

## URBAN DESIGN AND HERITAGE CONSULTEE RESPONSE

### Formal Park, Mindenhurst, Deepcut

22/1068/RRM | Reserved Matters application pursuant to Condition 4 for the Formal Park (Phase 3b) and the erection of a Church Hall attached to the Garrison Church of St Barbara (Phase 3d) with access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping being considered and the partial submission of details pursuant to conditions 16 (Ecological Mitigation and Management), 21 (LAP's and LEAPs), 29 (Tree Retention and Protection), 32 (Hard and Soft Landscaping) and 33 (Landscape Management Plan) attached to 12/0546 as amended by 18/0619 and 18/1002 and Schedules 5 Part 10 (formal park) and 9 Part 9 (LEAPS and LAPS) of the Section 106 agreement dated 17 April 2014 as varied. | Princess Royal Barracks Brunswick Road Deepcut Camberley Surrey GU16 6RN

#### Urban design, placemaking, landscaping - context and background

Urban design comments were previously provided for phase 3b on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2019. Detailed comments were consequently provided for application 21/1163/RRM on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2022.

The formal park was approved as Phase 3b of the development under Condition 2 (Phasing Scheme).

Phase 3 b includes the existing parade ground, the Grade II listed St. Barbara's Garrison Church, the cemetery and a parkland area. This Reserved Matters Application (RMA) in accordance with 12/0546 (as amended) seeks approval for all Reserved Matters (access, layout, scale, appearance and landscaping). Apart from condition 19, formal park- layout and character- the partial discharge of Conditions 21 (LAP's and LEAP's), Condition 32 (Hard and Soft Landscaping) for phase 3b also relates to urban design.

Mindenhurst is a major, key regeneration site in Surrey Heath, and one of the most important regeneration projects in the region. It is situated adjacent to, and integrates with the existing village of Deepcut, and extends to the surrounding areas of open heathland and existing woodland. The existing development, Dettingen Park and the military housing, bisects the Mindenhurst site boundary. The area benefits from an abundance of existing trees, which provide an attractive, mature setting for the proposed new development from day one. The Formal Park therefore represents an important cornerstone for the delivery and long-term future of Mindenhurst Village, and is vital for the integration of the new development in the immediate and wider context. The formal park was approved as Phase 3b of the development under Condition 2 (Phasing Scheme). The Formal Park boundary is considered to comply with approved plans in principle, with minor adjustments to match the existing topography and to retain as many existing trees as possible.

A number of important facilities have already been approved and is currently under construction, or completed, such as the Primary School, the Central SANG, the Village Green, the public house and the first phases of residential development in Mindenhurst. Phase 3b aims to deliver the second stage of infrastructures including improvement to the existing road network through the site, the delivery of the Loop Road connecting to Mindenhurst Road, as well as an extensive network of green infrastructure which will serve the new community of Mindenhurst and Deepcut, and will provide significant improvements for the benefit of other, existing, surrounding neighbourhoods.

The Deepcut SPD sets out Public Open Space and Recreation standards for the whole of the Mindenhurst development, which is 0.35 ha/1000 population (formal parks and gardens). The S106

Agreement requires the Formal Park to comprise of at least 1.30 ha. This submission proposes a total area of 1.31 ha in the form of a formal park, car parking and cemetery, including the re-use of the parade grounds as a car park. This complies with Public Open Space and Recreation standards in the Deepcut SPD for the Mindenhurst development as a whole, which is 0.35 ha/1000 population (formal parks and gardens). The S106 Agreement requires the Formal Park to comprise of at least 1.30 ha.

### Heritage implications

The general layout of the formal park is supported from an urban design and heritage perspective. There are also no objections in principle to integrating car parking into the placemaking in front of the Church building.

However, the former Parade Ground is part of the historic setting of the Garrison Church, and as such, it is protected by the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990. The Garrison Church, with its unusual architecture, also in a national context, requires a proper setting which safeguards existing heritage values and enhances the relationship between the Grade II listed Garrison Church, the new linked Church Hall, the immediate and wider landscape setting, including important views. The place-making and the hard landscaping materials should be of a quality and design that matches the significance of the place. The design concept also needs to retain and reflect the strong historic and visual connections between the Garrison Church and the former Parade Ground.

