

Report to	Planning Committee
Date	13 September 2018
By	Director of Planning
Title of Report	Development Brief for Holmbush Caravan Site, Midhurst
Purpose of Report	To approve the use of this Development Brief for development management purposes

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to approve the use of the development brief for Holmbush Caravan Site, Midhurst for development management purposes as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

1. Summary

- 1.1 Development Briefs are an established method of providing guidance to developers, the local community and stakeholders on how a Local Planning Authority wishes to see a particular site developed. Development Briefs help shape proposals from an early stage in the design process, guide decision making and help speed up the overall planning application process. They are a proactive way in which a Local Planning Authority can influence the development of a particular site and, once approved, they are material considerations in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.2 A draft Development Brief for this site was presented to Planning Committee on 18 January 2018 and approved, subject to specific revisions directed by the Committee, for public consultation. The changes instructed by Planning Committee were made and a period of public consultation with local residents, the Town Council and the landowner ran in March/April 2018 with a total of 21 representations being received.
- 1.3 January's Planning Committee gave the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee, the authority to make any minor changes required as a result of the public consultation but that if major changes were required a further report would be presented to Planning Committee. This Development Brief is being reported back to Planning Committee as, following public consultation, it is proposed that vehicular access to the site in an alternative location to that originally proposed by the draft Development Brief could be preferable and should be investigated further by any applicant.
- 1.4 If approved by Planning Committee the final Development Brief would be published as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A copy of the Development Brief would also be made available to the Inspector examining the Submission South Downs Local Plan through the Examination's Core Document Library.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Submission South Downs Local Plan allocates a number of sites for development. The SDNPA has given a commitment, through these site allocations, to produce Development Briefs for four sites as follows:
 - Holmbush Caravan Park, Midhurst allocated under emerging Policy SD82.

- Land South of London Road, Coldwaltham allocated under emerging Policy SD64.
 - West Sussex County Council Depot and Former Brickworks Site, Midhurst allocated under emerging Policy SD81.
 - Land at Pulens Lane, Sheet allocated under emerging Policy SD89.
- 2.2 The preparation of Development Briefs does not prejudice the consideration of these site allocations through the examination, by the Planning Inspectorate, of the Submission Local Plan. Should, however, any of these sites come forward in the final Local Plan a Development Brief provides guidance on how the site should be developed.
- 2.3 The Development Briefs are based upon the Submission Local Plan policy context for the site, include site specific analysis, set out the Authority's approach to contextual analysis and landscape led design (to try and ensure that landscape character is well understood and integrated into development scheme designs) and set out the key principles that should be observed in any development.
- 2.4 The Development Briefs have been drawn up in collaboration with the Authority's Design Review Panel.

3. Site

- 3.1 The site is situated within the southern part of Midhurst, west of the A286 and close to its junction with Bourneway. The site is approximately 5 hectares in size, is vacant and is a former caravan park. There is a large pond in the west of the site whilst the remainder of the site is largely overgrown and partly derelict with some hardstanding and a small number of buildings remaining associated with the former use of the site.
- 3.2 The site is bounded by residential properties on three sides (north, south and west) and is bounded by a road, The Fairway, to the east. The north west of the site adjoins a stream, Cocking Beck. Prior to the site's use as a caravan park it was a sand quarry and this accounts for its concave topography where surrounding residential properties are generally positioned higher than the site.
- 3.3 The trees on site are covered by an Area Tree Preservation Order served by Chichester District Council in 1997 (reference 97/00709/TPO) which covers all of the trees on site. Parts of the site adjacent to the pond lie within flood zones 2 and 3 with the remainder of the site being within flood zone 1 (areas at the lowest risk of flooding).

4. Public Consultation

- 4.1 The public consultation ran from March 28 to April 26 2018 and 21 representations were received. The representations are summarised in the table below, together with the Authority's response to each representation. It is also identified whether or not changes have been made to the Development Brief as a result of the particular representation.

Representation	Response
1. Against the principle of development on this site.	No change made to the document. The Development Brief is not about the principle of development (which is considered through the Local Plan process) but rather <i>how</i> any potential development should be carried out.
2. Too many homes are proposed.	No change made to the document. The number of homes expected to be accommodated on this site has been considered and set out in Policy SD82 of the Submission Local Plan. The number of dwellings proposed are considered to be capable of being delivered in a way that is compatible with the site, its characteristics and with the need for good landscape led design.

