

Feature Projects

Brightwell Lakes, Martlesham Heath, Suffolk



Local planning authority

East Suffolk Council (formerly Suffolk Coastal District Council)



Client

Carlyle Land and
CEG Land Promotions Ltd



Scheme outline

Outline planning application for up to 2,000 new homes, an employment area of c0.6ha (use Class B1), primary local centre (comprising use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C3, D1 and D2), secondary centre (comprising possible use Classes A1, A3 and A4), all through school, green infrastructure (including Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANGs), outdoor play areas, sports ground and allotments/community orchards), public footpaths and cycleways with vehicle accesses and associated infrastructure



Image courtesy of Carlyle Land

"CODE Development Planners are an outstanding planning consultancy. That Brightwell Lakes has become an award winning new settlement development, and granted planning permission only a year after submission, was due in large part to their professionalism and efficiency. They are not just team players but also led the team brilliantly, with inspiration and confidence. I unhesitatingly recommend Mike and Helen for a wide range of planning projects."

Peter Village QC – barrister and landowner

Particular elements to be addressed:

- The circa 114ha site was the subject of legal challenges in relation to its allocation, culminating in the Supreme Court's refusal to hear a fresh appeal. Although the planning application was progressed by a new landowner (Carlyle Land) and project team, from that which promoted the site through the Core Strategy, the challenges mobilised a highly organised and adequately funded objection group who infiltrated other statutory consultees
- New junction with A12
- Proximity to Deben Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sandlings SPA, Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar
- On-site presence of protected species
- On-site geological SSSI
- The existing use of the site was an operational sand and gravel quarry with areas of implemented restoration and 'made' ground
- On-site scheduled monuments and areas of archaeological interest
- Proximity of site to Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of

Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- Public rights of way (PRoW) and requirement for stopping up/extinguishment and order making for new or realigned routes
- Noise from A12 and relationship with new homes

Principal planning instruction:

- Liaise with leader, chief executive and senior officers of the local planning authority to advise the client on the scale of and strategy for public engagement
- Brief and coordinate project team to gain understanding of the various and complex issues associated with obtaining planning permission and advise the client on the strategy to be employed
- Lead team through preparation and negotiation of application for outline planning permission, including environmental impact assessment and tripartite planning performance agreement with local planning authority and county council
- Prepare and submit application and obtain challenge proof and viable planning permission in shortest possible timeframe

Particular elements where value was added:

- Extensive engagement with statutory consultees and other stakeholders
- Co-ordinated consultant team to maintain common message and vision including viability/affordable housing specialists
- Suitable Accessible Natural Green Space (SANG) – quality over standard quantitative approach and overall quantum fixed at outline permission stage regardless of agreed mix of homes at reserved matters
- Multi-functional nature of green space provision (space required for the setting of heritage assets, geological SSSI, habitat and species protection and mitigation, SANG and recreational open space) enabled areas for development to be maximised whilst demonstrating sufficient 'carrying capacity' of the green space provided
- All through school (two form entry primary and four form entry secondary with early years and sixth form) with mechanisms for client to be compensated for over provision of secondary and future growth to six forms of entry secondary education achieved through dual use of adjacent public sports pitches

- Negotiations with NHS England, clinical commission group, local doctors' surgery and parish councils to achieve mutually acceptable outcome for all
- Negotiation in respect of draft planning conditions and s106 contributions particularly in relation to reduction in contributions to the police, highway infrastructure, bus infrastructure and PRoWs
- Developed partnership approach with officers and Members of East Suffolk Council

Outcome:

- Submission within five months of project team inception meeting. Signing of s106 agreement and issue of planning approval 12 months from submission of planning application
- Application was not challenged due to robustness of processes followed and engagement with opposition groups
- Satisfactory scheme viability achieved including 25% affordable housing compared with policy guide of 33%