoor recreation / other)
 - Please use this space to provide us with any other feedback you may have
- 4.12 The personal details of the respondents were not visible to others to see throughout the consultation process and in the interests of data anonymity, these have been redacted from the comments forms at Appendix C.
- 4.13 Residents were asked to submit their comments by the end of the consultation period (11th December 2019).

Website consultation

- 4.14 A website was set up following the public exhibition on the 19th November, providing digital versions of the exhibition boards from the event and inviting comments, by providing a response form (seeking the name and comments from the respondent).
- 4.15 The website was advertised on the consultation comments forms at the public exhibition and on the Parish’s website.

- 4.16 The website was open for consultation for three weeks after the start of the first event to allow ample time for respondents to review the information and respond.

Consultation Feedback

- 4.17 This section summarises the matters raised during each consultation event. The applicant's responses to these and our recommendations are set out in the following sections.
- 4.18 The comments from the two public exhibitions and website consultation comments have been presented collectively in the tables below, given that these in effect formed part of the same consultation process.
- 4.19 A total of 70 comments were received. This represents approximately 41% of the total number of interested parties in attendance at the public exhibition (168). 40 of the responses were provided by comments forms completed on the evening of the exhibitions (response numbers 1-40), one comments form was posted at a later date (response number 41) and 29 responses were received via the website (response numbers 42-70).
- 4.20 None of the online responses left their age or address. Of the 41 respondents who used the comments forms, 50% were aged 50-70, and 45% were aged over 71. Only one respondent was under 50. 74% of respondents lived in Stapleford, and 16% lived in Great or Little Shelford.

Summary of support

- 4.21 The nature of the responses varied from those who supported the scheme in principle, those who objected in principle and a number of neutral responses where the comments do not (whether implicitly or explicitly) indicate support or an objection.

NATURE OF RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Support	16 forms, 13 emails	41.4%
Neutral	15 forms, 2 emails	24.3%
Objection	10 forms, 14 emails	34.3%

Analysis of Responses

- 4.22 The responses indicate that the majority of respondents support the development, with just over one third opposing it in principle.
- 4.23 The reoccurring themes within the comments are analysed in the tables below, these have been split into comments in support, general comments / suggestions and also points of objection.

Analysis of comments in support

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
Support for a retirement village	28	<i>Like the idea that local residents could move in and stay in touch with the community</i>

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
		<p><i>For over 55's wanting to downsize dedicated housing developments can be good and a communal dining area is a good idea</i></p> <p><i>Brilliant as long as it has reasonable parking and decent sized living accommodation</i></p> <p><i>An excellent idea innovative for this area... complements the rapid transit idea</i></p> <p><i>We feel positively towards the concept of a retirement village in this location</i></p> <p><i>I am <u>positive</u> about it... it will be a bonus if it could be combined with the proposed transport link to Cambridge South</i></p> <p><i>Excellent concept, 100% in favour</i></p> <p><i>Looks very promising – pleasant, dignified</i></p> <p><i>Very good use of our Green Belt being developed for the demographic needs</i></p> <p><i>Good idea, sensible location – in fact brilliant if the new Cam Corridor takes place</i></p> <p><i>A good idea, potentially very good</i></p> <p><i>I think it would be good for people who want company and enjoyment</i></p> <p><i>Isolation is a big issue for the elderly in Shelford/Stapleford, so a village where they can meet and socialise with people from their own generation is a super idea</i></p> <p><i>I think it would be a relevant and appropriate addition to the area, and very popular</i></p> <p><i>A great idea, this would be sought after by many in the area. ... Put me down for first refusal</i></p> <p><i>I think it's excellent for retired people to live in a village like this in a beautiful area with support and local facilities, and close to the hospital and countryside</i></p> <p><i>Supported accommodation is in short supply in this area</i></p> <p><i>My parents (who live locally) have been trying to downsize for some time and this would be perfect</i></p> <p><i>Given the demand for development this is a more acceptable development than a housing estate</i></p> <p><i>Retirement properties are becoming non existent in this part of the country</i></p>
Support for a new country park	6	<p><i>I am intrigued by this focus on biodiversity</i></p> <p><i>The park could be very attractive</i></p> <p><i>Countryside park will take 10 years to establish but could take pressure off the Mag Gogs</i></p> <p><i>The addition of another country park to the area would be fantastic</i></p> <p><i>The country park is a must though in order to justify the loss of some green land to development</i></p> <p><i>It would be such a wonderful opportunity to do something for the planet</i></p>

Analysis of neutral comments

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
Queries on the design of the retirement village	18	<p><i>The density of the development will be critical</i></p> <p><i>Plans for actual buildings should be kept suitable distance from gardens of houses on north side of Gog Magog Way... please provide elevation drawings</i></p> <p><i>The built area should be presented in a model form</i></p> <p><i>It should be outgoing/open minded in design</i></p> <p><i>Would be better if the main blocks were turned so that views over the Haverhill Rd became available to first floor residents</i></p> <p><i>I would be concerned if it was too high density</i></p> <p><i>Maybe some of the properties could face a different way for maximum enjoyment of views</i></p> <p><i>Hopefully not too squeezed together</i></p> <p><i>Will the new houses be properly insulated for heat and sound</i></p> <p><i>Make the housing adaptable and ensure consultation with elderly organisation to provide insight into what works</i></p> <p><i>Careful consideration would need to be given for helping residents in the retirement village to gain access to local services and facilities</i></p> <p><i>I prefer the idea that cohousing has, where people live in a multigenerational way. Could your plans consider this? ... Are you going to create buildings that have a low carbon footprint?</i></p> <p><i>It is hard to gauge the impact from the plans.</i></p> <p><i>The properties should be perhaps hidden or covered from the main road so as to blend in with the environment</i></p> <p><i>It is essential that it is limited to 2 stories</i></p> <p><i>A relatively high density estate on green belt is not acceptable</i></p>
Parking/traffic	17	<p><i>The provision of garaging will be a necessity for many</i></p> <p><i>Car parking from busway hubs will be an issue unless development is gated or subject to permits</i></p> <p><i>Road access to Haverhill Road needs to be carefully considered in view of robo-trams which provide <u>no</u> parking</i></p> <p><i>What impact would guided bus route have</i></p> <p><i>How about car park for visitors to country park</i></p> <p><i>A good cycleway from the village to Magog Down would aid the connectivity</i></p> <p><i>The 200 parking spaces mentioned creates the prospect of greatly increased traffic flows ... if the CAM does not go ahead the only public transport is the 31 bus</i></p> <p><i>A car park would be required for the "Park" just as for Magog Down</i></p> <p><i>Is there proper provision for cars for visitors and residents?</i></p>

