

## Rangeford retirement care village and countryside park (July 2022)

Residents will be aware that plans for a new retirement care village and countryside park on land immediately to the east of Stapleford were approved on appeal earlier in 2022. Access will be off Haverhill Road, with additional non-motorised access to the countryside park from Hinton Way. Stapleford Parish Councillors met the owner, Rangeford Villages, onsite in June and subsequently attended a public information event at Johnson Hall in July. Residents have also had opportunities to feedback to Rangeford about its plans via online and in-person consultation.

I won't reproduce here information which, at the time of writing, is available to view online at <https://rangefordconsultation.co.uk>. What follows is additional information gathered in conversation with Rangeford and its representatives. Please note that (a) some of the information may change as plans progress, and (b) while I reproduce our field notes in good faith, I apologise if there are any inaccuracies.

### Site ownership and operation:

- Rangeford Villages owns the freehold.
- Its business is owning, developing and operating integrated retirement communities. This is not a care home site so is unlike other retirement property developments by, for example, McCarthy or Churchill.
- Rangeford has sites in Pickering, Wadswick Green and Siddington Park, which residents may be interested to look at. The one at Wadswick Green is most like that which will be built in Stapleford, and Rangeford will organise a site visit for interested parties.

### Potential price and service charges:

- The cheapest 1-bed unit may be £399k, with 1,000sqft 2-beds averaging £600-650k. Prices are set to locality averages.
- There is no requirement to provide affordable accommodation because this is a Class C2 'residential institution' development. Affordable obligations are linked to Class C3 (residential) developments.
- Service charges will vary by apartment type and care intensity, but are typically £6,000-9,000 per annum. RPI index linked increases occur upon apartment resale.
- Service charges cover: building maintenance; communal spaces; use of the pool, gym, minibus and restaurant; 24/7 onsite assistance; domiciliary care; grounds maintenance; etc. Rangeford can also offer palliative and dementia care.
- Leaseholds will extend for 125 years.

### Occupancy:

- The development will accommodate 220 residents aged 60 years and above.
- The average age of Rangeford retirement care village residents is 78.

#### Construction timeline:

- A planning application for all reserved matters still to be decided should be submitted at the end of Aug 2022, hopefully with a decision made by SCDC by Jan/Feb 2023.
- Building work would commence mid-2023 with a planned 28 month construction period. Facilities and infrastructure will be built first.
- 60% of the units will be ready for occupation by month 19 of this (so early 2025).

#### Community access to retirement care village amenities:

- The onsite restaurant will be open to all.
- The general public will be able to access the pool and gym, most likely through an annual restricted membership subscription.

#### Impact on biodiversity, environment and surrounding landscape:

- The countryside park will offer substantial net biodiversity gain.
- Buildings will be carbon neutral in design. They will follow a 'fabric first' approach and include solar panels, rainwater harvesting, air source heat pumps and electric boilers. Rangeford Villages is ultimately owned by Octopus Energy so all energy is expected to the 'green' source.
- Sustainable draining will be incorporated into mature planting areas.
- Much of the development will be screened from Magog Down by a 15-20m deep mature planting area. Existing hedgerow to the north of the site will be retained.

#### Impact on local health and care services:

- Rangeford maintains that the domiciliary care available 24/7 from onsite staff will reduce the impact of a significant addition of older people (with greater health needs) on our community's health and care services.
- The retirement care village will not have its own GP. However, its residents may, for example, be able to leave hospital quicker after surgery or a illness due to available onsite domiciliary care.

#### Design:

- Parish Councillors expressed a desire for a design which is sympathetic to the village and its rural setting. Design is subjective, but what has been proposed does not do this and is, arguably, akin to what has been built at Trumpington and Eddington, albeit a max. of 2 storeys high. The designs are available to view online.
- The design relies heavily on variations in brick colour and orientation, and metal balconies and detailing. There will be no external wood or wood cladding in light of the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017.
- The large central pavilion will be ultra-modern and flat roofed.

#### Countryside park:

- All S106 contributions (used to mitigate the impact of development on the local community and infrastructure) have been allocated to management of the countryside park.

- This will be managed by Magog Trust, with Rangeford offering its design expertise to produce plans for the Reserved Matters application. Magog Trust will be responsible for the planting scheme.
- Land transfer to Magog Trust will occur after the schedule of work for its development is agreed. Development may take 5 years to complete but public access will be available well before this.
- There will be no cycle paths. Paths will be compacted grass, as at Magog Down.
- Pedestrian access will be via the emergency gate on Gog Magog Way, through the retirement care village and hence on into the countryside park. We are unclear at this stage whether this access will include horses and bikes.
- There is no onsite car parking for the countryside park at all – this wasn't included in the outline planning permission so cannot be changed.

#### Impact on busway:

- Rangeford reps are not enthusiastic about the busway. However, they support the GCP's Option 2 for relocating the Stapleford stop because this has less impact on their site (see [www.greatercambridge.org.uk/CSET-Stapleford2022](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/CSET-Stapleford2022)).
- The Parish Council takes a different view: Option 1 is more desirable because it is less likely to lead to infill development to the east of Haverhill Road.
- If the GCP pursues Option 1, the route of the busway will clip the NE corner of the retirement care village. Irrespective of how much Rangeford may dislike this, it can be achieved through compulsory purchase rights pursuant to a successful Transport and Works Act Order.
- Crossings are required by the Planning Inspector's approval of the retirement care village and countryside park as a single entity. With the busway cutting through the west side of the park, it is as yet unclear how this can be made to work safely. A footbridge would be inappropriate for the location and less mobile users; an underpass might work.

*Cllr Jenny Flynn*