

Case Study: Community consultation at Southlands Hospital, Shoreham-by-Sea

The 11-acre brownfield site at Southlands Hospital was previously home to the Steyning Guardians workhouse which was completed in 1901. In 1996 the hospital was vacated and the former workhouse buildings have since deteriorated badly with a number being demolished. Today, only three of the original eight buildings remain. To ensure the historical elements are preserved part of the site has been designated as a conservation area.

The plans for the site

The development will have 190 new homes, plus community facilities. All of the new-build dwellings will achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 3, and the refurbished historical buildings will achieve Eco Homes Very Good, and BREEAM Very Good for the non-residential.

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There will be a series of character areas centred around the enlarged public open space. The former workhouse buildings, which are of historical interest, will be sympathetically converted to dwellings. The architectural features of the historical buildings are reflected in the new dwellings, with materials carefully selected to create harmony between the new and the old.



The design incorporates a series of home zones which give priority to the pedestrian and a Green Travel Plan will see the creation of a website providing information on local public transport, car club schemes and other initiatives designed to reduce car use. Safe pedestrian and cycle routes link the site together and each of the residents will be given a free bicycle. All of the existing trees will be retained, and the ecological diversity enhanced through the introduction of native species with bird nesting opportunities and provision for roosting bats.

Consulting throughout

Fostering community spirit from the outset is essential to ensuring the long-term success of the development. From the beginning of the project we have consulted and worked with a wide range of stakeholder groups to develop the masterplan. Two public consultation events were held to actively seek input from the community and other key stakeholders. We continue to work with a wide range of stakeholders including the Shoreham Society, a local community group, the Local Planning Authority, Members of the Parish Council, local support groups and the local MP. Following our first public consultation event a focus group was set up to encourage ideas in an open forum. This was well attended and has proved to be very valuable in helping to inform the evolution of the design.

The proposed redevelopment of the former Southlands Hospital will deliver much needed housing and places for rest and play, while retaining and enhancing the site's historical legacy and local ecological diversity.