

Epsom General Hospital Dorking Road, Epsom

Summary Proof of Evidence of Andrew Earwicker on behalf of the Appellant Senior Living Urban (Epsom) Limited

APPEAL A REF: APP/P3610/W/21/3272074

APPEAL B REF: APP/P3610/W/21/3276483

July 2021

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Proof of Evidence : Summary

- 1.1.1 My name is Andrew Earwicker and I am a registered architect and a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, educated in the UK with a Bachelor of Arts Degree and two further post graduate diplomas in Architecture. In respect of the Proposed Development, I played an early role in the development of the design, attending design meetings with the client and the wider consulting team, and assisting the project through the public consultation period. I continued to be actively involved with the Proposed Development throughout the design process, undertaking regular design and quality assurance reviews as the Proposed Development progressed through the application process and subsequent design iterations.
- 1.1.2 Life 3A is a part of Marchese Partners International an entity which has over 26 years' of experience in master planning and 'later living' design and delivery. Marchese Partners International portfolio includes projects ranging from 50 to 300+ later living apartments and includes new builds, refurbishments and adaptive re-use of buildings.
- 1.1.3 My evidence will focus on the design aspects of the Appeal, outlining the design process, the extensive engagement with stakeholders and the Council, the evolution of the Proposed Development and the context that underpins the Proposed Development design. This evidence is supported by illustrative plans, drawings and photo-montages.
- 1.1.4 The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this Appeal reference APP/P3610/W/21/3272074 (APPEAL A) & APP/P3610/W/21/3276483 (APPEAL B) in this proof of evidence is true and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

1.1 Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1.1 In Section 1 of my evidence I introduce the Proposed Development with an executive summary of Scheme A and B, a summary of the Appellant's brief, and an existing plan of the Appeal Site.
- 1.1.2 I provide a brief summary of the pre-application process and the key changes that were made to the design of the Proposed Development as a result of feedback received during this process. This includes changes relating to Scheme A & B:

Function & Place

Masterplan, Access, and Parking

Massing & Density

Landscape

Facade & Materials

Residential Amenity

Wheatcroft Amendments

- 1.1.3 I outline the brief that Life 3A received from the Appellant, a flexible brief and developed over the design period through the consultation process which multi-disciplinary team meetings, allowing progressive design evolution of the masterplan, height and massing, urban design, and landscaping in order to respond and enhance the Appeal Site's contribution to the local context and townscape. Working in partnership with the LPA development team during the PPA process, it was important to create a balance between these requirements and achieving a high-quality design outcome.

1.2 Section 2: Process.

- 1.2.1 In Section 2 of my evidence I provide an overview of the planning and development considerations made, and outline good design practice guidance used in the assessment of the Appeal Site during the design and PPA process.
- 1.2.2 I illustrate this with reference to the RIBA 'Places Where People Want to Live' guidance, Life 3A later living design principles and CQC guidance used to develop Scheme A and B.

1.3 Section 3: Site Assessment.

- 1.3.1 In Section 3 of my evidence I provide an overview of the history and character of the Appeal Site referencing historical maps and pictures of buildings illustrating the diverse vernacular of the local context. I describe the opportunities and constraints of the Appeal Site, including, in particular, the surplus existing buildings, the opportunity for regeneration of a local brownfield site identified by the LPA for optimising housing delivery, and how these opportunities and constraints have shaped the design of the Proposed Development.
- 1.3.2 I illustrate this with opportunities and constraints diagrams.

1.4 Section 4: Design Evolution.

- 1.4.1 In Section 4 of my evidence I present the details of the design evolution process with the LPA. This process illustrates the influence that the consultation process with LPA and other stakeholders had on the design evolution.
- 1.4.2 The pre-application process for Scheme A spanned 6 months from June 2019 to December 2019. Throughout the pre-application and design process, the project team consulted with the LPA development team and other stakeholders, acknowledging all feedback and refining Scheme A where appropriate. As such, the design evolution has been a collaborative and iterative process whereby the planning, urban design, heritage, landscape, and transport officers have all made recommendations to inform the design process. Presentations for engagement with local resident's groups, committee members and the local MP ensured a broad spectrum of views were considered during the planning process.
- 1.4.3 Each stage of the Scheme A PPA process is described in terms of what was presented, what the LPA's main comments were (related to design) and what design changes were made in response to the LPA's comments.
- 1.4.4 The meetings are illustrated with diagrams, plans and CGI's that show the evolving Scheme through this process.
- 1.4.5 The section finishes with a brief summary of the Wheatcroft Amendments and the design evolution and planning submission of Scheme B in February 2021. A detailed description of the current design of Scheme A and B is set out in section 6.

1.5 Section 5: Public Consultation.

- 1.5.1 In Section 5 of my evidence I present the details of public, community, Council members and MP consultations and presentations undertaken during the process with the LPA. This process illustrates the influence that the consultation process with LPA and other stakeholders had on the design evolution.

