



The Midhurst Society

Charity number 268565

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01730-815238

To Metis Homes
Consultation Team

Copy of email dated 20 May 2020

**Re: Proposed housing development
at the former brickworks and WSCC depot site on Bepton Road**

Dear Sirs,

We would like to respond to your invitation for feedback on your proposal for housing development on this site.

The Midhurst Society welcomes this proposal to provide housing on what appears to be a very awkward site, and commends Metis Homes for a creative approach. We have seen the quality of your work on sites at Wyndham Mews and King Edward VII Hospital, and feel sure that you could provide an attractive development on Bepton Road.

Whilst we have no objection in principle, the currently proposed housing density, which has increased in your latest proposal, is in our view too high and the development is therefore unacceptable. The density problem is particularly evident in the northern parcel, where a lesser density would allow a more phased transition from the housing estate to the Common. This would create greater "Variety and Joy" for both the residents and those using the housing estate to access the Common.

The creation of courtyards and the like in the southern parcel, with its open and wooded areas within the estate, may help relieve the congested feeling. However, there is a sense of overcrowding in the north, especially when car parking is considered in areas separated from the housing. This has been seen in other parts of Midhurst, where it has also been observed that people prefer to park as close as possible to their property. On this site, the green approaches to the Common would be compromised. A partial solution might be, in conjunction with reducing

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density in the northern parcel, the greater use of parking spaces under the flats and houses. This may then allow more space for working from home, bike storage and community use. It could also allow for greater open spaces for relaxation; an amenity that has been valued during Lockdown in other parts of Midhurst.

In addition, the high density would result in greater water run-off, thus increasing the possibility of access to the estate being prevented due to flooding. It should be noted that flooding in Bepton Road has been experienced in the past, and heavy rain-fall resulting from ongoing climate change makes this a genuine concern. Indeed, this is recognised by the inclusion of an emergency access from the estate onto Station Road. It is therefore very surprising that, despite it being a requirement of the SDNP Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document, there is no reference in your proposals to the use of permeable pavings - nor to 10% of roofs being green roofs. Similarly, there is no reference to green walls, which could assist considerably in blending the housing into the common. nor rain gardens.

Also, the proposed 3-lane access into the estate and the recycling centre will inevitably run into problems when the recycling centre traffic backs up into Bepton Road, as it does on a regular basis. The recycling centre is an essential amenity for the local community and access to it and the estate should be redesigned to ensure access at all times to both.

This is a "Large Residential Development" as defined by the SDNP Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document and as such, all the matters required or encouraged by Appendix 4 – Sustainability Checklist should be included in the development. This includes such matters as improved energy efficiency, use of green energy sources, car charging points for every property and use of FSC timber for (preferably) timber frame construction and (at least) window frames and doors. There is little or no compliance with these requirements evident in your current proposals. In fact, in your latest proposals the total area of green roof space appears to have reduced.

Finally, we accept and welcome that many, though not all of the above issues have been raised by the SDNPA in their comments on your pre-application submissions, but we note they have yet to be included by you.

We would recommend refusal of any planning application in connection with the development proposal unless the above issues are addressed.

Sincerely

Harvey Tordoff

Vice Chairman

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