3. Concern that the proposed vehicular access is not in a safe location for this development.	Text and plan changes have been made. The highways authority, West Sussex County Council, agrees that alternative, safer vehicular access to the site should be sought. Alternative vehicular access points are now shown.
4. Concern that the lake would be lost.	No change made to the document. There is no intention to allow the lake to be lost as it has been identified as a key landscape element.
5. Concern that mature trees be protected.	No change made to the document. These have already been identified as being important and worthy of retention and are covered by an area TPO.
6. Concern that wildlife impacts will be great.	No change made to the document. The brief requires the development proposals to: maintain key habitats; improve species diversity through pond management; maximise wildlife space through green roofs and rain gardens.
7. Concern that PROW next to deep water is a danger.	Minor text change made. The exact relationship between a PROW and the water's edge is a matter of detail which would be explored as part of a planning application. However a reference to the lake edge leading directly to deep water has been referred to as a constraint within the Development Brief.

4.2 In addition to the changes made above a small change to the developable area has been made as a result of the flood risk boundary. An area of developable area was shown previously in what is in flood risk zones 2 and 3. All of the proposed developable area now lies in flood risk zone 1 which is the area least prone to surface water flooding.

5. Major change

5.1 The public consultation provided the opportunity for several local residents to point out the inadequacy of the current vehicular access to the site. The issue of safe access to the site was discussed with West Sussex County Council. They agreed that the current access as it stands is not appropriate for the scale of residential development proposed and they recommended two alternative access locations be considered, both of which are shown on the 'Design Principles' plan in the Development Brief together with the current access location.

5.2 The current vehicular access to the site, in its current condition, would not be a safe access for the number of vehicle movements that a development of 50-70 homes would be expected to generate. It suffers from poor visibility as it lies on a bend and due to the topography of the road. There is also mature vegetation which obscures the sight lines. The issue is exacerbated by car parking on The Fairway as well as the fact that this is on a bus route, necessitating cars pulling in to allow buses to pass.

5.3 It may be that the current access location could only be made safe, given its location on a bend, with the removal of significant vegetation including several mature trees. If the damage to mature trees and hedges is deemed excessive, alternative access locations may be preferred.

5.4 As a result, amended text in the document refers to the need for safe vehicular access to the site, proposes alternative options to the current access location and sets out the need for any developer to design the safe access in conjunction with the Highway Authority, while

minimising the loss of mature trees. The Development Brief now suggests three options on the Design Principles Plan for vehicular access into the site along the site's eastern boundary on The Fairway, including the current access location.

- 5.5 Any developer of this site will need to consult with the Highway Authority as part of any planning application. Whichever access location is proposed by the developer will require appropriate sight lines which may necessitate the removal of vegetation including hedges and mature trees. The extent of this removal and especially the removal of mature trees should be minimised and will have a direct bearing on which vehicular access location is chosen.
- 5.6 Vehicular access was not specified in the Submission Local Plan Policy for this site (Policy SD82) therefore no change is required to this Local Plan Policy. The implications of the potentially changed vehicular access are therefore only pertinent to this Development Brief.
- 5.7 The other changes made to the Development Brief set out in the table above are relatively minor, do not change the focus and intent of the Development Brief and are considered to be acceptable.

6. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No.
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	No – any further work required will be carried out in house.
Has due regard been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	The Development Brief supports improvements to the built environment to improve access for all. This will be considered further should a planning application come forward for the redevelopment of this site.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	The Development Brief supports the orientation and layout of buildings to increase natural surveillance of public areas, in line with the principles of 'designing out crime'.
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy: 1. Living within environmental limits 2. Ensuring a strong healthy and just society 3. Achieving a sustainable economy 4. Promoting good governance 5. Using sound science responsibly	The Development Brief supports and encourages sustainable design, helping us to live within environmental limits.

7. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
The Development Brief is seen as too prescriptive and stalls development of the site	Low	Medium	The Development Brief does not impose substantial additional requirements on developers but rather makes it clear what the Authority expects to see in the development of the site. Setting this out at an early stage gives clarity to developers and should make the planning application process (including pre-application discussions) more efficient.
A Development Brief is not produced and the Authority has no site specific guidance for the development of this site	Low	Medium	Prepare and approve a Development Brief.

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 Appendices I. Development Brief – Holmbush Caravan Park, Midhurst
 SDNPA Consultees Legal Services; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Director of Planning
 External Consultees None
 Background Documents [Submission South Downs Local Plan](#)
[Chichester Local Plan \(1999\)](#)