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
		<p><i>Concerns that if a GCP stop people would be looking to park locally. Need some parking for the country park in particular for older people</i></p> <p><i>A parking facility in the country park is helpful and can charge yearly parking fee</i></p> <p><i>I wonder if you have thought about a shared car set up</i></p> <p><i>If the Cam route goes ahead then the development would be well placed for access to Addenbrookes</i></p> <p><i>The 30mph speed limit section should be extended... the path along the road from the proposed park to the Magog Down should be improved</i></p> <p><i>If the CAM fails the proposal would not be suitable. Access to and from the site other than private car is needed due to the age of residents</i></p> <p><i>I have concerns over the safety of people trying to access the park as they would need to cross the busway. ... The planned cycle and pedestrian pathway would mean hundreds of people also have potential easy access to a site where vulnerable people are houses.</i></p>
<p>Queries on design & management of country park</p>	<p>11</p>	<p><i>Prefer more trees than open grassland</i></p> <p><i>A bridge to the country park would limit use by older people</i></p> <p><i>There could be a useful liaison with Magog Down to help establishment and maintenance of the Park</i></p> <p><i>Will there be areas where dogs cannot walk on leads?</i></p> <p><i>A large pond/water would be an addition to encourage different wildlife</i></p> <p><i>Will need more detailed discussions about the long-term maintenance of the country park</i></p> <p><i>Providing the country park is a positive and this must be properly funded to recreate the chalk downland</i></p> <p><i>We would like a dog walking area (no leash dog walks similar to the Gogs)</i></p> <p><i>Plant trees, perhaps create a well stocked lake. Create rick planting for the birds and bees and insects.</i></p> <p><i>Trees would be needed for reducing the impact on the views from the Gog Downs.</i></p> <p><i>The natural area should be maintained, not just built and then left behind.</i></p>
<p>Questions on the likely operation of the retirement villages</p>	<p>7</p>	<p><i>Would residences be free hold or leasehold? What service charge would apply? What re-sale value would there be in the light of the status of property?</i></p> <p><i>Will there be any restriction on dog ownership?</i></p> <p><i>Indication of pricing, size of properties</i></p> <p><i>Leasehold and ground rent charges are often high ... I am concerned about the description of providing "nursing care". Does this mean a part of the development would be a nursing home?</i></p> <p><i>Pets allowed or not?</i></p> <p><i>Ultimately an important factor will be cost to the new residents</i></p>

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
		<i>I know a group of people who have long been desiring to set up a Christian Care Home in Cambridge.</i>
Questions on community facilities	2	<i>Will these be available to other members of the community? What access will there be to simple admin facilities for elderly folk such as post offices, bank, cash machine</i>

Analysis of objections

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
Site is far from the village centre	18	<i>You cannot walk to centre of Great Shelford in 15mins, especially if you are elderly Not a good location for this development as not close to local facilities Distance/time assumptions are optimistic It is hard to imagine it will feel part of the larger community, despite the proposed health and wellbeing facilities The main disadvantage of the site is that it isn't within easy walking distance of a set of shops The edge of the village is not a good location It could be a good idea but I feel it is in entirely the wrong place for over 55s.</i>
A country park is not needed	13	<i>Do not need, already have Gogs Downs We are well served with accessible space in Stapleford Prefer open countryside The Magog Downs and Wandlebury offer fantastic local parks and would prefer to support the upkeep of these The prospect of a country park is, in my opinion, a bribe to the local community... I prefer to see open fields All of these facilities are already available locally</i>
Loss of Green Belt land	12	<i>Much better than private homes. But all more development of Green Belt. Unhappy of more building on the attractive green belt land of S Cambs Gog Magog hills are one of the very few scenic areas of countryside near Cambridge A retirement village in principle is a good idea but I am totally opposed to any further development of Green belt. A good concept but the proposed location is an inappropriate use of green belt land It does not fall within Green Belt exceptions</i>
Set a precedent for further development in countryside	9	<i>This will be one step further to joining us with Cambridge to the south Thin end of the wedge</i>

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
		<p><i>Area is overdeveloped</i></p> <p><i>Clear intention to use all the infill for future development</i></p> <p><i>This appears to be a backdoor route into further annexing land between Mingle Lane and Great Shelford</i></p> <p><i>It is self evident that it is hoped to establish a precedent for the subsequent development of the remainder of the Green Belt to the north and west</i></p> <p><i>The development will create a large pocket of land to the south of it, bounded by Mingle Lane and Hinton Way, which will become an easy target for further fill-in development</i></p>
Retirement home would not be of interest to respondent	9	<p><i>The prospect of downsizing from a 5 bedroom home to a one or two bedroom apartment is deeply unattractive</i></p> <p><i>It is a private site for rich people</i></p> <p><i>Could not fit belongings into a small apartment</i></p> <p><i>Not the sort of spacious relaxed retirement development I would prefer</i></p> <p><i>I am greatly opposed to the concept of segregated age groups though can see it is attractive to some</i></p> <p><i>I think inter-generational is the way to go</i></p> <p><i>Many 55-80yr old who remain healthy do not want to downsize to the size of properties typically available on these developments but would prefer small independent properties/bungalows in their local area</i></p> <p><i>Older people want to be fully integrated into their local communities, living alongside other younger people.</i></p> <p><i>Not keen on having a flat. Would much prefer a mix of flats and cottages. Do not want to purchase a leasehold property with all that entails.</i></p>
A retirement village is not needed in the village	7	<p><i>Would prefer key worker housing</i></p> <p><i>The priority locally is for <u>affordable housing</u></i></p> <p><i>What Stapleford really needs is affordable homes for young people trying to get on the housing ladder</i></p> <p><i>I don't think an elderly ghetto is the way to go – much better to have communities with people of all ages.</i></p> <p><i>We need more young people not old.</i></p>
The proposal will not increase the number of affordable dwellings available in the area	5	<p><i>Housing is extremely expensive in the village and unaffordable for younger people</i></p> <p><i>How will key workers be able to afford to live in the vicinity?</i></p> <p><i>Couldn't this development accommodate them?</i></p> <p><i>Many of the 4 bed roomed houses could be released by older people downsizing are too expensive for young families and would not achieve the balancing of the age groups</i></p>
Retirement home would not be part of the community	4	<p><i>No wish to be surrounded by a totally elderly population.</i></p> <p><i>Mixed ages brings diversity... do not want to live in a private enclave</i></p> <p><i>The village design feels as if it will not be part of either Stapleford or Shelford but a separate almost gated community</i></p>

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
Design of village	3	<i>Buildings are far too large and significantly over develop the built part of the site... the main block would be an eyesore blocking the view of existing residents It is wholly out of scale with the village No thought for how bit will impact on the existing residents in Chalk Hill and particularly Gog Magog Way. It will make it very dark and block out the beautiful views which are currently enjoyed</i>
Potential strain on local facilities	2	<i>How does this tie in with current provision of GP services – would money be available to redevelop Shelford GP Centre?</i>
Don't like moving busway further from village	2	<i>This will put the proposed station even further from the village and involve local users in an additional walk along the busy Haverhill Road</i>

- 4.24 It is clear from the comments made that a significant number of residents support the proposed development and see a number of benefits it will provide for the local community. In particular, this includes the provision of new retirement housing which will help to address an unmet need and enable older people to downsize and stay in the village. A further benefit which was emphasised by many local residents was the significant provision of open space.
- 4.25 A small number of suggestions had been made involving amendments to the plans and these have been responded to in the following sections of this statement.

