

Urban Design Comments:

F/23/96629 – Land at Fieldfare Road, adjacent to the roundabout with Winchester Road

From: Urban & Landscape Design Team to Development Management

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Proposal: Erection of 70-bed C2 Care Home with new vehicular access to Fieldfare Road

Summary:

- A car dominated form of development that fails to balance the requirements of built form, parking and landscape
 - Site frontages over dominated by carriageways and parking
 - Concerns over the layout of the scheme, which results on little space for landscape.
 - Further opportunities to introduce soft landscape and green infrastructure should be explored, adopt a landscape-led approach.
 - Consider setting back the building from the boundaries whilst still creating a positive gateway.
 - Provide a better interface between buildings and active travel routes to create a good sense of enclosure and overlooking.
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From the information supplied, I would like to comment as follows.

1. Site Context

The site lies at the entrance to the new Boorley Green development, immediately adjacent to Fieldfare Road at its new junction with Winchester Road. It sits prominently adjacent to Winchester Road and is identified as a gateway to the wider development.

Bus routes on Winchester Road provide services to Southampton city centre and Eastleigh.

2. Siting, Building lines, Footprint & External Layout:

The site is currently undeveloped and is encompassed by an underlying outline permission (O/15/75953) for mixed use land.

The proposed building is considered to be large and bulky and as it sits close to the boundary, its perceived scale is even more emphasised. Also, the large footprint is taking too much of the site leaving too little for landscape or to even soften this bulky building.

In order to provide more detailed comments on this matter, it would be encouraged to produce a CGI view from Winchester Road and another from the southern west corner.

The overall layout is considered to be parking orientated, with some views through the site dominated by parking areas.

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The north-south footpath on the western side of the site is fronted by parking areas and significant stretches of dead frontage. This will fail to create a pleasant walking route, particularly after dark. It is recommended that the layout is reconsidered to create more surveillance and reduce the feeling of vehicular dominance.

Furthermore, the outdoor private amenity space is a fundamental part of all developments both in supporting residents' wellbeing and the ecology and biodiversity of the local area. As such new developments must have adequate amount of external space. This can be provided at ground floor level as a community garden or as a balcony at the upper floors. It is welcomed that the proposed building set back from the boundaries to maximise the southern amenity space and create opportunities to propose more landscape treatment to help soften the building.

Therefore, it is felt that the quantum of development should be revisited to allow for a slightly more relaxed scheme with greater emphasis on achieving a well-designed place.

A reduction in room numbers and consequent reduction of car parking spaces would create opportunities for more significant areas of soft landscape and help to create a more positive contribution to the layout whilst giving more emphasis to the quality of the external spaces proposed.

It is recommended that a landscape-led approach to the site is taken to create a useable network of amenity spaces and public open spaces that better support the delivery of a memorable gateway to Boorley Green, as well as provide outdoor spaces that residents will want to linger in rather than merely pass through.

Parking needs to be reduced to the minimum.

3. Height

No objections in principle.

4. External Appearance & Materials

Good architecture is less about a particular style, rather it relates to the way in which proportions, detailing, finishes and materials work together and the way the building meets the ground. The design should be developed to break down the building's mass and reduce its perceived scale by proposing setbacks and changes in the materials and fenestration.

However, given significant concerns over the layout of this part of the scheme it is suggested that external appearance should be considered further once this issue has been resolved.

The western elevation presents a dead frontage towards the parking area. This should be reviewed to create better overlooking to the movement network and a more balanced façade.

5. Sustainability

To improve the sustainability of the site:

- Consider installation of photovoltaics
- Provide electric vehicle charging points and consider future proofing / safeguarding land for infrastructure to support autonomous and connected autonomous vehicles
- Consider provision for shared car club vehicles

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- Consider introducing green roofs and walls to reduce hard surfaces
- Include additional tree and soft landscape planting to reduce hard surfaces, slow surface water run-off, provide shade, and create habitats / corridors for biodiversity
- Incorporate permeable surfaces and SUDS throughout, Landscape and Ecology Officers can advise further