

LOCATION: PRINCESS ROYAL BARRACKS, BRUNSWICK ROAD,
DEEPCUT, CAMBERLEY, GU16 6RN

PROPOSAL: Application for the approval of Design Codes pursuant to
planning condition

TYPE: Details to Comply

APPLICANT: Skanska UK plc

OFFICER: Michelle Fielder

This matter would normally be delegated to officers, however given the importance of the redevelopment of the former PRB site and the aspirations to deliver a high quality, sustainable development, Member approval is sought for the approach being taken.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report relates to details submitted pursuant to conditions 1 (2) and 2 of non-material amendment planning permission 15/0035/2 regarding the submission of design codes for the PRB site. The relevant conditions were originally one condition (no.3) on the hybrid approval for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site as granted planning permission under 12/0546.
- 1.2 The details submitted pursuant to the planning condition has been subject to design review by Design South East. This report concludes that the approach taken to the design code formation is acceptable and is in large part driven by the phased approach to a development of this scale but, also in part, by the decant arrangements of the site by the MOD. The report advises that subject to on-going compliance the design code framework will build upon the principles of the Adopted SPD and the approved Design and Access Statement and will provide a robust framework against which reserved matters applications for the site can be assessed.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site (the PRB Site) is located within the village of Deepcut; it extends to approximately 114ha and currently comprises the Princess Royal Barracks (PRB) and associated lands which is currently the headquarters of the Royal Logistic Corps of the British Army and the Defence School of Logistics. The application site is split into three linked areas, The Main Barracks Area, The Northern Area and the Western Area.

3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY

- 3.1 Planning permission for the comprehensive redevelopment of the site under the reference 12/0546 was subject to Full Council Approval in July 2013. This hybrid permission granted outline consent for the wider development of the site for 1119 new build dwellings and a raft of ancillary and associated development comprising large areas of open space, community facilities and infrastructure. Detailed planning permission was also granted under that hybrid application for 81 flats or apartments to come forward from the conversion of the Sergeants and Officers Mess and of the HQ building. The general access arrangements comprising the northern access roundabout, the Brunswick Road access and the alignment of the secondary road were also fixed as part of the hybrid application and the subject to a minor amendment approved under NMA application 12/0546/1.
- 3.2 Application 15/1062 is also relevant as this is the first reserved matters application for the redevelopment of the site. This application appears elsewhere on this agenda and seeks approval of the finer detail of the access arrangements, the secondary road, the village green and the central SANGS.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This submission pertains to the requirement that Design Codes be submitted to guide the redevelopment of the PRB site. This requirement was originally cited in condition 3 of decision notice 12/0546; however this was amended under NMA approval 15/0035/2 and effectively split into separate conditions as detailed below:

Prior to the submission of any reserved matter application which includes residential units, Design Codes which are in substantial compliance with the approved parameter plans and the submitted Design and Access Statement shall be submitted for each of the Character Areas. The Design Code shall include the following:

- built-form strategies to include density and massing, street grain and permeability, street enclosure and active frontages, type and form of buildings and landmarks and vistas;
- design strategies for principal buildings or land uses within the character area, including where appropriate the primary school, and the sports hub sites;
- a strategy for a hierarchy of streets and spaces;
- principles for the alignment, width, lighting and surface materials proposed for all footways, cycleways, roads and vehicular accesses to and within the site;
- design of the public realm, including layout and design of squares, areas of public open space, areas for play, street furniture and sustainable urban drainage;
- principles for determining quality, colour and texture of external materials and facing materials for roofing and walls of buildings and structures including a consideration of opportunities for using locally sourced and/or recycled construction materials;
- principles for hard and soft landscaping including the inclusion of important trees and hedgerows;
- on-street and off-street residential and commercial vehicular parking, off-street turning (where required) and/or loading areas; and,
- cycle parking and storage

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Design Code for that reserved matter.

And

Prior to the submission of any reserved matter application which does not include any residential unit(s), but includes any non-residential building, land and infrastructure (with the exception of the spine road) a Design Code for that reserved matter, which is in substantial compliance with the approved parameter plans and the submitted Design and Access Statement shall be submitted. The Design Code shall include the following (as relevant to that reserved matter application):

- built-form strategies to include density and massing, street grain and permeability, street enclosure and active frontages, type and form of buildings and landmarks and vistas
- design strategies for principal buildings or land uses within the character area, including where appropriate the primary school, and the sports hub sites
- a strategy for a hierarchy of streets and spaces
- principles for the alignment, width, lighting and surface materials proposed for all footways, cycleways, roads and vehicular accesses to and within the site
- design of the public realm, including layout and design of squares, areas of public open space, areas for play, street furniture and sustainable urban drainage
- principles for determining quality, colour and texture of external materials and facing materials for roofing and walls of buildings and structures including a consideration of opportunities for using locally sourced and/or recycled construction materials
- principles for hard and soft landscaping including the inclusion of important trees and hedgerows
- on-street and off-street residential and commercial vehicular parking, off-street turning (where required) and/or loading areas
- cycle parking and storage

The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved Design Code for that reserved matter.

