

**EASTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE
ON 3 MAY 2017**

UPDATE REPORT

Item No: (1) **Application No:** 17/00182/COMIND **Page No.** 13-44

Site: Land North Of Floral Way, Opposite Foxglove Way, Thatcham, Berkshire

Planning Officer Presenting: Masie Masiwa

Member Presenting: N/A

Parish Representative speaking: N/A

Objector(s) speaking: N/A

Supporter(s) speaking: N/A

Applicant/Agent speaking: Stuart Clark

Ward Member(s): Councillor Sheila Ellison
Councillor Lee Dillon

Update Information:

1. MEMBERS CONCERNS WITH REGARD TO LOSS OF TREES

1.1 During the Planning Committee site visit members expressed concern with regard to the loss of the mature trees on the site. At the time, no comments had been received from the Tree Officer. The Tree Officer's comments are now attached below.

2. OUTSTANDING CONSULTATION FROM THE TREE OFFICER

2.1 The plans provided have identified the trees at the site as indicative symbols only, but provide no further tree related information; other than the information within the Landscape Appraisal ref 237/16/BK, therefore the potential impact was determined during my site visit, using the plans and information available.

- 2.2** The site contains a number of trees, including, a group oak and walnut trees at the front of the site, just north of the culvert, there are other small trees and hedgerows in this area, which I understand are to be removed to facilitate the works.
- 2.3** The new access will require the removal of 2 small lime trees, and a section of hedgerow, and the northern section of the works will require the removal of 3 oak trees, other potential impacts include oak trees and hedgerows in areas of proposed works, which might be affected, by the changes in levels to either increase or reduce the land fall. The proposed new precast headwall, which would appear to be close to or within the root protection area of the adjacent oak tree, is off concern, but the oak tree is also located within the access road, but not been shown to be removed.
- 2.4** The site contains lots of areas, where trees require to be removed, to facilitate the works, or there is the potential for impact, which hasn't been completely covered, the majority of these trees are in good health and vigour and would score highly if graded using the BS5837 guidance, and would be considered a material constraint.
- 2.5** The landscaping proposed for the site on the Kirkham landscaping plan WBC/237/SK1, has proposed a mix of new native hedgerows, and a good mix of native trees, around the perimeter of the site, to help mitigate the losses, the use of native oak and field maple, will in time provide adequate mitigation. The landscaping along the eastern boundary which runs along the rear gardens of the properties in Harts Hill, may in time become overbearing, the use of the native hedge to help screen the earth works, is acceptable, but the trees should be set further back from the boundary, to reduce the overbearing impact they will have as they develop and grow, including the impact on the light to the bottom of the garden, as they are located on the western boundary.

Conclusion

- 2.6** The proposed works, will require the removal of a number of trees, and hedgerows most of are to be mitigated with new landscaping, the views from Floral Way into the site are reduced due to the linear row of lime trees, so the potential landscaping impact is greatly reduced.
- 2.7** My concerns are with the number of mature trees to be removed to facilitate the works, and can these be retained, if adjustments are made to the location of the spill way and bund works.
- 2.8** Can the spill way be moved further west and the bund works adjusted to retain the trees in the south-eastern corner, if so, then the landscaping requirements adjacent to the houses could be reduced, as more of the existing vegetation is being retained?
- 2.9** Can the engineering works for the bund at the northern part of the site be adjusted to retain the 3 mature trees, and also can adjustments be made to the location of the new precast headwall, and access road to retain the tree on the eastern boundary?
- 2.10** It's not clear why these trees can't be retained within the site, as long as they are not within the bund or close to the bund, the retention of trees will also help with storm water runoff, so hopefully they can be incorporated.
- 2.11** The amount of landscaping along the rear gardens may become overbearing in the future, the use of the native hedgerow to screen the bund is a good idea, but I would like to see the

trees moved further back from the boundary by at least 3m, so as they mature they don't become overbearing on the residents. It would be beneficial if the following information were provided to support the application, and ensure the development is Arboriculturally feasible.

- Tree survey in accordance with BS837:2012. (clear indication of the trees to be removed)
- Arboricultural impact assessment and supporting arboricultural method statements as required following the completion of the tree survey.
- Tree protection plan in accordance with BS5837:2012
- Details on site storage and contractor parking.

2.12 If you are minded to approve the application, I would request that the following conditions are attached

3. ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE TREE OFFICER

3.1 The Tree Officer has advised that if the current proposal is acceptable, the landscaping condition can be in accordance with the information provided by Kirkham Landscapes. However if minor amendments are to be made, the landscaping details will change and the Tree Officer recommends the following conditions :

3.1.1 Landscaping

No development or other operations shall commence on site until a detailed scheme of landscaping for the site is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities, an implementation programme and details of written specifications including cultivation and other operations involving tree, shrub and grass establishment. The scheme shall ensure;

- a) Completion of the approved landscape scheme within the first planting season following completion of development.
- b) Any trees shrubs or plants that die or become seriously damaged within five years of this development shall be replaced in the following year by plants of the same size and species.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping in accordance with the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

3.1.2 Landscape Maintenance

No development or other operations shall commence on site until details of the maintenance of the proposed landscape scheme have been approved in writing and shall include an implementation programme and details of written specifications including cultivation and other operations involving tree, shrub and grass establishment. The scheme shall ensure;

- a) Details of soil preparation, plant protection, watering and weeding.

- b) Any trees shrubs or plants that die, become seriously damaged or die within five years of this development shall be replaced in the following year by plants of the same size and species.

Reason: To ensure the implementation of a satisfactory scheme of landscaping in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

3.1.3 Tree protection scheme

No development (including site clearance and any other preparatory works) shall commence on site until a scheme for the protection of trees to be retained is submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such a scheme shall include a plan showing the location of the protective fencing, and shall specify the type of protective fencing. All such fencing shall be erected prior to any development works taking place and at least 2 working days notice shall be given to the Local Planning Authority that it has been erected. It shall be maintained and retained for the full duration of works or until such time as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. No activities or storage of materials whatsoever shall take place within the protected areas without the prior written agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Note: The protective fencing should be as specified at Chapter 6 and detailed in figure 2 of B.S.5837:2012.

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

3.1.4 Tree Protection – Construction Precautions

No development or other operations shall commence on site until details of the proposed access, hard surfacing, drainage and services providing for the protection of the root zones of trees to be retained has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason; To ensure the protection of trees identified for retention at the site in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and Policies CS14, CS18 and CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026.

4. CONCLUSION

Following the updated information, the recommendation of approval remains unchanged. Officers have reviewed the loss of the trees on the site and the submitted landscaping scheme, it is considered that the overall benefits of the scheme would outweigh the loss of the existing trees. It is also considered that additional trees and landscaping can be secured by condition as recommended by the Tree Officer, if members consider this necessary.