

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting:	22.10.21
Site:	Castelmer Fruit Farm, Kingston near Lewes SDNP/21/03968/PRE
Panel members (DRP):	Paul Fender (Chair) Maria Hawton-Mead James Fox Due to only 3 DRP Panel Members this meeting was not quorate. Due to exceptional circumstances (need to restrict numbers due to Covid-19 and room capacity) and the unavailability of a of member within 24 hours of meeting, it was decided to continue with the DRP session.
SDNPA officers in attendance:	Rafa Grosso-Macpherson (Design Officer) Ruth Childs (Landscape Officer)
Applicant and Project Team:	Peter Rainier (DMH Stallard Planning) Robert Burnham (Greenplan Designer Homes) Laura Cox (Fabrik) Paul Dullain (OSP Architecture)
Observers:	Tania Hunt (Support Services Officer) Jessica Riches (Planning 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 the public can view it.

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.

Summary

On behalf of the South Downs National Park, I would like to thank you for bringing your proposal to the Design Review Panel. We are incredibly grateful to review a proposal so early in the process and look forward to participating in further DRP sessions in the future. We would like to thank you and the applicant team for their presentation and the supporting information you provided to us; it created numerous points for discussion and generated some interesting ideas during the session.

The DRP panel looked at various options that were put forward to them during the presentation and felt that there was some merit in option 4, which should be explored further. It was felt that setting the built form close to the woodland decreased the visual impact of the proposal and allowed for greater use of the landscape downslope giving a much more generous landscape. This option would also allow the development to keep the orchard, which was felt to be one of the key landscape characters that positively contribute to the site and could also contribute to the new development as a shared open space.

It was felt by the panel that the development typology should not be suburban and the key element is to keep the units compact and joined together. Consider sustainability in the approach with passive houses, green roofs - community heating systems, waste and bike stores. Consider simplistic building forms and contemporary architecture that could lead to a more sustainable outcome. It was also felt that the trees at the entrance should be preserved. However, if the trees become an obstacle to the pattern then there are other trees within the site and an established woodland that could allow for this loss.

Landscape/ Topography

- An alternative road layout should be considered. Option 4 (road and buildings pushed closer to the north boundary) is worth exploring.
- Setting the built form back to allow for greater use of landscape downslope
- Consider keeping orchard as a landscape asset
- Shared space with community allotments.
- Edges – how do you deal with this and its relationship to the scheme?

Sustainability

- Passive houses certification and passive solar gain.
- Community Heating System
- Community Waste System
- Community Bike Shed
- Reduce external surface area of the buildings to reduce heat loss to improve energy efficiency.
- Enlarged guttering/ solar shading/ ventilation, for adaption to climate change.

Design

- Kingston has varied and contemporary and highly sustainable architecture.
- The Street could be a good precedent.
- A compact development is encouraged, with communal services and open space (orchard retained).
- Contemporary and highly sustainable with reduced surface area.
- Flat green roofs should be explored.
- The site could benefit from several characters. More than 1 character – terrace, detached...

- Consider the relationship between units and existing context – breathing space. Including relationship with dwellings to the west.
- Understand where front and back is.
- Consider alternative access location to the land to the east.
- Consider placement of dwellings where there are existing buildings. Explore the configuration of existing building form for future layout.
- If considering Option 4, the building typology is important and should relate to the topography of the site. The house may generate a stepped section.

Going Forward

- The Panel thought it would be useful to continue exploring Option 4 following the advice above and return to DRP for further advice in due course.