



Report of the Guildford Design Review Panel

Garlick's Arch

20th November 2019

The design review meeting

Reference number	1321/161019
Date	16th October 2019
Meeting location	Guildford Borough Council Offices, Millmead, Guildford GU2 4BB
Panel members attending	Richard Portchmouth (Chair), Architecture, Urban Design Carl Gulland, Architecture, Housing Kay Richardson, Historic Environment, Landscape Architecture, Urban Design
Panel manager	Rosie Dennis, Design South East
Presenting team	Daniel Cavanagh, London Strategic Land Quentin Andrews, OSP Kelly Jethwa, Guildford Borough Council
Other attendees	Stuart Mills, Iceni Projects Hannah Fawdon, Iceni Projects Jason Houslander, London Strategic Land Clinton Bradshaw, OSP Mark Bewsey, CP plc Rob Westcott, CP plc James Bancroft, Vectos John Markwell, Barton Willmore Sakina Khanbhai, Guildford Borough Council Katie Williams, Guildford Borough Council Paul Fineberg, Guildford Borough Council Paul Sherman, Guildford Borough Council Cllr Catherine-Anne Young, Guildford Borough Council (Clandon & Horsley Ward) Cllr Jan Harwood (Marrow & Lend Ward) Cllr Susan Parker, Guildford Borough Council (Send Ward) Cllr Colin Cross, Guildford Borough Council (Lovelace Ward) Cllr Patrick Sheard, Guildford Borough Council (Send Ward) Cllr Tim Anderson, Guildford Borough Council (Clandon & Horsley Ward)
Scope of the review	As an independent design review panel the scope of this review was not restricted. However, the local authority asked us to particularly concentrate on the changes made to the proposal since the last review.
Panel interests	Panel members did not indicate any conflicts of interest.

Confidentiality

This report is confidential as the scheme is not yet the subject of a detailed planning application. Full details of our confidentiality policy can be found at the end of this report.

The proposal

Name	Garlick's Arch
Site location	Land east of Burnt Common Lane, southeast of Portsmouth Road and south of Kiln Lane
Site details	The site comprises 28.9 hectares of land located approximately 6.5 kilometres to the north east of Guildford town centre. The site lies between Send March / Burnt Common and the A3. The site comprises parcels of woodland, some of which is ancient woodland, and pastureland. Pylons extend across the site, and a telecommunications mast is visible to the south.
Proposal	Development of the site for approximately 520 residential dwellings (Use Class C3) and 6 Travelling Showpeople plots (Sui Generis). Undergrounding of overhead electricity pylons, provision of new vehicular access points, car parking, open space and other associated works.
Planning stage	Pre application. Target submission November 2019.
Local planning authority	Guildford Borough Council.
Planning context	The site comprises pastureland and woodland. The site is allocated under the Guildford Local Plan Policy A41: Land at Garlick's Arch, Send Marsh/Burnt Common and Ripley. The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 and contains Ancient Woodlands.
Planning authority perspective	Guildford Borough Council did not consider the applicant to have appropriately responded to the feedback from the last review, and do not consider the changes to be sufficient enough to provide a positive response to the proposal.
Community engagement	The application has been subject to a scoping meeting (8 th April 2019) and four pre-application meetings with Guildford Borough Council during June to October 2019. Three public consultations and Councillor and Members briefings have taken place.
Previous reviews	This scheme has previously been reviewed by the Guildford panel on the 1 st August 2019. Following that review our report stated that the proposal had failed to protect or maximise the value of the significant landscape qualities on site, or to provide a convincing sense of place. The panel were unable to support the proposal and recommended significant revision.

Summary

The proposal has progressed since the last review and it is clear that a collaborative approach involving Guildford Borough Council has been adopted in response to the comments previously provided. We are encouraged by the changes that have been made and welcome the extension of site analysis beyond the site boundary toward the surrounding communities. This has improved how the proposal connects with the surrounding area. However, this is a substantial urban extension to the existing settlements that requires a step change in thinking in design and collective governance with existing representation of local councillors, to ensure it is successful in its creation, and to engender community spirit and goodwill with the neighbouring communities.

