

Gill Claxton

From: Oliver Waring
Sent: 08 February 2019 09:47
To: Gill Claxton
Subject: 6/2018/2768/Outline Hatfield Business Park

Hi Gill,

Further to our discussion below are the Landscape and Ecology team comments relating to the above application.

In principle we objection to the development of the site. We have, as a Local authority, been involved with the development and management the site over many years in partnership with St Albans District Council. Since 2000 the site has evolved into an important Nature Park with valuable habitats . It is significant recreational area and important open space within the Green Belt. The loss of this green space through development will have detrimental effect on natural habitats and the character of the area.

If the application is to be allowed the following should be considered:

- All the trees on or adjacent to the site need to be considered in relation to the proposal. Documents which should be referenced throughout the proposal should be BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations; BS 3998 2010 (Tree Work Recommendations) and BS 8545 2014 (Trees - From Nursery to Independence in the Landscape - Recommendations).
- A Tree Survey should be undertaken to assess what trees are on site. This information should be used to construct a Tree Constraints Plan with Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- As the soft landscaping is so important to this proposal a detailed landscape plan should be included with the application. Detailed landscape plans should include information relating to species, size of planting material and numbers or planting densities. A copy of the planting specification and maintenance schedule should be included. An accompanying report should address any prominent issues and the style of proposed landscape(s) throughout the site. These documents will be used to form an opinion on the appropriateness of the application and any further detailed documents/information required by condition of approval. After approval, the depletion of the approved landscape plan via subsequent applications to amend the scheme, removing the structure or areas of soft landscaping will be considered unacceptable.
- Initial considerations for landscape should include at minimum:
 - § Proposed sites should be self-sufficient for landscape or/and contribute to the landscape of the neighbourhood as a whole. They should not rely on existing surrounding landscape to provide screening etc.
 - § Planting on the boundaries of the site should reflect the locally native flora.
 - § Planting should be a considered mix of formal and informal to provide texture throughout the site. Species choice does not just have to be native, especially in relation to trees. The right plant in the right place is key to sustainable and continued landscaping.

§ The proposed planting schedule will be considered with existing on site flora to ensure the 10:20:30 rules of diversity are being observed.

§ Tree planting should use the largest crowned species suitable for the location without future containment issues. Trees with seasonal interest such as flowers, seeds or berries and autumn colour should be used. A limited number of double or semi-double flowering species should be used as these provide no forage for pollinators.

§ Large areas of hard standing should be shaded with trees.

§ All trees which will stand in, or with large areas of hard standing, even if permeable, should be planted in pits using either structural soils or cellular confinement systems to ensure the best start in life.

§ When choosing tree species consideration should be given to their ability to thrive in the Borough and current plant movement restrictions. Birch, ash and rowans should be avoided as these do not thrive. Horse chestnut suffers extensively with bleeding canker in this area and should be avoided. Lime should be avoided in areas of hardstanding due to the issues associated with root damage. Trees commonly known to suffer from honeydew drop should not be used in seating areas, above sculptures or other locations where conflict can be foreseen.

§ Trees planted within residential gardens may be fruit trees or small ornamental species.

§ Lamp posts and CCTV points should not be located close to trees. These locations should be indicated on the landscape plan.

§ Hedging materials along the non-residential areas should be native mixes. Hedges located within the site do not need to be native or mixed in species but must not include Photinia or laurel.

§ All areas of shrubbery or herbaceous planting should include a diverse range of plants which offer seasonal interest. Different pallets of plants should be used in areas of different use e.g. residential, parking and openspace.

§ Prominent vertical buildings such as bin stores or garden walls shall be covered with a climber or wall shrub.

§ The landscape design should provide strong principles with interesting features for future residents.

§ Even where there are existing semi-mature or mature trees, further tree planting can be used to produce a more diverse age or species structure.

§ The site should have a strong entrance area e.g. a pair of future landmark trees flanking the road. / The site should include at least one tree which has the potential of being a landmark tree i.e. it should be a large crowned tree in maturity, planted in a prominent position and be either an unusual species or something different to species found on site.

§ Where amenity land is outside private gardens, information as to who is going to own and maintain this land should be included.

§ LEAPs and LAPs need seating for parents and an indication of the style(s) or expected character(s) of the equipment/location

· The use of green roofs, green walls, living walls meadows, rain gardens, swales, attenuation basins or SUDS schemes should be considered on a development of this scale.. Information and details about these aspects of the proposal should be included with the planning application as they are key to the consideration of any application. A clear indication of the style(s) or expected character(s) of the areas should be included through the use of a short description and or a photo montage showing similar schemes. For green roofs and/or green or living walls an indication of which product will be used or installed is helpful.

A Landscape Management Plan is imperative to establishing any landscaping. Key points which will be looked for include:

- o The intensive aftercare period (first twelve months) has an explicit specification for tree watering and needs to include: a start and finish period; a frequency; and an amount. Terms such as "field capacity" should be avoided. For example: "The Contractor shall be required to water all trees planted within the previous two years, starting in spring on the week containing the 15th March and continuing through the summer on the weeks containing the 1st and 15th of each month until the week containing the 1st October (inclusive). Each tree on each round shall receive 40 litres of water. This shall be evenly distributed around the mulched tree circle." Further clauses can resolve any unseasonable wet weather and a reduction in water.
- o The Plan should include a definition of "thrive" and/or a list of visual symptoms of a failing plant to ensure all poor quality plants are removed. For example: "All foliage should be free of significant abnormal discolouration. The crown or plant should be free of any die back. Foliar density and size should be typical of the species and or cultivar. Extension growth should be compared to the growth of the previous year where it is apparent."
- o The use and distribution of fertilizer around the landscaping on an annual or regular basis should be avoided. This should be removed as it is unnecessary and increases the likelihood of pest and disease colonization on weak sappy growth.
- o Ensure all replacement planting receives the intensive aftercare period regime for twelve months.

Landscape Management Years 1-5 should include the following items:

- o All stakes, tie and labels shall be removed on the third growing season in late spring
- o Any tree which has not firmly rooted after two full growing seasons should be removed and replaced as it is unlikely to do so
- o On the fifth year the trees shall have formative pruning by a suitable competent operative who understands and is experienced in this type of pruning
- o Meadow planting can become depleted after three growing seasons from installation. A spring and summer inspection of the meadow areas should be undertaken and any areas where there are not abundant flowering herbs etc, should be reseeded with flower mix or planted with appropriate species of plugs at the supplies recommended density.

I trust the above is of help.

If you have any further queries let me know.

Kind regards,

Oliver

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Follow the link for more information about Trees in Welwyn

Hatfield <http://www.welhat.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1110>.

Find an Arboricultural Association <http://www.trees.org.uk/> approved tree surgeon or consultant