

Urban Design Observations

To: Development Management, Joseph Swift, Louise Yandell

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

Application ref: DM/25/1986

Date: 03/02/26

Address: Phase 1c, Burgess Hill Northern Arc, Land North And North West Of Burgess Hill, Between Bedelands Nature Reserve In The East And, Goddard's Green Waste Water Treatment Works In The West

Description:

Reserved matters application to consider access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for parcels 1.7, 1.7b, 1.8 and OS1.8 comprising: a) Eastern Neighbourhood Centre: Up to 270 residential dwellings and extra care units; commercial floorspace; the community building, the neighbourhood square, cycle and pedestrian connections, parking and associated infrastructure. b) Eastern Parkland comprising open space, multi-use games areas (MUGA), public art, green circle cycle link and associated infrastructure

Stage: Reserved matters.

The proposal is split into several distinct areas:

- The area to the south of the Eastern Bridge and Link Road comprises an apartment block and a row of terraced houses.
- The area to the north of the Eastern Bridge and Link Road comprises the Neighbourhood Centre with two apartment blocks comprising commercial uses at ground floor with residential above, set around a public square, with car parking to the rear.
- The north of the Neighbourhood Centre comprises detached and semi-detached houses with a pedestrian and cycle link through to the residential parcels beyond to the north and the proposed Secondary School.
- To the east of the site is the Eastern Park, which contains the Green Circle, linking through to the open space parcels beyond to the north and continues southwards adjacent to the residential dwellings to the south. The Green Super Highway extends east-west through this open space, continuing from the southern side of the Eastern Bridge and Link Road, through the Eastern Park onto the bridge leading to Freeks Farm (Oakhurst).
- To the south of the Eastern Park is a Community Building and an extra-care apartment block.
- To the south of the site lies semi-detached and detached dwellings.

This application follows several pre-application meetings and the Design Review Panel consultations, where the layout, massing and the elevations have been evolved and finessed. This proposal has co-ordinated with other land uses – especially the school and the community centre and can be complemented on the focus that was placed on design ambition and detail.

This proposal forms an important part of delivering the Vision and Objectives of the Brookleigh Masterplan. Critical to the success of the scheme was ensuring:

- The Neighbourhood Centre square will be a multi-purpose civic space and will support flexible use.
- A clearly defined and legible gateway that announces arrival into the new Centre.
- The delivery of an urban park that integrates the Northern Arc Avenue and the neighbourhood centre and has a strong, regular built edge.
- That the square is visually revealed to the passers-by of Isaac's Lane in order to increase the viability of the centre.
- Streets and public spaces are structured by strong and consistent building lines.
- A coherent and clearly defined network of streets and spaces, offering a high degree of legibility and permeability.
- Streets that provide direct, safe, and attractive routes for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.
- A variety of routes within the Character Area including well overlooked pedestrian and cycle connections through the park and more intimate links through the residential areas between the centre and the secondary school.
- A high-quality residential environment that accommodates a wide range of residents through a diverse mix of tenures and housing typologies.

The majority of these principles have been successfully achieved, and overall, the proposed layout, massing, and architectural treatment of the elevations are largely in accordance with the Policy DP26 requirements, and the principles set out in the Council's Design Guide.

However, notwithstanding the positive aspects identified, the proposal must be criticised for the following:

- Design of the Eastern Park Frontage which shows a clear departure from the Northern Arc Design Guide with the introduction of the secondary road, parallel to the Eastern Bridge and Link Road. This arrangement introduces a large area of hardstanding immediately in front of new houses, setting them back from the planned building line. This has a knock-on impact on trees that have been approved on this stretch of road and will reduce the appearance of the intended avenue of trees.
- A poorly developed landscape design strategy that fails to articulate the importance of tree form, height, and maturity in shaping the character of the place. The proposals do not demonstrate how trees are intended to complement, frame, and define spaces to the same degree as the surrounding buildings. This is particularly critical in relation to the principal open space and key routes linking different parts of the site. The submitted drawings (street elevations) are inconsistent and frequently show trees that are simply too small. Tree planting at a scale that is inappropriate to the proportions of the spaces and adjacent buildings, undermines the creation of coherent spatial definition and a meaningful overall composition.
- The public square is weakly defined, due to the modest height of the community centre and the adjacent western houses. The gap between buildings to the west fails to provide a coherent edge, undermining the spatial enclosure and the intended legibility and hierarchy of the square.

I would like to see changes to overcome these concerns. However, if recommendation is for an approval, I recommend following conditions:

LANDSCAPE conditions for each parcel in the scheme:

- Detailed soft landscape plans of each parcel in this scheme.
- Details and samples of the hard surface materials.
- Detailed hard landscape plans of each parcel in this scheme. (include materials, finishes and locations of any proposed lighting, street lighting, public art, cycle stands, benches, bins and any other street furniture in picture form). Please ensure that material choices will result in securing a meaningful and context driven landscape design.
- Close up landscape plans and sections (1:50 scale) of the following areas:
 - a) Space between Block C plot and Isaacs Lane.
 - b) Re-designed and improved space between plots 261 -262 (more landscape, carport to bridge the gap between the buildings).
 - c) Front garden of the Extra Care building.
 - d) Car parks to the front and back of Block A and B (ensure any roots are not sitting in the planters but have direct access to the soil under, incorporate seating to the side of the planters along key routes).
 - e) Main square and surroundings (avoid a single, monotone colour in public square; avoid concrete paving and use natural stone).
 - f) Eastern edge of the space adjacent to Block A.
 - g) Space between plots 237 and 244 and Isaacs Lane – there is a need for additional trees to screen exposed rear elevations of plots 237 to 244.
 - h) Southern tip of the site showing the access point to the scheme (please move row of trees along the opening path closer to the pump station to allow for an uninterrupted 'view in' to the scheme).
 - i) Northern tip off the scheme, showing link between parcel P1.7 and OS.1.5/1.6
 - j) Front gardens and access to townhouses fronting EBLR. Incorporate and demonstrate all detail that will prevent cars parking in front of the houses (high kerbs to front gardens, raised planters etc).
 - k) Proposed LEAP.
 - l) Proposed MUGA.

