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REF: 20/03660/REM

Location: Stone Pits Hempton Road Deddington OX15 0QH

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Thank you for consulting me on the above application. I have reviewed the submitted plans and reviewed the crime statistics for the area.

Whilst I do not wish to object to this application, I consider some aspects of the design and layout to be problematic in crime prevention design terms and therefore feel that the development may not meet the requirements of;

- The National Planning Policy Framework 2020, paragraph 127(f) which states that; 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible... and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.'
- HMCLG's Planning Practice Guidance on 'Design', which states that; 'Although design is only part of the planning process it can affect a range of objectives... Planning policies and decisions should seek to ensure the physical environment supports these objectives. The following issues should be considered: safe, connected and efficient streets... crime prevention... security measures... cohesive & vibrant neighbourhoods.'

In addition, I feel that the Design and Access Statement (DAS) does not adequately address crime and disorder as required by CABE's 'Design & Access Statements- How to write, read and use them'. This states that DAS' should; 'Demonstrate how development can create accessible and safe environments, including addressing crime and disorder and fear of crime'. I recommend that the applicants updates the DAS to address crime and disorder, incorporating the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) prior to approval. This document should demonstrate a commitment to achieving accreditation under the police's Secured by Design (SBD) scheme. Details can be found at;
<https://www.securedbydesign.com/guidance/design-guides>

To address the potential for crime and antisocial behaviour, I provide the following comment and ask that amended plans are submitted that address my concerns prior to permission being granted.

Surveillance

I have concerns that the current proposed layout and associated floorplans do not sufficiently exploit the active surveillance potential. Throughout the development, there are blank gable end walls which reduce the amount of natural surveillance over the public realm and parking areas.

Ref. safer Places, p24 Crime and anti-social behaviour are more likely to take place where;

- *Spaces are not overlooked by surrounding users, and active frontage to all neighbouring open spaces should be an aim in all developments.*
- *Criminals can operate, including travelling to and from the location, without fear of being seen.*

Recommendation

I ask that suitable amendments are made to the submitted plans to provide surveillance from active rooms in the dwellings and to address the blank elevations currently present, and that these are approved prior to planning permission being granted.

'Active Frontages rather than blank walls should be encouraged. The more windows overlooking the street and other spaces the better' Safer Places - Surveillance p 24
Gable End Walls - Section 12.1 p21 - New Homes 2016 – Secured By Design

Bin and cycle stores

I am unable to locate details of where bins and cycles will be stored throughout the development.

Recommendation

I ask that plans are updated and submitted to the LPA, indicating where and what type of cycle and bin storage is provided. Bin and cycle stores should be located and designed to comply with the requirements set out in Homes 2019.

Lighting

I am unable to find a lighting plan within this application. Lighting is crucial within the parking barn area of this development to reduce the risk to parked vehicles of crime and antisocial behaviour. Residents should also be able to go to and from the parking area at night whilst feeling safe without the fear of crime.

Recommendation

A lighting plan should be submitted to the LPA for approval, which meets the general standards of BS5489; 2013 to include column lighting throughout the development. Particular attention must be paid to the parking barn area, which must be sufficiently lit to deter crime, the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour. Bollard lighting should be avoided as they can be damaged by reversing vehicles and more critically doesn't provide sufficient light to aid facial recognition.

Parking barn / unallocated parking court

The proposed parking barn provides offenders with access to parked vehicles in an enclosed space, limiting surveillance opportunities, particularly at night. The potential risk of crime and anti-social behaviour occurring in terms of the proposed parking is exacerbated with the apparent unallocated parking. Unallocated parking makes it difficult for future residents to identify and challenge the presence of an offender or suspicious activity and is inappropriate in a private parking court.

Recommendation

Surveillance to this area needs to be increased. It would be more appropriate to enclose the communal parking with low level hedging, enabling clear unhindered sight lines from across the development to parked vehicles whilst providing them defensible space. Spaces should be allocated, and where visitor spaces are required these should be clearly identified, and overlooked by active rooms from surrounding dwellings.

Boundary treatments

I am unable to locate details of boundary treatments, without which I am unable to assess the level of surveillance provided from the private realm to the public realm and vice versa.

Ref Safer places, Surveillance p24. "Buildings and spaces are not designed to allow surveillance 'outside' from 'inside' and vice versa."

Recommendation

I ask that a boundary treatment plan is submitted to the LPA for scrutiny prior to permission being granted. Robust boundary treatments must be provided to adequately protect private gardens and vulnerable rear and side elevations, the point of entry for the majority of burglaries. It should not be assumed that all offenders are external to a development and appropriate boundary treatments will help to prevent neighbourhood disputes. Boundary treatments protecting vulnerable side and rear boundaries should be a minimum height of 1.8m. Close board fencing or similar should be used and a lower fencing of 1.5m with an additional trellis topping utilised to maximise surveillance to the public realm where appropriate.

Rear access

The rear access for plots 15-21 exposes the vulnerable rear and side boundaries of plots 14-21 if not robustly secured. These boundaries are the point of entry for most residential burglaries, and must be sufficiently secured. The rear access route for all of these plots also terminates between two unallocated parking spaces, which if insufficient space is provided could result in accidental damage to cars and subsequent neighbourhood disputes.

Recommendation

I ask that the rear access route is secured as close as possible to front fascia of plot 19. The boundary treatment should be 1.8m close boarded fence. The route should be secured with a robust gate of the same height, with self-closing hinges to prevent it being left visibly insecure, and should be fitted with a key lock operational from either side. Sufficient space should be provided around the access point to allow safe manoeuvrability of garden equipment past parked vehicles, but should not run between parking spaces. The size of the rear access should be reduced – Plot 21 should access their rear garden from the front fascia of their plot, and the communal rear access should terminate at plot 20. Plot 17/18 should be able to access their garden through their own boundary at the front of the building.

Pedestrian link

The pedestrian link to the north of the development creates an excessive level of permeability. It introduces a level of anonymity associated with its public use and should be pushed away from the private areas of the development. Whilst clear and direct routes are important they should not undermine the defensible space of neighbourhoods. Furthermore, I cannot identify the necessity or intended legitimate use of this route, however it provides an opportunity for offenders to enter and leave the development with surveillance obscured by the parking barn.

Ref. Safer Places – Access and Movement p18

Recommendation

Further clarification is required with regards to its intended use, purpose and position.

Finally, I would urge the applicant to seek further consultation with Thames Valley Police in terms of design and layout, ensuring that the opportunity to design out crime and antisocial behaviour is not missed. I hope you find my comments helpful.

Kind Regards

Kevin Cox, on behalf of the CPDA Team.