5. DESIGN REVIEW FOLLOWING FIRST CONSULTATION

5.1 This section sets out the applicant's responses to the comments and queries received where it is appropriate and reasonable to do so.

Comments in Support

Support for retirement villages

5.2 A significant number of responses indicated support for the proposals, with 28 responses indicating specific support for the retirement village concept. Many of the respondents perceived a shortage of retirement properties locally; a number also commented on the benefits of retirement villages in reducing isolation amongst the elderly and allowing them to stay in the area.

Support for open space

5.3 6 responses referenced explicit support for the countryside park/open space, particularly the focus on biodiversity.

Support for proposed facilities

- 5.4 In response to the question on the form: "A 50-acre country park is being proposed as part of the development. How do you think you would use it?":
- 29 respondents would use it for walking;
 - 12 respondents would use it for cycling;
 - 10 respondents would use it for general fitness;
 - 8 respondents would use it for children's play;
 - 8 respondents said they wouldn't use it, or would rather use the Magog Downs (primarily because they didn't agree with the proposal)
- 5.5 Other suggested uses included dog walking (two responses); bird watching; star gazing; picnics; or outdoor concerts (one response each). It is clear that walking would be the most popular activity, and the general layout of the walking and cycling trails through the open space presented at the consultation was supported.
- 5.6 In response to the question on the response form, "What sort of health and wellbeing facilities would you be interested in having access to?":
- 23 respondents would be interested in a swimming pool
 - 13 respondents would be interested in a gym
 - 11 respondents would be interested in outdoor recreation
 - 10 respondents would be interested in a sauna/spa
 - 8 respondents would be interested in a hairdressers
- 5.7 Other respondents wanted provision for bowls (four responses), tennis courts (three responses), and a croquet lawn, doctors, library or putting green (one response each). Five respondents said they do not want any facilities, or would prefer open countryside.

- 5.8 From the responses it is clear that including a swimming pool within the retirement village would be of greatest interest locally, following by other forms of activity such as a gym.

Comments raising suggested amendments

- 5.9 A number of responses suggested amendments or asked for further clarity on specific aspects of the proposal.

Design of the retirement village

- 5.10 The responses can be broken down to a number of specific issues/queries:
- Any eventual plans should not be too “high density” or “squeezed together” (four responses)
 - Further detail should be provided, in the form of plans/elevations/models (three responses)
 - The care home/properties could be turned to maximise views of the countryside (two responses)
 - Careful regard should be paid to views of the development from surrounding properties and Haverhill Road (two responses)
- 5.11 **Response:** These comments have been taken forward in our review in a number of ways, including breaking up the massing of built form within the development; producing additional height parameter plans to indicate maximum elevations; and a concentration of views and landscaping to minimise landscape impacts.

Parking and traffic

- 5.12 Responses can be categorised into a number of key concerns:
- Need for resident parking within retirement village
 - Need for parking area for Country Park
 - Lack of parking for the CAM bus stop may lead to problems with people parking in the development
 - Clarification on how the proposal would interface with the CAM route
- 5.13 **Response:**
- Since the consultation a detailed traffic survey has been undertaken. Whilst this is an outline application and internal parking arrangements would be subject to Reserved Matters applications, it is expected that the proposals would provide car and cycle parking spaces in accordance with Cambridgeshire standards. There is sufficient space within the proposed retirement village for both the proposed accommodation and parking spaces.
 - A Travel Plan would be provided with any Reserved Matters application which would set out a long-term strategy to encourage, promote and facilitate staff, visitors and residents using non-car modes to travel to and from the retirement village. A framework Travel Plan is provided with as part of the outline application.
 - A parking area for the countryside park has been carefully considered; any decision on parking provision will be made by the eventual body responsible for the management of the countryside park.
 - The CAM proposals do not form part of this application and the proposals have been designed independently of it. Should the CAM come forward it will be subject of a separate application which would consider car parking, including impact of parking on existing residential areas. Parking requirements for the CAM are not therefore considered as part of this proposal.
 - As above, the CAM proposals are separate from these proposals. At the time of our application no detailed plans were available of the design of the busway, and it is not known how it would interface with existing

roads. However these matters would all be dealt with by any planning application for the CAM and are not considered in this application.

- 5.14 Our parking and access proposals are considered in greater detail in our Transport Assessment and Planning Statement.

Design and operation of the open space

- 5.15 General suggestions for the design of the open space area included:
- More trees (three responses);
 - Areas where dogs don't have to walk on leads (two responses);
 - Some kind of water body (two responses)
- 5.16 **Response:** Our landscape plans are to be revised following feedback to include further tree provision on the eastern and western boundaries of the site, and further tree groups along the north of the open space. Unfortunately due to the topography of the site, with the retirement village located on the lowest part, it is not practical to include any water body. Due to the scarcity of chalk grassland habitat, the open nature of the existing habitat, and the views afforded over the surrounding countryside due to the elevation, it is felt that continuing to have the open space as grassland with informal paths through it offers the best conditions for local wildlife and would maximise enjoyment of local residents.
- 5.17 Two questions were raised about the operation of the country park/open space, and whether there was scope for integration with Magog Down.
- 5.18 **Response:** Since the consultation event, the applicant has undertaken a review of the purpose, ownership and management of the park. As part of this review meetings have been held with third parties (Cambridge Past Present and Future, Cambridge Wildlife Trust, and the Magog Trust) about the relative merits of each management option. This has ultimately determined the form that the countryside park should take.
- 5.19 This is explored further in section 3.

Operation of the retirement village

- 5.20 A number of residents questioned how the retirement village would be operated, with specific questions on the size, type and cost of properties available; the ownership status of any apartments; and possible restrictions on what residents could do, particularly owning pets.
- 5.21 **Response:** This is an outline application and as such these matters won't be confirmed until an operator is confirmed and Reserved Matters applications come forward.
- 5.22 Our Planning Statement sets out further detail on how retirement villages differ from conventional care homes or sheltered apartment schemes. A retirement village is a concept that is relatively new to the UK, and allows for a range of living models – from full independence in individual properties of varying dwelling types, through to supported living within the central main block.

