

Urban Design Comment Form:

RM/24/96684 NETLEY FIRS, KANES HILL, SOUTHAMPTON

From: Urban & Landscape Design Team to Development Management

Urban Design Officer: Marta Oliveira

Planning Officer: Gary Osmond

Date: 05 February 2024

Proposal: Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Approval O/18/82750 for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of 23 employment units (up to 5,905 sq.m.) with units 12-20 for Use Class B1 (b) and (c) and units 1-11 and 21-23 for Use Class B2, with associated car parking and access. Detailed matters to be considered: appearance, landscaping and scale.

Summary:

- Softening the impact of the building in views from the main road is crucial.
 - Elevations are of poor design and more consideration is needed on this matter.
 - More consideration should be given to the materials, colours, finishes in order to achieve a high-quality scheme.
-

These comments are made in relation to the plans and supporting information dated 9 January 2024 and should be read in conjunction with comments from the Landscape, Tree and Ecology Officers.

1. Site Context

The site is surrounded by land within a Gap designation, therefore the treatment of the boundaries will be key in terms of retaining and enhancing the character of the rural/semi-rural setting in order to mitigate any urbanising effects of development in this location, and therefore supporting the purpose of the Countryside Gaps policy in the emerging Local Plan, and also responding appropriately to the Strategic Gap designation in the current Local Plan.

The visual impacts of the proposal will vary depending on the proposed building heights, material and cladding selection and colour. In terms of these, I would expect to see selection being made with visual mitigation in mind, the overall effect being sought to minimise impact on the perception of the countryside Gap between settlements.

2. Height, Scale & Mass

There are no objections in principle to the height of the scheme as the proposal is in compliance with the approved Outline parameters.

3. External Appearance, Materials and Detailing

The quality of the proposal should be enhanced through the provision of a cohesive and complementary palette of materials that relate to the context without having to slavishly copy the materials of the surrounding area.

All materials should be durable and of high quality.

Urban Design Comment Form:

RM/24/96684 NETLEY FIRS, KANES HILL, SOUTHAMPTON

There is lack of information in terms of materials. More information should be submitted by the applicant to demonstrate how the proposal appears from the road and how the materials and detailing have been carefully considered in order to mitigate any urbanising effects of development in this location.

As it stands, it is felt that the external appearance of the proposed buildings does not appear to go far enough in terms of design, particularly those units parallel to the main road where glimpses of the new built form will be visible from the road. Furthermore, I agree with the concerns raised by the Landscape Officer about the new pedestrian link onto Kaneshill that will open up a direct view into the site. Careful consideration would be needed to reduce any visual impact of new buildings in views from the main road.

Some of the elevations present two different tones of cladding applied on the elevation. It is unclear what type of claddings are being proposed. More information would be needed to clarify this subject.

Every effort should be made to create a building which is positively designed, and even functional and utilitarian elements such as ventilation stacks, shading screens / louvres etc can be integrated into a design to create features which enhance, as opposed to detract, from the overall aesthetic.

The primary frontage of the proposed buildings, which is facing on to the central courtyard, should be of high in quality and distinction through the use of its materials and building design (fenestration, style, etc.)

Signage is a crucial element of any building; not only does it provides passive advertising to passing pedestrian and vehicular traffic, but it defines the buildings' location within the built environment and, when done correctly, can contribute positively to sense of place and placemaking. Whilst signage is often dealt with by way of a separate application, there are some key principles which should be adhered to when dealing with signage on large buildings.

Landscape will be critical to provide screening and soften the proposal. Also, existing trees bordering the site shall be retained and reinforced with additional planting as part of a landscape scheme for the site, to provide visual and noise screening as per Policy HE5, Land at Netley Firs, Kaneshill, Hedge End.

Appropriate lighting should also be considered to act as a feature during day and night.

Lastly, all opportunities to increment the quality of the public realm within the site and on the surrounding area are welcome to increase footfall and encourage pedestrian use whilst making it more permeable.