

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting:	20/3/2017
Site: Proposal:	Land East of Harrier Way, Petersfield, Hampshire Proposed continuing care community for the elderly in the C2 Use Class – 12 apartments and 58 cottages/extra care units.
Planning reference:	SDNP/17/00047/PRE
Panel members sitting:	David Hares CHAIR Kay Brown John Starling David Edwards
SDNPA officers in attendance:	Genevieve Hayes (Design Officer) Paul Slade (Support Services Officer) Richard Ferguson (Case Officer) Ruth Childs (Landscape Officer)
Authority Members in attendance:	None
Item presented by:	Andrew Tull Alison Galbraith David Boden
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 congratulated the Applicants on a comprehensive presentation, and said that the elevations and perspectives they provided, link the proposal to the landscape context creating effective imagery. The Panel recognised that in regard to addressing the layout, two obvious approaches would have been, to either front Harrier Way, or front the east side toward the landscape. They noted that the applicants had decided to internalise the frontages within the development, which would be a logical direction. However, the provision of three connections to the existing network would appear to support greater integration with the wider context rather than promote a self-contained, inward looking community, if this were the intent. As a result, the Panel suggested that two entrances may be more appropriate – possible, incorporating a link between this. The Panel asked if the Applicants had had feedback from Highways regarding the number and location of the entrances?</p> <p>The Applicant said that they had considered the location of the proposed entrances in relation to the location of existing junctions. They had not had any feedback from Highways yet regarding access. They explained that the three entrances allow for localised fire truck access and bin collection, rather than needing an access road that ran through the entire development, which they feel would take up more space and involve larger amounts of hardstanding.</p> <p>2. The Panel asked about the capacity of the site, noting that the applicants are working to approx. 25 dwellings per hectare. The Panel asked if it would be possible to forsake some of the dwellings to allow greater green space/ landscaping. For example, 40 units would fit much better in to the landscape and provide for a higher quality development.</p> <p>The Applicant explained that they will need to provide the care package utility, as a part of the C2 use class designation, which required them to build the proposed Care Community Hub(CCH). The CCH was a substantial investment, likely to cost around £2,000,000, so they need +70 dwellings in order to make the CCH viable.</p> <p>3. The Panel noted that the division of the proposal into three separate sections appears to fragment this rather than create one consolidated development. To counter this, the Panel suggested strengthening internal connections between the three clusters – possible, with an internal vehicular link. They then asked whether the construction would be phased in</p>

	<p>accordance with the three obvious spaces. The Applicants said that construction would be phased, planning to start at the southern end of the site and work their way along it. They are not currently planning to phase it specifically to the three identified areas, however.</p> <p>4. The Panel pointed out that the high density has an impact on the amount of car parking required. In particular, the community is likely to see a great deal of visitors needing parking at the weekends, but substantially less traffic during the week. The Panel suggested that some consideration is paid to the proximity of parking to the dwellings, for example, does visitor parking need to be so close to the dwellings? The Applicant said that the depth of the site makes fire access difficult and they are already pushing the 45m limit on access at this point, so the parking courtyards also form the function of providing service access. If they were moved further away, alternatives would need to be put in place to provide service access.</p> <p>5. The Panel asked them whether there's a sewer running through the site. The Applicant agreed that there was. The Panel asked whether it was operated by southern water and whether that would entail needing a 5m clear area on either side. The Applicant noted that there were both gas mains and sewers crossing the site, which they acknowledged that they would need to account for but were not able to provide specific details.</p> <p>6. The Panel asked about security and the openness of the site. The plans feature some notes regarding controlled access and gates, the Panel asked if it was going to be a gated community. The Applicant explained that there could be gated entrances for vehicle access but they weren't planning any particularly obtrusive security measures. They felt that the existing bund edging on to Harrier Way coupled with domestic fences would be sufficient. The Panel asked them to confirm that this would not be a gated community. The Applicant confirmed that it would not be gated, that security would be provided for by passive overlooking. They explained that they did not want to stop people coming into the site.</p> <p>7. The Panel asked whether the applicants might ultimately want to close off the Northern and Southern boundaries, around the foot paths.</p> <p>8. The Panel also asked if it would actually be necessary to separate some of the houses from the landscape</p>
