

## **SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

Date of meeting:	18/11/2016
Site:	SCU Leydene
Proposal:	24 dwellings in lieu of the 14 dwellings under reference 21514/086
Planning reference:	SDNP/16/00006/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 Victoria Corrigan Richard Ferguson
Committee Member	Heather Baker
Item presented by:	Peter Morgan Phil Deacon Paul Wilson Ian Ellis
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
<b>1.0</b> <b>Discussion/Questions</b> <b>with applicants</b>	<p><b>1. The Panel commented that this is an unusual scheme to start with based on the fact that there is already a consented scheme, so this scheme is predicated on that. They asked if the applicants have thought to use this chance to significantly change the scheme and create one that is better suited to the site's position in the national park, alongside the South Downs Way.</b></p> <p>The Applicants agreed that this was a valuable opportunity to look at the plan again and said that the scheme has made substantial leaps forward from a landscape point of view. They acknowledged that the previous scheme didn't respect the landscape character, but the landscape and architectural approaches of this scheme have been driven by the key principles of the National Park.</p> <p><b>2. The Panel suggested looking in to a sustainability concept, considering the sites adjacency to the Sustainability Centre, and asked whether the Applicant had considered leaving traditional building typologies to consider a more radical scheme with a sustainable living focus.</b></p> <p>The Applicants said that they have made a concerted effort to approach the planning more sensitively in this scheme and have not employed traditional standard house types.</p> <p><b>3. The Panel acknowledged the landscape led approach, particularly the concept of an "edible landscape". They suggested that a defining element of the site is the chalk downland on which is situated, and suggested that the Applicants could look in to developing that, rather than planting trees and bringing woodland to the site. They acknowledged the applicant's suggestion of coppicing the woodland areas, but were doubtful that the trees would actually be felled every seven years per traditional patterns of coppicing. In considering how to handle the landscaping of this site, care needs to be taken not to adopt too much of the character of East Meon – While it is the nearest settlement, the landscape in that area is substantially different to the landscape of the site (it is a spring line settlement within a valley, characterised by a water course visibly running through the village).</b></p> <p>The Applicants observed that the site is on an interesting ridge line, but they don't feel the chalk downland has sufficient significance to justify focusing solely on it for landscaping. The wooded boundary of the site lends itself towards bringing woodland in to the site itself. However, they said that there is still scope for combining the two, as</p>

	<p>the site is an obvious junction between the downland and woodland. On the subject of coppicing, a private management company will handle maintenance of the site, with the coppicing likely to be phased and possibly not occurring every seven years.</p> <p><b>4. The Panel noted a danger of there being substantial contrast between this site and the phase I site constructed as part of the earlier application and asked if there was any chance of revising the original landscaping scheme.</b>  The Applicants said that, now that the first phase has been sold off, it would be very difficult for them to make changes to the landscape strategy, but it is something that could be considered and there's scope for some discussion on that matter.</p> <p><b>5. The Panel noted that the site is visible from the South Downs Way, but the Applicants are taking efforts to reduce its impact through screen planting along the boundary to disguise the development. However, they raised the concern that by hiding this part of the site without similar work on the Phase I part, the Phase I buildings would seem even more stark and isolated.</b>  The Applicants said that there was a hedge planted on the Phase I site that was about a year old at this stage and getting well established, which would provide some screening for the phase I development.</p> <p><b>6. The Panel reiterated that the sustainability centre is situated opposite the site and asked whether it would be possible to look at a more sustainable development, observing that some thought had obviously gone in to sustainability based on the high degrees of glazing, showing consideration of heat loss.</b>  The Applicant agreed that they had considered sustainability, stating that air source heat pumps, water reclamation systems, no connection to gas mains and careful sourcing of materials were all matters that they hoped to implement in the final plan to help make the development more sustainable.</p> <p><b>7. The Panel asked what the base structural material would be.</b>  The Applicants suggested that they expected to use brick and block.  <b>The Panel asked if they had considered using more sustainable construction methods such as passive house techniques.</b>  The Applicants said that the site location necessitates good insulation.</p> <p><b>8. The Panel questioned the planting proposals, raising</b></p>
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	<p>a concern about how much planting is proposed considered that lack of top soil. In order to counter this, a lot of excavation work will be required and top soil will need to be brought in from elsewhere, which could add a lot to the cost of development. If this site is on a chalk base then it wouldn't lend itself well to woodland. The Panel felt that an eco-development that takes advantage of the site's south-facing slope, perhaps with a more open landscape, would be more appropriate than what is proposed.</p> <p>The Applicant suggested that Beech trees could grow in spite of very limited quantities of topsoil, but acknowledged that getting them established would be difficult.</p> <p><b>Referring back to the slope of the site, the Panel noted that it appeared to be a very steep slope when they saw it on site, but the plans make it look as if the site is flat.</b></p> <p><b>9. The Panel said that there is an opportunity here to rethink the concept strategy and tie it more closely to the sustainable living encouraged by both the site's place in the national park, and the proximity to the sustainability centre. This could be a good chance to create some low impact or off grid housing.</b></p> <p>The Applicants said that their pre-application advice in 2008/09 placed a lot of emphasis on planting beech and beech hedging, an element that they've tried to reinforce. They went on to say that PV panels didn't work on the previous scheme because of shading on the site.</p> <p><b>The Panel commented that the current scheme introduces similar problems with shading because of the tree planting suggested along the southern boundary, which could even result in the south facing gardens being more shaded than the north facing ones.</b></p>
<p><b>2.0 Panel Summary</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Panel opened by saying that there is an amazing opportunity here in this site, alongside the South Downs Way, to make something that truly represents the Purposes of the National Park The South Downs Way running along the south and west boundaries provides a fantastic opportunity to create something that truly represents the park in such a prominent location on one of the key trails through it.</li> <li>2. They went on to suggest that the Applicants could create something really unique here, whether by focusing on sustainable living, or looking in to things like courtyard housing, a terracing system reminiscent of bronze age systems, edible planting, redesigning the car parking to better accommodate electric vehicles and encourage a sense of community – There are a huge range of options open at this early stage that could make this development outstanding. This is a perfect chance to create a plan that represents the future of housing in the park.</li> <li>3. The Panel acknowledged that the Phase I area of the site</li> </ol>

	<p>was a difficult development and that the Applicants would want to create something that would make up for that cost, particularly given that they already have an existing permission that they could build anyway, but said that they felt that most of their suggestions for more sustainable, high-quality alternatives to the existing suggestions would not add substantially to the cost but could make for substantially better returns.</p> <p>4. The Panel finished by saying that this is a beautiful site and that the Applicants here have a chance to create a development to match, housing that they could be proud of, rather than trying to hide it away behind rows of trees.</p>
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