

Planning Meeting May 26th 2020

Brickworks Site Midhurst

In response to the Metis Homes consultation on the draft development documents on the Old Brickworks/WSCC depot site, Midhurst Town Council makes the following observations.

1. It warmly welcomes the proposed development of the joint sites particularly as the original concept for the development was a Town Council initiative four years ago, including an indicative master plan.
2. The Town Council has always taken the view that it is crucial that the development included employment use, given that the whole site has been in employment use for the last century. Whilst the Town Council accepts that the National Park has generally not encouraged employment use in the site design brief, non the less feel that employment use can be included. To that end, makes a proposal below.
3. Given the scarcity of building land in the National Park and the demand for housing, the Town Council recommends that the minimum number of housing units on the site should be 72.
4. The Town Council is deeply conscious of the difficulty of buying or renting housing in Midhurst and the surrounding area, given that the average wages in the town are no greater than the national average wage. To that end, the Town Council is keen that the development should include a strong element of affordable houses and not less than 30 units.
5. The Town Council is pleased to see that an element of the sites' industrial heritage will be retained in the retention of one of the railway shelters. This opens the prospect of employment use as proposed below.
6. In reflection of the development of the site, the Town Council regards the ecology and tree report as evidence that in reality, there is little wildlife activity on the site. The Town Council also regards a number of the TPO's on the site as frivolous and of little real value. In that context, the Town Council believes that it allows a relatively broad canvas to build a quality development enhanced by new and more effective landscaping and tree planting.
7. The Town Council asks for confirmation that the open spaces in the development will be for general public use and these will be clearly marked.
8. The Town Council asks that a better entrance arrangement is made as the current suggestion may have restricted sight lines [and further ways need to be explored to separate traffic from Bepton Road leading to the waste recycling site and the new development.](#)
9. [It asks if the two SuDs \(Sustainable drainage systems\), near the site entrance, can be 'naturalised' as much as possible to develop into SuDs Ponds to look like real 'village' ponds, possibly of interest to the nearby primary school and others.](#)

Midhurst Town Council will make a fuller response to the site development when it moves into a planning application but is open at any time to meet with the developers or National Park planners to discuss any matters.

Employment proposition.

As stated, the Town Council has pursued the importance of building the employment base in the town for a long time, particularly on a site that formerly was a major source of employment. [\(in line with SDNP local plan SD34\)](#)

The Town Council would like to suggest the following scheme to help remedy the situation.

Under the industrial railway shed it would like to see six work/live units, where a two-bedroom house would also contain a work area. These could be used for artisan workers or small businesses or Tec development. The Town Council has explored such units in another location and in confidence, attaches these plans for Metis Homes interest.

Such units, besides offering six homes allows the development of small businesses in a highly sustainable way, in accordance to the National Park's Local Plan. There are a few issues to address, such as access of sunlight but as a concept the work/live units are an important gain for the site development as well as the National Park and the town's employment regime.

It would be preferable if access to these units was via Station Road