Objection responses

Location of the site

- 5.23 The biggest concern was the location of the site (18 responses). It was felt that:
- The site was far from local facilities;
 - Elderly people would not be able to walk to the village centre to access services and facilities;
 - It wouldn't feel part of the community due to its separation.
- 5.24 **Response:** Stapleford and Great Shelford form constituent parts of a larger settlement. Due to the historic growth of the villages, neither has a particular "centre". Whilst the site is on the edge of Stapleford, it is in close proximity to the recreation ground, pavilion, and primary school. It is approximately 1.5km from the junction of London Road and Church Street, which might conventionally be described as the centre due to the two nearby pubs and convenience store. The retirement village would not develop the green gap between Shelford and Stapleford and would not therefore further integrate the two villages.
- 5.25 It is recognised that some of the residents of the retirement village would not wish to walk the distance from the site to the more central facilities in Shelford, such as the railway station, GP and post office. It will be for any operator, and the planning process, to decide whether it would be appropriate for them to provide a shuttle bus to run between the site and Stapleford/Great Shelford (however some similar schemes do run such a service). The bus 31 provides regular services from Gog Magog Way to the village centre, Addenbrookes, and Cambridge; this is further assessed in our Transport Statement.
- 5.26 The facilities that will be proposed as part of the retirement village, in addition to the open space, will ensure that the site becomes a destination for the local community and not separate from it.

Need for and desirability of a retirement village

- 5.27 Seven responses felt that there was no need for a retirement village in Stapleford. This was mainly due to a stated preference for alternative developments (particularly affordable or key worker housing); or because it was felt that "gated communities" for older people would not be good for the area.
- 5.28 Nine responses expressed doubts about the need for retirement dwellings, but relating their concerns to personal preferences:
- Not interested in downsizing to an apartment (particularly due to size)
 - Would prefer to be integrated with the local community
 - Retirement homes are not affordable options
- 5.29 **Response:** The need for the development is set out in the Planning Statement which accompanies this application. The provision of additional specialist accommodation is a recognised priority at both a local and national level. It is of course recognised that retirement schemes are not for everyone; however this is a market-led scheme which will be occupied purely by people who have chosen to live there (clearly no one will be under an obligation to move into one). These comments were outweighed in number by those commenting they would like to live in a scheme such as the one proposed.
- 5.30 Moreover, a retirement village is not the same as a sheltered apartment scheme or care home. They are designed to be open and outward facing, with facilities available to members of the local community. Public footpaths and cycle paths will run through the scheme connecting Gog Magog Way with the proposed open space and Haverhill Road, and potentially the new CAM stop. As set out above this would serve to integrate the development with the local area.

Need for a country park

- 5.31 13 responses did not see the need for an additional country park/open space. This was due mainly to the existing presence of the Gogs and Wandlebury Country Park. A number of respondents preferred to leave the site as agricultural land rather than opening it to the community in perpetuity.
- 5.32 **Response:** there is a clear policy requirement/objective for biodiversity net gain, as set out in local and national policy. Policy CSF/5 sets out a Countryside Enhancement Strategy which covers this area of land, which includes the aspiration for the management and creation of chalk grassland, and new footpaths and bridleways connecting with Wandlebury and The Magogs. These are identifiable policy objectives which marry with our proposals. NH/10 supports facilities for recreation in the Green Belt and policy NH/6 supports the linking and enhancement of green infrastructure. Paragraph 141 of the NPPF supports the beneficial use of Green Belt land. Other bodies such as Natural Cambridgeshire have aspirations to double the amount of natural habitat within the County.

Loss of Green Belt Land, and potential precedent for further development

- 5.33 12 responses expressed concern over the loss of Green Belt land, while nine responses also expressed concern over the potential for further development on adjacent sites, should the proposal be approved.
- 5.34 **Response:** The site is currently part of Cambridge's Green Belt, and as such it is in an area where the default position is that development is inappropriate. However, as is set out in our Planning Statement, "Very Special Circumstances" exist in this case which justify development in the Green Belt. Should planning permission be granted the site would retain its Green Belt status and protections. The change of use of the site or a future redevelopment could not occur without a further planning application that demonstrated Very Special Circumstances necessitating revised proposals.
- 5.35 The fields to the west of the site are not in the control of the applicant. However it is our understanding that there are no plans for these areas to have their Green Belt status removed, and significant controls therefore remain over their potential for future development. The proposal would not therefore set a precedent for further development. In any case, each and every development would be assessed on its merits at the time, against the relevant Green Belt policy.

The proposal will not increase the number of affordable dwellings in the area

- 5.36 Five respondents noted that the proposal would not create more affordable homes in Stapleford:
- Key workers would be unable to afford to live nearby;
 - The homes that the elderly population would downsize from would be unaffordable to young families.
- 5.37 **Response:** It is outside the scope of the applicants to address the affordability of family housing in Stapleford. There are two areas of urgent need in South Cambs: market housing, affordable housing in particular, and older peoples' housing. This scheme isn't designed to address all three: it is designed to address a particular kind of acute housing need. However, the link between building retirement properties and the resulting freeing up of family properties is well established. As set out in our Planning Statement, Based on the ratio of 1.5 which East Cambridgeshire District Council uses to determine the contribution of older people's accommodation to general housing supply, the scheme would free up to 132 dwellings. This would make a significant contribution to housing supply
- 5.38 The site is considered to be in a sustainable location. It is 1.8km from Shelford Railway Station (equivalent to a 25 minute walk) and 400m from bus stops on Gog Magog Way, with regular bus services to Addenbrookes, and

Cambridge. Whilst no key worker housing is proposed as part of the application (which would introduce a C3 use within a Green Belt location), the site is well connected to nearby settlements and would allow workers on site access by means other than the private car. If the CAM does come forward this would make the site even more sustainable in transport terms.

5.39 This is covered in further detail in the Transport Assessment and Planning Statement.

Design of the retirement village

5.40 Three respondents felt that the indicative plans were too dense and out of scale with the rest of the village. It was further felt that the care block looked bulky and would block views for existing residents.

5.41 **Response:** These sentiments are similar to those expressed above regarding the potential density and potential impact on neighbours. These issues have been carefully considered as part of the outline application scheme design process.

Movement of busway

5.42 Two responses noted that the proposals involve moving the busway further from the village, which would increase walking times to the potential stop.

5.43 **Response:** The CAM route is still at the proposal stage, and the route and final design of any transport route is not within the control of the applicants. Indicative proposals put forward by the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership indicate the route would likely run through the site, and proposed stops at both Haverhill Road and Hinton Way. It is for the GCP to specify the design and location of stops. The GCP are aware of the proposals and will no doubt be consulted on them through the application determination process.

