

# ONLINE CONSULTEE RESPONSE ON PLANNING APPLICATION 21/11201

Location	ORCHARD GATE, NOADS WAY, DIBDEN PURLIEU, HYTHE SO45 4PD
Received Date	27 September 2021
Objection received from	NFDC Landscape Team

Thank you for consulting the Environmental Design Team regarding the application.

After reading the supporting documents and carrying out a desk study and a site visit on the 31/08/2021 I have the following comments.

## 1. The Site

- a. Noads Way is characterised by large, detached dwellings set back in wide plots with consistent boundary features of tall hedges, sometimes behind post and rail fencing, interspersed with large mature trees, that provide a sylvan character distinctive to this part of Dibden Purlieu. Each dwelling has a green landscape setting. This is fundamental to the local landscape character.
- b. The site is partially visible to the public from the highway through glimpsed views from gaps in the mature planting and at the single gated access. An orchard and paddock are visible running parallel to Noads Way breaking the street scene rhythm of detached properties.
- c. Typical plot widths on Noads Way suggest that the site is approximately two plot widths with a backland area associated. All of which currently contribute to landscape character, the principle of development for the site is accepted and has been assessed through a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Nevertheless, landscape character is relevant in assessing appropriateness.

## 2. Layout

- a. The proposed layout appears over developed and unsympathetic to the local context and urban grain. This can be seen when comparing the proposal on plan with the local typology of large 1½ and 2 storey detached houses in green settings. Each existing house is set back from the street by a front garden and has a large rear garden that backs onto others, interspersed with large mature trees. Conversely the proposed dwellings are predominantly terraced or paired with no front garden space or in many cases no greenery at all. Rear gardens are all rather confined to absolute minimums being less than 10m for the most part and even as small as 5.7m which is inadequate for family use and particularly inadequate to respect the context and contribute to the landscape quality.
- b. Dwelling 19 appears to have the smallest garden with the boundary set approximately 5.7metres from the building. To be appropriate for the local distinctiveness, gardens would need to be large enough to contain some small trees or larger shrubs. Whilst an efficiency of land use is expected, respecting local context

might be half the typical local garden size.

- c. Space for preserving the existing trees which currently contribute to the character of the area is lacking. Once the existing trees reach their maturity and start to decline there is nothing proposed to retain the landscape character and local distinctiveness that they give.
- d. Backland development needs to be subservient and sympathetic in scale to the street frontage and its local context. The street frontage on Noads Way suggests a variety of 1, 1½ and 2 storey dwellings in larger plots. The adjacent backland development Lime Close is a clear precedent of being sympathetic in building height with its local context. The close contains a mix of 1 and 1½ storey buildings with hip roofs to reduce the visual impact and impacts on the local distinctiveness. The proposal shows a mix of 2 - 2½ storey buildings with exposed gable ends and half hip roofs. This is unacceptable in the local context and does not comply with policy ENV3 or ENV4.
- e. Whilst there is no expectation that a development should adhere rigidly to local typologies, the principle of respecting such context is of fundamental importance within the Local Plan policy ENV3 and ENV4. Departures from local character will need to be justified through design and a demonstration of how the development is appropriate, contributing positively to local distinctiveness as set out in policy D1 in the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The proposal is clearly a departure of some magnitude and although some assessment of context has been undertaken there is no link, so no such demonstration is made.
- f. The proposal lacks justification as to how it links with the local distinctiveness. Section 1.3 in the Design and Access Statement describes the local character and place as being 'informed more by the substantial tree and hedgerow planting than the buildings.' This sentence shows an understanding and acknowledges the local distinctiveness, but the supporting documents fail to explain how the design responds to this analysis and do not meet the requirements of policy ENV3, ENV4 and D1.
- g. As explained through the Housing Design, Density and Character SPD, context and character are not related solely to the buildings, the spaces such as amenity and gardens are often of even greater impact on local distinctiveness. Character isn't always what we see from the street but is important to those working or residing in the place that is created.