5.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATION

5.1 Background

5.1.1 The Adopted Deepcut SPD sets out the vision for the area as the creation of a sustainable expanded settlement. This expanded settlement is to be separate from the urban areas to the west and north, but linked to them in a sustainable manner. The heathland landscape is to define the development with open space threading through the built areas. The Basingstoke Canal is to frame the southern boundary and play a significant role in visual and recreational terms and also, in providing sustainable transport walking and cycling links. The vision explains that the quality of design and general environment will be high and will reflect a contemporary interpretation of Surrey village pattern.

5.1.2 The SPD breaks down the vision into component parts and provides a number of objectives wherein compliance is sought. In terms of built form, the SPD details a number of character areas and seeks to guide developers by setting out guiding principles for development in that particular area. A further layer of detail to the SPD was approved

by the approval of the Design and Access Statement as part of the hybrid submission under 12/0546 and it is noted that this document is expressly cited in the text of the relevant conditions.

- 5.1.3 The requirement to submit design codes is very much a belt and braces approach, particularly given the detail provided in the Adopted SPD; however para 9.6.3 of the Committee Report (for 12/0546) to Full Council advised that this was appropriate in order to ensure that the development complied with the SPD and the aspirations of that document did not get lost over time. Such an approach also necessitates early involvement with the Council as, if done correctly, residential developers should not press ahead developing layouts for submission without the corresponding design code for that character area having been agreed.
- 5.1.4 The Design Code for consideration has been the subject of extensive discussions and has been comprehensively reviewed and reworked following previous submission not being found to be acceptable. In this regard the matter was initially submitted for consideration in November 2015 and then resubmitted in December 2015. Since that date officers have sought advice from Design South East and a full day was spent with the Design Panel and the applicant's team discussing how the submission could be amended. This included a site visit and round table discussion. A further full day workshop has also been held and the documents currently under consideration refined and reworked until officers were satisfied they would deliver the aspirations for the site as set out in both the SPD and the approved Design and Access Statement.

5.2 The Design Code Suite

- 5.2.1 The condition wording for the submission of the design codes indicates that there would be multiple design codes, each dealing with a character area or areas pursuant to a reserved matters application. The submitted document follows this format but provides an additional strategic level of design guidance bridging the gap between adopted SPD and the approved design and access statement for the site and the individual character area design codes which will be produced to support each reserved matters application.
- 5.2.2 The details subject to this report therefore include a 'Site Wide Design Code' and 'Regulatory Plan' in addition to the design code required to support application 15/1062 as the first reserved matters application. This approach will result in a suite of documents to guide development proposals and ultimately ensure that each reserved matters application delivers the design aspirations set out in the SPD and as taken forward in the design and access statement and plans approved under 12/0546.
- 5.2.3 The approach being taken is set out on page VI of the Site Wide Code and this shows that the Code will provide an overarching document setting out a mandatory framework for all future design code and reserved matter submissions. Compliance with the Site Wide Code is to be secured by requiring the submission of a 'Code Compliance Checklist' with all future reserved matters applications. This will enable the site wide strategies identified in the SPD and refined in the hybrid approval to cascade consistently through all phases of design and development. The Regulatory Plan sits alongside the Site Wide Code. This plan of the site shows the main land use components to be delivered, and by using of the 'key' directs the reader to the relevant page or section within the site wide design code wherein both strategic and detailed advice can be located. This detail would then be used to inform the specific design code production required to support a particular reserved

matter application. Appendix 1 to this report is an extract of the submitted Site Wide Design Code and this further explains the approach taken.

5.2.4 The practicalities of such an approach can be tested by consideration of the detail code produced to support application 15/1062 as the first phase of infrastructure to come forward to enable the delivery of the first phase of residential development. This will be considered below; however it is considered the general approach that is the production of a suite of documents is acceptable. Moreover, officers consider the Site Wide Code and Regulatory Plan to comply with the aims and objectives set out in the SPD and the approved Design and Access Statement and recommend that this be approved.

5.3 The design code to support application 15/1062 pertaining to the first reserved matters application providing detail of the spine road, the main access points, the central SANGS and the village green.

The Village Green

5.3.1 The approved documents (the design and access statement and the SPD) require the village green to function as a community hub and be highly visible. It is required to provide a children's play area and be the focus of sustainable transport connections and the SUDS network. The new public house is to be sited close by and a water feature is expected. The size of the village green is set at 2ha and, in addition to the requirements above, this area is supposed to be open enough to accommodate informal play, community events and maintain views of the Minden Ridge.

5.3.2 By reference to the Regulatory Plan as part of the Site Wide Code section 8.1 of the Site Wide Code sets the code requirements above and in doing so adds detail to the framework already set by the approved documents. The reader should also refer to more detailed parts of the code, for instance section 13, where in guidance on the required landscaping of this area can be found, or section 9, where details on edge treatments is located. This information should then be used to drive the production a site specific design code for the village green itself.