A standard tarmacked car parking area with mixed interspatial hedge planting with little sense of place, as proposed, does not meet the design expectations for such an important civic space.

A bespoke design, suitable for a Church building and a new community hall, created by a combination of high-quality hard landscaping materials such as a key pattern, such as an iconic symbol associated with the Regiment/historic identity, the community or the Church, a framework of granite setts or "conservation" concrete setts and asphalt (main part), with appropriate details, focussed on creating a strong sense of place is recommended, as discussed in earlier design meetings.

It is important that the former Parade Ground is designed in a way that it does not read as a tarmacked car park when empty, but retains the ambience of a proper setting for the designated heritage asset and the new civic Hall. It should be possible to achieve the same amount of car parking spaces in a different, more timeless manner, which enhances the site and generates new qualities. The proposed lighting should also be more formal in the former Parade Ground to mark the historic connection and the previous use associated with the place.

### The cemetery

The cemetery also provides the immediate setting of the Grade II listed Garrison Church, which underpins the importance to retain the existing peacefulness of the site. The re-routing of pedestrian paths and cycle routes is welcome in that respect.

### War memorial

A war memorial will be integrated in the open space design and will form part of the ambitious public art contribution for Deepcut.

## LAP/LEAP

The layout, design details and proposed equipment proposed for the Lap and LEAP, condition 21, which include robust play equipment in natural materials, such as joined log trails, are fully supported. The proposed timber benches are sturdy, natural and well designed. All timber bins need to match the benches in terms of design, colour and material. The black painted cycle barriers should have appropriate fluorescent warning signs for safety reasons.

## Wider historic setting

Mindenhurst benefits from close proximity to the Basingstoke Canal, a designated SSSI and a Conservation Area, important to local history and identity. The proposal provides a robust pedestrian and cycle network of routes which links to existing paths and routes, such as Frith Hill cycle path, Blackdown Road, Frimley Lock, Basingstoke Canal walk and the wider countryside, which provide plenty of opportunities for all round training and longer excursions.

## Green and blue infrastructure

The proposed green and blue infrastructure for Mindenhurst, as well as the movement strategy, is considered to provide excellent opportunities for a sustainable and healthy lifestyle by integrating a wide range of outdoor activities including walking, cycling, education, local food production, play and rest into daily life routines. Proximity to green space is a key factor for people to make active and regular use of open space, making it realistic to integrate outdoor activities into the daily routine. In Mindenhurst, green, open space is provided within 10 minutes' walk from most properties in the area. Of particular importance for the quality of the proposed public realm is the variety of different types of green space provided in combination with designated sport facilities, social hubs and the new community centre, all within easy reach from home.

## New glazed link and Church Hall

Regarding the proposed glazed link and new Church Hall, detailed comments from a heritage and urban design perspective were provided on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2022. Although no objections in principle, better detailing has been requested with regards to the glazed link design. Subtle changes to materials/colour scheme have also been requested to soften the visual impression of the new Hall and ensure high quality design in line with the NPPF, DM9 and D17, to retain and enhance the existing heritage values and local distinctiveness. For ease these comments are copied in, see below:

### **“CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

GARRISON CHURCH OF SANTA BARBARA, DEEPCUT BRIDGE ROAD, DEEPCUT, CAMBERLEY, SURREY  
GU16 6RS Application Nos 22/0820/LLB 22/0821/FFU

## Policy and legislation

The statutory requirements to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings are set out in section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Development Management Policy DM17 of the Local Plan also protects heritage buildings. The National Design Guide also gives great weight to heritage, local history and, in particular, context when assessing development proposals. The importance of high-quality design is further emphasised in the Local Plan policy DM9. See further below under impact.

### Significance of the Listed structure

The Grade II listed St Barbara's Church, a prominently positioned landmark building clad in corrugated metal, is a very rare example of a prefabricated Garrison Church, a building type of which there are very few remaining nationally. The building is therefore of high architectural significance. Although designed as a semi-temporary structure, which the corrugated metal cladding is a clear indicator of, the church building has remained virtually unaltered since it was built in 1900.

