



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Planning Committee

Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 2:00pm on
Wednesday 3 September 2025

Present:

Cllr Chika Akinwale
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Christine Colbert
Cllr Mark Goldsack (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Martin Goodearl
Cllr Keith Horgan (substitute)
Cllr Bill Hunt (Chair)
Cllr James Lay
Cllr Alan Sharp
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Ross Trent
Cllr Christine Whelan

Officers:

Patrick Adams – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Maggie Camp – Director Legal
Rachael Forbes – Planning Officer
Catherine Looper – Major Projects Planning Officer
David Morren – Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager

In attendance:

Paul Belton – Agent for the Applicant

ECDC Comms

11. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lavinia Edwards. Cllr Keith Horgan substituted for Cllr Edwards.

12. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

13. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 2 July 2025 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the amendment of Kirling to Kirtling in the heading of agenda item 6.

14. Chair's announcements

There were no Chair's announcements.

15. 24/01257/RMM - Ely

Rachael Forbes, Planning Officer, presented a report (AA41, previously circulated) recommending approval of a reserved matters application for layout, scale, appearance, access and landscaping following outline planning permission for the erection of 300 new homes, landscaping, open space, allotments, pedestrian, cycle and vehicle routes and associated infrastructure pertaining to Phase 5 of the Orchards Green development and approval of relevant details for Phase 5 under conditions 14, 20, 21, 25, 26, 49, 50 and 56 of the outline planning permission, which had been granted in 2016.

It was noted that the Council's Waste Team, Trees Officer and Ecologist had no objections to the proposal. There were also no objections from the Environment Agency, Anglian Water or the Internal Drainage Board.

Paul Belton, agent for the applicant, made the following statement:

"My name is Paul Belton from Carter Jonas, and I am here representing Bellway homes.

"These reserved matters are seeking approval for the delivery of 300 new homes, extensive areas of open space and associated infrastructure on what is known as Phase 5 of this allocated site to the north of Ely.

"As you know, outline planning permission was granted for this North Ely development in 2016. Since then, Phases 1 and 3 have been built out and as you have just heard, Phase 2 has been approved and is now well advanced on site. Phase 5 sits in between Phases 1 and 3 to the south and Phase 2 to the north and is a key part of the masterplan, it being the missing part of the site that connects these already consented and built out parcels.

"A key aspect of phase 5 is the delivery of the central part of the spine road that will enable direct connection to be made through the wider development and between Lynn Road, Cam Drive and the A10. This connectivity is key to the wider development as it allows the parcels to be connected, new pedestrian and cycle routes to be created and the new internal bus route to be provided.

"Phase 5 also delivers a key part of the Long Fen, the area of open space to the west of the site, alongside the A10. The Long Fen provides continuous

green infrastructure throughout the entirety of the site, which spreads into each of the separate development parcels.

In addition, phase 5 will deliver a more formal green square to the south of the site, adjacent to the primary school, known as Eight Tower Park, new allotments and separate play areas. Over 5 hectares of open space will in fact be delivered as part of these plans.

“Given its location within the centre of this allocated site, Phase 5 is very much the missing piece of the jigsaw and Bellway are pleased to be able to bring these reserved matters forward to help realise the overall vision for North Ely.

“Since the submission of this application at the end of 2024, Bellway has worked closely with officers and other key consultees to review the emerging plans and refine the details submitted.

“Detailed design reviews have been held with Place Services and workshops undertaken with housing, ecology officers, the LLFA and Highways to name a few. These workshops have ensured that the details submitted have been robustly tested and refined and we are very grateful to officers for their diligent work in processing this application so that the very positive recommendation of approval can be put forward to you today.

