

Comments for Planning Application APP/22/00439

Application Summary

Application Number: APP/22/00439

Address: The South Downs College, College Road, Purbrook, Waterlooville, PO7 8AA

Proposal: Redevelopment of southern section of site to provide 91 dwellings comprising 42 No. 2, 3 & 4 bed houses and 49 No. 1 & 2 bed flats with associated parking, landscaping, waste and cycle storage. New access from College Road and other associated works.

Case Officer: Arleta Miszewska

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Complainant

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Comments on behalf of Havant Climate Alliance and Havant Friends of the Earth

Of the 30 "affordable homes" on this site, 21 will be for "affordable rent", (80% of market rent) and 9 will be shared ownership. None will be available for social rent. We think this is unacceptable given the length of the housing waiting list for people needing homes for social rent. The majority of affordable homes should be for social rent.

Although we would normally support developments on brownfield land, we have concerns about the use of this site. It is stated that the College no longer needs the extra building nor car park as A level students have moved to Havant College and there has been a growth in distance learning. However we suspect that the land sale is also the result of financial pressure on the college. The extra space should rather have been used to increase provision for adult training which has been severely cut in the last few years. That need is expected to increase with the growth in jobs in new technologies, including the transition to a low carbon economy.

There is no indication that these homes will be sustainable or contribute to net zero carbon emissions. They need to be insulated to the best BREEAM standards. We would like to see homes built to Passivhaus design. They should be gas/fossil fuel free. It is suggested that heating and cooling should be done through electric heat pumps. Ground source rather than air source heat pumps are the most effective and are easier and cheaper to install during construction, rather than retrofitted later. All homes should have solar thermal or PV panels, with roof designs to facilitate this (e.g. avoiding dormer windows), including more with a south facing aspect. Grey water recycling should be integral.

It is good that there has been an improvement to plans for a cycle lane past the site entrance. However only some homes appear to have bike sheds. It is important that all homes have a secure bike shed, to encourage more sustainable travel.

EV charge points need to be available for all residents, or have the infrastructure in place for these to be installed easily, should a household have or get an electric car.

The car park site is already well surrounded on 3 sides (west, south and east) by a narrow corridor of broadleaved woodland and vegetation. This provides a valuable wildlife corridor and screening from the Campdown fields. Trees are to be removed from part of the eastern boundary to facilitate this development. We would like to see all the original trees and vegetation retained rather than replanted. There should also be a wildlife corridor created along the north side of the site with trees and hedging. Where existing planting cannot be retained, we agree that native trees and hedgerows should be planted around the site to enhance wildlife corridors and encourage biodiversity. The provision of wildflower borders will be useful as long as they abut the wildlife corridors. It is important that any trees removed should be mitigated by additional tree planting on site, if this is possible.

We agree with the proposal for hedgehog friendly fencing, plus swift and bat bricks on houses, and bird and bat boxes on trees.

We share the Ecologist's concern that the Amended Ecological Assessment of January 2022 shows no sign that any wildlife surveys have been carried out since then, covering 3 active seasons. In particular he noted the need for badger, bat, and hazel dormouse surveys, all legally protected species. Earlier surveys showed several active badger setts in the banks around the south east corner of the site. Development will destroy most of these setts as well as much of the woodland which could provide a buffer between the setts and the development area. Although some setts are to be closed, this is a well used area for badgers and some may come back. The Ecologist has pointed to possible conflicts between badgers and humans due to them tunnelling under fences and buildings and foraging in gardens. We think that the solution would be to not build houses close to the south east boundary, but to enlarge the woodland area here, to provide a buffer, so the badgers can continue undisturbed in their current setts.

There was evidence of foraging and commuting by 7 species of bats, including myotis and barbastelle, although no roosting sites were found. The site is currently hardly lit. So the development would need to install only bat friendly external lighting.

Although no hazel dormouse or reptiles were found they are known to be present nearby and the woodland corridors could potentially provide habitat.

