

From: Alex Bateman [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 December 2018 11:28
To: Simon Davis [REDACTED]
Subject: Planning Consultation AL/57/18/OUT

Simon,

I have naturally been tracking the application and thank you for your patience as we have been engaging with your design consultant.

I noted on the application that there was a representation from someone accusing you of “faffing around” by engaging with us. It’s a real shame that a Planning Consultant would choose to use such language, when planning should all be about being proactive and having these discussions.

I am pleased and encouraged that we have been able to have such a dialogue, as opposed to shutting doors and having shouting matches.

That aside, I sat down with the scheme architect to review the comments received on design/layout and below is their detailed response.

Perhaps we could all sit down in the New Year to discuss.

Our responses below are intended to follow the chain of dialogue established from the numbered points of our e-mail 5th November. We have interpreted the consultant’s comments as an invitation to continue a dialogue, recognising that we have yet to clarify some of the intent of our proposals. Our responses aim to provide this clarity and to hopefully be persuasive.

1. Solar Gain

The new supplemental sketch is intended to clarify our intention for the southerly boundary treatment of the private residential gardens. This boundary is heavily landscaped with the run of rain gardens flowing to the pond. This forms a threshold, or buffer, which helps establish privacy to the households from the gardens and thereby justifies maintenance of a relatively low boundary treatment to the community green itself. As a result the houses should still passively survey the common areas. Paths and back gates directly link the common areas to the houses as can be most clearly read in the landscaping master plan by Lizard, also attached to this e-mail.

The apartments are all dual aspect and have glazing to the rear, for the benefit of solar gain, but also to the north for passive surveillance and interaction with the community green. It is accepted that the higher proportion of glazing to the north will not deliver the same degree of fabric performance we believe that this is outweighed by the more significant benefits to the overall scheme, as described previously. The apartments form a visual backdrop to the communal landscape setting and an acoustic baffle to the industry beyond. These measures ensure the quality of the communal setting as the real heart of the proposal which binds the different parts.

The southern boundary has a very dense existing mature tree screen which will be maintained for the purposes of privacy and we have intentionally set the apartments away from this boundary to establish car access and parking.

The southerly aspect from the apartments will have a tree screened view and provide solar gain BUT the dual aspect means that preferential views, free from noise, are afforded to the communal green.

Access to and from these apartments is clearly defined in their links to the communal green which is focus for amenity provision. The landscaped margins to the perimeter of the apartments have ornamental planting (see Landscape Masterplan) so reinforcing the character of the communal green for common activities.

Within the wider context we find that wall materials of brick and render are prevalent. However we also find a wide variation of colours with no dominant or consistent material use which could be echoed. Older buildings in the setting use slate whilst newer developments favour brown or red concrete tiles. We have sought to create a new typology to suit the specific context of our site and with passive solar gain in mind. So, naturally, our proposed homes will differentiate themselves from those in the wider setting. We have sought to use brick and render on walls to mitigate such differences, particularly to the houses which are more readily viewed in glimpses from the access road. The apartments are screened from view within the depth of the site plan, adjacent to the more commercial uses, and use alternative materials to suit their function within the overall scheme.

2. Communal Public Realm

I hope the opening point is clarified in the response above with the new supplemental drawings.

With regards to sweep path for various vehicles we must defer to our transport consultant who has already undertaken this exact same analysis. However I can respond to the intent here: the two 'no through' road branches are for cars alone and intended for the residents and their guests. The linking route is disguised through careful specification of landscape products (refer to Landscape Masterplan) and facilitates the very occasional movement of larger vehicles such as fire appliances more freely around the site. The large radius turns also facilitate these movements.

We have talked of the quality of the apartments above and the dual aspect is key. We have also previously mentioned our understanding that RSLs have stated, in our experience, for clear differentiation in the operation of their properties. This said the blocks are all designed with the same care and specification and share access to the same common facilities.

3. Non Rectilinear

The existing site only has one point of access to the public realm. Three of the boundaries are to private land. The fourth, along Lidsey road itself, has no existing pavement to the local authority owned verge and there, therefore, seems little opportunity for greater permeability to this boundary. Indeed we believe that greater connection would not be desirable because it offers no greater level of access to the amenities of the wider settlement and would open access to a heavily trafficked and noisy road.

We have instead created a strong connection through the internal landscape plan to reinforce the legibility of the single access point.

We also attach our drawing '103 – Proposed Block Plan' which was intended to demonstrate the relative development patterns and densities found within the immediate setting. We believe that this diagram supports our statement that we have sought to adhere to the 'grain' of the context. The housing around Woodgate Close, south of Woodgate Road, provides for just 21 houses on a similar site area.

Consultant's Closing Comments

We hope that the above responses, with attachments, provide greater clarity of both intent and of the challenges we have sought to meet and positively address.

SHW

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Director of Planning

for and on behalf of Stiles Harold Williams Partnership LLP

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