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FPCR RESPONSE TO LANDSCAPE COMMENTS OF HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL REGARDING LAND OFF ST MARY'S ROAD, HAYLING ISLAND

INTRODUCTION

This letter responds to the comments that have been received from Havant Borough Council's Landscape Architect (dated the 4th of December 2023) in response to the planning application (HBC Ref **APP/21/01434**) that has been submitted for the above site.

HBC COMMENTS & RESPONSE

Comment from HBC

The Havant borough Townscape, Landscape and seascape character assessment describes the site location as an open agricultural landscape with open views. This locally important landscape scene should be preserved through the scheme proposals. We therefore recommend that proposed tree planting to the north east corner would be improved by concentrating on a fewer number of larger legacy trees to retain the open vistas and in particular views to saint Marys church from the public footpaths.

FPCR Response

The submitted Development Framework Plan shows how informal clusters of scattered tree planting could be provided along the northern boundary of the site, if deemed to be required and necessary. The detailed arrangement, placement and size/species of tree planting would be provided at the reserved matters stage. Alongside this, it is important to note that the retention of views and vistas to St Mary's Church has been considered from the earliest stages of the masterplanning process, in shaping the development proposals.

Comment from HBC

The man-made ditches add a lot to the amenity of the landscape by improving the water

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retention, ecology and landscape character. A Landscape scheme that incorporates the retention of the ditches would be recommended.

FPCR Response

The comment is noted. The man-made ditch which passes from east to west through the site and into the existing pond is to be retained in-full as part of the proposals for the site and incorporated into a green corridor with additional tree planting. Some form of crossing to facilitate pedestrian access would need to be provided over the ditch, the detail of which could be determined at the RM stage of planning. The retention of the ditch can be further secured in future RM submissions and accompanying landscaping details.

Comment from HBC

The landscape character assessment also notes good connections across Gable Head with a number of well used rights of ways. Currently the public footpaths that connect to the site and to which the proposed internal footpaths are connect too cannot be deemed accessible to all. Any proposals that improve the existing public footpaths to make them more accessible to the wider public would be encouraged.

FPCR Response

As shown on the submitted Development Framework Plan, it is proposed that two connections will be provided to the footpath/Public Right of Way (PRoW) that runs adjacent to the application site's western boundary, in locations where this PRoW crosses over into the application site boundary, with the applicant therefore having an ability to achieve these links.

The wider network of PRoWs to the immediate north and west of the application site lie within 3rd party ownership, such that it is beyond the applicant's control to deliver or make any improvement works to these routes. However, the applicant would be amenable to making a proportionate developer contribution to deliver upgrades or works to improve their accessibility if these are shown to be necessary.

Alongside these off-site routes, the proposed recreational routes within the site boundary are extensive and offer a loop around the proposed development and connections into the PRoW network. The proposed surfacing of these routes has yet to be determined but it is recommended that if they are to be accessible to pedestrians and cyclists that they consist of a bound material with finger posts and signage for wayfinding and navigation.

Comment from HBC

The adjacent housing to the site is a mixture of single, double and some occasional three storey housing. Due to the close proximity to the open space and the reduction in the stretching views no more than two storey housing would be advised to attempt mitigate the loss of the wide vistas.

FPCR Response

The Design and Access Statement proposes that the majority of housing would be 2 storeys, with the occasional 2.5 storey dwelling located along the main street. In this regard, it is considered to be a good urban design principle to create a sense of hierarchy through the development by using taller buildings and a continuous frontage along the primary routes and deeper frontages and varied setbacks along secondary and tertiary routes.

It is also important to highlight that the vista between the public footpath and St Mary's Church would be retained notwithstanding the building heights along this route/view corridor as the proposed road network has been designed with this in mind. The avenue of street trees along the vista would help

to reinforce the view and highlight its significance. Details of the specific building heights to be provided can be further determined and considered at the reserved matters stage.

Comment from HBC

The landscape and built form strategy and guidelines states to maintain, manage and improve hedgerow character within the central open area of Gable head to reduce adjacent impact of the built environment and maintain historical character. It would therefore be favoured that the introduction of mixed native hedgerow as boundary screening, adjacent to the proposed built form to be implemented. Intermittent native oak tree planting within the hedgerow would retain and enhance the historic landscape character.

FPCR Response

The Development Framework Plan shows how a hedgerow could be provided along the development edge to the north and west of the site, which could help to provide a softer edge to the proposed development and a boundary between private and public land. Hedgerow trees are also shown on the layout which would provide vertical interest and additional habitat connectivity. Due to its location within the greenspace it would be highly recommended that this hedgerow should be native and species rich, but the exact details of this would be provided at the RM planning stage.

Comment from HBC

It would also be preferred for the site to have cycle and shared footpath access routes to relieve the strain of vehicular traffic and promote healthy travel.

FPCR Response

As mentioned above, an extensive network of proposed recreational footpaths and cycleways is proposed within the site and these could help to promote a modal shift away from vehicular forms of transport. These routes would spur off key points within the development, providing a loop around the site and connecting in with the existing PRow network which provides access to St Mary's Church, Hayling Island Holiday Park and facilities on Church Road. The precise nature of these routes, including those that could be designed to be shared by pedestrians cyclists could be determined at the reserved matters stage.

These routes will also be supplemented by cycling/pedestrian connectivity via the main site access from St Mary's Road, with a number of services and amenities located within an acceptable walking and cycling distance of the site, alongside access to public transport options.

CONCLUSION

We trust that the above responses are helpful and demonstrate that all the points raised are capable of being satisfactorily addressed. If it would be of use, FPCR would be willing to attend a Teams meeting with the HBC Landscape Architect to discuss these matters further.