

Application Number: APP/23/00488

Address: Land East Of, College Road, Purbrook, Waterlooville

Proposal: Application for mixed use residential development comprising 628 dwellings, community centre, allotments, public open space including play areas, new junction to College Road, related internal access road, footways and cycleways, pumping station and drainage basins.

Vision

The Design and Access Statement provides the vision for the development: to be of high quality, landscape-led, with quality public open spaces, connections, and respect of the existing heritage.

Layout/connections

The internal street layout is clearly landscape-led, designed to minimise the impact of level change.

Pedestrian routes through the site are generally good with the site being fairly permeable. However, there are a few instances where this is not the case and further attention is required, for example:

Further cyclist/pedestrian connection onto the main cycle lane running to the north of the built form, from the turning area between plots 294 and 307, further pedestrian connections between the proposed path to the south and the street, as well as path running south-north within the gas easement area, including pedestrian footpath (or pedestrian priority) from between the fronts of plots 61 -52, as per below:



There also should be a pedestrian connection through the northern part of the retaining wall within the Campdown Hills character area to avoid the need for residents from plots to the south of the wall to walk eastwards (or southwards) in order to access College Road. This is particularly important given the ground levels.

There are bus stops, local shops and community facilities in Crookhorn Lane which could be accessed by foot via Apollo Drive, therefore creating convenient connections onto College Road is of particular importance.

Pedestrian connection onto the South Downs College site – I have indicated on the plan above, in blue, the previously agreed pedestrian connection between this site and the proposed residential development at South Downs College.

DAS mentions an alternative vehicular access for emergency vehicles. I cannot locate it on the submitted layout plans.

There is a good variation in street block shapes and sizes, with some falling below 50 meters and others being much larger. Whilst normally a block size of 80m in length provides a good pedestrian experience, the variety of the different block sizes within the site, would create a permeability and positive pedestrian experience. The pedestrian link running south of plots 511 and 489 is an effective way of breaking up a too large block, which is welcomed. However, as mentioned above, the lengthy block within the Campdown Hills area should be reconsidered, and at least a pedestrian connection provided through the retaining wall.

The permitter block approach with frontages facing onto the streets and backs fronting onto the backs is welcomed. I also note that a significant number of car parking spaces have been located to the sides of the proposed dwellings, which is a positive feature. Some courtyard car parking for dwellings and flatted development is also proposed and this would reduce the visual impacts of a car. This is well balanced with on-plot/frontage parking to ensure that there is “life on the street”.

I also note the shorter pedestrian paths within the eastern part of the development site which incorporate smaller areas of open spaces and planting, which provide convenient, some off-road, pedestrian connections and some vistas into the development or beyond, to the south.

Provision of play areas

The main play area is located to the north of the cycle link and close to the A3M. Play areas should be incorporated within a development so that they are well overlooked and within easy walking distance from majority of dwellings. Similar, the location of the allotments in a close proximity to A3M, where noise levels will be high during daytime, is unlikely to create a quality recreational space for residents. This goes against the Vision for the development which aims to create quality open spaces.

Please note, I am not making any comments on the design of other play areas/SUDs areas within the development as there is still an ongoing internal discussion on the quantum of open space that would be required to be provided.

Hierarchy of streets

The treatment of the Spine Road, especially once it turns southward doesn't create the sense of the street being the main street within the development. The proposal to plant trees on the northern edge of the road should continue southwards, as there are currently no trees proposed within the footpaths. There are very few trees proposed within this part of the development and it's unclear whether they would be located within a land owned by prospective property owners (even if boundary treatment may suggest that this would not be the case). Having the heritage aspects in mind, and the vision expressed in the DAS for the development to be respectful of existing heritage, I feel that the spine road running south

should be wider and should be treated as an avenue. The properties facing onto this road should be of a scale that signals the status of the street, with density getting lower towards the southern boundaries of the application site. This could be achieved without unnecessary loss of too many residential units, by moving the different house types within the site.

Overall, given the size of the development, legibility of the routes is very important to guide walkers alongside the shortest routes ie onto College Road. The DAS mentions the creation of a good number of focal points/spaces for a site of this scale, however, it doesn't provide any examples how the spaces are proposed to be treated, for example, in terms of building scale and heights, architectural articulation, planting, street furniture or any form of street art etc. Based on the current layout plan, it is difficult to understand the intended street hierarchy, the street types and character. The Spine Road is currently too narrow and lack the built form treatment to create a sense of place/ a focal point. The views from the streets leading onto the Spine Road should also be considered to achieve an attractive townscape and pedestrian experience, for example dwellings on the Spine Road that would be seen from subservient streets should be of a scale and architecture that suggests that a road/footpath user approaches the main road within the development.