The proposal is still missing a strong sense of place or identity which is required to make a successful development. Improvements are needed to make the development a welcoming place and to attract people into the scheme, which may be aided by the provision of community facilities that can foster enhanced social interaction and much stronger and more pedestrian-friendly connections to neighbouring communities. The site's landscape is remarkable, however the images provided fail to convey an approach to landscape that taps into the surrounding character of Surrey. The landscape strategy should be placed as a high priority with the central green as the heart of the new community. While the vision for the landscape appeared ambitious the images presented were quite generic.

Key recommendations

1. The landscape strategy needs to be of primary importance in design development to ensure a successful landscape-led proposal is delivered.
2. On-site community facilities will be necessary due to the scale of development to ensure a sense of community can be created onsite and to attract interest into the development from surrounding communities.
3. The development requires a strong sense of place and identity, through a more bespoke response to the landscape characteristics, architecture, built form and communal spaces.
4. Clarity should be provided as to how the development is resilient and sustainable at a range of scales including flexibility of homes to adapt to home working, the energy strategy, solar orientation, and resident engagement in maintaining the landscape.
5. Views should be provided onto and away from the site at agreed key locations to ensure the quantum and disposition of built form is appropriate.
6. Greater clarity is needed over the decisions toward housing typologies and their contribution toward the street hierarchy on primary and secondary streets.
7. The highways engineered and led proposal for the Portsmouth Road roundabout would have a detrimental impact on the proposed Garlick's Arch community in terms of placemaking and connection, which will need resolving to aid a successful scheme.

Detailed comments and recommendations

1 Social and environmental sustainability

- 1.1 The panel do not consider the lack of community facilities on site appropriate within the proposal. This will make the residents overly reliant on community facilities in other parishes, which are already oversubscribed. For a development of this scale, we strongly urge the design team to incorporate low maintenance community space into the development by way of a barn or hall. This will provide the development with a focal point, while also creating a sense of community within the development and potentially attracting surrounding communities onto the site for enhanced social interaction.
- 1.1 Guildford Borough Council declared a climate emergency approximately three months ago, and we have yet to see how the scheme will facilitate in creating a carbon neutral development.

2 Landscape

- 2.1 While it is clear that the landscape approach is beginning to respond to the site's specific landscape character, the landscape strategy appears to be falling behind in design development, which is disappointing for a scheme that needs to be landscape-led. The site's landscape is remarkable, however the images provided fail to convey an approach to landscape that taps into the surrounding character of Surrey. It is important that the landscape strategy is prioritised in future development to successfully inform the identity and sense of place within the proposal.
- 2.2 A successful solution needs to be found for the burying or re-positioning of the electricity pylons. Although the design team identified that they are actively pursuing a workable solution, the determination of this issue could significantly influence the proposal.
- 2.3 There needs to be a more harmonious relationship between the built and natural form within the proposal. The proposal currently displays passive landscape that is surrounded by buildings and the landscape design and proposals for the built form could be enriched by being more closely related and specific to the characteristics of their site location such as plateau slopes, stream frontage, woodland setting, new village green.
- 2.4 Further consideration needs to be placed on the governance of the site. While we appreciate the intent to use the Land Trust, people need to be connected to the landscape. Consider how residents can be engaged in the management of the landscape through working parties, statements of common ground or another community-led approach. Permit landscape management should be a two-way process rather than a paid for commodity.
- 2.5 The landscape is more than just a visual consideration. Its function in supporting biodiversity and ecosystems needs to be considered. This in turn becomes an amenity for residents. We would like to see an approach that creates an enduring development where the community has an intimate knowledge of their locality and direct contact with nature, which is both personally enriching and economically appealing.
- 2.6 The secondary streets across the site are relatively open and sterile and could be enriched by planting strategies. For example, if the hedges were moved closer to the road it would mediate the scale of the development and create a calmer, more welcoming approach to the street.

