

SITE: Penns Field SDNP/15/06484/FUL

Design Review Panel Workshop Meeting Notes

**DATE: 10th June, 2016.
Memorial Hall**

TIME: 14:00 – 17:00

VENUE: SDC

Attending DRP:

Mark Penfold
Graham Morrison
Adam Richards
Andrew Smith
John Starling

Attending SDNPA:

Stephen Cantwell (Development Management Lead)
Veronica Craddock (Landscape Officer)
Genevieve Hayes (Design Officer)

Attending Applicants:

Tom Hayhurst (Fluid Architecture)
Stefanie Georgiadis (Fluid Architecture)
Annelies Earley (ACD Environmental)

Introduction:

- Meeting commenced at 14:11 and after introductions, the design officer briefed the Design Review Panel (DRP) on background information in relation to the pre application process. The DRP were made aware of an identified and agreed (by officers and applicants) starting point for the workshop.
- Key issues that had been raised by the DRP in the most recent DRP session were expanded on by the Panel.

Landscape strategy

- AE (ACD) explained how they had assessed the site and provided indicative diagrams of their landscape context assessment. TH (Fluid) explained that the northern footpath was located on the other side of Tilmore Brook, and that the water course is around 2.5 lower than the site in terms of topography.
- AS asked how the site had been interpreted, and what had informed the strategy.
- AE explained that they identified that a variety of different landscape characters surrounded the site: woodland, 1960s development, recreation and natural/wild landscape and aimed to optimise their potential.
- AR asked if the designers felt that the design strategy mediates all these characters.
- TH said that the different character areas were focused around the edges and the key east west green link, they had chosen to keep the centre less landscaped.
- It was noted by the Panel that to ensure a 'linear park' along the eastern boundary, defined spaces need to be demonstrative on the plan.
- AS noted that the green area indicated in the Petersfield Neighbourhood Development Plan's development framework for the site, as an aspirational element has not transferred to this scheme. It has gone from a large wedge (indicated in the PNPD document) to a series of tree planting along the street in the proposal. He added that as a neighbourhood plan aspiration it needs to be explained and not look as though it has simply gone away. AS asked if the open space calculation had been done, as it had not been demonstrated in the application.

- Options were explored for the east-west green link, surface water run-off, drainage and the potential introduction of rain gardens into the streetscape. SUDS/tanking and swales in the open space gateway to the east/adjoining the linear park were discussed.
- GM asked how their understanding the landscape, has informed and generated the street pattern. He said that the panel felt that it was not evident that this has been done effectively, and so asked for an explanation of what was done to inform the street pattern.
- TH explained that they took desire lines and enhanced those to inform a road layout, deciding to preserve the outer edge and direct vehicles away from it. This enabled a circular pedestrian route and an east-west green link. TH explained that they looked at a number of scenarios for the road layout, for example the primary route on the west side, but this would diminish the woodland edge/buffer. The primary route on the south side would establish a vehicular character around the existing pedestrian route and so on. They had found that no comfortable relationship to either boundary was possible, which is why it was decided the best option was to create a central spine as the primary route. He explained that the design process allowed them to establish where the areas for development were. And then they intended to design within those areas.
- JS asked about the vehicular loop at the top of the site, TH replied that originally there was no loop but highways (HCC) insisted it was there from a practicality point of view.
- GM said that the current road layout which had evolved from a drawing by the previous design officer is credible, and would enable the user to enjoy the edges. It is sensibly accessible and has the least impact on the landscape. It is clear that with each decision that has been taken since, the scheme has moved further away from the original strategy. For example: Where the central spine road curves and continues across the road, it does this without an event. This intersection should mark the transition between each character area. VC The primary road location if pulled to the east might work better for the view of the green sand hills, the cross sections would be useful in seeing if that would work.
- The overall character of the road system appears to have been dictated by highway constraints. JS suggested it would be possible to have a well-designed and detailed hammerhead at the northern end which would resolve the current issue: the loop losing a sense of character. MP added that we should reconvene with HCC to discuss and ensure drag and reverse distances, the space doesn't necessarily have to be a particular shape and look like a turning head, it can be a square for example.
- AS: it would be beneficial to look at cutting down the highway which cuts into the linear park as this also diminishes character.
- GM: If areas are introduced for example A,B,C,D,E. this will overcome the lack of clarity in regard to character areas. This can create a hierarchy, and buildings can respond to the space appropriately which will help with legibility, allowing people to know where they are in the development. House types can then address each area with a different design response for example:
 - A Fronting streetscape, wide fronted with narrow rooves.
 - B Mews: deliberately mews typology, artisan workshops more informal
 - C paths and landscape...
 - D central special character area....
 - E Edge: outward looking, a definite a symmetry e.g. wood back/ brick front.
 It is important that the details for these should not be over complicated because it could start to feel like the centre of town, which would not be appropriate.

