

SITE: Fernhurst Pk/Syngenta: Former Syngenta Site, Henley, Old Road, Fernhurst, Haslemere, West Sussex, GU27 3JE

Design Review Panel Workshop Meeting Notes

DATE: 18th July, 2016.

TIME: 13:00 – 16:00

VENUE: Chanctonbury

Attending DRP:

Paul Fender
David Hares
Graham Morrison
Mark Penfold
John Starling

Attending SDNPA:

Rob Ainslie (Development Manager)
Veronica Craddock (Landscape Officer)
Genevieve Hayes (Design Officer)
Paul Slade (Support Services Officer)

Attending Applicants:

Tony Edwards (Place)
Giles Hopgood (Place)
Neil Rowley (Savills)

The workshop commenced at 13:15 and after brief introductions, RA provided a brief overview re-iterating the importance of the scheme achieving the vision, aspirations and policy requirements as set out in the Fernhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan and purposes of the National Park to achieve an exemplar scheme. GH provided an overview of the notes from the previous DRP session and tabled information gathered since the last meeting with applicants (25/5/2016)

Sustainability:

- The option of using wood fuel to heat the development and provide hot water was discussed at length, and prominence given to the fact that the option for the development to support the wood fuel economy would be very much welcomed by the SDNPA. This sustainable approach could provide a number of benefits across the whole park, and give back to the community. It was uncertain at this stage which operating system would be best for the dwellings within the development and concerns were raised by the applicants over the sustainability and logistics of providing a constant supply of wood and the aesthetic considerations of storing it, but were addressed by SDNPA. In collaborating with the neighbouring Cowdray Estate, there would be potential for a Wood Fuel Hub to be provided on the land to the south. Drawing on coppiced wood from the surrounding area and multiple counties, this could ensure a constant supply for the development. Suggestions were also made about possible aesthetics for the wood stores, using contemporary examples.
- It was agreed that it is was a conceptually sound approach, being supported by the Local Plan.
- It was further agreed that GH would set up a meeting with Bruce Middleton (SDNPA), Nick Heasman (SDNPA) and Matthew Woodcock (Forestry Commission) and Richard Everett (Cowdray Estate Head

Forester) and Julian Brooks and Neil Rowley on behalf of Comer Homes to conduct site visits of local wood fuel systems and discuss and bottom out the feasibility.

Landscape strategy

- TE reviewed and explained the landscape strategy so far and how the green fingers/shaws were based on areas of level changes and TPOs, which has made it challenging to create developable areas. The Panel Members said that they still felt that the development could be improved by merging some of the fingers, feeling that fewer more robust fingers would make a more significant impression and give the scheme a defined character.
- An agreed landscape strategy to inform the block structure was agreed:



