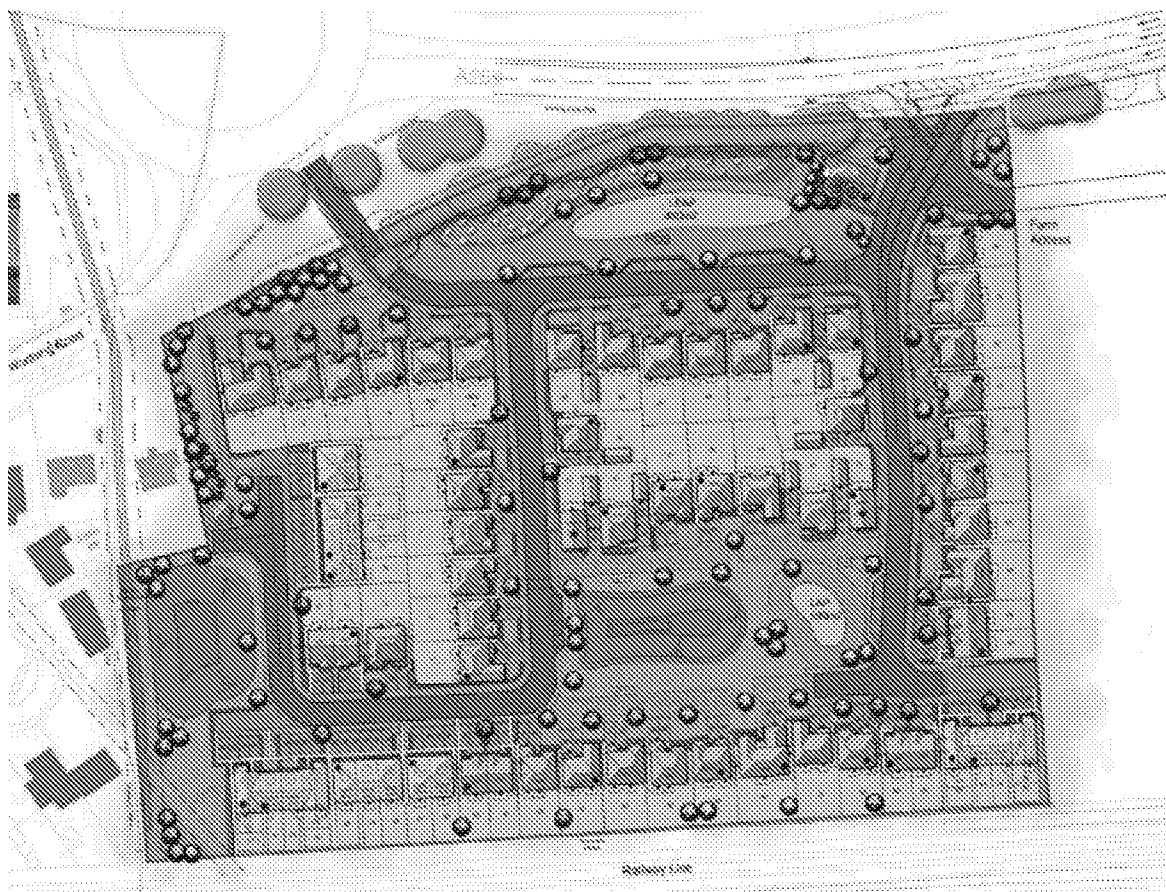


Development at Roundstone Farm, Angmering

A/168/21/PL Erection of 76 No. dwellings, means of access, public open space, play areas, associated infrastructure & landscaping. Land South Of Littlehampton Road and East of Worthing Road Angmering BN12 6PN





Proposal

A/168/21/PL is a full application for 76 dwellings within the Local Gap between Angmering, East Preston and Ferring. It is outside but adjacent to the settlement boundary of East Preston. To the east of the site is properties accessed from Saxon Close and the Old Worthing Road within East Preston. To the north is the A259 and roundabout. To the south is the railway line with further fields beyond. To the west is the remainder of the arable field and Roundstone Farm.