- JS highlighted the fact that in order to achieve the aspirational design the technical information has to be understood, otherwise issues like drainage and easements on the sewer line will prevent implementation. AS concurred it is critical that we know what is happening underground.
- VC: our suggestion was that rain-gardens would be best placed in the public realm where they can add value to the street scene and contribute as a green infrastructure element. We can re-think some surface water treatment ideas in the mews and courtyards if materials are right and we can create high quality hard surfaces to the rear.
- AS: the gateway green space is a very conceptual strategy for a character. It is key that this space shows how it relates N/S, and if it allows enough space to be meaningful and part of the linear park. There are concerns about the design of the pond, not wanting it left as a muddy space and how its connected to the recreation space beyond.
- AS: Open space yield calculations/the quantum for green space needs to be calculated and explained in the application.
- AS noted that there is a visual relationship between the existing green spaces and that the new community on the site, it will be outward looking. Views in and out of the site are important there with a deciduous boundary there are immediate views of the recreation space and mid distant views of the downs. VC added that the northern section has a different relationship to the site, to the southern recreational space and these visual relationships can also inform the character areas. That in terms of pedestrian movement it is well connected and there is a lot of activity in the recreational space. It would be beneficial to see a cross section of the development and views across the green sand hills.

Comfort break

Routes/Block and Plot Layout

- It was agreed that there needs to be another highways conversation in regards to the option of a hammerhead, before a high level safety audit.
- AR: There is a concern that the proposed layout presents suburban uniformity and introduced an idea for a central area (at the EW/NS intersection). The east west link is a transition space between town and country. A defined space here instead of a crossroads could be referred back to, from the each route. It sets up a gathering space for the community. If the primary road was to be moved farther east in the southern section and then creates a slight dog leg/offset where the primary road to the north is closer to the west. This would add visual interest, as part of the corner building opposite emerges into view on approach, and it would take the pressure off the end of the road (turning head). A more formal terracing to the west and pavilion buildings to the east that you could see past and out into the landscape. To create a place, there needs to be an overall hierarchy throughout the site, and then a hierarchy within the 'special' area. This space would support the idea of character areas to the north and south. The use of symmetry or other similar architectural moves might be employed to emphasise the character of a key important space, and to reinforce its importance within the whole.
- TH/AE indicated that it may be difficult to fit urban bulk in the woodland buffer zone but acknowledged the concept of a central space and can work up the idea.
- GM: Circular walk around the site could be made more of in terms of character and a 'walk around the park' could be one of the character areas.

- JS talked about garages and how different typologies could be explored such as car ports, rather than having a traditional garage form.
- MP talked about boundary treatments and views between buildings and courtyards. TH suggested that some of the walls might need to be taller.
- Discussion around detailing, materials palette, curtilage and boundary treatments included the following points:
- The development should have a hierarchy of materials throughout the site which relate to the specific character areas. Key buildings located at focal points, should be presented differently so the whole structure can be seen to emerge, there has to be a reason behind material choices to aid legibility. The proportions and architectural style of key buildings will announce the space and create character, not a change in materials alone.
- Choice of brick is also important, as is the use of stone for key/corner buildings. The use of local stone can be used sparingly at the gateway to the development where it will make a first impression. It is best to keep simplicity in the scheme, having variety only where it makes sense.
- The Petersfield pattern book was suggested as a reference for materials.
- The DRP gave some key ideas to emphasise characterisation and a structure for developing the character. They stressed that what makes this site special is the mature landscape context.

Next Steps:

- The DRP were keen to look at the scheme again, once the suggestions and comments have been worked up. It was agreed that Fluid will develop the masterplan and circulate it to the panel in two weeks' (around 24th June, 2016 to expedite the process).
- DRP could help by looking at detailing the hammerhead if needed.
- Fluid to provide cross sections to assess views for road alignment.
- Character Areas: need to be demonstrative on plan.
- Lighting strategy- Fluid to contact Dan Oakley in relation to Dark Night Skies.
- Fluid/ SDNPA to discuss hammerhead option with HCC.