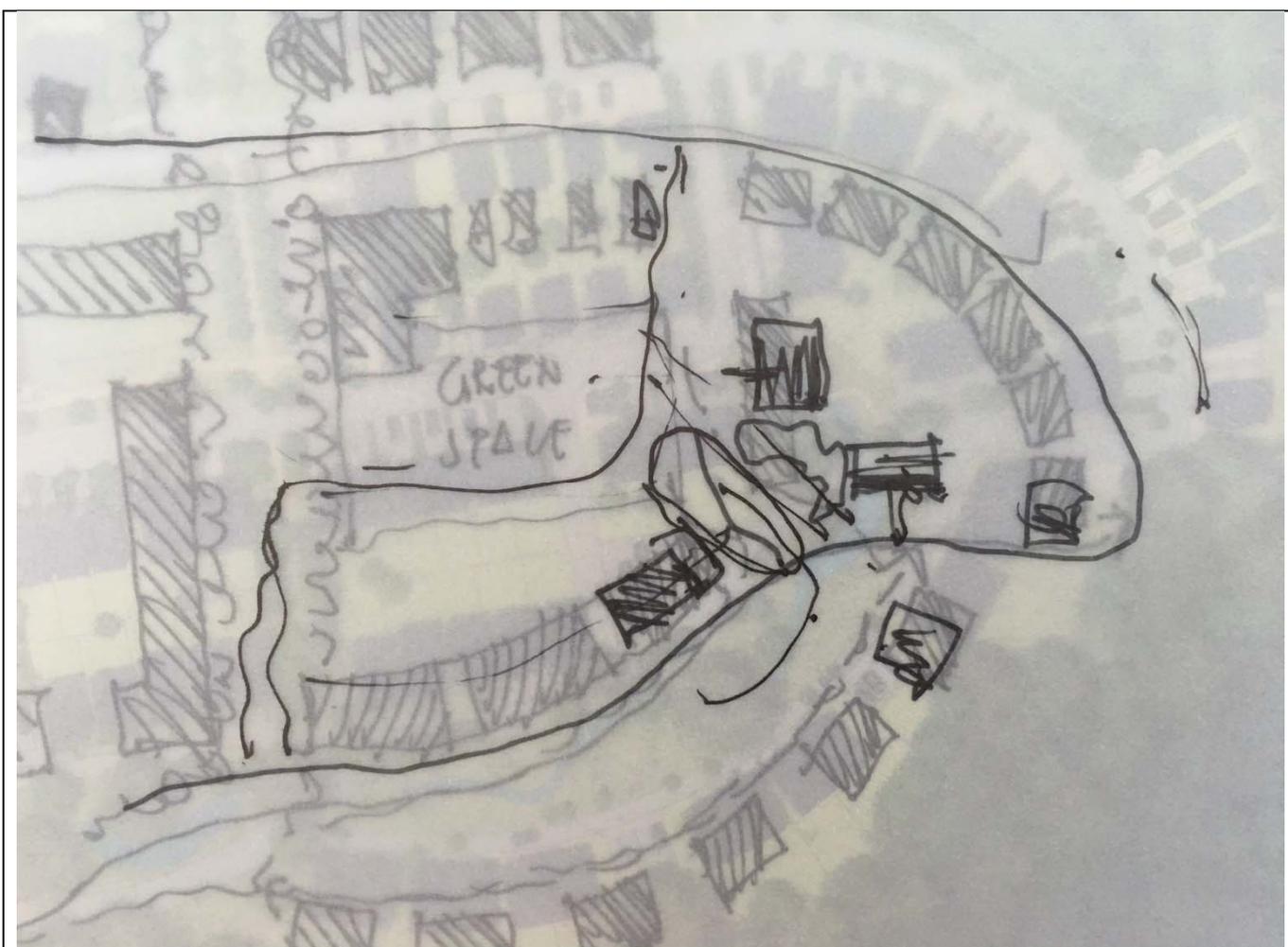
- Surface water drainage strategy – water as a feature: The applicants suggested that there was a ditch in an area of land to the south which veers out of the site (outside the red line boundary) and that it would be beneficial for it to be part of the water course. GH offered to look in to establishing contact with Cowdray Estate, the landowner, to facilitate discussion between them and the applicants, in light of both this and the proposed wood fuel economy (as above).

- The workshop briefly touched on the allotments/ community gardens at the eastern end of the site, questions were raised regarding soil testing and the feasibility of providing allotments/subsequent uptake during the phasing of the scheme etc.
- Maintenance of the landscape: The applicants clarified that Comer Homes were well versed in landscape maintenance in their developments, and would have a management company in place to protect landscape concerns, which would initially be rolled into the purchase price of homes and in the future be funded by a service charge from the occupants. The discussion involved suggestions that local businesses might get involved and that the developer might also be able to support the wood fuel system, including maintaining boilers and delivering wood supplies.
- The applicants told the workshop that there were a number of patches of non-indigenous trees that they would consider removal, if SDNPA were in agreement. A plan of identified TPO trees would help to clarify where these were.