3 Urban Design

- 3.1 We still consider the site's permeability to be significantly constrained by the A3 and the two proposed roundabouts at the main entrances of the development. While we understand that the road layout is largely inflexible at the A3 slip road, we consider the provision of a T junction as access off the Portsmouth Road to be a more appropriate approach in place making and connectivity to the entry sequence onto the development.
- 3.2 The panel recommend providing illustrations of agreed views onto the development from a distance to display how the buildings and roofscape looks from afar. This will ensure the site layout works effectively with the natural topography of the site.
- 3.3 Ensure the community engagement process is collaborative to allow all parties to work together for the benefit of the development itself and the surrounding area, thus aiding community buy-in.
- 3.4 The neighbouring parishes have very separate identities and we find it difficult to understand the identity expected within the proposal. Garlick's Arch used to be, and still is, a connection site and part of Burnt Common. It is necessary that this identity is embedded into every aspect of the proposal, in particular though stronger connectivity.
- 3.5 The street hierarchy is negatively affected by the arrangement of buildings on the site. This is particularly due to the fact that taller, grander, buildings are located on secondary streets and lower rise development is retained on primary streets. We recommend either providing justification for this street arrangement, through further analysis of the layout of other local settlements or considering rearranging buildings so that taller units are more centrally located in comparison to lower rise development to provide more legibility within the development.
- 3.6 The block to the north of the site in its present form has a problematic relationship with the landscape surrounding it and with the transition between field and slope that creates its context. The block has the opportunity to become an expression of interconnectedness with the natural processes that surround it, and in turn it would start to mark the green as the heart of the development. Careful study of the locale of the block is needed to ensure its form sits in the flow of landscape.
- 3.7 There have been significant improvements to cycle and pedestrian routes and connections to the surrounding communities, which we consider positive design moves.
- 3.8 We still do not consider the layout and arrangement of buildings fronting onto the A3 road appropriate. While the arrangement has improved with a more varied edge and relaxed building line, the setback location allows for very limited informal space to be created behind the buildings, which we do not consider sufficient. Pushing the buildings forward will allow for more open space to be created at the rear of the buildings, making them appear more comfortable in this location.
- 3.9 In design progression we would like to see how the boundary treatment alongside the A3 can become a series of places and spaces to ensure a less harsh and monotonous boundary treatment is provided.
- 3.10 The 3D video of the site is a good way of visually presenting how the site challenges have been overcome in design development. This will be a useful tool at planning stage to assist in concerns of the development.
- 3.11 While it is positive that a lot of thought has gone beyond the red line boundary to connect to the wider area, more consideration needs to focus on how to make this a welcoming place and to bring people into the community.

- 3.12 The location for the travelling show people's homes was raised and the panel were informed that possible limitations on vehicular sizes is under discussion and review with the Highways Authority.

4 Plateau site

- 4.1 The reconfigured layout for the plateau area with the more gradual access route following the contours and more direct pedestrian connections is a positive design move and successfully provides a comfortable and desirable route to the platform.
- 4.2 We urge the design team to visually present the proposed views from the plateau to the village to ensure that the views acknowledge the topography and are not counteracted by any buildings proposed. It is essential that the plateau is to be distinctive and of high-quality design and presenting the views will be an important way to illustrate and ensure that the views are not diminished.
- 4.3 The present prospect from the landscape plateau evokes a strong emotional response and more consideration is needed on how the built form and arrangement of landscape elements will optimise the views out from the site. The natural sloping topography presents a good opportunity to provide high-quality views out to the Surrey landscape, which must be maximised by building orientation and layout.
- 4.4 As there were no drawings provided at review it is difficult to judge whether the amount of built form and density is appropriate for the slope onto the plateau. Site sections and detailed landscape plans as well as developed visualisations of some of the typical views will give confidence that the proposals are evolving successfully.

