

Landscape Architect Response

Application No. APP/13/00317

Development: Yachthaven, Hayling Island

Case Officer: Stephen Cantwell

Comments by: Julie Boschi

Date of Comments: 30.05.13

Observation/ Comments:

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment

The LVIA concludes that the visual impact of the proposed development will be limited, and it will not result in harm to the distinctive character of this AONB, stating 'overall this development will have very limited impact on the character of the surrounding countryside.' It states that new planting is proposed to 'filter and soften' views from the water. However, I am concerned about the mass of the proposed buildings, their urban appearance and their visual impact on the site itself as viewed from the harbour and the coastal footpath. The Chichester Harbour Conservancy's Design Guidelines for New Dwellings and Extensions in the AONB advice for the North Hayling Island Coastal Strip character area is for 'use of materials in predominantly muted or darker tones' which 'can help to ensure buildings blend into background and reduce visual impact.' They also advise 'avoid breaking the existing skyline where possible.' The proposed flat roofed houses are in muted colours but they will dominate the site with unsympathetic built form and even if the new planting grows up to soften them, the buildings will still be dominant due to their size in relation to the green gaps between them. There is also a potential problem with the screening because the new householders will not want their views of the water obscured by the new planting, therefore some of the screen planting may be removed after 5 years.

Landscape Strategy Plan

The retention of existing native boundary planting and augmentation with additional native tree, hedge and wildflower planting is welcomed and should meet the aim of the landscaping stated in the Design and Access Statement at 8.3:

'A robust landscape framework is proposed for the residual development areas, formulated to enhance both the ecology and appearance of the site. The introduction of additional tree and shrub planting of native species helps soften the proposal and integrate it into the wider landscape context.'

However, areas of concern are:

- the mown grass path through linear wildflower grassland area between plots 1 and 2 and plots 4 and 5. The benefits of providing public access between private back gardens are not clear.
- the proposed timber bench next to the junction of roads and path is very close to back gardens and could cause a noise nuisance if used by walkers.

- the sinuous hedge along the development edge, the flowering and fruiting trees and the feature trees should all be native species.
- the raised timber decks with steel square mesh front panels that it is proposed to plant with ivy to enclose and screen the areas under the timber decks are of varying heights. The lowest for house type C are 700-900mm height but the highest for house type B are up to 2.5 metres high and the exposed steel mesh will look very ugly until the ivy grows up to cover it. I recommend using a timber detail for these panels instead so that it will look attractive from the beginning but could still be planted up to provide extra greenery if required.

The Havant Landscape Character Assessment can be found at
<http://www-old.havant.gov.uk/havant-7364>

See the Hampshire Landscape checklist :
<http://www.hiow.gov.uk/offnet/hlg/47340%20Oce%20Checklist.pdf>

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