

Notes of Mid Sussex Design Review Panel – 5 December 2023

Present: Lap Chan (Chair), Michael Alete (Vice Chair), Nick Dexter, Giles Ings, Jenny Lewin, Nick Lomax, James Rae

Apologies: None

In attendance: Anna Kramarczyk (MSDC Urban Designer), Andy Watt (Senior Planning Officer), Roselle Goacher (Urban Designer, Chichester District Council)

Land South Of Hanlye Lane, Longacre Crescent, Cuckfield

Description of the Scheme

Residential development of 55 dwellings with vehicular and pedestrian access, car parking, open space, play space, landscaping and all other associated works (Planning application DM/23/2610)

Presenters

Architect/Designers: Chris Barker, Megan Smith, Jennifer Yon, Nick Francis, Adam King (ECE Planning Ltd)

Landscape Architect: John-Paul Friend (LVIA Ltd)

Developer: Adam Light (Sigma Homes Ltd)

In attendance

Ward councillor: Cllr Malcolm Avery

Case officer: Joseph Swift

The Panel's Comments

The Panel commended an enjoyable presentation and welcomed the non-pastiche architecture, which drew on the richness of Cuckfield's vernacular. Some of the proposed elevations, particularly the contemporary interpretation of a Kentish oast house, were beautiful. The proposal would thereby have a sense of place.

The Panel were not convinced by the severance of the highway in the central part of the site, as this would result in an inefficient layout and cars needing to reverse frequently and in close proximity to a number of dwellings. The Panel also queried the juxtaposition of roads running along both sides of the new central green lung. Consideration could instead be given to incorporating much of this as a shared surface without pavement, and otherwise limiting the use of tarmac elsewhere. Overall, the permeability through the site, connecting existing public rights of way from the west and the north, would be a clear benefit.

The Panel agreed that the landscaping for the scheme would be proportionate and generous, which would filter views of the built forms through the trees from the south. The scheme would be fairly well spaced out and the play spaces (which should be natural play) appropriately sited.

The Panel queried whether the development as a whole was too overwhelming in its elevations, noting that there were 23 different house types for 55 dwellings. They felt that this could be simplified and made more subtle, by relying on a reduced palette of texture and tone, particularly as it was otherwise clear there was sufficient visual interest in the structures. Care should also be taken to ensure that the detailing for the angled / cut brickwork shown in Elevations 1 and 4 would be neatly finished. In addition, there were concerns that the large windows on the south-facing properties

looking out to the roads would result in adverse impacts to future occupants, such as overheating, privacy and headlight nuisance.

The Panel requested consideration be given to the location of the solar panels and air source heat pumps, as well as overheating analysis to inform the final sustainability strategy.

Overall Assessment
Support, with amendments