5.44 The proposal may involve improvements to pedestrian routes along Haverhill Road, and will provide attractive foot and cycle routes through the retirement village to the proposed CAM stop adjacent to Haverhill Road. This will provide attractive car free access to the proposed CAM stop and the open space beyond.

Impact on neighbours and strain on local facilities

5.45 10 responses raised concerns with the likely impact of the proposal in terms of:

- Construction noise and impact;
- Increased traffic;
- Strain on GP services

5.46 **Response:** Any approval is likely to have a condition requiring a Construction Management Plan to be submitted prior to any development. This would seek to limit the impact of construction activities on the local surroundings.

5.47 A detailed Transport Assessment is provided with the outline application. This has assessed the likely trip generation from the proposed development, as well as the options to get to the site via sustainable means. Even assuming a worst-case scenario where the CAM doesn't come forward, any traffic generated would be within the capacity of the local road network. A Travel Plan would also be put in place that would seek to encourage staff and visitors to use sustainable means to access the site where possible.

5.48 As set out in our Planning Statement, on average 39% of retirement village residents come from within a three mile radius, limiting the number of new residents using local services. It is acknowledged that there may be an impact on local GP services, and we will seek to liaise further with NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to

understand what that impact will be and what the most appropriate way of dealing with it is. However, one of the advantages of schemes of this nature is a decreased reliance on primary and acute medical services and facilities, on the basis that with serviced care and adaptive housing issues are dealt with in their infancy before medical attention is required, preventing them from happening. All residents will receive a minimum level of care per week as standard to ensure their basic care needs are met.

Changes to be made to the scheme

- 5.49 Following the consultation process, a number of recommendations were made to the design team, the purpose of which was to positively respond to issues and matters raised throughout the consultation process, in areas where the applicant considered it was appropriate to do so. The recommendations are summarised below:
- The masterplan has been further refined and developed to show clear access roads through the site, and parking/landscaped areas
 - The main care block has been moved to the north to create a further distance between it and the rear boundaries of adjacent properties
 - Boundary planting has been reinforced to further screen the buildings from their surroundings
 - Cross sections of the development have been undertaken to demonstrate the massing and layout of buildings, and their separation from existing dwellings
 - Parameter plans have been provided to show land use and maximum building heights, access points, and framework landscaping areas
 - The positions and number of tree copses on the countryside park have been altered to respond to and emphasise key views and provide additional tree cover

6. SECOND PUBLIC EXHIBITION

Exhibition Publicity and Format

- 6.1 Following the changes made to the design and structure of the proposals (see section 6), a second public exhibition was held to inform the public on the changes that had been made to the scheme. As this event was primarily informational, only one event was held.
- 6.2 The public exhibition was held on Friday 28th February, 10:00 – 20:00, The Stapleford Pavilion.
- 6.3 The choice of venue, date and opening times maximised the opportunity for interested parties to attend the consultation in person.

Form of the exhibition

- 6.4 The focus of the exhibition was a series of 11 exhibition boards (see Appendix D), which aimed to inform interested parties about the changes that had been undertaken following the previous consultation. More specifically, they:
- Welcomed people to the exhibition and explained who the applicants were;
 - Described the site's location and the purpose of the development;
 - Explained the concept of a retirement village;
 - Explained the need for a retirement village;
 - Described the connectivity of the site;
 - Described our proposals (two boards);
 - Explained the proposals for the country park (two boards);
 - Outlined the wider community benefits that the development would provide; and
 - Asked for feedback and set out the methods for responding

Publicity

- 6.5 The exhibition was publicised in advance of the event by the following means:
- By a leaflet drop to every registered address in Stapleford, Little Shelford and Great Shelford (please find the leaflet attached at Appendix E), distributed two weeks prior to the exhibition date;
 - Editorial piece posted on the village website (staplefordonline.com/home) on 14th February, with a location plan, description of the proposals and details of how to respond online;
 - Posted to Great Shelford Facebook group;
 - By contacting the Parish Councils of Stapleford, Little Shelford and Great Shelford on 21st February to invite them to the exhibition.

Attendance

- 6.6 Members of the project team were on hand to answer questions from local residents and those in attendance. This included the applicant (Phil Grant, Jon Knight and Andrew Adams of Axis Land Partnerships), and the communication consultant (Emma Drake of Henbe).

6.7 In terms of public attendance, 124 local residents attended. This is 74% of the number that attended the first set of exhibitions, and represents 2% of the population of Great Shelford and Stapleford.

Comments

6.8 Comments were invited from interested parties. Comments could be made by the following means:

- By submitting completed comments forms on the evening of the exhibition (completed comments are provided at Appendix F);
- By submitting a completed comments form (or indeed a written email or letter) following the evening of the exhibition by email to stapleforddown@axislp.com (the planning consultants);
- By submitting comments on the dedicated website set up immediately following the event.

6.9 The comments form and website response form simply requested the name and address of the respondent along with an open 'comments' section. The comments form deliberately took an 'open-ended' response format and asked general questions to prompt responses which did not have the effect of restricting or leading the responses. The personal details of the respondents were not visible to others to see throughout the consultation process and in the interests of data anonymity, these have been redacted from the comments forms at Appendix F.

6.10 Residents were asked to submit their comments by the end of the consultation period (13th March 2020).

Website consultation

6.11 A website was set up following the public exhibition on the 28th February, providing digital versions of the exhibition boards from the public exhibition and inviting comments, by providing a response form (seeking the name, address and comments from the respondent).

6.12 The website was advertised on the consultation comments forms at the public exhibition and on the Parish news website.

6.13 The website was open for consultation until the 13th March to allow ample time for respondents to review the information and respond.

Consultation Feedback

6.14 This section summarises the matters raised during the consultation event. The applicant's responses to these and our recommendations are set out in the following sections.

6.15 The comments from the two public exhibitions and website consultation comments have been presented collectively in the tables below, given that these in effect formed part of the same consultation process.

6.16 A total of 25 comments were received. This represents approximately 20% of the total number of interested parties in attendance at the public exhibition (124). 20 of the responses were provided by comments forms completed on the evening of the exhibitions (response numbers 1-20) and five comments were received online (response numbers 21-25). A further online response was submitted from Cambridge Past Present and Future (CPPF), which is reviewed in section 7 below.

6.17 None of the online responses left their age or address. Of the 20 respondents who used the comments forms, 40% were aged 50-70, and 40% were aged over 71. 10% were 36-50 and 10% left the field blank/circled more

than one category. 50% of respondents lived in Stapleford, and 30% lived in Great Shelford. Other respondents resided in Uttlesford, Cambridge or left the field blank.

Summary of support

- 6.18 The nature of the responses varied from those who supported the scheme in principle, those who objected in principle and a number of neutral responses where the comments do not (whether implicitly or explicitly) indicate support or an objection.

