

Notes of Mid Sussex Design Review Panel – 22 January 2025

Present: Mark Folkes (Chair), Jake White, Gavin Sargent, Phil Winch

Apologies: Alice-Rose Hoile

In attendance: Anna Kramarczyk (MSDC Urban Designer), Andy Watt (Senior Planning Officer), Catherine Carden (Planning Officer)

Land at Caldyne Park, Wallage Lane, Rowfant

Description of Scheme

Proposed new 4 bedroom dwelling in the countryside under paragraph 84 of the NPPF) (Current planning application DM/24/2799) (Previously considered by DRP at pre-application stages in July 2021 and July 2023 (DM/21/1345))

Presenters

Architect/Designers: Conrad Howard, Harry Horwood (DD Architects)
Developer: Messrs Williams, Jacobs and Hooper

In attendance

Ware Councillors: Cllr Graham Casella, Cllr Christopher Phillips
Case Officer: Caroline Grist

The Panel's Comments

The Panel really enjoyed the presentation and remained impressed with the core concept. However, they felt that the scheme had not moved forward sufficiently since the pre-application stage and was technically weak. Matching technical delivery to the concept would require simplification, so that its buildability does not result in the concept being watered down.

The scheme as a whole is considered to be too urban and not organic enough. The choice of reclaimed bricks for the building does not relate to the concept, and the extent of potential hardstanding is excessive. The amount of wildflower area is unrealistic, so landscaping should be designed in greater detail.

A fundamental concern was the construction details. There is a high risk of overheating and thermal bridging. Further detail should be provided in relation to:

- Passive house overheating calculations
- Air tightness information
- Entry door details
- Bi-fold door details to ensure that they can follow the faceted walls
- Condensation risk analysis (dew point calculations and details of wall sections)

The Panel felt that the eaves detail is too flat and the gutters and downpipes remain unresolved. The internal experience has not been fully understood, such that the kitchen will have a poor outlook being located in the centre, and an opportunity has been missed to provide a triangular rooflight to reference why the building is the way it is, rather than the current shape which does not correspond.

Overall Assessment

Object. The Panel requested that additional specialists were brought into this scheme, such as a sustainability consultant, landscape architect and structural

engineer, to further develop details of what remains a laudable concept, and take it from 'good' to 'exceptional'.