



Appeal by Persimmon Homes South Coast for:  
Development comprising 206 dwellings at  
Land East of Crofton Cemetery and West of  
Peak Lane, Stubbington, Fareham

LPA REF: P/20/0522/FP

## Summary of Proof

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## **1. The Principal Urban Design Issues**

- 1.1 This evidence provides a commentary on national and local design policy, an appraisal of the appeal site context and an assessment of the appeal scheme against the context and issues raised by the design related reasons for refusal. The appeal scheme has evolved through an iterative process with Council Officers. It has been prepared by a development team with experience of delivering quality schemes.
- 1.2 From the outset, Persimmon Homes has worked with Fareham Council Officers to produce a planning application consistent with the aspirations of policy and the site.
- 1.3 The Case Officer's Committee Report covers the design of the appeal scheme with regard to the policy and design framework in depth. It draws upon the comments of other officers, third parties and others.
- 1.4 It is reasonable to expect that when recommending the appeal scheme for approval, the Case Officer came to an informed and balanced view. I concur with the Officer's support for the appeal scheme.
- 1.5 The site is identified in the emerging Local Plan Policy HA54 as having an indicative yield of 180 dwellings. Furthermore, the Main Statement of Common Ground para 5.1 states "it is agreed the site is suitable, in principle for housing with an indicative yield of 180 dwellings". The parameter plans submitted with the latest revised application are no different to the parameter plans associated with the refused application.
- 1.6 The following summary briefly describes; -
- Context and Character
  - Design Evolution
  - Design Proposals and Quality
  - Response to Reasons for Refusal
  - Summary Conclusion

## **2. Context and Character**

- 2.1 Considering local context, the site is on the edge of a defined settlement.
- 2.2 The housing to the east, south and west varies in age, none of which pre-dates the 1950s, other than St Edmund's Crofton Old Church and a manor house to the east of this.
- 2.3 The vast majority of the existing housing has been arranged around a series of cul-de-sacs connect to key movement routes such as May's Lane and Titchfield Road. Immediately adjacent to the site to the east is a more recent residential development at Summerleigh Walk featuring a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached housing.

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- 2.4 The majority of existing properties in the surrounding locality are two storey.
  - 2.5 There are some two and half storey homes on Summerleigh Walk which is immediately adjacent to the site to the east and, within a wider area, bungalows for example on Sumar Close, further east.
  - 2.6 The established character of the area is typical of an edge of settlement location.
  - 2.7 In respect of the application site, this is on the edge of the existing settlement with Crofton Cemetery to the west which, whilst creating a more open environment, is a significantly influenced and manicured landscape rather open countryside. The landscape edges to the site are important defining characteristics of the site which provide filtering views.

### **3. Design Evolution**

- 3.1 Pre-application discussions were held in respect of application No1 for 302 units. The number of units was reduced to 261 dwellings and a planning application submitted. This was refused in August 2019 with the council refusing to accept amended plans to address issues in response to urban design comments.
- 3.2 Following this a revised application was prepared which was the result of substantial pre-application discussions.
- 3.3 Pre-application discussions were held in respect of a second revised application, with the basis for this revised scheme being the urban design comments received from Council's Urban Design Officer during the first planning application.
- 3.4 The 2<sup>nd</sup> revised application sought to follow and take on board all the design advice and comments provided by the Council's Urban Design Officer.
- 3.5 The Urban Design Officers schematic layout showed perimeter blocks with two POS areas that correspond in positioning with the refused layout.
- 3.6 Despite the close alignment with the Council's Urban Design Officer sketch layout, the second application was refused.

### **4. Design Proposals and Quality**

- 4.1 The design proposals will create a high quality and beautiful environment for residents and visitors alike. In particular the use of good architecture, informed by a thorough understanding of the positive aspects of the wider locality, alongside an attractive and legible layout and significant landscaping throughout the development, ensure the proposals will create a better quality of place in which to live and contribute towards wider sustainability objectives and in addition to providing a strong sense of place.

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4.2 The design proposals include the following:

- Strong east/west greened streets provide clear views to the western boundary edge adjacent to the cemetery and Oakcroft Lane.
- The inclusion of incidental landscape green spaces will provide an interesting variety, as orientation spaces and stopping points to chat to neighbours or to sit, relax and play. Within a post Covid world these spaces are invaluable within any new development.
- A Surrounding green edge – for walking, recreation and play, a chance to meet neighbours, exercise or walking the dog. The proposed development layout maintains the green edges to the site and incorporates an area of SuDS at the southern extent of the site. Green buffers to the north, south and west ensure an appropriate design approach to edge conditions and relationship with the cemetery to the west, Oakcroft Lane and existing housing to the east.
- Sustainability – high quality SuDS ponds and native tree planting throughout the site to attract wildlife and enhance local biodiversity, above all creating a very attractive place to live.
- Adoptable streets and private drives are softened and punctuated by high quality materials, providing an interesting variety and legibility to the ‘spaces’ created between buildings.
- Built form – a varied mix of appropriate house types meet the local housing need.
- A materials palette is sympathetic and complementary to the local area, ensuring these design proposals fit well within the locality.
- Development parcels are arranged in outward facing ‘perimeter blocks’ providing excellent surveillance and activity at street level providing safety, security and surveillance on the street using specific corner turn house types.
- Vistas are enhanced with interesting view stops of specific building groupings or landscape features and/or spaces.
- A varied density across the layout using specific house types will also provide a strong sense of place and legibility for residents and visitors alike.
- The proposed elevations and streetscenes alongside specific building materials have been carefully considered and selected and is informed by a thorough understanding of the site and the surrounding context.