NATURE OF RESPONSE	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Support	13, 3 emails	64%
Neutral	3 forms, 1 email	16%
Objection	4 forms, 1 email	20%

Analysis of Responses

- 6.19 The responses indicate that the majority of respondents support the development, with just over one third opposing it in principle.
- 6.20 The reoccurring themes within the comments are analysed in the tables below, these have been split into comments in support, general comments / suggestions and also points of objection.

Analysis of comments in support

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
Good idea/general support	5	<i>Fantastic concept It is a brilliant proposal for the many reasons you outline</i>
Respondent may be interested in living in the development	5	
Support for design	4	<i>The variety of provision of accommodation and the inclusion of well being facilities and provision of care are excellent Looks very good</i>
Respondent is interested in living in the development	4	<i>Interested but not sure if I will still be around to see completion</i>
Support countryside park	3	<i>I love the idea of being next to a countryside park A country park would be a great asset to the area</i>
Good location	2	<i>It is such a good location (especially if the electric busway goes ahead) It is certainly a lovely location</i>
There is a need for the development	2	<i>I am amazed at the lack of similar facilities in the area Shortage of this type of facility with growing need – especially single storey/ground floor flats for older residents</i>
Good way to release housing	2	<i>Good way of releasing onto the market under utilised large homes</i>

Analysis of neutral comments

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
Further detail needed on operation of retirement village	4	<i>It would be good to know more about purchase price, ongoing outlay e.g. maintenance/ground rent; charges for other provisions, to enable potential purchasers to begin to budget</i> <i>There should be a price reduction (10%+) for purchasers within a set radius – say 5 miles/named local villages to encourage local purchasers and to ensure the available apartments are affordable to that population</i>
Consideration should be given to parking provision for countryside park	3	<i>The Haverhill Road is not suitable for parking</i> <i>Parking policy for country park to avoid adding to future congestion on Hinton Way</i>
Doubts expressed over need/desirability of apartments	3	<i>The space in 1 or 2 bedroom flats look limited</i> <i>Not sure about apartment building, would prefer detached bungalow</i> <i>I would be interested, however, as my wife is a full time wheelchair user, I suspect the single story properties will be too small for her to move around easily</i>
Design of countryside park	3	<i>The country park should be bigger</i> <i>the open land should in part, at least, be made over to chalk grassland (no trees) for the benefit of chalk grassland wildflowers and butterflies.... For the grassland to have any benefit for nature then part should be fenced off from people and dogs</i> <i>Have you thought of an area or two (each end) where people who use bikes could leave them? Also, there will need to be STRICT limitations on dogs – see current huge issues at the Gog Magos</i>
Concern with accessibility	2	<i>I would be concerned about transport facilities in the event that I couldn't drive, but that may well be addressed</i> <i>There needs to be careful thought on getting the staff for the facility</i>
Concern about cumulative impact of development in the area	1	<i>This proposal comes at a time when several other things are up in the air, e.g. local plan, busway, those other fields then enclosed by this and existing housing. Not for Axis to solve per-se but it may complicate getting enthusiastic support</i>
Potential pressure on water resources	1	<i>In answer to a query re water demand and waste management I was told... that depends on who the operator of the retirement home is.</i>
No details on sustainability	1	<i>No details or even proposals re meeting UK govt climate zero net carbon or/and other govt policies on climate change; no indication of environment policy re renewable energy... or rainwater recycling; ... avoiding light pollution?</i>
Design of retirement village	1	<i>Move two storey buildings up the field instead of impinging on local residents' views</i>

Analysis of objections

TOPIC	NO. OF RESPONSES RAISING TOPIC	SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON TOPIC
Doesn't meet a need/isn't needed/not interested	7	<i>The village needs more affordable housing not a retirement village The real housing need in Cambridgeshire is for affordable housing, not the lucrative downsizers and recently retired. A bit of an American idea, becomes a posh ghetto, but would suit some people</i>
Potential precedent for further Green Belt building	3	<i>The idea is good, my concern is infringement into Green Belt & future additions which I would not be happy with The fear expressed by many is that the undeveloped land in the middle of the map will come under increasing pressure to be built on</i>
Impact on local infrastructure	3	<i>Haverhill Road.... is already too narrow and in poor condition for the amount of traffic using it now, let alone the extra traffic Increased demands of the roads and the local GP will further impact on the current village residents, without providing any significant benefit. I cannot see senior citizens walking 30 minutes each way to Shelford – they will use the car, and Mingle Lane will bear the brunt. But it is certainly a lovely location.</i>
Prefer mixed community	2	<i>I prefer to live in a mixed community Not all are incapable of being in “normal” society – on the contrary they want to see young people too and benefit from being stimulated</i>
Shouldn't develop the Green Belt	2	
Poor location	2	<i>The wrong concept in the wrong place ... it is too far for older people to walk to the shops or station It would seem obvious that this location is unsuitable, set on the edge of the village and remote from most services. ... Clearly the anticipated elderly residents of this development will be reluctant to walk this distance, which will result in increased traffic and associated pollution</i>
The scale of the village is too large	2	<i>It cannot be ignored that the size of the development is significant, with 12 acres of housing planned - dramatically increasing the village size.</i>
Landscape impact	1	<i>The erosion of the greenbelt and blurring of the soft village edge, with loss of separate identity of Shelford/Stapleford will be significant. Encroaching markedly on the rolling chalk hills loses the distinct separation between village and countryside that is a current positive facet of the village.</i>

6.21 It is clear from the comments made that a significant number of residents support the proposed development and see a number of benefits it will provide for the local community. In particular, this includes the provision of new retirement housing which will help to address an unmet need and enable older people to downsize and stay in the village. A further benefit which was emphasised by many local residents was the significant provision of open space.

6.22 A small number of suggestions had been made involving amendments to the plans and these have been responded to in the following sections of this statement.

7. DESIGN REVIEW FOLLOWING SECOND CONSULTATION

7.1 This section sets out the applicant's responses to the comments and queries received where it is appropriate and reasonable to do so.

Comments in Support

Support for retirement villages

7.2 A significant number of responses indicated support for the proposals, in terms of its design, its location, and the need for it. Nine (36%) of the respondents stated that they would be, or may be, interested in living at the site once it was completed.