5.3.3 This site or application specific design code is called the 'Phase 1 Infrastructure' code and it addresses those matters detailed under the reserved matters application. Each element of the application is addressed and as such there are three sections each with a strategic and more detailed overview. The strategic level expands upon the principles set out in the site wide code and enables a comparison between the further developing principles with the aspirations for the area as originally envisaged in the SPD. Taking a small part of the village green proposal, like for instance, the desire for this to deliver a water feature and be the focus of the SUDS solution; the detail provided gives an overview of the pond design, how it will look, how it will be experienced by users of the green in addition to how that design accommodates and respond to the need to provide wildlife habitat. Detail is also provided on how the pond is to be fed (by the ditch network to the north, with an outflow on its southern side, where eventually the ditch network feeds into the Basingstoke Canal), although the detailed design of the SUDS network and wetland features is subject to consideration under additional conditions the code provides sufficient detail to inform the reserved matters application and demonstrates compliance with the wider framework in place.

The access points and the spine road

- 5.3.4 The southern access along with the northern access roundabout and spine road were fixed at the hybrid approval stage and were subject to a minor amendment under NMA application 12/0546/1. The functionality and safety of these features is obviously a significant consideration however the SPD sought a green verdant character with amenity space threading through with footpaths following a meandering route as opposed to following the spine road rigidly. The Design and Access Statement provided further details and added that the road would be a bus route designed to a 30mph speed.
- 5.3.5 The Site Wide Code further refines this and explains that the new primary road is to be called Mindenhurst Road and this will have secondary roads coming off of it to service the later land parcels coming forward for development. The existing road to Frimley Lock is to be retained.
- 5.3.6 The Site Wide Code further explains that the road is actually being designed as a 20mph speed limit and will be of varying width of between 6.5m and 7.5m. The street is designed to allow it to respond to the changing character areas which will abut its length and the main access to it, from the existing highway network, are to be screened by retained trees. Dedicated footways and cycleways are to be provided adjacent or close to it. The reader is then directed to the Infrastructure Design Code.
- 5.3.7 On referring to this finer detailed layer it is clear that consideration has been given to achieving a balance between a technical highway design and the aspiration for a green, surrey village environment. In this context the detail sets out the requirement for the reserved matter application to, for example, provide for two buses to pass each other, to deliver a dedicated cycle path but also to retain mature scots pine and for vegetation to be used to convey a sense of drama and enable housing to be set within a heathland /woodland setting as opposed to the character of the area being defined by the road itself. It is considered this is acceptable and meets the stated aspirations for the development of the site.

The central SANG

- 5.3.8 The SPD advises that the SANG is to be an important component of a wider open space network and is to be provided in two large linked blocks. The areas are to be both focal points, yet be unobtrusive and composed of natural elements and serve as destinations for cyclists and walkers. The SPD sets out some general design guidance and makes reference to the need for these areas to also meet with Natural England approval.
- 5.3.9 The approved Design and Access Statement adds that areas of natural regeneration in the Central SANG will be retained and enhanced. The Site Wide Design Code and Regulatory Plan repeat the aforementioned requirements along with pulling forward requirements imposed by planning conditions (like for instance compliance with particular drawings in the environmental statement submitted pursuant to 12/0546).
- 5.3.10 The Infrastructure Code then adds to this detail by further explaining that areas will be subject to selective thinning to allow for the format of more diverse ground flora and the regeneration of heath and acid grass land habitats. The SANGS formation is also the

subject of a number of specific planning conditions on the hybrid approval and against this backdrop it is considered that sufficient detail is provided to enable the LPA to be content that the reserved matters application will comply with the outline approval and SPD.

- 5.3.11 The SPD requires developers to accommodate firebreaks in the development and recognises the risk this could have. The submitted Site Wide Design Code addresses this in Section 13.6 and details a requirement for areas of open space, such as SANGS to incorporate firebreaks. The Infrastructure Design Code provides a further layer of detail to inform the detailed reserved matters application and future planning condition requirements.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This report seeks to explain the approach being taken by the developer team to the requirement, imposed by planning condition, that design codes be produced to guide the submission of all reserved matters applications. The report explains that this requirement is very much a 'belts and braces' approach to the development of the site as whilst large parts of the approval referenced as 12/0546 were in outline form, the detail provided in the adopted SPD and the approved Design and Access Statement along with the approved parameter plans means that the outline approval is far more prescriptive than one might ordinarily expect. However, the LPA's requirement for the codes reflects the importance of the development to the borough and recognises that it is of such a scale and will be delivered over a time period wherein there would otherwise be the fear that the aspirations for the site could get lost. The Site Wide Code addresses this and provides opportunities for flexibility and review where appropriate while reinforcing the principles of the SPD. It also allows for the development of site specific codes to come forward to deal with reserved matters applications and in doing so requires any developer to actively engage with the LPA.
- 6.2 By necessity this report has only been able to touch upon a small fraction of the content of either of the submitted codes; but nevertheless has attempted to show how they are to be used by the Council as a tool to resist poor design. In this regard it is considered the codes build upon the long established principles for the site, are easy to use and apply. It is therefore recommended that, subject to the amendments set out at section 6 of this report the 'Site Wide Design Code', 'The Regulatory Plan' and the 'Phase 1 Infrastructure Design Code' be approved in partial consideration of the relevant planning conditions.