

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting: 18/04/2016

Site: Lamberts Lane

Proposal: Redevelopment of site with 29 dwellings

Planning reference: SDNP/14/03682/PRE

Panel members sitting: David Hares (Chair)
Graham Morrison
Kim Wilkie
Steven Johnson
Paul Fender
David Edwards

SDNPA officers in attendance: Genevieve Hayes
Hayley Stevenson
Paul Slade
Richard Ferguson

Item presented by: Architect
Graham Beck

Declarations of interest: David Hares declared that he knows the applicants.

The Panel's response to your scheme will be placed on the Planning Authority's website where it can be viewed by the public.

The SDNPA operate a transparent service, whereby pre-application and application details, although not actively publicised will be placed on the online planning register. This is unless the applicant gives reasons why the enquiry is commercially sensitive.

COMMENTS

	Notes
<p>1.0 Discussion/Questions with applicants</p>	<p>The Panel suggested that the main design decision seems to be the active frontage on to the playing fields. They asked if there was a particular reason why this is the case. The applicant explained that the reason for dwellings fronting on to the recreation ground came about through pre-application discussions with the previous design officer, believing that fronting on to the playing fields provided a more aesthetic feel.</p> <p>The Panel asked what has determined the width of the path in front of the housing adjacent to the school site, and how the boundary will be treated, raising concerns about the loss of frontage. The applicant explained that there are further negotiations to be had with West Sussex County Council. The applicant's landscape advice has suggested a 1.5m post and rail fence with mesh and defensive planting.</p> <p>The Panel felt that the current plan is better than the previous one, but asked if there was any way to reduce parking in order to make it less cramped.</p> <p>The Panel suggested that it might be better use a traditional mixed/hawthorn native hedge as an alternative to the proposed post and rail fence along the playing field boundary. The applicant said that they would be using brick around flint panels for the walls.</p> <p>The Panel responded by saying that brick around flint panels didn't reflect the local context – local walls are all made of stone with no brick detailing.</p> <p>The Panel asked, referring back to the presentation, whether the applicant would be retaining trees, or whether the trees were based in neighbouring properties and so couldn't be removed. The Applicant conceded that the trees were outside of the property, but that they had made provisions to accommodate them, including removing a unit in the south of the development to make room for them.</p> <p>The Panel asked how much of the development was going to be affordable housing. The Applicant stated that, at this stage, 37% of the development is designed as affordable.</p> <p>The Panel asked whether there was a reason for the fact that some of the houses have grey rooves, while others have red ones.</p>

	<p>The Applicant said that this was simply a design choice, with the style of some of the houses better suited to grey rooves than red ones.</p> <p>The Panel asked what the square footage of the site will be. The Applicant said that the overall footage would be 2,100 square feet.</p> <p>The Panel asked what the pitch of the rooves would be. The Applicant answered that the rooves would be at 40 degrees, 45 where they are gabled.</p>
<p>2.0 Panel Summary</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Panel thanked the applicants and stated that, while this was not an easy application, there have been some definite steps in the right direction. 2. The Panel was mixed in its opinion on the relationship to the playing field, with one of their main concerns being that it resulted in an awkward connection to Lambert's Lane, with the small triangle of land 'left over' being a residual and significant problem. It also expressed concerns on the resolution and clarity of the 'fronts' and the 'backs'. The overall feeling was that houses 1 and 2 were not sufficiently contained. They were neither part of the courtyard nor part of the town and held a prominent and uncomfortable relationship with the street. It was suggested that the plan might adjust to resolve the problem or possibly a different typology might be introduced for those two units. 3. The Panel also raised concerns that the effort to orient the frontages with the playing field, combined with the scale of development being squeezed on to the site, compromised the setting for houses 1-12 leaving insufficient space for an appropriately generous pathway in front of these houses. The Panel felt that it was currently too narrow and too enclosed and this was made worse by the adjacent security fence on the school boundary. That the path led nowhere further diminished the quality of this space. The Panel suggested that a solution could be to move the block of houses back by two metres, in order to widen the route and create more space and a better landscape. 4. On the internal space, the Panel commented that it seemed little more than a parking courtyard. Instead of it being pleasant, it was disappointing. The Panel suggested that, by removing a number of units from the development, the applicants could gain some external space that could be planned more purposefully. It also raised a further concern about 'fronts and backs' in that the prospect of numbers 13-18 was not only little more than a car park but also the backs of number 20-24. The Panel offered the thought that, by installing a high-quality roofed parking lot similar to the one at the nearby Cowdray Court development, there may be an opportunity to resolve this issue and improve the

	<p>view from the fronts of 13-18.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. The Panel was disappointed by the quality of the landscape proposals and recommended a more serious approach. At the very least, the removal of some parking spaces to allow the planting of additional trees should be considered.6. The Panel felt that the design of the elevations were over-elaborate. It commented that this may be a response to compensate for the poor quality and planning of the external spaces in the development. A specific issue highlighted by the Panel was the excessive height of the gables and suggested some softening by the introduction of hips.7. Though the Panel conceded the density of the site might be determined by policy, the site planning still needed to be persuasive in design terms. It believed that all of the criticisms levelled at the current scheme could be resolved by removing two or three of the houses. In addition, a reduction in the number of parking spaces would allow the design of a better public realm. Though the panel conceded that parking requirements may also be determined by policy, it took the view that if a reduction in the numbers was not achievable, it was likely that the design of the external spaces would fail to be acceptable.8. Additionally, the Panel remained split on the matter of the frontages being oriented towards the playing field. There was some concern that the Applicant might not be able to resolve all of the issues raised by the Panel without a carefully considered rethink of this decision.9. Finally, the applicant raised concerns that the school might be difficult to deal with on the boundary with the playing field. However, the Panel were confident that, if the applicant spoke to the School directly about it, they'd be open to negotiation on the matter.
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