Support for open space

7.3 Three responses referenced explicit support for the country park/open space.

Support for proposed facilities

- 7.4 In response to the question on the form: "A 50-acre country park is being proposed as part of the development. How do you think you would use it?":
- 12 respondents would use it for general fitness and recreation
 - 11 respondents would use it for walking or dog walking
 - 10 respondents would use it for getting closer to nature
 - 3 respondents would use it for children's play
- 7.5 Other suggested uses included using it for family gatherings, using it to take elderly relatives for a walk in a safe environment, or not the respondent wouldn't use it (one response each).
- 7.6 In response to the question on the response form, "What sort of health and wellbeing facilities would you be interested in having access to?":
- 13 respondents would be interested in a swimming pool
 - 10 respondents would be interested in a sauna/spa
 - 8 respondents would be interested in outdoor recreation
 - 6 respondents would be interested in a gym
 - 4 respondents would be interested in general fitness
 - 3 respondents would be interested in a hairdressers
- 7.7 Other respondents would use the restaurant or communal spaces such as a vegetable garden (one response each). Two respondents said they wouldn't use any of the facilities.
- 7.8 From the responses it is clear that including a swimming pool within the retirement village would be of greatest interest locally, following by other forms of activity such as the sauna/spa.

Comments raising suggested amendments

7.9 A number of responses suggested amendments or asked for further clarity on specific aspects of the proposal.

Parking for the countryside park

- 7.10 As during the previous round of consultation, concerns remain about the requirement for car parking at the countryside park, and potential pressure for street parking on Haverhill Road.
- 7.11 **Response:** as is set out above, a parking area for the countryside park has been carefully considered. However any decision on parking provision will be made by the eventual body responsible for the management of the countryside park.
- 7.12 Our parking and access proposals are considered in greater detail in our Transport Assessment and Planning Statement.

Operation of the retirement village

- 7.13 As during the previous round of public consultation, a number of residents questioned how the retirement village would be operated, with specific questions on the cost of properties available, and likely maintenance/service charges.
- 7.14 **Response:** This is an outline application and as such these matters won't be confirmed until an operator is confirmed and Reserved Matters applications come forward.
- 7.15 Our Planning Statement sets out further detail on how retirement villages differ from conventional care homes or sheltered apartment schemes. A retirement village is a concept that is relatively new to the UK, and allows for a range of living models – from full independence in individual properties in a variety of dwelling types, through to supported living within the central main block. The suggestion about offering a discount to those who live nearby is noted and will be forwarded to the eventual operator.

Design of the retirement village

- 7.16 The responses can be broken down to a number of specific issues/queries:
- Concerns over whether apartments are justified/needed (with a corresponding preference for bungalows) (three responses)
 - Potential pressure on water resources (one response)
 - Further detail should be provided on sustainability (one response)
 - The two storey buildings should be moved away from existing residents (one response)
- 7.17 **Response:** The retirement village is to provide a variety of dwelling types. This is a market-led scheme, and it is recognised that some residents will have preferences for certain kinds of accommodation. However flats offer a suitable form of accommodation for those who require more active forms of care.
- 7.18 As a result of the comments, a section on sustainability has been included in the Planning Statement. Specific measures will be detailed as part of any reserved matters application, which will have regard to the relevant local plan policies, Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, and national guidance.
- 7.19 The Land Use and Heights Parameter Plan shows the larger buildings to the south of the site, which is the lowest area in topographical terms. This ensures that the buildings will be screened from views Magog Down

and Stapleford cemetery. A minimum 10m distance is achievable between the care building and the rear boundaries of properties on Chalk Hill and Gog Magog Way which ensures that views will not be impinged.

- 7.20 With regards to water pressure, our Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy sets out in detail how surface water would be managed across the site. Infiltration is considered a suitable method of surface water discharge.

Design of the countryside park

- 7.21 Three respondents commented specifically on the design of the countryside park: that it should be bigger; that there should be cycle parking; consideration should be given to limits on dog walkers; and that priority should be given to chalk grassland and wildflower species that would attract butterflies.
- 7.22 **Response:** The boundaries of the countryside park have been defined by the northern, eastern and western boundaries of the site, and by the likely position of the CAM route to the south (as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan). The landowner also wished to retain part of the larger field in arable agricultural use. Whilst it is not proposed to increase the size of the countryside park, it will link to a network of amenity spaces through the retirement village to the recreation ground, and form part of a chain of green space with Ninewells and Magog Down.
- 7.23 As above, a decision on cycle parking provision will be made by the eventual body responsible for the management of the countryside park. It will also be for the management body to det out any restrictions on dog walking, should it be felt necessary.
- 7.24 The countryside park is envisaged to be planted out as chalk grassland and provide a valuable habitat for species such as butterflies. The planting and maintenance specification will be set out as part of Reserved Matters application.

Objection responses

Need for and desirability of a retirement village

- 7.25 Seven responses felt that there was no need for a retirement village in Stapleford, or they would not be interested in living in one. As in the previous round of consultation, this was mainly due to a stated preference for affordable housing. A further two responses expressed a preference for mixed communities.
- 7.26 **Response:** The need for the development is set out in the Planning Statement which accompanies this application. The provision of additional specialist accommodation is a recognised priority at both a local and national level. As is set out above, this is a market-led scheme which will be occupied purely by people who have chosen to live there. These comments were outweighed in number by those commenting they would like to live in a scheme such as the one proposed.
- 7.27 Moreover, a retirement village is not the same as a sheltered apartment scheme or care home. They are designed to be open and outward facing, with facilities available to members of the local community. Public footpaths and cycle paths will run through the scheme connecting Gog Magog Way with the proposed open space and Haverhill Road, and potentially the new CAM stop. As set out above this would serve to integrate the development with the local area.

Loss of Green Belt Land, and potential precedent for further development

- 7.28 Five responses expressed concern over the loss of Green Belt land and the potential for further development on adjacent sites, should the proposal be approved. (It should be noted that one of the responses was not an objection as they expressed support for the proposal.)
- 7.29 **Response:** The site is currently part of Cambridge's Green Belt, and as such it is in an area where the default position is that development is inappropriate. However, as is set out in our Planning Statement, "Very Special Circumstances" exist in this case which justify development in the Green Belt. Should planning permission be granted the site would retain its Green Belt status and protections. The change of use of the site, further extensions, or a future redevelopment could not occur without a further planning application that demonstrated Very Special Circumstances necessitating revised proposals.
- 7.30 The fields to the west of the site are not in the control of the applicant. However it is our understanding that there are no plans for these areas to have their Green Belt status removed, and significant controls therefore remain over their potential for future development. The proposal would not therefore set a precedent for further development. In any case, each and every development would be assessed on its merits at the time, against the relevant Green Belt policy.

Location of the site and landscape impact

- 7.31 Two respondents felt that the village was in the wrong location and too far from local facilities. One respondent felt that there would be an adverse landscape impact due to encroachment into the chalk hills.
- 7.32 **Response:** The accessibility of the site is assessed further in section 5 above. Regarding landscape impact, a Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken and accompanies the application. In summary:
- The built part of the development is kept on the lowest part of the site and does not encroach onto the hillside
 - The built part of the development is kept on the western edge of the site, adjacent to Haverhill Road. This serves to reinforce the separateness of Stapleford and Great Shelford by not further developing the land between the villages (around the location of the cemetery)
 - The countryside park occupies the highest part of the site, and will include a landscaped viewpoint with extensive views of Stapleford and Great Shelford

Design of the retirement village

- 7.33 Two respondents felt that the scale of the village was too large.
- 7.34 **Response:** These sentiments are similar to those expressed above regarding the potential density and potential impact on neighbours. These issues have been carefully considered as part of the outline application scheme design process. The scale of the development ensures that the proposal can make a meaningful contribution towards meeting the need for specialist retirement accommodation and provide a critical mass of residents to justify provision of facilities.