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	<p>to cater for the needs of vulnerable residents. The Applicant noted that they were trying to get the balance right. They want to achieve a sense of community while at the same time, avoiding an institutional sense of place. They feel that more obtrusive security measures would reduce the sense of community.</p> <p>9. The Panel asked why there were some three storey elements in the plan and whether any of the dwellings would need extra roof space to accommodate lifts for the occupants. The Applicants said that all house would be equipped with hoist systems that would form the basis of an easy installation of a lifting system if the occupant needed it. Each dwelling would be designed to meet Part M access requirements. As to the decision to include three story elements, it was felt that they might help to create and articulated roofscape, giving a more appealing sense of verticality to the development.</p> <p>10. The Panel asked about parking ratios, raising the concern that in such a dense development, parking ratios could quickly lead to a sea of tarmac in order to provide enough spaces for the entire site, especially when overspill parking to account for weekend visits is considered. The Panel said that the current proposal seems to have a density simply too high to produce a strong application. And added the importance of considering whether or not the dwellings will need space for scooter parking. The Applicants replied that there will be vehicle charging points installed in the car ports, as well as one external charging point for each individual property.</p> <p>11. The Panel questioned whether there could be more exploration into the development addressing the road, exploring the relationship between the site and Harrier Way. At present, given the inward outlook, the development appears as an isolated community; it could be more effective if there were some relationship with the wider context of Petersfield.</p> <p>12. The Panel said that they'd like to see the central oaks preserved, as some of the existing trees are very valuable. They acknowledged that the Applicants most probably have an intent for these trees but in the absence of the Panel having seen any details, it is assumed these trees are simply being ignored or removed. They suggested that even some basic assessment would be valuable, just to make it apparent that the problem has been considered.</p> <p>13. The Panel was hopeful, seeing the opportunity for south facing dwellings, that renewables would be</p>
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	<p>used to help provide for the site. They said that it would be a particularly attractive option because of the use of gable-fronted roofs, which could allow PV panels to be installed with a minimum of impact on the roofscape. However, as renewables didn't seem to be reflected on the proposals, the panel asked if these had been considered.</p> <p>The Applicant explained that they intend to take advantage of solar gains as much as possible to support the development. While they had considered solar panels, it had not gone any further than consideration at this stage.</p> <p>14. The Panel asked about the pollarding and coppicing that was proposed and if it would be along the road.</p> <p>The Applicant said that this would actually be predominantly along the ditch.</p> <p>15. The Panel asked about the nature of the pond alongside the hub and if it will be part of SUDS.</p> <p>The Applicant said that it will be used in SUDS and that they hope to retain the existing ditch and incorporate it in to the SUDS. They also believe the lake would be valuable as an aesthetic feature as well as SUDS.</p> <p>The Panel said that the problem therein goes back to a question of density, as SUDS often needs a great deal of space to function properly.</p> <p>16. The Panel asked whether residents would adopt the garden spaces around their dwellings and be free to plant in them as they desire.</p> <p>The Applicant said that it would be a combination; they want to allow people to have the freedom to use the spaces if they want to, but also to have a degree of maintenance in place to make sure that spaces that are not actively used by residents are still kept to a high standard. They further elaborated by explain that they did not want to create an austere, institutionalised environment; they wanted to allow room for individual choice and improvement, while still maintaining a good standard. They explained that they hoped to create a development that they could say, hand on heart that they would be happy to live in themselves.</p> <p>17. The Panel asked whether there would be any efforts to restore the Heathland by planting heather and possibly some birch and oak.</p> <p>The Applicants said that they have not yet reached that level of detail in their planning, but they would look at including this at a later stage as heather is both beautiful and appropriate to the setting. The developer explained that the decision behind hiring the instructed Architect and Landscape Architect was driven by a desire to use local professionals who could help create a development that had a strong local connection, building on the ideas of the prior developer to make a much stronger application.</p>