5 Architecture

- 5.1 The architecture is beginning to feel more responsive and has started to show consideration of the local context and surrounding landscape. It is clear that analysis of the wider Surrey vernacular has begun to inform the architecture. This must be continued to ensure a more responsive and contemporary approach within the development.
- 5.2 The plateau presents opportunities to deliver exceptional communal space and private dwellings. The views out from the communal green space at the summit are special and need to be considered in terms of framing. The architecture and buildings need to be responsive to the sloped site upon which they sit and potential for interesting section spatial arrangement, terraces, views should all be explored to create unique houses and character.
- 5.3 We welcome the work in terms of form of building types and the continuation of exploration of the use of materials. There's a lot of scope to introduce a very interesting and innovative aggregation of house and building types to work with the site and local vernacular in a contemporary way.
- 5.4 The site is such that it cannot be 'rubberstamped' by standard house types, and we consider undertaking the development as a joint venture with Countryside a positive move to ensure a distinct and unique scheme.
- 5.5 While we can see traditional Surrey materials beginning to inform the architectural treatment of the proposal, more needs to be done to ensure that a new identity is created for the wider development.
- 5.6 We do not consider the turreted corners of the large buildings appropriate for the site. While we understand the architectural detail on most buildings requires further

consideration, these are the least successful in an architectural sense. The buildings are overly large and unrefined and finding a good typology for these buildings will be key.

6 Materials and detailing

- 6.1 We did not discuss the treatment of elevations, materials or detailing at length at this review. The local authority should note general guidance on material quality and detail, which accords with national policy. Paragraph 130 of the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework states:

'Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).'

At the full planning application stage, the quality of the detailing should be demonstrated through large scale drawings at 1:20 and 1:5 of key elements of the building/landscape and should be accompanied by actual material samples which should be secured by condition as part of any planning approval.

7 Energy Strategy

- 7.1 We did not discuss the energy strategy in any detail at this review. Our guidance is that at the planning application stage the proposals should produce a clear energy strategy which details how the development will optimise thermal performance, minimise the demand for energy, supply the remaining energy requirements efficiently and optimise the use of renewables, consistent with Government and local policies. This strategy should be communicated in a robustly considered way, for example using detailed modelling work with respected calculation methods.

Confidentiality

If the scheme was not the subject of a planning application when it came to the panel, this report is offered in confidence to those who attended the review meeting. There is no objection to the report being shared within the recipients' organisations. Design South East reserves the right to make the contents of this report known should the views contained in this report be made public in whole or in part (either accurately or inaccurately). Unless previously agreed, pre-application reports will be made publicly available if the scheme becomes the subject of a planning application or public inquiry. Design South East also reserves the right to make this report available to another design review panel should the scheme go before them. If you do not require this report to be kept confidential, please inform us.

If the scheme is the subject of a planning application the report will be made publicly available and we expect the local authority to include it in the case documents.

Role of design review

This is the report of a design review panel, forum or workshop. Design review is endorsed by the National Planning Policy Framework and the opinions and recommendations of properly conducted, independent design review panels should be given weight in planning decisions including appeals. The panel does not make planning decisions. Its role is advisory. The panel's advice is only one of a number of considerations that local planning authorities have to take into account in making their decisions.

The role of design review is to provide independent expert advice to both the applicant and the local planning authority. We will try to make sure that the panel are briefed regarding the views of local residents and businesses to inform their understanding of the context of the proposal. However, design review is a separate process to community engagement and consultation.



The North Kent Architecture Centre Limited
trading as Design South East
Admirals Office
The Historic Dockyard
Chatham
Kent
ME4 4TZ

T: 01634 401166
E: info@designsoutheast.org
www.designsoutheast.org

© Design South East 2019