

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting:	18/11/2016
Site:	Burnt House Cottage, Alfriston
Proposal:	A refurbishment and extension of Burnt House Cottage.
Planning reference:	SDNP/16/03952/PRE
Panel members sitting:	Mark Penfold (Chair) Kay Brown Steven Johnson Graham Morrison Kim Wilkie
SDNPA officers in attendance:	Genevieve Hayes Paul Slade Emily Anderson
Planning Committee in attendance:	Heather Baker
Item presented by:	Chris Wojtulewski Julia Davies
Declarations of interest:	None

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
1.0 Discussion/Questions with applicants	<p>1. The Panel asked whether the two storey building situated on the boundary wall south of the cottage was part of the site. The applicants said that it is and said that they needed to do some more work on explaining how it is going to be maintained. The Panel raised a concern that the extension to the cottage would block the view to the North of the building. The Applicants said that the proposal would be no more than three metres in height and would not substantially impact the views as a result.</p> <p>2. The Panel inquired about the other outbuildings on the plot and whether they were going to be removed. The applicants said that the intent was not to remove them. The applicants explained that they were originally going to offset the size of the building proposal with the removal of these buildings but the case officer made it clear at a pre-application meeting that negotiating floor space would not be possible and encouraged them to focus purely on the extension. Therefore the owners hope to retain them and possibly restore them in future. The Panel commented on the deterioration of the predominantly wooden outbuildings, asking whether the applicants might want to remove them in future. The Applicants reiterated that the outbuildings might be retained as storage rather than removed, but acknowledged that they haven't laid out many plans on the subject at this stage.</p> <p>3. The Panel commented that it would have been beneficial if historical maps of the site, such as a tithe map or first edition OS map, were provided to see the chronological historic development of the site and adjacent plots.</p> <p>4. The Panel noted that the plans contained proposed planting and trees but lacked details on any existing vegetation and contours. The applicants offered to add a drawing of these things on the map.</p> <p>5. The Panel raised a concern that the plans create a very dark North-facing terrace, which is likely to result in a little used space located directly outside the bedrooms.</p> <p>6. The Panel asked if the boarded roof was a rain</p>