“As noted within the report, this phase of the development is the first to deliver 40% of the new homes, as affordable housing, that is 120 affordable homes in this case. In addition, these plans will deliver 180 new private homes. The submitted plans adhere to the overarching Design Code for North Ely and the approved Spine Road Statement, both of which have steered and informed the plans now being presented. The proposals also accord with each of the approved parameter plans consented as part of the outline planning permission and the conditions attached to the outline approval. Bellway fully supports the recommendation of approval that is before you and hopes that these reserved matters are approved so that the delivery of these much needed homes can commence on site. Bellway are indeed very keen to progress with the delivery of this development and hopes to be commencing works on site in the next couple of months if approval is given.

“As members will be aware, Bellway is already delivering new homes in the garden village of Kennett and is therefore an experienced house builder in the district. Bellway would be delighted to be able to continue the positive delivery of new homes by delivering this key part of the already allocated site at North Ely.”

Members were invited to ask questions to Mr Belton.

In response to Cllr Chika Akinwale, Mr Belton explained that the proposed cycle paths on the site had been approved by the Highways team and that all homes would be within 400 metres of a bus stop. He confirmed that the toddler play area on the edge of Lynn Road would be enclosed.

Mr Belton explained that details of the play equipment in the parks would have been included in the original application, but he understood that it included equipment for disabled children. It was noted that the Section 106 Agreement would include details of when the play areas had to be completed. It was reported that 47% of the housing units would meet the criteria for being disabled friendly. Cllr Christine Colbert expressed the hope that a sensory garden would be planted in the Long Fen area.

Mr Belton reported that the impact of the development on the capacity of Ely College would have been considered at the outline planning application stage.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, Mr Belton explained that the Council's waste team had examined that application and were satisfied that there would be sufficient room for the residents' bins, including the additional bin planned for June 2026, in the new development. He further explained that bins from the apartments would be collected from the rear of the building. Cllr Christine Colbert expressed concern that if waste vehicles were unable to drive down privately owned roads, residents would have to move their bins some distance to a single collection point. Mr Belton stated that waste vehicles could use private roads if they had indemnity insurance.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, Mr Belton explained that the application's ecology strategy had taken into account the welfare of hedgehogs, including the provision of routes for hedgehogs in private gardens.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, Mr Belton stated that the number of chimneys in the plan had been a requirement of the design guide to ensure that the development was in character with the local area. Mr Belton also confirmed that there would be spaces for the domestic charging of electric vehicles, all homes had car parking spaces and that tandem car parking spaces would be kept to a minimum.

Mr Belton explained that self-build homes would be included in phase 4 of the scheme.

Mr Belton explained that the design of the roads, including the proposed 30 miles per hour speed limit, had been agreed in the outline planning application, in consultation with Highways officers. It was noted that many of the road in Ely had a 20 miles per hour speed limit. In reply to Cllr James Lay's concerns on the road layout and access to Lynn Road, Mr Belton stated that the access strategy had been agreed at the outline planning application stage.

In response to Cllr Alan Sharp, Mr Belton explained that if a road was not adopted it would remain in private ownership. Under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement, responsibility for the maintenance of open space will first be offered to the Council and then to a maintenance company.

In reply to Cllr Keith Horgan, Mr Belton stated the reserved matters application needed to be approved before the signing of the Section 38 Agreement

regarding the adoption of roads. He further explained that some roads would remain in private ownership.

In reply to Cllr Christine Whelan, Mr Belton explained that Bellway had taken advice on size and species of trees and were keen to ensure that the new landscape would be successfully introduced over a five-year period, whilst existing mature trees would be protected.

The Planning Officer explained that under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement, no more than 50% of the new homes could be occupied until half of the open space had been completed. No more than 75% of the new homes could be occupied until all of the open space had been completed.

Members were invited to ask questions to the officer.

In reply to Cllr Chika Akinwale, the Planning Officer stated that planning permission for shops had been agreed in a previous phase and would be built elsewhere on the allocated site. The application under discussion was purely for residential housing.

In response to Cllr Christine Whelan, the Planning Officer reported that the Council had consulted with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Internal Drainage Board regarding drainage and sewage and they had not raised any objections regarding the proposed development.