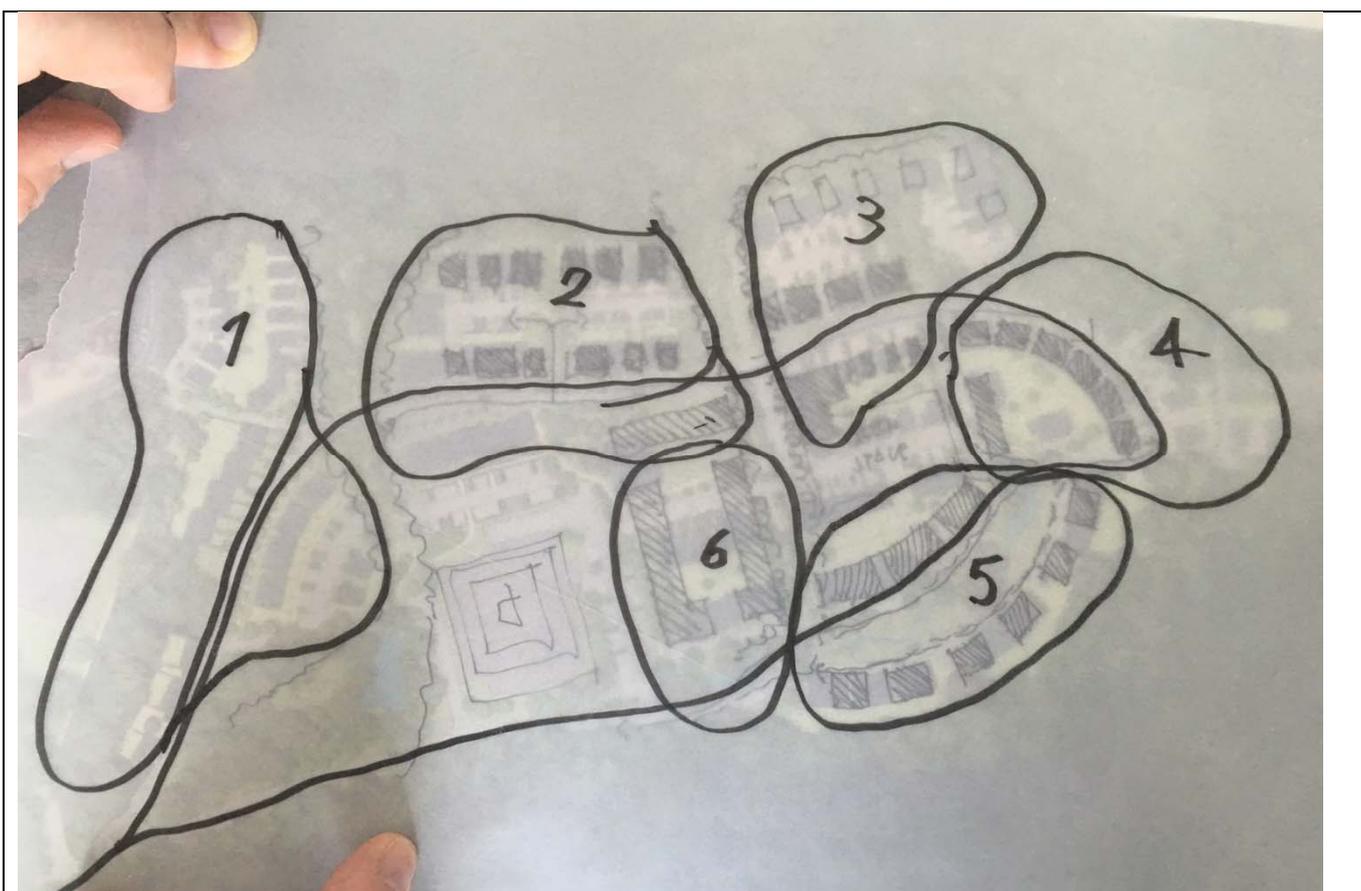
Routes/Block and Plot Layout

- Further to the initial concept of a series of pulses for the scheme (DRP session in May), and after establishing the landscape strategy as per above, the block structure was further explored. Although the benefits of underground parking on the north side is full understood (that it enables a reduction in the visual appearance of cars within the scheme), and the rationale for using the existing level changes for underground parking is appreciated. The Landscape and Design officers recommendation for moving the flats/higher density building forms to intensify the centre of the site and relate to the Pagoda building is strongly concurred by the DRP. The following sketch evolved from the workshop, which resolves the many issues with the block structure and it was agreed that this approach would be tested and re-drafted by TE/GH.





- This evolution of the block structure revealed that there would be 6 pulses which should all be considered individually in regard to building typology and character:



- Through this configuration a clear hierarchy of building typologies were starting to emerge and further work will establish a logical architectural style to calibrate with each defined character area/ 'Pulse'.
- The gateways into the development within Pulses 1 and 4 need further work. The allotment area and housing to the east is a gateway and transition area between the housing and the countryside & really needs a bit more design work to get this area working better. It currently feels like the back of the scheme.
- It was noted that the next steps would be to give careful consideration to plot orientation and address the fronts and backs of blocks, ensuring that there is distinction between public and private space.
- And that the parking and curtilage for each block/plot must now be developed.
- Low weald character/ variety/colour palette and materials. The workshop discussed the materials and aesthetic choices that may be appropriate, covering the topic of variation and expressing the need to handle it appropriately – While variation is a good thing, it needs to remain within the character of the site. Variation for its own sake will be detrimental to the sense of place.
- The form of the application was discussed and NR asked if an outline application would be considered. Or a hybrid application with a number of the 'pulses' worked up into detail with some design coding/reserve matters to ensure that all agreed components of the design would be retained if taken on by other architects. Rather than a detailed application for the whole scheme. It was flagged up that the landscape strategy would have to be uncompromisingly fixed in detail with an outline application to make sure the integrity of the overall landscape led scheme was assured. Rob Ainslie said that he would consider the feasibility of this.