



Lindfield Preservation Society

35 Dukes Road
Lindfield
West Sussex
RH16 2JQ
Tel: 01444 482538
e-mail: kennedy.gil@gmail.com
www.lindfieldsociety.org.uk

A PLANNING APPLICATION TO OVERDEVELOP THE TAVISTOCK/SUMMERHILL SCHOOL SITE WAS REFUSED PERMISSION IN 2020. THE APPLICANTS HAVE APPEALED AND OUR OBJECTION IS BELOW.

YOU MAY ALSO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS AT <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk> OR THE PLANNING INSPECTORATE ADDRESS BELOW **BY 25 MARCH**.

12 March 2021

Ms Lauren Matthews
The Planning Inspectorate
2 The Square
Bristol BS1 6PN

Dear Ms Matthews,

**APP/D3830/W/20/3263492: Tavistock and Summerhill School, Lindfield
(Mid Sussex Ref: AP/21/0012)**

The Lindfield Preservation Society would like to register our objection to this appeal.

The appellants' case relies on maximising the alleged alignment of their scheme with planning policy, while attempting to minimise the reasons for refusal. Much is made, for example, of the case officer's recommendation to approve (e.g. Statement of Case, 7.2; Townscape Statement, 1.4), while neglecting to mention his repeated caveat that the matter was "finely balanced" and "a subject on which a different view could legitimately be formed" (e.g. Committee Report, p 29). The Planning Committee did so and refused permission by a large majority, based on the extensive submissions at your disposal as evidence. (Please see, among others, our detailed objections of 26 Feb and 12 Nov 2019.)

The proposed array of blocks of flats, in a designated Area of Township Character of all places, is an alien, urban design concept that is entirely out of keeping with the rest of Lindfield's built environment. The appellants try to deal with this disconnect by describing, at considerable length, the variety of local building styles (e.g. Townscape Statement 4.23ff). The fact that there is an historical range of building styles in Lindfield does not mean, however, that *any* variant is acceptable. Nor do the applicants' appeals to encouragement of modern architecture in planning policy (e.g. Statement of Case, 6.4) demonstrate that *any* "contemporary design" is suitable.

The simple fact remains that there are no other structures in Lindfield on anything like this scale or with anything remotely like this type of design. The proposal was therefore rightly found to contravene DP26, which requires that all developments "reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside". It also

contravenes Neighbourhood Plan policy 7 and Village Design Statement section 4, both of which require developments to reflect the character and appearance of the area.

Moreover, the combined bulk and height of three-storey blocks situated on high ground would necessarily overlook surrounding houses, giving rise to an overbearing impact and loss of privacy. This effect would be exacerbated by the many balconies proposed. The application therefore contravenes a further clause of DP26 requiring that development "does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents... including taking account of the impact on privacy (and) outlook".

Another material consideration in our view is the effect across the district and beyond, should this scheme be allowed to proceed. An ominous precedent would be set, enabling further urbanising of villages and the degrading of their character.

This application remains a transparently speculative attempt to overdevelop a sensitive site, without regard for the character of the village or the amenity of neighbours. We urge that the appeal be denied.

Yours sincerely,

Gil Kennedy

Chairman