1.7 Section 6: Proposed development.

1.7.1 In Section 6, I describe the final design of the Proposed Development. Scheme A is described first, with the description of the Scheme B design limited to the ways in which it differs from Scheme A. This is appropriate due to the high degree of similarity between the two schemes. It is this design which forms the basis of the Appeal. The design of the Proposed Development is broken down into the following topic areas:

(a) Function & Place: Scheme A seeks to make a design positive response to its mixed surrounding context creating a 'new' place that will become an integral part of the local community including the elderly residents, neighbouring residents, hospital staff and visitors. It provides a distinctive built form, designed to include later living (C2), care (C2) and key worker (C3) accommodation with integrated private and community amenities juxtaposed with verdant landscape enhancements throughout the Appeal Site.

(b) Masterplan: A strong sense of place is created through the open permeable public central landscaped plaza, which links pedestrians with Epsom General Hospital and Woodcote Millennium Green and the proposed residential, commercial, and public amenity uses. The masterplan design works within the constraints of the existing Appeal Site and respects the residential street frontage of Woodcote Green Road with setback buildings creating an opportunity to introduce significant landscape features with mature and semi-mature trees in response the expansive Woodcote Millennium Green making a positive contribution to the local character and appearance.

(c) Access: The majority of day-to-day movement through the Proposed Development will be dominated by pedestrian movement from later living residents, neighbouring residents, hospital visitors and staff interacting with a new public realm created by the central landscape plaza, overall enhanced landscaping, and design layout of the masterplan.

(d) Parking: The design of an APS car park managed by valet staff and visitor parking, limited to parallel spaces within the site boundary off the NHS services road, and along the western boundary proposed landscaped verge, will ensure pedestrian footfall is separated from vehicular traffic through the communal outdoor space is safe, lively and engaging for all users, with strong legibility derived by responding positively to the site's constraints and opportunities.

(e) Massing & Density: The range of proposed massing, with taller elements towards the hospital buildings, and lower elements towards the large open space and residential buildings to the south and the west help create diversity and visual interest within the built form, which is articulated by the façade design and respects the sensitive boundaries.

(f) Landscape: The varying ground floor uses in both buildings, the proposed central plaza and overall verdant landscape design with safe permeable routes through the site, create a strong sense of place by reflecting both a village green and market square typology, bringing with it active building frontages animated by the proposed uses. The setback of buildings to street frontages, enhanced landscape features along Woodcote Green Road, the adjacency to the large open space of Woodcote Millennium Green and connectivity to the significantly landscaped central plaza space, will result in an attractive landscape design and will ensure that Scheme A will ensure Scheme A becomes a new interactive and vibrant open community space.

(g) Façade & Materials: The proposed brick architectural aesthetic reflects of the existing site vernacular and will bring a cohesive sense of familiarity to the overall scheme design, emphasised by the quality of proposed brick detailing, whilst positively contributing to the local character and appearance. The architectural design uses a combination of several brick details, including an expressed frame of vertical and horizontal brick piers, deep window reveals, inset and chamfered brick panels to embellish the architecture and articulate the building façade. Features such as projecting bolt-on balconies, inset Juliet balconies and planter boxes provide residential amenity to apartments whilst creating another layer of visual interest to the façade design.

(g) Residential Amenity: In order to mitigate impact on neighbouring residential amenity, particularly No.40 & 46 Woodcote Green Road, Scheme A employs: trees and landscape along the western boundary currently dominated by on grade car parking; a 'saw tooth' façade design with full height windows to apartments at 90deg. to the Appeal Site boundary; and a planted balustrade set back 1.5m from the parapet edge and is 1.5m to the sensory garden. The Appellant team has sought, through the design, to mitigate the impact on neighbouring residential properties so far as is possible, and considers that the final design which has been arrived at, although it represents a significant change from the existing character and built form of the Appeal Site, nonetheless achieves an appropriate balance between the regeneration objectives and the protection of residential amenity, and an appropriate relationship between the Proposed Development and the neighbouring properties.

(h) Scheme B: Scheme A and Scheme B are closely related, and design proposals as described in the previous section largely apply equally to both schemes. As such, the following sections simply set out the key design features of Scheme B insofar as they differ from Scheme A.

1.8 Section 7: Conclusion.

- 1.8.1 I conclude by stating that the Proposed Development design for both Scheme A and Scheme B maintain and reflect good design principles, planning policy guidance and consultation comments adopted during design development stages of each scheme, as well as the respective PPA processes (as set out in the submitted DAS' for each scheme) and Appeal processes (Wheatcroft changes).
- 1.8.2 Both schemes were supported on design matters by the LPA, as outlined in their recommendations for approval to the Council committee. Although there are differences between the designs of Schemes A and B, they are separated not by design quality, but by the different balance offered within each scheme relating to, in particular, overall apartment numbers, height, scale and massing.

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