

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

Date of meeting:	20/3/18
Site:	Land off Hurst Lane, Owslebury, Hampshire, SO21 1JQ
Proposal:	Erection of a Paragraph 55 dwelling
Planning reference:	SDNP/17/06374/PRE
Panel members sitting:	Graham Morrison (Chair) John Starling John Hearn Adam Richards
SDNPA officers in attendance:	Mike Hughes (Major Planning Projects and Performance Manager) Ruth Childs (Landscape Officer) Paul Slade (Support Services Officer) Victoria Corrigan (Case Officer)
SDNPA Planning Committee in attendance:	None
Item presented by:	Jeremy Higgins John Alexander
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>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>1. The Panel noted that the Applicants said the concept for this site would be best appreciated from the air and asked who exactly would be able to see it from the air.</b>  The Applicants explained that it would mostly be people flying in and out of Southampton Airport, then reiterated that their objective had been to make something that would be obvious from the air, but subtle from the ground.  <b>The Panel asked whether recognition of the Spitfire Wing landscaping would be key to this.</b>  The Applicant said yes. </li> <li> <b>2. The Panel asked the Applicant to explain the sequence of spaces in the house.</b>  The Applicant explained, using visual aids, that the house was intended to look over the wing and out towards the historic airstrip in order to give the sense of an air traffic control tower. This centred in particular on the gallery, which was a viewing space that would be looking directly out over the wing. Finally, they noted that Paragraph 55 often sees claims of innovation based on sustainability or high tech solutions; the Applicant feels that these should be a given for any Paragraph 55 house and the true innovation here is in its cultural ties to the land. </li> <li> <b>3. The Panel asked how the proposed dwelling relates to the landscape.</b>  The Applicant explained that it was purposefully placed where it could fit snugly in to the trees in order to screen it from outside the site, but be visible easily from the air and provide clear views over the site itself. </li> <li> <b>4. The Panel asked if the Applicant could show how the wing is visible from the house.</b>  The Applicant explained that the house had a viewing gallery within it which was glazed to enable the owner to view the landscaped wing of the plane. </li> <li> <b>5. The Panel asked what dictated the design of the house.</b>  The Applicant explained that the size of the “roundel” dwelling is determined by the brief, but they’re trying to ensure that the size of the landscaped wing is appropriate relative to the size of the roundel. </li> <li> <b>6. The Panel asked whether the historic airstrip had crossed the road and whether the hedging along the road where the airstrip crossed could be removed to represent this.</b>  The Applicant said that the hedging wouldn’t be removed, explaining that the hedging on the opposite side of the road is outside of their control, although if the opportunity were there they’d love to remove it. </li> <li> <b>7. The Panel asked how much of the dwelling dropped below the apex of the wing.</b> </li> </ol>

	<p>The Applicant explained that the whole dwelling would be cut in to it but it would be most pronounced at the garage and annex, which would lose about a metre and a half against the apex.</p> <p><b>8. The Panel asked whether the entire building would be made with metal.</b>  The Applicant said that it would, explaining their view that metal was the most suitable material.  <b>The Panel further asked about the roof finish planned for the metal building.</b>  The Applicant said that they had two types of finishes in mind, one silver, which would look white at a distance, and one blue, in order to complete the roundel imagery from the spitfire.  <b>The Panel asked whether the roof would feature any glazing.</b>  The Applicant said no, the whole roof would be solid.</p> <p><b>9. The Panel noted that any housing built under Paragraph 55 should significantly enhance the landscape setting, and asked how the Applicant envisaged achieving this.</b>  The Applicant suggested that the NPPF doesn't define what an enhancement is and that the landscape is already highly valued, which makes it difficult to enhance – the main source of improvements would be through achieving an increase in biodiversity.</p> <p><b>10. The Panel said the historic context had been well explained but asked how the design of the dwelling and landscape was informed by the visual context.</b>  The Applicant explained that they did a ZTV as part of the initial LVIA which showed most of the site of the dwelling was largely hidden by landform. They concluded that screening afforded by trees limits distant views of the site, so they focused on the local views. The NE corner was selected as a result of the local topography and tree cover. Their LVIA suggested that the scheme would be beneficial, or at least cause no harm. They reiterated they could therefore demonstrate they are conserving the National Park and enhancements would be focused on biodiversity improvements. They also noted that the woodland is key to the site's history as well as its visual appearance and the quality of the site would be improved by extending woodland across it.</p> <p><b>11. The Panel noted that a lot of the application hangs on the history of the site and asked how the Applicant feels the house emphasises this.</b>  The Applicant explained that there are two elements to emphasising the history, the landscaping and the house as a piece of engineering. They further explained that the house wasn't intended to explicitly emphasise the history, it would all be in the detail. The house is intended to represent the frame of a Spitfire, therefore the story was expressed in the engineering of the frame.  <b>The Panel asked, therefore, whether the historical</b></p>
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	<p><b>link is about the way in which the dwelling is made.</b></p> <p>The applicant said yes.</p>
<b>2.0 Panel Summary</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Panel opened by explaining that Paragraph 55 applications were often the hardest applications for them to deal with, as there is less objectivity than less bespoke schemes.</li> <li>2. They noted that the site has an unquestionably intriguing piece of history behind it and that it is a worthwhile story to tell.</li> <li>3. However, the Panel feels that this becomes a problem when the voice of that story is a house; can a house effectively communicate a story like this? The message communicated to people viewing the site from the air is probably too subtle, while a person on foot is unlikely to see any message at all.</li> <li>4. The Panel noted their disappointment at the suggestion that the landscape can only be enhanced through the Applicant's biodiversity improvements; the Panel expects biodiversity improvements as a starting point in an application like this. They think that the landscape suffered overall as it largely lacked participation in the scheme, except the isolated fragment that the dwelling would be constructed on.</li> <li>5. The Panel expressed concerns about whether the house helps to communicate the story or whether it is just a side effect of the attempt to communicate. It seems as if the Landscape is intended to be very subtle but the house contrasts vastly with this.</li> <li>6. The Panel observed that, though the scheme lacked neither passion nor skill, it felt that the overall composition was struggling in trying to be both a house and an emblem and, in trying to be both, the effect was that one compromised the other. That said, the Panel took the view that, even if this difficult composition task had succeeded, it is doubtful that the components of this proposal could have produced a sufficiently exceptional outcome to justify an approval for a Paragraph 55 dwelling.</li> <li>7. The Panel expressed concerns about the viability of the site for a Paragraph 55 house to begin with, and while it acknowledged that it couldn't be ruled out completely, the circumstances on this site make it an exceptionally difficult proposition.</li> <li>8. The Panel noted that there are analogies that exist that might have presented more viable options, such as the Gridshell building at the Weald and Downland Museum.</li> <li>9. Finally, the Panel raised a general point that although the site is not exceptional, it is difficult to see how its setting could be significantly enhanced by a Paragraph 55 dwelling. The panel did however acknowledge that it was not only exceptional settings where Paragraph 55</li> </ol>

	developments could be a success.
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