### 3. Density

- a. The site was identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment in June 2019 and forms part of Appendix 3: Hythe. This review informed the local plan 2016-2036. The site is referenced as SHLAA\_HYT004. The assessment concludes there is potential for development in the site but with an estimated housing number noted as 13. The application proposes 37 dwellings, 24 more dwellings than was estimated as part of the review. This is a clear departure and evidence of the proposals overdeveloped character.

### 4. Street Elevation

- a. When reviewing the submitted Character Views and Street Elevation the dwellings 1-6 will have a more prominent building line along Noads Way than the neighbouring dwelling frontages. The proposal is approximately 8metres closer to road than the Neighbouring Purlieu Cottage southwest of the site and is approximately 11metres closer to the street than the neighbouring Chilgrove dwelling in the northeast. With the closer proximity to Noads Way and increased height/mass of dwelling 1-6, the proposal will break the rhythm of the existing Noads Way frontages. A 2½ storey building within the Noads Way frontage is not justified, the local context suggests a variety of 1, 1½ and 2 storey dwellings in larger plots. The elevation shows something that is clearly at odds with the context. This will have a prominent and

detrimental impact on the existing street scene and its local distinctiveness.

#### 5. Play Provision

- a. I note the site is 0.9 hectares. Residential sites over 0.5 hectares must provide on-site designed play or at least doorstep play provision in accordance with policy ENV3. Please refer to the draft Design Guidance for Outdoor Play Space document being developed by NFDC. The national standards ask that schemes over 15 dwellings should include a Local Area of Play (LAP). Currently play space has not been provided and there does not appear to be room to include any.

#### 6. Parking Standards

- a. When reviewing the proposed parking provision with the NFDC Parking Standards SPD it does not fully meet the requirements. There are 64 proposed spaces in total with 7 spaces proposed as visitor spaces, leaving 57 spaces for resident parking. When reviewing the size and number of proposed dwellings with Table 1: Residential Standards from the Parking Standards SPD the requirements are not met. Given that the scheme is already short on parking, the parking illustrated demonstrates almost complete areas of hardstanding in the parking courtyards. The parking proposal offers very few trees and very little opportunity to add greenery even to dwelling frontages where personalisation will be important. These parking spaces do not achieve good landscape design and do not meet policy ENV3 and ENV4.
- b. The D&AS explains in section 2.7 'secure cycle storage will be provided within the garden area'. Given the confined space proposed for the rear gardens this does not look possible for the most part as the gardens are to small and the access to get to them is restricted.

#### 7. Public space

- a. The proposed 'Green' appears to function largely as an area for SuDS. The proposal shows a surface water swale, but the green has little space to function as anything other than a swale. Due to the lack of space to act as a multi-functional space the proposed 'Green' does not meet the requirements of the policy ENV3.
- b. The yards are almost unadulterated areas of hardstanding. There is no room for planting in front of the dwellings which can be personalised or keep people and cars from front windows. The lack of space and proximity of people and cars will create an uncomfortable street with few opportunities to create a sense of responsibility and ownership.

#### 8. Conclusion

- a. The application has failed to meet the requirements of Policy ENV3 and ENV4 of the Adopted Local Plan 2016-2036 or Policy D1 from the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan due to the following reasons:
  - The new development does not provide adequate appreciation of the unique character, identity, and context of the area and what is valued locally.
  - The scale, height, density, and layout proposed is not a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness. Any visual intrusion, overlooking, shading, noise, light pollution, or other potential adverse impacts on local character have not been presented.
  - Although the proposal does provide a central 'Green' it is inadequate and overall has poor public and private amenity spaces proposed.
  - Carparking is not well integrated; cycle parking in rear gardens is not possible for the most part as

the gardens are too small and the access to get to them is restricted.

- Policy D1 from the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Development Plan asks all new development will be required to seek exemplary standards of design and architecture, to demonstrate:
  - That local character and context has been fully recognised,
  - That the proposed design responds to it. And
  - That what is valued locally is respected.
- b. None of the above in the Neighbourhood Development Plan are demonstrated.
- c. The character the overdeveloped proposal presents can be seen by the requirements in policies ENV3 and ENV4 not being met as listed in the above points. Inadequate public space, confined garden size, poorly integrated parking and the unsympathetic relationship with the local distinctiveness are all results of the overdeveloped nature.
- d. An objection to the application is recommended.