

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting:	02/10/20
Site:	Barnetts Cottages, Fitzlea Wood Road, East Lavington. West Sussex.
Proposal:	The demolition of two dwellings and replacement with one dwelling and associated annexe, restoration and relocation of timber outhouse, relocation of bridleway, landscape design and drainage works including balancing pond.
Planning reference:	<u>SDNP/20/01405/FUL</u>
Panel members sitting:	Mark Penfold (Chair) Robyn Butcher Paul Fender
SDNPA officers in attendance:	Ben Terry (Design Officer)
Applicant and Project Team:	Adam Richards (Adam Richards Architects) James Fox
Observers:	Tania Hunt (Support Services Officer)
Declarations of interest:	None

The South Downs National Park Design Review Panel is an independent assessment of development proposals by a panel of multidisciplinary professionals and experts, who aim to inform and improve design quality in new development. It is not intended to replace advice from the planning authority or statutory consultees and advisory bodies, or be a substitute for local authority design and landscape skills or community engagement

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.

Panel Questions:

1. MP — does the positioning of the V-Shape have to sit on the axis? Or can it be adjusted and realigned?

The residential curtilage limits the extent of 'build' on the uphill side of the site, and on the downhill side of the site, we choose to keep the building away from the road; this also minimises changes in ground level.

During the site visit, we discussed how the building would appear in the landscape and how the buildings address the road, especially along the eastern boundary, where the building is located close to the road. Would the building and change in levels create adverse landscape or visual impacts, when viewed from the road?

In terms of the landscape, there is no [adverse] impact, as you cannot see the proposed embankment from the road. If the question is – is that building too close to the road? We believe to have a building on the edge of the landscape is a positive characteristic and it is quite typical in rural areas - rather than to have [a building] put into the middle of the landscape, creating an urbanisation of the landscape.

2. RB – Chichester District Council's Landscape Officer has raised concerns about the impact from the road and how could this be mitigated. One of the main concerns is the embankments on the north-east corner [of the plot] and how that might affect the exiting hedgerow.

Would the existing hedgerow be lost?

And, what measures would you undertake to ensure it is protected?

...or is there a way of not having the embankment?

I can confirm, the construction of the bank will have no impact on the hedgerow, although the hedgerow is only laurel.

Yes, we could build in a retaining wall.

3. RB – Have you considered planting the proposed hedgerow further into the site. ...If the hedge is higher up, you would get a view across and along the bank - it might make the house look less residential.

The hedge was considered agricultural and I would prefer it not to be there, along with the coppice, I would prefer to have more of a mix of woodland.

4. RB – Is the land [beyond the curtilage] staying under the management of the client or The Wildlife Trust.

Yes, there is a written agreement in place for The Wildlife Trust to manage the land, but it is not a legal agreement – but it could be made into one?

Once the house is built, is there something to ensure this is implemented? That would protect the landscape and prevent residential sprawl into the landscape.

5. PF – Has there been any architectural changes since the last DRP session?

No

6. PF – As you come down the road and you glimpse a view of the house – as you look down along the west side to the chimney and the tall trees at the end – is that something you would want to have a view of?

No, I think the house should be something that you pass by on the road and something that is there just on the periphery of your vision, rather than something you see. The view from the courtyard and across the pond is a private view and something you experience from within the build.

7. RB – On one of the plans you have another building – What is that?

That is an existing shed. It has quite an attractive timber frame and it is under a beautiful large oak tree. It will remain as a shed. If it were to be refurbished you would have to put a concrete floor in it, meaning that you would have to lose the oak tree next to it. Therefore, it will remain as a shed for garden use.

8. MP – Is there a garage for parked vehicles?

There is not a garage. The cars are parked in the courtyard next to the trees; with the trees helping to obscure the view of the cars, and not detracting from the view across the courtyard to the pond.

9. RB – I just wanted to say that I think re-routing the bridleway is a good idea. From a health and safety point too it is very important and I would welcome it.

The bridleway has not been controversial this time around as the focus has shifted and it is being managed.

Summary:

On behalf of the South Downs National Park, I would like to thank you for bringing your proposal to the Design Review Panel. The Panel thanked the applicants design team for their presentation.

The Panel unanimously support the application.

The main points in question are:

- We feel it is important to reinforce that the typologies for the built form and the landscaped approach to this proposal is not based upon the loose and rather simplistic application of farmyard/farmstead typologies which have become the example for development in the landscape, much of the time inappropriately. The scheme is a much more sophisticated design response to forms in this particular landscape setting, that takes some influence from the forms of farm buildings and how these sit within the landscape, and is a response that reinterprets these forms and the use of materials to provide a built form that is able to suggest a similar influence on the landscape.
- We would also advise that this is a dwelling, not a farmyard or a farmstead, and will not function in the way that these typologies traditionally functioned. Therefore, key to this scheme is the understanding that the architect and landscape architect expressed about the landscape and the built forms integrating into the landscape, and the sequence of forms and spaces, materials and details that make this a successful response to this site.
- The Panel feels it is important to support a design like this because it is a good example of how buildings form part of the landscape, and how a good landscape design can form part of the build.

- That said, we feel that the landscape design could be more in keeping with its surroundings. The proposed hedge and coppice areas (along the eastern boundary) are not in keeping with the 'natural landscape' approach you have put forward.
- We also feel that the landscape beyond the immediate residential curtilage is protected, by way of planning condition. It is important to protect the (wider) landscape around the building, particularly along the eastern and western boundaries.
- The Panel would also recommend that once the heathland and woodland have established, the laurel hedge is removed – subject to an approved management plan. It is an uncharacteristic element and it does not form part of the 'natural' landscape.
- The Panel recognise that the proposal is highly specific to this site and the intellectual basis of the design provides much of the foundation for the scheme.
- As such, we would also advise a condition is used to protect the original design team and ensure this is sustained for the whole of the build process. It was clear from the panel that the success of the scheme is dependent upon the continuity of the understanding of the site, the design solutions that are contained in the planning application and the design skills that Adam Richards and James Fox provide.