

I outline landscape comments specific to conditions 4, 5 & 7 further below.

In reviewing the submitted plans for this discharge application, I reviewed the approved drawings pursuant to APP/12/01233 (with APP/12/01234 comprising Conservation Consent).

In general terms, I am disappointed with the submitted plans – the design quality appears diluted in comparison with the original approved application. Additional parking had been incorporated at the expense of soft landscape. The attractive mews courtyard concept, which was originally proposed, has been watered down by significant reduction of proposed trees, the introduction of tarmac and insensitive boundary treatment arrangements.

I include extracts below from the original Design Access Statement that appear to have been disregarded in preparation of the condition discharge submission:

Hedging and planting is proposed around the garden areas of houses to ensure privacy.

These will sit above a low wall which will be present throughout the scheme to promote a language at eye level within the development.

The surface texture of the road changes when entering the development to make the transition between road and courtyard apparent.

A tree lined arrangement is prominent in this area and enhances the backdrop and pedestrian areas of the proposal as well as breaking up and potential monotonous car parking arrangement.

Condition 4 – Detailed soft landscape scheme

Based on concerns regarding layout changes compared with the approved plans, the submitted landscape plan is not deemed sufficiently acceptable to discharge the condition.

- i) 2no extra parking bays require removal for reinstatement of shrub planting beds with the appropriate number of trees as per the originally approved layout.
- ii) Splayed ends to parking bays 1 and 2 could ease access manoeuvrability and are considered reasonable. Since this contradicts with the other submitted layouts, all layouts require updating to an agreed and consistent approach.
- iii) Close board fencing to the rear of plots 1, 2, 11, 12 & 13 requires setting back to reinstate a planted margin to enhance the car park as per the original approved drawings.

- iv) The proposed grass areas to the frontages of plots 1, 2, 14 – 24 are deemed impractical and inappropriate. Shrub planting (as originally indicated on the approved plans) is recommended.
- v) The narrow grass margins to the edge of shrub beds between parking bays and to the bed at the rear of the bin store are deemed impractical and inappropriate. Recommend this margin comprises a line of paving flags or robust groundcover.
- vi) The 2no planting areas to the frontages of plot 23 and 21 are not sufficient in size for establishment of planting of any substance. The original layout indicates tree planting along the frontages of plots 14 – 24. Careful coordination with the underground drainage/services, the use of root barriers and appropriate upstand edge for impact protection should reasonably allow the reincorporation of these trees with underplanting.
- vii) This condition makes specific reference to the inclusion of 'details of the agreed 'green wall' to the western boundary wall adjacent to the internal access road' – this needs to be included with the submission.
- viii) Landscape specification notes regarding topsoil quality, depth, planting method, stakes / supports, mulching and maintenance are required.
- ix) Generally the proposed species are deemed appropriate with the following minor exceptions
 - Tilia x euchlora is likely to become too big for the proposed location and should be substituted for a medium-sized tree (perhaps Pyrus x calleryana 'Chanticleer' or similar).
 - It would be preferable for the Phormiums to be substituted for an alternative specimen (perhaps a small Magnolia, Viburnum bodnantense 'Dawn' or similar).
 - Use of some climbing plants may be advantageous for screening benefit.

Condition 5 – Specification of materials for hard landscape

Based on concerns regarding layout changes compared with the approved plans, the submitted plans, details and materials schedule is not deemed sufficiently acceptable to discharge the condition.

- i) 2no extra parking bays require removal to allow reinstatement of soft landscape.
- ii) The proposed tarmac is not acceptable since the approved original application comprised a block paved courtyard to '*make the transition between road and courtyard apparent.*'
- iii) Specification information and details for the flag paved and gravel areas are required.

- iv) There is no clear transition from road to courtyard – a contrast material for transition from the road and the courtyard block paving is recommended.
- v) Given the Conservation Area designation, Marshalls Keyblok Vintage would be a more appropriate choice of paviour rather than the standard type. The proposed laying bond(s) need to be made clear and thought given to variation of edging courses / materials for visual interest / demarcation.

Condition 7 – Proposals for screen walls, hedges and other means of enclosure

Based on concerns regarding layout changes compared with the approved plans, the submitted layout plan is not deemed sufficiently acceptable to discharge the condition.

- i) The dwarf wall and railing arrangement to plot 2 appears to obstruct the visibility splay, limits the pedestrian access / crossing and ease of manoeuvrability from the parallel parking bays.
- ii) Close board fencing to the rear of plots 1, 2, 11, 12 & 13 requires setting back to accommodate a planted margin or upgrade to a more attractive / partially permeable screen fencing.
- iii) Specification information is required for proposed walls, railings and fencing (e.g. proposed materials, colours, fixing/laying methods and product references as required).
- iv) Larger scale, annotated elevation details with dimensions are required for walls, fences, railings and screening enclosures for bin stores / substation / bike stores.
- v) Any retained existing boundary treatments require clear identification on the layout plan (with details for proposed enhancement / reinstatement works).

I am more than happy to discuss the above in further detail if there are any concerns or queries. Given the Conservation Area status, the importance of the retained building and close proximity to the town centre, I feel it important to ensure that the quality design approach proposed within the original approved application is maintained.

Kind Regards

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