

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting:	20/3/18
Site:	Playing Field, Pook Lane, Lavant, West Sussex
Proposal:	Erection of 16 dwellings on land off Lavant Road and relocation of existing football pitch on to and off Pook Lane.
Planning reference:	SDNP/17/06528/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) David Cranmer (Case Officer)
SDNPA Planning Committee in attendance:	None
Item presented by:	Ben Bailey Nick Reynolds Caroline Treadwell Jennifer Hayward Amanda Sutton
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 there was a school or shop that was reasonably accessible to pedestrians. The Applicant said that the school was located to the North and it was reasonable to expect that occupants of the development could walk there, however there is no shop in the village that could be walked to, with the nearest shop being at a filling station on the road into Chichester.</p> <p>2. The Panel said the amorphic shaped roads were estate-like, given this, they asked how the character responds to the open space, how differences are emphasised. The Applicant explained that the road was designed to gain visual experience of the landscape and this was one of the key features defining the character of the site. The differences in detailing between the individual buildings allows the development to look more organically grown. The bungalows were designed to dissipate the urban form.</p> <p>3. The Panel asked about the two most Northerly buildings, suggesting that they seem to have a different relationship to the rest of the site. The Applicants said that this was a result of the change of character across the site coming through. The Panel asked whether this could result in these buildings being perceived as a separate scheme. The Applicant said they thought this was unlikely, due to the continuous frontage that these buildings are part of.</p> <p>4. The Panel noted that there was a substantial focus in the heritage statement on the precedents for the materials used, but felt there was relatively little on matters of form, layout and spatial characteristics and asked the Applicant to give further detail. The Applicant explained that they'd given substantial thought to the urban form in Lavant and noted that there are a lot of details through the village that they want to bring through to this development. They hope to bring the Lavant Road character (Character Area C in their analysis) across to Pook Lane and suggested they'd be happy to demonstrate that with a figure ground analysis.</p> <p>5. The Panel raised a concern that the development feels a bit of a pastiche. The Applicant acknowledged that there are bits of the village that currently feel like pastiche, but in their case they intend to use their depth of materials to avoid this. They noted that that the local people support the application and believe that it very much captures the Parish character. They explained that the details of allocation in the NDP were hard won. The local parish</p>

	<p>tends to favour more traditional characters to contemporary architecture, but buildings of genuine historic worth are few and far between. Achieving the right balance is not easy and a lot of it will come down to detail.</p> <p>6. The Panel asked whether the estate railing to be installed would be on the curve along the open space. The Applicant explained that the fences would only feature on the private drive.</p> <p>7. The Panel asked whether the double garages had been a conscious decision and whether it would be possibly to amalgamate them in to the houses. The Applicant suggested that it would be technically difficult to get the garages integrated in to the houses, but building separate garages was fairly typical of Lavant.</p>
2.0 Panel Summary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Panel opened by noting that this application has been very thoroughly explored for a pre-app stage application and carries a lot of detail for this early stage. Panel comments focused on house types and place-making. <p><i>House types</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The Panel explained that house types were always one of their key concerns in applications such as these, noting that no matter how carefully considered your analysis and choice of materials are, if you gravitate towards a single house type you will ultimately produce a very bland development. 3. The Panel appreciated that the Applicant wants to avoid creating an estate typology but warned that with certain elements, such as the amorphous road layout, they risked producing an estate typology anyway. 4. The Panel suggested that the Applicant consider how deep the houses are on average, noting that the pitch of the roofs meant that deep houses would result in very high ridges. They also noted that all the houses looked to have very similar depths, which is one of the things that make the houses look like they're all of one house type. 5. The Panel noted that the proposed flats building was convincing but it was terribly positioned. Such a large building deserves to be positioned on a strong plot. 6. Despite efforts to vary the palette between houses, the structure of the houses makes them all seem like the same house type; the differences feel superficial and the Panel suspects that the houses are all designed to appeal to a single audience. <p><i>Place-making</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The Panel noted that this application is on the A286, but seems like it's very much hidden from the main road, which helps to make it feel suburban. This is at odds with the rest of Lavant, where the houses along the A286 face directly on to the street. This exacerbates the 'estate' feeling the applicant is trying to avoid. 8. The Panel noted that the first impression given to people entering the site will be garages, gables and rear elevations; if the Applicants want to create a special place,

	<p>they need to better control this first impression.</p> <p>9. The Panel has no issue with a road following a curve provided it seems purposeful. The amorphous nature of this particular proposal, however, seems a little at odds with the normally very direct layout of lanes planned perpendicularly to a main street. The proposal to follow this line with a flint wall is in danger of characterising the new layout as the very 'estate' form the design sought to avoid.</p> <p>10. The Panel noted that that the location of the green and the sinuous line of its frontage mean that the plot at the far eastern end of the development is likely to be the most valuable site – But the hierarchy doesn't seem to reinforce that, nor does the house built on that spot.</p> <p>11. The Panel suggested that there should be no parking along the edge of the road where it meets the open space. The road edge here needs to be very carefully cared for and parking along it should be discouraged, not encouraged.</p> <p>12. The Panel warned that, on the right hand side of the scheme, there seems to be a bit of a backland development resulting from the work on the depth; this feels out of character.</p> <p>13. Finally, the Panel concluded that a layout that incorporated a street(s), which is more like the built form within the village in terms of spatial character and alignment of buildings (that in many instances are joined) would be more appropriate. Concentrating on layout first, rather than detail and materials, should lead to a scheme which would have a unique identity and be sympathetic to the existing village pattern and grain.</p>
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