	<p>screen and whether that would be sacrificial. The Applicant said yes on both counts.</p> <p>7. The Panel asked if balustrading on the terraces was intended. The applicants stated that they intended to use an anodised or powder coated balustrade in a fine bronze colour, pointedly avoiding using glass, with more details included in the plans.</p> <p>8. The Panel asked about the view of the building from the public right of way (The South Downs Way). The applicant said that it would be unlikely that the extension would be seen from the South Downs Way. They added that existing vegetation is very thick and they plan to augment it with further planting to help stabilise the bank.</p> <p>9. The Panel asked about the materials sourcing and colour of the wood for the cladding. The Applicant said they had researched manufacturers and lifespans, looking in particular at Alfriston School for working examples. They had thought about using black timber, but will most probably use timber that will weather down to a silver/grey colour. The Panel asked about pigmented concrete. The Applicant said that they had considered it and were very experienced in using it, but had a preference for not using it.</p> <p>10. The Panel asked about the roof light, with regard to light spill and automatic shuttering, as well as questioning whether the applicant had looked in to dormers. The Applicant said they had considered dormers, but they wanted to keep the building discreet and opted out of dormers to keep the massing low.</p> <p>11. The Panel continued to ask about the materials, noting that north facing façade will be almost always in the shade, which would allow for algae growth which would gradually turn the walls green. Algae would also affect red brick walls, but the effect is more common and would appear to be more natural. They asked if Corten steel would go green in a similar fashion. The Applicant said that they would need to look in to it more, but they doubted that Corten would develop an algae coating.</p> <p>12. The Panel asked if an arboricultural report had been done, before raising the concern that the existing trees will block the view, in spite of the design concept being based on looking out of strategically placed windows. The Applicant said that the majority of the trees were</p>
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	<p>further down the slope and wouldn't block the view, with vegetation closer to the house being smaller shrubs.</p> <p>The Panel asked if the trees were on the Applicant's land.</p> <p>The Applicant said that some were, some were not.</p> <p>The Panel suggested that the views from the basement might still be obstructed.</p> <p>The Applicant agreed, but said that they didn't intend for long views out of the basement.</p> <p>The Panel asked if the trees might eventually be removed to facilitate those views.</p> <p>The Applicant said that there was no intention to remove them, and highlighted that fact that removing them would expose the bedrooms to the walkers moving along the public right of way.</p> <p>13. The Panel asked about the large fireplace and chimney.</p> <p>The Applicant said that they would retain the fireplace and the chimney, which were in fact parts of the 1960s addition.</p> <p>The Panel asked if this would be the principle source of heating.</p> <p>The Applicant said that they intended to add another fireplace.</p> <p>The Panel asked whether it would have a brick chimney or a steel flume.</p> <p>The Applicant said that they might create the chimney from concrete.</p> <p>The Panel pointed out that this would be a very prominent part of the build and would have to be quite a bit taller than the ridge line in order to meet regulation.</p> <p>The Applicant agreed, but they felt that it would fit in well, as it would be constructed in the same style as the existing chimney.</p> <p>14. The Panel asked about the weathering of the building, focusing particularly on the darker northern face and raising concerns about the roof edges without overhangs. They subsequently asked how the Applicant would detail the structure to allow for water to run off in order to reduce the damage of weathering. The Panel expressed that resolving this suitably was extremely important.</p> <p>The Applicant agreed that this was an important consideration and said that they would add more detail in the next stage of planning, but at this time they want to look at ways to channel water off the roof to collection points. They had previously proposed using zinc to protect against weathering, but were strongly advised against it by the planning authority.</p> <p>15. The Panel pointed out that cutting into the embankment causes a loss of vegetation, which the Applicant plans to go back in to replace and asked if</p>
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	<p>they have considered instead leaving the embankment and creating an internal courtyard for the basement, perhaps cutting further to the east to provide room for it. This could provide light in to the bedrooms without producing such a substantial landscape impact.</p> <p>The Architect said that it had been considered but were concerned about it increase the massing and the overall footprint of the build, both of which they wanted to keep down.</p> <p>The Panel suggested that the Architect look in to the historic context, as there might be important details there that would allow them to argue for a bigger footprint. They also made the point that the plans already create what is essentially an internal courtyard outside the bedrooms, it's just bound by vegetation rather than by walls.</p> <p>16. The Panel observed that one of the plans appeared to feature a light well, and asked if it would be glazed.</p> <p>The Applicant confirmed that there was a light well, which would let some light in to the family bathroom below, and said that it would not be glazed.</p>
<p>2.0 Panel Summary</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Panel were impressed by the presentation and the effort that had been put into the proposal. 2. The Panel said that the details of materials and future weathering are really important and need to be resolved, but they have confidence that the architect will be able to achieve this. 3. The Panel suggested that there are some elements that could be added to help the proposal blend in to the landscape, like cantering the eaves line on the north edge down towards the east. Blending in to the landscape is particularly important in this application because cutting in to the ridge is likely to leave a very substantial scar. 4. The Panel noted that the composition is very well considered, with a lot of thought put in to the scale and massing of the building helping to insure that the extension looks subservient to the cottage rather than overwhelming it. 5. The Panel did not agree with the suggestion by officers that the eastern end of the roof extension should be hipped or shortened, they unanimously felt that it would make the roof look too bulky. 6. The Panel stated that they have concerns about the north-facing bedrooms being quite dark and dank and felt that the alternative of extending the basement to the east and using the space to create an internal courtyard would provide a better end result. 7. The Panel also felt that the chimney could be better placed at the gable end (east), rather than the middle of the roof, as this would mean that the chimney could be integrated into the gable wall and therefore have less visual impact.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Ottolenghi's villa, by Carlo Scarpa, was suggested as a precedent by the Panel, as a good demonstration of following contours of a site. 9. The Panel insisted that the materials proposed will need thorough research in to whether they work and weather well. The Panel said that they would expect to see the detailing conditions if the application was successful. 10. The Panel raised concerns about the overall context of the site, feeling that the Applicant lacked attention to the context of the site as a whole. 11. The Panel raised an issue with the site circulation. For example not enough detail has been put in to considering where the occupants would park, cycle storage where they would leave their bins for collection and similar access details. 12. The Panel had concerns about the outbuildings being left out of the plan and what they might be used for in future. If left untouched they're likely to degrade relatively rapidly. 13. The Panel questioned whether a new house built in a more appropriate location on the site would be a better choice. The Applicant explained that during a pre-application meeting they were strongly discouraged from creating a new build over concerns regarding sub-division of the site and overlooking from Burnt House. The Panel agreed that there was a presumption in favour of an extension over a new build and that a different approach would be required to justify a new build. However, they felt that from a design and landscape point of view, a new build in a different location could be a better solution. 14. The Panel observed that one of the complaints of the Applicant was that the existing entrance for the cottage was concealed, but that they have then gone to pains to keep the massing down and reduce the impact of the extension, resulting in an entrance that is similarly understated. 15. The Panel encouraged following the contours to help reduce the impact of the plans by avoiding cutting in to the landscape. Relatedly, they also raised a concern about how the Applicant would deal with spoil from the cutting as is planned. 16. It was suggested that proper analysis of the site, its history and its contours, coupled with a suitable whole site development plan that dealt with the outbuildings, and landscape strategy could provide a strong basis for suggesting removing the existing structure and rebuilding. 17. The Panel finished by saying that this is a very strong, clever application, with the subordinate design of the extension meriting particular praise, but there would need to be a good qualitative judgement on any increase in the area of the build.
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