



Creating Design Codes & Masterplans – Trumpington & Abode, Cambridge Site Visit

23.07.19

- **Cambridge is the fastest growing city economy in the UK.** Our site visit provided lots of examples where the code worked well and a few examples of where it didn't (mainly due to a loss in quality control)
- **Can Masterplans & Design Codes delivery successful places?** Yes, but it's more than simply following a process. Great places to live are created by successful collaboration across public and private sectors. Masterplans and codes can give a loose framework to work within – it's up to land owners, developers and built professionals to find ways to successfully deliver these approaches whilst maintaining quality.
- **Good design requires skill, input and willingness from ALL parties.** Design Codes are a good tool and starting point, but cannot be relied upon to deliver good design on their own. Remember that high quality design costs more. This requires a land owner willing to accept less value for their land. Good design is also time consuming, and requires particular attention to the details. In addition, we all need to be aware of the needs and desires of the customers/residents of the actual new homes.
- **Can places like Trumpington and Great Kneighton be rolled out across other suburban places in the UK?** Each city/region has different pressures. Cambridge has had significant infrastructure investment resulting in fast and direct bus routes and cycle ways into the City centre and connecting with major employment and service areas such as the hospital and schools. If there was more reliance on cars this would increase the pressure on the public realm to be more car dominant, resulting in less space for trees, people, plants and play.
- Many of the examples seen in our site visit demonstrated that **good neighbourhoods are made of more than just good housing**. Less reliance on rules such as back to back distances, on-plot car parking, building line, height uniformity and large private gardens can result in greater floor area to plot ratio, varied private/ semi-private amenity and interesting streetscapes.
- Suggestions for how to improve process include the creation of a **handbook of details** – prepared and approved as part of the planning application which locks developers into delivering details which should provide a benchmark for the scheme. This approach would overcome the issue of architects not being retained post planning and a subsequent loss of design quality.

Speakers

Adam Tillion, Barratt London
Andrew Matthews, Proctor & Matthews Architects
David Birkbeck, Design for Homes
Miles Leigh, Allies & Morrison
Mawgan Pengelly, Terence O'Rourke
Sean Marten, BDW Homes

Attended: 34