In reply to Cllr Keith Horgan, the Planning Officer explained that indemnity insurance would be required for waste vehicles to drive on private roads. It would be the responsibility of the developer to arrange this with the waste team. Whilst this was not a matter that the planning team would be involved with, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager was satisfied with the assurance received from the waste team that the issue would be resolved.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Planning Officer reported that building regulations ensured the provision of domestic charging points for electric vehicles.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, the Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that if planning conditions were not discharged, officers will investigate and if necessary, take enforcement action.

The Committee moved into debate.

Cllr Alan Sharp stated he was in broadly in favour of the development but he was disappointed that planning conditions had not been included with the outline planning permission in 2016, to ensure that shops and other infrastructure were provided before a certain number of homes were occupied.

Cllr John Trapp expressed concern regarding the number of tandem parking places and the distance that some homes would be from play areas. He

suggested that planning conditions should be added on fully accessible play areas, tree planting, parking, electric charging and bin collection points.

Cllr Christine Whelan expressed her support for the number of affordable homes to be built in the development. However, the Council needed to listen to the concerns of residents regarding traffic, a lack of amenities, play areas, open spaces, minimising disruption to current residents and long term issues regarding drainage and sewage. She hoped that what was being promised would be delivered and if necessary, conditions enforced.

Cllr Keith Horgan expressed concern regarding bin collection for residents living on unadopted roads, due to the distance bins would have to be taken to the collection point and the possible charge to each household to cover any indemnity insurance. He recommended that an extra condition be added that would address this issue.

Mr Paul Belton assured the Committee that the waste team were satisfied with the bin collection points in the application and it was not unusual to have waste collection on unadopted roads.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager reminded the Committee that the adoption of roads was not a planning consideration. He suggested that an additional condition regarding waste collection, which was a planning consideration, could be added, which ensured that further plans regarding bin collection points will be brought to the Council if key roads were not adopted and no indemnity insurance was arranged.

Cllr Keith Horgan proposed and Cllr Christine Colbert seconded the following additional condition “that in the event of any roads not being adopted and indemnity insurance not being agreed in relation to waste collection, then plans of further details of bin collection points will be put forward to the Council, approved in writing and implemented in accordance with the approved plans. Delegated powers be given to the Strategic Planning & Development Management Manger to agree the wording of an additional condition.”

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith and Cllr Chika Akinwale seconded the amended recommendation in the report, with the additional condition. A vote was taken and with 11 votes in favour and 1 against

It was resolved:

to approve planning application 24/01257/RMM, subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 2, with delegated powers given to the Strategic Planning & Development Management Manger to agree the wording of an additional condition that in the event of any roads not being adopted and indemnity insurance not being agreed in relation to waste collection, then plans of further details of bin collection points will be put forward to the Council, approved in writing and implemented in accordance with the approved plans.

16. Planning Performance Report – June 2025

David Morren, Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager, presented a report summarising the performance of the Planning Department in June 2025. It was agreed that the colours used for the years in the graph should be consistent in the monthly reports.

It was resolved unanimously:
That the Planning Performance Report for June 2025 be noted.

17. Planning Performance Report – July 2025

David Morren, Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager, presented a report summarising the performance of the Planning Department in July 2025.

It was resolved unanimously:
That the Planning Performance Report for July 2025 be noted.

18. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Chair proposed that the meeting should go into private session. It was resolved unanimously:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Categories 1, 2 and 7 of Part 1 Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

19. Quarterly performance in resolving planning enforcement cases

The Committee considered a report which considered the Quarterly Performance in Resolving Planning Enforcement Cases. Officers replied to a number of queries from councillors regarding specific sites.

The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager explained that enforcement takes time, in some cases it was not expedient to prosecute and the department were working well with the resources available. The Committee praised officers for their work in resolving enforcement cases.

It was resolved that:

The Quarterly Performance in Resolving Planning Enforcement Cases be noted.

The meeting concluded at 4 pm.

Chair.....

Date.....

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