

Urban Design Observations

To: Development Management, Joseph Swift

From: Anna Kramarczyk-Dillon, Architect/Urban Designer, Mid Sussex DC

Application ref: DM/26/0073

Date: 02/03/26

Address: Land Off West Hoathly Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex

Description: The erection of 44 new homes with access from West Hoathly Road, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure and highway works.

Stage: Planning.

The site is outside of the built-up area boundary of the adopted development plan. The site features significant topographical variation, with levels rising from the north-east to the south-west by approximately 8.5 metres. As the site rises, it is partly visible on the approach from the existing settlement to the north.

The site appears on the map to be separated from the settlement by an area of public open space (Sunnyside Ground) although this impression is less on the ground due to frontage development which hides Sunnyside Ground from view. A public footpath runs along the northern boundary of the Sunnyside Ground. The eastern boundary is defined by a line of trees and a ditch. To the south, the site is bounded by a further line of trees and an access track.

The scheme was previously reviewed at the pre-application stage, and the current submission demonstrates some improvement.

However:

- Some key recommended improvements have not been incorporated, such as reorienting the units to face the tree belt to the south.
- And some positive elements of the previously presented layout have not been delivered as expected – such as passive surveillance/ overlooking of the pedestrian link to Sunnyside Recreation Grounds which is now only one sided.

Therefore, design does not accord with some of the principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guidelines and need further refinement.

Before submitting further comments, I would like to propose the following improvements:

- Part of the site is partly visible on the approach from the existing settlement to the North, please provide photomontages showing 'before' and 'after' of this view:



(full size image attached to the email)

- Pedestrian connectivity should be improved by linking routes and closing loops around perimeter blocks.
- There is no footway on eastern side of road. One would be required to link to existing facilities.
- Design of the pedestrian link to the Recreation ground is still poor and requires refinement. Increase passive surveillance; increase fenestration to north-west elevation of Unit 44, employ bay window to the ground floor Living room facing the path. Add interest to the 1st floor elevation with secondary facing materials and detailing.
- Internal courtyard between units 42 and 43 is poorly defined by flank elevations with very little fenestration: improve design and overlooking.

- In addition to the previous two points, I would like to highlight my concerns regarding the interface between the development and the Recreation Grounds. In my view, there is clear potential to enhance passive surveillance of the recreational grounds within the current layout, please reconsider the configuration of plots within perimeter block marked below to allow some units to directly overlook the Recreation Grounds. This will, in turn, encourage greater use of the space.



- I believe that current layout can be improved. Reorientate units 24 to 30 to face the tree belt to the south.
- Providing dual aspect apartments with access to private outdoor space accessible directly for the main living spaces is very welcomed. However, the ground floor 2-bed were, and FOG were not provided with any private outdoor space, not even a Juliet balcony; please improve.
- Provide boundary treatment plan: we would respect all walls that are facing public realm to be solid brick walls.
- Provide a separate plan clearly identifying all sustainability measure locations (PV panels, heat pumps, etc.).