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- A mixture of street types are proposed with single sided streets and a rural lane approach on the western edge of the site combined with shared surface streets within development blocks.
  - A Building for Healthy Life Assessment has been completed and an assessment against the design criteria contained within the National Design Guide which is included in the Design Analysis (Appendix A) and which supports the appeal.

## **5. Response to Design Reasons for Refusal**

5.1 The following briefly describes the Council's design reasons for refusal and objective third party response: -

5.2 The Council's reasons for refusal No 3 and 4 are set out below:

- iii) the introduction of dwellings in this location would fail to respond positively to and be respectful of the key characteristics of the area, in this countryside, edge of settlement location, providing limited green infrastructure and offering a lack of interconnected green/public spaces.*
- iv) the quantum of development proposed would result in a cramped layout and would not deliver a housing scheme of high quality which respects and responds positively to the key characteristics of the area.....*

5.3 The Council's Statement of Case summarises these reasons into 3 key issues:

- Issue No 1 - The application of policy DSP40 (criteria (ii) and (iii))
- Issue No 2 - The impact of the proposed scheme on the character and appearance of the countryside (Dealt with by Mr Seymour); and,
- Issue No 3 - Whether the site design and layout respond positively to the key characteristics of the locality, and would deliver a high quality housing scheme – including consideration of the adequacy of green infrastructure; the interconnection, or otherwise, of green/public spaces; and whether the proposal responds appropriately to the edge of settlement location.

### ***Whether the proposed housing would respond positively to and be respectful to the key characteristics of the area***

5.4 The proposed layout along with the proposed house types respond both the form, density and urban grain of the surrounding locality. The proposed elevation treatment for individual dwellings and streetscenes also draw upon positive local character to ensure an attractive

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neighborhood. The inclusion of landscape spaces and edges is also an important element and further evidence of responding to the edge of settlement location of the site.

***Whether the proposals would provide sufficient green infrastructure***

- 5.5 There is clear evidence included within the Design Analysis (Appendix A) to demonstrate how the refused layout will create a series of interconnected green spaces.
- 5.6 A key driving principle of the layout is to ensure housing relates well to the surrounding green spaces and ensure a 'sequence of spaces' including tree lined streets and green spaces within the development. The careful consideration of quantum and quality of green space ensure publicly accessible 'interconnected green space', contradicting the Council's reason for refusal No 3.
- 5.7 Green buffers around the edge of the new housing are connected to these streets. This approach is in line with para 13 of the NPPF, which identifies the contribution trees can make to the character and quality of urban environments, and encourages new streets which are tree lined.

***Whether the development would result in a cramped layout***

- 5.8 The density comparator table within the Design Analysis (Appendix A) compares the density of the proposed development with adjacent areas. The proposed density is 29 dph, this compares to densities of 48 dph at Summerleigh Walk, 30 dph at Country View and 22 dph at Penbury Road. Across the proposed development, different densities have been used to help respond to the edge conditions of the site, looking onto open countryside to the west and to create distinctive character areas thereby ensuring variation to street scene and a quality design approach. The density comparator indicates that the refused application will not create a cramped layout with a density, which in several instances, is lower than surrounding areas.

***Whether the proposed development would deliver a quality development***

- 5.9 The design solution is a context and site specific solution to the unique setting of the site which will result in a high quality development that fulfills the design objectives and requirements set out within national design guidance such as the National Design Guide, Building for a Healthy Life and local design guidance. The relationship with the adjacent existing residential areas and landscape setting including Crofton Cemetery to the east and Oakcroft Lane to the north have helped influence the bespoke design approach in respect of the layout and proposed architectural response
- 5.10 The implementation of the refused planning application will have a positive influence on the overall quality and character of the area, introducing townscape and homes which draw upon the positive elements of the locality and creating a high-quality environment for residents and visitors. The development will be a positive improvement in respect of the layout and overall contribution in terms of urban design.

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***Whether the proposed development responds positively to the key characteristics of the area***

- 5.11 The proposed development has been thoroughly informed by a thorough understanding of character and context as evidenced in the Design Analysis document and DAS. A landscape led approach combined with a robust approach to the detailed design of dwellings and spaces between, will create a development that responds positively to the site and wider area.
- 5.12 The design proposals include many elements of good urban design and placemaking, with the 'sum of its parts' providing a high-quality layout specific to this location, creating a beautiful place.

**6. Summary Conclusion**

- 6.1 In my opinion, the appeal scheme is a well-designed and contextual proposal. In my view, the reasons for refusal referred to in this summary Proof of Evidence are not justified. The appeal scheme is of a high standard of urban design and the requirements and guidance on good design have been met. It is demonstrable that the design has been carefully considered with reference to architectural forms and details found within the local context to ensure that this will result in a high-quality scheme which will enhance the character and appearance of this area.
- 6.2 The design and layout is the result of very careful and sensitive design approach utilising a 'landscape led' approach to create a high quality and memorable place. The design solution is a context and site specific solution to the unique setting of the site which will result in a high quality development that fulfills the design objectives and requirements set out within national design guidance such as the National Design Guide, Building for a Healthy Life and local design guidance. The relationship with the adjacent existing residential areas and landscape setting including Crofton Cemetery to the east and Oakcroft Lane to the north have helped influence the bespoke design approach in respect of the layout and proposed architectural response.
- 6.3 The design proposals include many elements of good urban design and placemaking, with the 'sum of its parts' providing a high-quality layout specific to this location, creating a suitably beautiful place.





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