Due to the strong connections to the local regiments, and the special role the Garrison Church of Santa Barbara has for the local community, the building is considered to be of high historic and social significance, demonstrated by the long tradition of ceremonies and the many memorials and commemorative art works that embellish the Church building.

### Impact of the Proposal on the Significance of the Church

The proposed scheme involves the construction of a community hall within the churchyard, to the north of the existing building. Designed in a contemporary built form and materiality, in contrast to the historic character of the church, the new structure would accommodate a number of additional public services required by the church, as Deepcut evolves and expands.

Access to the hall is proposed directly from its north transept through a glazed link, and involves the alteration of an original window to allow for the insertion of an interconnecting door beneath. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 199, requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on a heritage asset's significance, great weight should be given to its conservation: the higher the significance, the stronger the onus for conservation.

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF points out that harm to the significance of heritage assets would need clear and convincing justification; while paragraph 202 sets out that where a development proposal will lead to *less than substantial harm* to the significance of a designated heritage asset, *this harm should be weighed against the public benefits accruing from the proposal*.

The proposed change of an original component of the listed building would result in some degree of harm, considered here to be less than substantial harm, to its architectural significance. However, on balance, from a heritage point of view, the benefits of the project to the Church, and the wider community as a whole, are considered to outweigh the harm to the existing window.

Heritage conservation is about managing change, preparing for the future and making sure our historic buildings can continue to be actively used, whilst safeguarding the heritage values for coming generations.

### Heritage Consultant position

From an urban design and heritage point of view, the position, scale, height and built form of the proposed Hall are considered appropriate, being clearly subordinate to the Grade II listed Church building and located within a respectable distance, within a setting with many mature trees. The glazed link between the historic Church building and the new Hall is strongly supported in principle and should provide a light, neutral element with lots of light and transparency, linking the listed structure with the new, contemporary Hall. Given the simplistic design of the proposed structure, and the setting of a Grade II listed structure, high quality detailing is vital for a successful result. It is therefore important that the roof structure of the link should be as slim and subordinate as possible, and the upper level of the glazing should be fully aligned with the fenestration of the new Hall. The link should be fully glazed throughout to provide contrast and transparency, also on the south-east elevation, as the heavy brick plinth on this side is considered to compromise the lightness of the design. The importance of views in and out from the new glazed link was further emphasized by the

Design review Panel in 2018. Detailed drawings to resolve these matters are requested to be conditioned.

The contemporary built form of the proposed hall, a rhomboid, is a distinctive but timeless feature, which because of its simplicity and location is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the setting of the Grade II listed Church. From a heritage perspective, a design approach which provides a clear contrast in form and character and visually distinguish between the historic and new structures, yet subservient, is considered a well-established principle. However, from an architectural and heritage perspective, a softer, more sophisticated approach in terms of materiality and colour scheme using dark grey tones, preferably matt, rather than the harsh black, metal sheeting and a different type of texture, in contrast to the existing iron cladding, is required. Subsequently, the brickwork should also be dark grey rather than black, which is considered too prominent given the proximity of the plinth to the listed structure. The detailed design should seek to minimise/eliminate the brick plinth.

Alternatively, the Hall could be clad in elegant dark grey slate, a natural material which would blend in well in this tranquil setting, characterised by the many mature trees.

#### Conditions

- Fully detailed drawings of glazed link and adjacent Hall fenestration
- Detailed material schedule and samples of all materials to be submitted to the LPA and approved in writing prior to any construction works

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022

M. Gustafsson MSc MA

Urban Design and Heritage Consultant “

#### **Summary:**

Fully detailed drawings of hard and soft landscaping are required to refine the detailed design of the place making, including car parking, in the setting of the Grade II listed Church (by condition)

Fully detailed elevations/sections/detailing/material schedule of the glazed link/fenestration of the Church Hall are required to refine the detailed design (by condition).

Condition 21 (LAP and LEAP) - no objections.

M. Gustafsson MSc, MA

Urban Design and Heritage Consultant