LANDSCAPE conditions for the whole scheme:

- Separate Proposed Site Plan Tree Height Strategy (like already submitted Proposed Site Plan Height Strategy). Propose tree planting that is proportional to surrounding space and buildings. Match the mature height and canopy spread of the trees to the scale of the built environment.
- Separate lighting strategy. Together with specification of the lighting elements.
- Separate signage strategy for the scheme if any signs are required.
- Provide updated boundary treatment plan:
 - a) Notwithstanding the approved details between plots 261 -262 the boundary treatment to the surround of the car park to be changed to brick wall.
 - b) Unit 67-68 Wall boundary change to brick wall.
 - c) Until 11-12 Wall boundary, change to brick wall.
 - d) Add estate fencing to green open space facing Isaacs Lane.
 - e) Update key: show in picture form all boundary treatments, include information of any RAL colours if applicable.
 - f) Update key: include all external railing required to any external steps or ramps, and solid brick wall bins enclosures to the front of the townhouses facing EBLR.
 - g) Increase the height of the wall linking Extra Care and Community Hub on the plan (as shown on the Community Hub drawings).

ARCHITECTURE, conditions:

- Details and samples of the facing materials.
- Updated separate facing material application overall plan (include roof coverings, cladding materials, brick choices together with brick bonding types, RAL colours for windows/doors/any railings/balconies finish in the key).
- 1:50/1:20 scale front/street elevation and section drawings of typical houses including front entrance and canopy, roof and eaves detail, projecting brick detailing and vertically grouped windows, rainwater downpipes (annotate RAL colour where applicable).
- Street Scene G SE_02 Window incorrect on plot 46.
- Purbeck HT_2B_011 – Windows need to be added to both sides not just plot 256.
- Purbeck Type 2 and 5 – No change at the moment and need windows to side.
- Southern plot 262-263– more details to window surround, apply brick detailing to side walls or apply 2nd facing material to first floor (take inspiration from *B5P - Kings (3B5-2) - Type 1 - Detached - Rear Garden - M4(1), NDSS*).
- Plot 247 and 264 add a window at first floor left elevation (note drawing is handed).
- Separate set of drawings for typical carport.

APARTMENTS, conditions:

- Details and samples of the facing materials (including mortar).
- Separate facing material application plan for the apartment blocks A,B,C (include roof coverings, cladding materials, brick choices together with brick bonding types, RAL colours for windows/doors/any railings/balconies finish in the key).
- 1:50 scale plans, elevation, and sections of front and back entrance zones to each apartment building, and separate detailed drawing of the
- 1:20 sections and front elevations of the typical features in each apartment block (shown in context) including shop fronts, louvers, windows, doors and balcony detail and surrounding, entrance canopies/doors, parapet detail, railing, roof/eaves details, projecting brick detailing and vertically grouped windows (as applicable). rainwater downpipes (annotate RAL colour where applicable).
- Affordable block C, southern elevation with balconies requires brick details/texture to be applied.
- Type 4 and 5 units 128 – 132– east elevation: require brick details/texture to be applied.
- Detailed plans and elevations showing location of rainwater downpipes and drainage solutions to roof space, balconies etc. Please note it would be expected that drawing will show how water from balconies and terraces will be collected and redirected.
- Provide Guidelines/Design Code for the future signage strategy. The need for the shop front to have an appropriate architectural relationship both to its 'host' building and to the area must be judged as more important than the need for corporate identity, should the two come in conflict with each other.

EXTRA CARE, conditions:

- Details and samples of the facing materials (including mortar).
- 1:50 scale plans, elevation, and sections of front and back entrance zones to the building, and separate detailed drawing of the
- 1:20 sections and front elevations of the typical features (shown in context) including louvers, windows, doors and Juliet balcony detail and surrounding, entrance canopies/doors, parapet detail, roof/eaves details, projecting brick detailing and vertically grouped windows (as applicable). rainwater downpipes (annotate RAL colour where applicable).
- Redesign: South and North elevations require brick details/texture to be applied and more vertical window grouping to break up the massing.

- Detailed plans and elevations showing location of rainwater downpipes and drainage solutions to roof space etc.

Community Hub, conditions:

- Details and samples of the facing materials (including mortar).
- 1:50 scale plans, elevation, and sections of front and back entrance zones to the building, and separate detailed drawing of the
- 1:20 sections and front elevations of the typical features (shown in context) including windows, doors detail and surrounding, entrance canopies/doors, parapet detail, roof/eaves details, and vertically grouped windows (as applicable). rainwater downpipes (annotate RAL colour where applicable) together with details of a wall linking Hub to the Extra Care building.
- Detailed plans and elevations showing location of rainwater downpipes and drainage solutions to roof space etc.

Sustainability, conditions:

- Provide separate plan showing elements that will be employed in the design of the scheme and location of those elements: heat pumps, EV charging points, water harvesting tanks and any elements of the design that would prevent overheating etc.

Summary and Overall Assessment.

Acceptable with minor changes: