

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL

Date of meeting:	20.04.22
Site:	Land west of The Causeway, Petersfield (SDNP/22/00611/PRE)
Panel members (DRP):	Chris Blandford (Chair) Graham Morrison Andrew Smith William Hardie Luke Engleback Nadim Khattar
SDNPA officers in attendance:	Rafa Grosso-Macpherson (Design Officer) Ruth Childs (Landscape Officer)
Applicant and Project Team:	Chris Brake - Planning Neil Methven & Leon Donald - Design Elliot Firth - Engineering Simon Knight - Development Management: Graham Farrier - Landscape Consultant: from The Landscape Partnership
Observers:	Paul Slade (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 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, 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 development is currently too suburban with the landscape principles very generic and not landscape-led. The Panel generally thought that the analysis was satisfactory, but it has not yet informed the layout, more work is needed on this. For example, it was thought that the open space was not fully integrated into the layout, with a need to have more connections to stop the development being too insular. When thinking about “what does Petersfield get from this site”, better connections could be one answer. The Panel recommends the design should respond to the typography and “the line” (the ditch which marks the junction between the sloping land and flat land), this being one of the key “traces” in the landscape. It would be good to have some sections in the plan. Sustainability issues are a very important consideration moving forward, which could be addressed by a landscape led design. Key considerations being; seeking to reduce the amount of material needed to build the site with a more efficient layout - such as the road layout suggested but the panel, making space in street layouts for SuDS, and crucially making space for people to make this a ‘vibrant’ place to live and be. Consider key landscape fabric assets. Such as; the wet flush and adjacent large oak tree, which have currently not been dealt with a sustainable landscape led approach.

The vision and the masterplan should also include what could happen, rather than just what is in the developer’s control.

Landscape/ Topography

- **Vision/ Sense of Place** – A Vision is needed, with more work on what makes this site special.
- **Landscape Character** – needs to be reflected in the layout, with PRoW included in this. Design should be driven by the analysis of landscape character, ensuring ‘traces’ remain, i.e. the landscape still needs to be read post-development. The wet flush/spring and copse character in area 3 is currently not acknowledged or responded to in the design.
- **Sections** – site sections are needed.
- **The ‘Line’** – is a key characteristic for the design to follow, not currently acknowledged. The line defines a different typology to the east and the west. Include constraints and landscape priorities to create good design and sense of place.
- **Views** – Butser Hill is a key view, not in the presentation, or reflected in the layout.
- **Edge of town** – use precedents to determine what a characteristic edge should look like to be less suburban.

Sustainability

- **SuDS** – Pipes to lagoons is not sustainable means of drainage. Deal with rain where it falls.
- **Embodied Carbon** – 40% carbon emissions come from construction. Consider passive solar gain in unit orientation to minimise heating, and strategies to reduce embodied carbon.
- **Bio-diversity** –respond to the biodiversity emergency. Oak has been placed in an entirely different context – it is linked to surrounding vegetation. Provide a long-term management plan.
- **Green corridor** – create green infrastructure and zoom out to ensure the scheme contributes positively to wider connectivity.

- **Sense of place** –contribute to a sense of place that speaks of Petersfield.

Design

- **Masterplan** – should include what could happen outside of the scheme, with potential for better connections and further development as an example to stop site being insular.
- **Development** – currently bland and too suburban, needs to follow topography and drainage patterns.
- **Design** – needs to fit into this landscape.
- **Roads** - Challenge standard road widths and consider creating a community - the main space is currently divorced from where people will meet. Consider shared space.
- **Fewer units** - are likely to ensure the scheme can achieve a positive design response to the landscape.
- **Consider passive design.**
- **Consider alternative location for flats.**