A new 'left in, left out' access is proposed at the western end of the site and shows a spur leading to the remainder of the field to the west, annotated 'farm access'. The existing farm access onto the roundabout is retained as 'entry only' for site vehicles. The internal road layout also includes a spur leading to the western boundary at the southern end of the site.

Existing vegetation along the A259 appears to be retained except where removal is necessary to facilitate access. Open space is proposed on this side of the development to mitigate road noise. Further open space is proposed adjacent to the existing properties to the east and within the site. A 3.2 metre acoustic fence is proposed along the boundary with the railway line. The western boundary with the remainder of the field is mostly proposed to comprise a native hedgerow along the rear boundary of new houses.

The principle of development on this site

Currently there is a strong eastern settlement boundary to Angmering and East Preston formed by the A280 to the east of Angmering and the continuation of this line to the south of the A259 to form the eastern boundary of East Preston. The importance of the gap between these two settlements and Ferring was recognised by its identification in the Arun Local Plan 2018 (Policy SD SP3). In the supporting text to this policy it says:

“It is important to retain the settlement structure of Arun District and recognise the value of gaps between settlements for preventing the coalescence of individual settlements and for retaining the separate identity and amenity of settlements...A clear break between settlements helps to maintain a “sense of place” for residents of, and visitors to, the communities on either side of the gaps. This can be assessed using measures such as inter-visibility (the ability to see one edge from another) and; intra-visibility (the ability to see both edges from a single point)...The designation of gaps is not intended to rule out all development but to allow for appropriate, small scale development, which is in keeping with the rural nature of the gaps. Development in the gaps must be appropriately sited and designed to minimise the impact on the openness of the gap”.

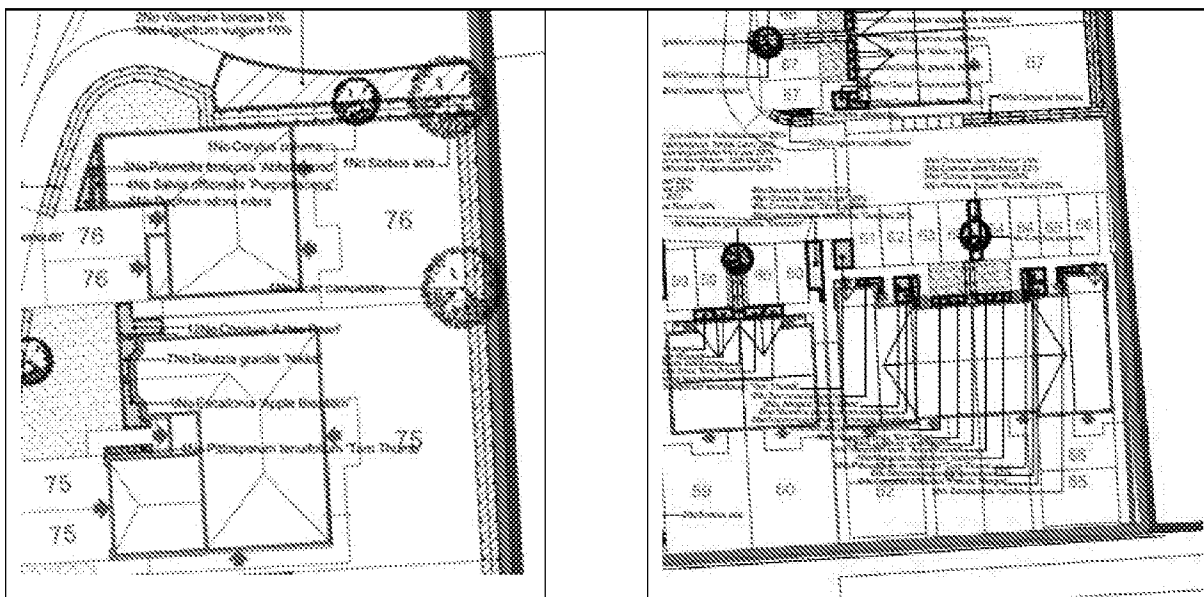
The gap at this point is only 712 metres wide, and the application site would reduce this by about 200 metres or 28%. In addition, the breaching of Policy SD SP3 is likely to set a precedent which would result in further incursions elsewhere in the gap and/or to the immediate east of the current site. This probability is heightened by the proposed layout of the development which clearly facilitates future development in the remainder of the field to the east. This would effectively subsume Roundstone Farm into East Preston, reducing the settlement gap to only 230 metres.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment considers that users of the footway / cycleway past the site entrance and drivers on the A259 “will have views into the site and are likely to experience the most noticeable visual change”. This will adversely affect their perception of the gap between the two settlement areas and the separate identity of the villages.