Character areas

I agree that the Spine Road is the main entrance into the site and sets the tone for the development. Subject to no objection from Historic England, I would suggest that this part of the development contains the largest portion of the 2.5 and 3 storey buildings to reflect the status of the street. However, I don't agree that this character area should extend as far as currently shown, namely, it should not contain the areas on the southernmost boundary of this site. This is because this area is more linked to the adjacent countryside and the built form should respect this by creating looser development with much larger gaps between buildings and lower heights. Moreover, the traffic volume within this part of the site will be significantly less, accessing the southernmost properties only, and so, at this point, the street will not have the same status.

Overall, there is a high number of house types, however, a closer inspection reveals that there is a lot of similarities between the different house types. The proposal requires more variety, in terms of form, roof form, fenestration and detailing. The introduction of elements such as porches, bay windows and balconies for dwellings overlooking the SUDS would help enrich the overall character.

Having in mind the proposed themes of each character area, the varying density within each area should be much more obvious, and so the ratio of built form to greenspace, and gaps between buildings. There are some variations between the different character areas, in terms of dwelling types, elevational treatment and plot size, however, these are not sufficient to achieve an apparent change in character. This links to the need for legibility and the opportunity for using specific buildings as landmarks, for examples at junctions and focal points, to create interesting and recognisable routes through the development.

Building detailed design

The architecture of the proposed development clearly borrows from the local examples, which does not result in a diverse and interesting mix of dwelling types. The proposal would create a new neighbourhood, a development of its own and therefore it should not be restricted to relying on local vernacular but should also inject its own architectural character, especially given its heritage theme expressed in the Vision. The heritage constraint

differentiates this site from other nearby sites and allows for the inclusion of more interesting detail and more unique identity.

The current proposal doesn't promise an exciting townscape experience when walking through the place. There are too many similar streets with straight/monotonous front building lines and little visual interest at the end, I would like to see more projections and set-backs from the front building lines, deflections, attractive vistas and built form that creates surprise, contrasts etc.

Building form

Too many of the house types have rectangular, flat façade beneath two storey eaves creating a too uniform streetscene. The proposed use of some front gables should be supported by (but not limited to) the introduction of 1.5 storey eaves height with dormers or half dormers, as well as different roof forms, such as half hipped and catslide roofs, or combination of both. Deeper and easily readable front projections, curved bay windows, bay windows across the entire frontage and enclosed/part-enclosed front porches would also add more interest to the appearance of the dwellings and the streetscene. The use of different shaped floor plans, i.e. "L" or "T" shaped floor plans should also be considered to break up the pattern of mostly rectangular building footprints.

Transitions between buildings – gentle transitions between building heights and mass are required, including at junctions and corners. This is particularly relevant where blocks of flats are located at junctions or adjacent to dwellings. The proposal contains 2.5 and 3 storey house types, and these should be used to create a good transition. There are instances within the development (i.e. Plot 265, 295) where two storey houses of modest mass have been positioned next to/opposite blocks of flats. These instances should be re-considered.

Elevational treatment

More variation in elevational treatment is needed, such as style of canopies and roofs over porches, variation in garage door design. More consideration should be given to the window style, size and proportion, as currently windows on different house types look too similar.

Semi-detached pairs – there are examples where these have been created using two different house types. Non-matching pairs don't achieve the same visual balance that is found in identical semi-detached houses, which contributes positively to the quality of the street scene. This aspect should be reconsidered.

Architectural detailing – the proposed detailing is very linear, horizontal or vertical. To create interest, other forms of detailing are needed, especially on important buildings (at junctions, focal points). For example, there could be some (roman inspired, but not only) arched detailing, such as arched fanlights above doors (especially on 3 storey elevations), arched hoods above doors. The use of wooden pediments on wooden posts to frame doors and an occasional chimney on most prominent plots would also enrich the overall character. Other detailing could include window architraves, headers and cills, pointed pediments above doors, cornices and bargeboards, etc.

Variation in materials - the DAS says that an "eclectic mix of bricks and render are commonly found across the area, with timber cladding, tile hanging and Tudor boarding acting as a feature". There seems to be an overreliance on cladding, which in itself is not discouraged, but there should be an opportunity to introduce wider palette of external materials to create richness in texture.

Enclosures

Brick walls are shown in DAS as examples from the adjacent areas but there appear to be none in the proposed development. DAS also mentions the provision of timber post & rail fences and brick walls, however, the proposed plans only show details of fence panels and wooden fences. In terms of play space enclosures, plans show chestnut fencing. Will the play spaces be proposed for adoption or managed by a private company? If adoption is considered then details of play spaces surfaces, equipment and enclosures would have to be agreed with HBC (chestnut fencing would unlikely be supported in such instance).

It is unclear from the Landscape Masterplan what is the exact **boundary treatment for the proposed blocks of flats**. In some instances, it appears that hedging would be used, however, there are instances where the distinction between private and public space is unclear. This could lead to insufficient defensible space for the blocks of flats and a loss of privacy for the occupiers of the flats. More detail is required to demonstrate appropriate boundary enclosures can be achieved.

Arleta Miszewska 22/03/024