

Landscaping Consultation

APP/13/01153

Date: 29 November 2013

Site Address: Howards Car Spares, Mill Rythe Lane, Hayling Island, PO11 0QQ

Comments dated Dec 13th 2013

Whilst the existing site is fairly well screened from the road by existing native hedgerow, the extension of the proposal west into the surrounding paddocks is of concern.

The existing site and its use has a small negative impact on the surrounding landscape because of the existing internal shelterbelt of planting alongside the enclosure fencing and also because of the distance from the road at present – there is enough agricultural land/paddocks between the two to provide the continuation of the experience of being in a rural area. The adjacent fields (included as part of the proposal) are linear in form with wire fence boundaries and a strong hedged boundary to the south.

Landscape Character:

The Havant Borough Townscape, Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment (HBTLSA) gives us a better understanding of the variety of the historic, landscape, ecological, social, economic and cultural factors that have created the distinctive character of Havant Borough. This area is in LCA 31 - Central Hayling Plain- the site in its context is to the east of the A3023 road. The neighbouring existing Yacht building facilities can be seen adjacent the shoreline and marked on the OS base.

The characteristic of this area of the borough is that of *A predominantly flat landscape*. As a result it can often be more sensitive to even small changes in the landscape. Relevant references are demonstrated in italics below. Extracts from the planning application document are in **italics bold**.

The west of this landscape character area consists mainly of arable land, there is a small mosaic between two large patches of arable land which consists of coastal grazing marsh, broadleaved woodland and semi-improved neutral grassland

The western edge of the area is bordered by a thin strip of intertidal shingle whilst the centre of the area consists of arable land with large patches of broadleaved woodland and residential development (providing habitat through gardens) with larger patches of improved grassland as well as dense scrub and semi improved neutral grassland

It is this 'mosaic' that the proposal would therefore interrupt, with it's irregular boundary cutting into the paddocks and adjacent fields in an unnatural way. The removal of the existing belt of planting would remove a strong boundary that forms part of the mosaic and shields the existing use somewhat.

Historic and built environment

Few hedgerow boundaries survive in this area but the character of the enclosure pattern is retained through wire fences and farm tracks.

The north east area of the LCA has a historic landscape character of small regular fields with straight boundaries, which has been reclaimed from former unenclosed salt marsh and Verner Common

Where hedgerows have been reinstated, as at the existing site for screening purposes, their retention should be proposed where possible. The proposal also erodes the remnants of the older field patterns.

An agricultural landscape with colour depending on time of year and crop selection.

The proposal would prevent any seasonal change in the linear fields by introducing the constant digging and filling of the land during training exercises.

Visual: openness/enclosure, prominence and visibility

An open landscape with blocks of trees and shrub vegetation screening and concentrated around farmsteads allowing long views across adjacent areas of the open arable landscape.

There is a point along the hedgerow looking east where the southern hedge boundary meets the road when it becomes much more open and the existing site can be seen clearly. The space between creates a suitable spatial divide between industry and the surrounding landscape. The proposal would fill most of this area and be visually intrusive.

The view from Mill Rhythe Lane in particular would suffer, at the moment it is pure open pasture looking south-this would be permanently altered.

Experiential: tranquility, visual perceptions and access

In areas adjacent the A3032, tranquillity is reduced due to the heavy volume of traffic and the open nature of the landscape.

Visible urban edge

Removing the hedgerow makes the urban nature of the industrial site more obvious within the rural landscape. The operations in the field would further reduce tranquillity. Even though existing site operations have been present, the continuation of noise and possible impact is not preferable in this rural location.

Landscape and built form strategy and guidelines:

The landscape strategy is to conserve and enhance the local landscape character.

The following guidelines apply:

Land management - Specific local key issues

Loss of mature trees

Poor edge treatment (such as at Mill Rythe holiday village) with ancillary facilities often exposed to open adjacent landscape

The proposal removes the strong line of the hedgerow which, though not mature, contributes to the local mix of mature planting.

The D&A statement notes:

LANDSCAPING No landscaping would be proposed as the site externally will not change in appearance other than new fencing to make the car parking area more secure

However the plans show some proposals for perimeter planting-it is not clear what the landscaping intentions are other than to remove the existing belt to enable the practice field. More details required to confirm this and species proposed if so. The development checklist outlines expectations.

<http://www.hiow.gov.uk/offnet/hlg/47340%20Oce%20Checklist.pdf>

Built form and development

Reduce visual impact of A3023 through hedgerow planting. Restrict development of the built form along the A3032 to maintain open rural character

The proposal encroaches close towards the A3023 which already creates some local disturbance to the local area-filling in this with more industrial activities is likely to cause intrusion is not in line with the LCA guidelines. The form and nature of the proposal erode the character of this band of land between the road.

The D&A statement also states that:

The impact on this land should be no different to its use as agricultural land with the vehicles used been of the same size and characteristics as agricultural vehicles such as tractors and associated vehicles.

Vehicle movements on the site would be more continuous during training exercises for the whole year whereas I would consider that agricultural land works are more seasonal and for smaller periods of high activity at a time-they are considered part of the moments and characters of the landscape necessary to its working- this is not such an activity.

Lighting- the new plan shows new lighting external building mounted units that will likely have a small local impact in highlighting the new development rather than in any way mask it.

AONB:

In terms of possible impact on the AONB, it may have an negative impact, especially from the north- along mill rhythe lane-the long views south would be broken either by the mechanical works or even the new tree planting shown on some plans would now obscure the old field boundaries. The proposal eats into a chunk of undeveloped land which is not desirable.

The Conservancy's LCA also notes possible further visual intrusion from industrial and marine purposes as a local risk- therefore this proposal appears to go against their policy.

The Conservancy aim to preserve the undeveloped character of the areas and this proposal would erode the field character that currently exists.

Conclusion:

I would not support the proposal due to its negative impact on the surrounding landscape character and impact on the AONB. I cannot propose supporting conditions that would make the proposal suitable.

<http://www.havant.gov.uk/gaps-between-settlements-and-landscape-studies/havant-borough-townscape-landscape-and-seascape>