The details of the development

The somewhat unusual access arrangements to the site are proposed because Roundstone Farm apparently retains the right to use the access directly onto the roundabout, in particular for large farm vehicles. Whilst physical measures are proposed to discourage other motorised users from exiting onto the roundabout it is hard to see how these will be successful whilst still retaining access in both directions for large farm vehicles. It would make more sense for this access point to be blocked by a locked gate or bollards at sufficient distance from the roundabout to allow farm vehicles to park off the highway whilst the barrier was unlocked.

The proposed eastern boundary of the site is poorly designed with back gardens adjacent to this boundary and little room left for the proposed native hedgerow. The very limited depth of the rear gardens and the understandable wish of future occupants to gain countryside views is likely to result in this hedge being kept low in height or even removed altogether. In the south-west corner no hedge is proposed at all and the flank wall of plot 66 immediately abuts the boundary. As a result, views of the development from the east are likely to be prominent and detrimental to the character of the countryside, as well as adding to the intra-visibility between the new edges of the remaining gap.



The proposed house types are standard and have little relationship with the character of Angmering or East Preston. No reference is made to the Angmering Character Assessment (Character Area North and South Angmering is adjacent to the site) or the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan Character Areas 3 and 5 adjacent to the site. The predominantly detached houses result in a homogenous but broken street scene which could be any Redrow development anywhere in the country. No information has been provided about any sustainability credentials of these new homes.



Objection to A/168/21/PL

- The site is outside of the Built Up Area boundaries of Angmering and East Preston and therefore its development for dwellings would be contrary to Arun Local Plan policy SD SP2 and Angmering Neighbourhood Plan policy HD3. The adverse impacts of this development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, as set out below.
- The site is within the East Preston to Ferring Local Gap and its development, including the proposed new access, would significantly erode this gap contributing to the coalescence of these settlements and detracting from their separate identity and amenity contrary to Arun Local Plan Policy SD SP3.
- In addition, the breaching of Policy SD SP3 is likely to set a precedent which would result in further incursions elsewhere in the gap and/or to the immediate east of the current site. This probability is heightened by the proposed layout of the development which clearly facilitates future development in the remainder of the field to the east.
- The proposed layout of the development results in an unsympathetic edge with the countryside / remaining gap to the east which will not be adequately mitigated by the proposed hedge given the limited space provided for it and the pressure from future occupiers to reduce or remove the hedge. In the south-west corner no hedge is proposed at all and the flank wall of plot 66 immediately abuts the boundary. As a result, views of the development from the east are likely to be prominent and detrimental to the character of the countryside, as well as adding to the intra-visibility between the new edges of the remaining gap contrary to Policies C SP1 and SD SP3.
- The proposed design of the new housing does not reflect the character and distinctiveness of the area as defined in the Angmering Neighbourhood Plan or the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, no information has been provided about the sustainability credentials of the proposed new homes. The proposed design is therefore contrary to Angmering Neighbourhood Plan policy HD6: Housing Layout & Design:
 - “Proposals for new development should demonstrate high quality design, reflect local distinctiveness, and seek to incorporate local design features evident in buildings in the surrounding area.
 - Development that seeks to meet the highest possible standards of construction Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards or equivalent will be strongly supported”.
- The proposed retention of an access point directly onto the roundabout is likely to result in highway safety issues given the volume of vehicles using this roundabout. The requirement to keep this access available for farm vehicles should be achieved with a locked gate or bollards rather than the proposed measures which are unlikely to be successful in preventing access onto the roundabout by vehicles from the site.