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	<p>18. The Applicant mentioned that their design choices were inspired by the design of houses by Scandinavian architects, particularly an Alvar Alto scheme. The Panel commented that it would be interesting to understand the density of the initial Alvar Alto scheme that has informed the current proposal. The Panel asked what the linear blocks were on the parking courtyards. The Applicant said that they were sedum roofed car ports. The Panel suggested that such car ports could have flats built over them, which would allow a reduction in building footprints on other parts of the site while retaining the same overall density. This could therefore be able to help mitigate some of the problems presented by the density by allowing a greater landscape area.</p> <p>19. The Panel questioned whether the size of the individual dwellings could be reduced slightly to allow more landscaped area. The Applicant said that they had found in their market research that, while the expected occupants are likely to be willing to sacrifice bedrooms, they often want a larger living space in exchange. The current size of the housing is what they feel would attract the most interest.</p>
<p>2.0 Panel Summary</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Panel opened by stating that it felt the development should try to address Harrier Way in some manner. The development should feel like a part of Petersfield, not being set apart from it. It was suggested that some passive overlooking of the road would help this. 2. The Panel then discussed security and overlooking and whether the courtyards and entrances were overlooked. The Panel stressed that more consideration needs to be given to the overlooking of the footpaths and accesses to the resident's back gardens. Additionally, the applicant might consider omitting the path alongside the stream to improve security. The development should consider 'secure by design' principles. 3. The Panel felt that the development at present lacked any real sense of arrival. The car parks are the first aspect that any new arrivals would see, which detracts from the overall development. The Panel recommended that more consideration is put in to creating a sense of place. 4. The Panel noted that they had some confusion over where North was on some of the drawings and plans, but once they had discerned this, they found themselves questioning how much evening sun the dwellings would be likely to get. There seemed to be pretence of south-facing dwellings but on closer examination that was not always the case. 5. The Panel next raised the issue of density. In particular, they were concerned that there wouldn't be enough room for the proposed SUDS at the current density. In order to achieve a high quality development, the density might need to be reduced. The Panel did accept, however, that there is

	<p>an economic argument for the high density development. If the Applicants were to provide a greater degree of sound economic evidence in future, the Panel might be willing to accept the density as it is.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. A concern was raised that the use of identical house types might result in the development looking very institutional, which was something that the applicants had expressed a particular desire to avoid. Some variation of house types – particularly corner units - might help to resolve this. 7. The Panel acknowledged that the Applicants had clearly done a lot of very comprehensive work on the landscape context, but felt that the building context was lacking – There needs to be a contextual analysis of local building typologies to make sure that the buildings have a suitable character. 8. The Panel reiterated their interest in considering two accesses with an internal connection rather than three separate accesses. Noting that potentially, these could be connected along the western edge (parallel to the external road), rather than through the middle of the site. With three entrances going in to individual courtyards, this development could easily start to feel like three separate developments, especially once you have to start putting in signs saying which units are served by which courtyards. 9. The Panel suggested that the Applicants consider building flats over parking or across the entrances in order to reduce building footprints and thereby, allow more open space for gardens and circulation. 10. The Panel encouraged reviewing the primary frontages and front-to-back/ back-to-back relationships as presently, a greater area is allocated to circulation – through the middle of the site and along the boundaries. However, focussing on one primary aspect would release a greater area of open space while at the same time, supporting legibility and security through fewer incidents where rear gardens are facing circulation routes. 11. The Panel said that, whilst not objecting to gable fronted houses, it should be borne in mind that centre valley gutters are a high maintenance element of a design, especially when they are near high trees where leaves fill the gutter in the autumn and the valley needs clearing annually or biannually. In addition, in the process of daily freeze and melt in the winter after snowfall the hopper head can often freeze at the inlet and hold back the melt the next day, which cumulatively can raise the water level high enough that it risks entering the house through the tiles above the gutter level. 12. The Panel observed that, where parking is concerned, concealing it should be an objective to be aspired too. 13. Finally, the Panel agreed that the application is moving in the right direction; while the development has a lot of challenges to face, none of them are insurmountable and a lot of good work has already gone in to it.
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