Impact on infrastructure

- 7.35 As in the previous consultation, respondents highlighted the likely impact of the scheme on traffic, and the likely impact on local GP services.

- 7.36 **Response:** A detailed Transport Assessment is provided with the outline application. As is set out above, even if the CAM proposal does not come forward, the site is sustainably located and future staff and visitors will be encouraged to use sustainable means of transport where possible. Any private vehicular traffic generated will still operate within the capacity of Haverhill and Babraham Roads.
- 7.37 Impact on GP services is covered in section 5 above.

Comments from consultees

- 7.38 Cambridge Past, Present and Future responded as part of the online consultation. Their comments can be summarised as:
- It was suggested other sites may be available and preferable. The site should be promoted and assessed through the Local Plan
 - Concern was expressed about the lack of delivery partner
 - The proposal for the countryside park would ordinarily be supported; however there is no evidence of a needs analysis
 - It would be difficult to prevent infill between the village and the countryside park
 - It is suggested that any countryside park should focus on habitat creation rather than informal recreation
 - The location would protrude into the Green Belt and change the village form
 - The development would be highly visible while the trees matured
 - The retirement village is located on the edge of Stapleford, which is not ideal for elderly residents. It would be better if the development were adjacent to the village cemetery
- 7.39 **Response:** Many of the issues raised are similar to those expressed by local residents, which have been assessed above. In summary:
- The applicant does not have control over the adjacent sites and there is no reason to suppose that development of this site would lead to infilling of the Green Belt. It is proposed that the site retains its Green Belt status to provide strict control over future uses and possible extensions of the site. As has been assessed above and in further detail in the Planning Statement and Transport Assessment, the site is in an accessible location for staff and visitors.
 - The suggestion that the development of the countryside park focuses on habitat creation rather than recreation is noted and will be reflected in reserved matters applications
 - Whilst the built part of the development would protrude into the Green Belt, the site retains its Green Belt designation. The built part of the development is limited to the lowest part of the site and is to be screened by a significant planted buffer. The most publicly visible part of the site is to become a countryside park.
 - A detailed Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken. It is acknowledged that the scheme will be visible as the tree buffer and landscaping matures. However, over time, any effects on landscape character at a local and site level will be Moderate Neutral.

Changes to be made to the scheme

- 7.40 Comments made regarding the scheme were broadly similar to those in the first round of consultation. Justification and further explanation have been provided above where relevant. Following the consultation process, additional information on sustainability has been incorporated into the Design and Access Statement.

8. EVOLUTION OF SCHEME DESIGN AS A RESULT OF ENGAGEMENT

- 8.1 As has been evidenced above, the applicant has been in consultation with the local community for a considerable period of time. The applicant has consulted widely, seeking input from the Parish Council, local residents, voluntary bodies, CAM delivery body and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 8.2 The proposals have also evolved following detailed discussions with the design team, particularly masterplanning, and landscape, heritage, drainage, transport and ecological consultants.
- 8.3 A summary of the evolution of the scheme is provided below:
- **July 2018:** Discussions with the Parish Council are initially open-ended on how the 35ha arable field between Haverhill Road and Hinton Way could be developed to meet needs within the Parish
 - **December 2018:** Following feedback from the Parish, meetings with care providers, and analysis of the housing need set out in the Local Plan and Housing Needs report, proposals are focussed towards the retirement village concept as a way to retain the site's Green Belt status and respond to local demographic needs
 - **March 2019:** The easternmost and westernmost parts of the site are submitted separately to the Call for Sites advertising their suitability and availability for general residential development
 - **October 2019:** Following meetings with the CAM delivery body and Parish, detailed proposals for a countryside park to the north of the site are formulated as a way to provide a significant and lasting benefit to the community
 - **November 2019:** Outline plans are presented to the community, and submitted to the District Council for the Call for Sites
 - 168 residents attended the two consultation events. 70 comments were received; of these comments, 41% were generally in favour, 24% were unsure or didn't express a preference, and 34% objected in principle.
 - **December 2019:** Following feedback from the community, design team and voluntary bodies, the proposals were further refined:
 - Parameter plans and cross sections are refined to minimise impact on landscape, views and surrounding properties
 - Landscaping is reworked on countryside park to screen the built form and emphasise views towards Stapleford and Shelford
 - **February 2020:** the proposals are submitted for a second round of consultation.
 - 124 residents attended the consultation event. Of the 25 comments received, 64% expressed support; 16% were unsure or didn't express a preference; and 20% objected in principle.
 - Whilst this was based on a smaller response rate than the first consultation there was still a clear increase in support since November. In both November and February/March those who raised in principle objections were in the minority.
 - **March 2020:** Following receipt of final comments from the community and design team, the proposals were further refined for submission.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The applicant has undertaken a comprehensive approach to public consultation throughout the preparation of the planning application. This involved meetings with the Parish Council over an 18 month period; pre-application engagement with the local authority and conservation bodies; and two rounds of public consultation with an accompanying website.
- 9.2 The level of consultation undertaken was more comprehensive than is typically undertaken in view of the scale of the proposals. However, the applicant was keen to ensure that the proposed development had the support of the local community and furthermore, that the application team were responding positively to the views of local residents.
- 9.3 The responses received throughout the consultation process clearly indicate that the local community as a whole support the proposed development and express a desire for both the proposed open space and the retirement dwellings. Objections have been received regarding the principle of development, citing concerns over development of the Green Belt; however a robust response on this point is provided in the Planning Statement. Other objections regarding the design of the retirement village have been taken into account in the redesign. The applicant has made a number of other changes to the plans to address issues raised throughout the consultation process and these are outlined in the previous section.
- 9.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) strongly supports the use of pre-application public engagement through the process of preparing planning applications and paragraph 128 states that ‘applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot’.
- 9.5 The application scheme has engaged in early, proactive and effective engagement with the local community and the applicant can demonstrate a strong level of local support for the proposed development. We would therefore respectfully request the Council lend their support to the planning application.

APPENDICES

A Exhibition Boards – November 2019

B Consultation Leaflet – November 2019

C Public Consultation Responses – November 2019

D Exhibition Boards – February 2020

E Consultation Leaflet – February 2020

F Public Consultation Responses – February/March 2020

