

MEMORANDUM

From:	Catherine Brimble Senior Landscape Officer		
Service	SDL Landscape and Trees	App No:	243124
Address:	Land At Bridge Farm, Bridge Farm Lane, Twyford, Berkshire.		
Proposal:	Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning consent 212720 for the erection of 200 dwellings with associated infrastructure, open space, biodiversity enhancements, landscaping and green infrastructure (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be considered).		
Type of Development:	Major Dwellings (10+)		
Site Visit Made:	Yes/No		

Summary Of Recommendations

- ☐ No comment
☐ No objection
☐ No objection subject to conditions (and reasons) **stated below**
☒ Request further information before determination as **stated below**
☐ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

Comments On Proposal

Drawings

- I note that revised drawings have been provided as requested indicating Plot numbers on all the drawings, parking spaces identified for each plot and dwelling types on layout plan. This is helpful however the Block Plan drawing should also include additional information such as:
 - The location of front and rear access doors to each property.
 - Sheds and / or cycle parking.
 - Access to rear gardens.
 - Service margins or corridors.
- We will need an overall levels strategy drawing for all areas of development across the site. The only levels information is provided as part of the Drainage Strategy document and only shows FFL's and proposed levels of the new roads. Existing levels are indicated on this drawing but are so small they can only be read when zooming in by 200%. I note that additional levels information is being prepared, and request that it will also need to show proposed levels across all other parts of the site.

Layout

3. As previously indicated in my pre-app comments, the Site Opportunities plan in the Design Code indicates the access road as providing opportunities to reinforce green buffer connections and which relates to the primary route (street hierarchy) and formal avenue (street character) as shown in the design concept section. The landscape treatment relating to the primary route and avenue will also need to extend along the section of road off the roundabout into the site as this will set the tone of the development. We will need to see space for a greater level of street tree planting at the site entrance and I am disappointed that changes have not been made in this area to respond to the pre-app comments and to incorporate structural tree planting in this area.
4. Some changes have been made to accommodate a slightly greater landscape buffer between the access road and the reprofiled ditch at the front of the site opposite plot 16 to allow for some planting. However no change has been made to provide a larger landscape buffer between the top edge of the ditch and the front of plot 29 which still looks cramped in relation to the ditch and the access road.
5. Where no footway is shown along the edge of the road, a 2m utility margin is required which remains part of the highway infrastructure. However in a number of locations proposed landscape planting including hedgerows and trees are indicated in these areas and / or too close to the dwelling and in reality these will not be planted which will be to the detriment of the wider landscape scheme. Examples are provided below where trees are shown either in the utility margin or too close to dwellings circled in red, and therefore unlikely to be planted



6. One dwelling (plot 20) extends into the 2m Utility Margin and is therefore unacceptable.
7. Many of the widths of the proposed front gardens do not comply with the ranges as set out in the Design Code and are substantially smaller than implied in the Design Code, thereby limiting the type of structural planting that can be incorporated throughout the scheme.
8. There are numerous locations where the proposed lighting columns as shown on the Street Lighting Layout is in direct conflict with the location of a proposed

tree. As tree locations are more restricted than the locations of street lighting columns, I suggest the position of the street lighting is reviewed in relation to tree planting and revised locations sought.

9. Lighting columns are also shown in in direct conflict of existing tree canopies to be retained and request revised locations are found taking into consideration these existing landscape features.
10. There are a number of locations where there are four on-plot parking bays in a row with no break between the two properties creating large areas dominated by hard surfacing. It is noted on the Enclosures Plan that the parking bays between two different plots will be marked by estate railing, however I suggest that this is replaced by the 0.6m ready hedge instead. Trees could also be included where there is no other opportunity for tree planting due to other restrictions (see point 5 above) and can be accommodated by including underground soil cells under the adjacent hard surfacing.
11. Some of the tree planting around the Loddon Green open space is likely to be restricted by underground attenuation tanks. The location of the tanks will need to be adjusted to enable the tree planting to be accommodated as shown on the Landscape Masterplan.
12. It is noted that a number of the rear gardens are below the 11m minimum length as required by the Wokingham Design Code.
13. The location of the sub station is on the edge of The Orchard pubic open space and on main pedestrian route to Twyford so will be visually dominant from within the public open space. It would be more appropriate if the sub station can be better integrated into the built development rather than open spaces.

Landscape Design Statement (dated September 2024 Rev H) and Tree Planting Plans

14. As indicated in points 3 & 4 above, the space available around the site entrance and to be considered as part of the northern buffer (page 12) and site gateway (page 13) of the Landscape Design Statement (LDS), is partially restricted by the reprofiled ditch and the close proximity of the development especially plot 29. To achieve the ambitions of this area as set out in the LDS it is important that further changes are considered as part of the layout.
15. It is not clear why coniferous trees are proposed on the roundabout as these are not typical of the character of the area. Further consideration should be given to other more characteristic tree species of the area.
16. The main street is indicated on the Character Areas plan, page 14 of the LDS and as previously discussed in point 3 above, street tree planting will need to be continued all the way along this road to the site entrance.
17. The size of street trees at time of planting will need to be more robust / larger to withstand rigors of public areas (page 15).

18. In order to provide adequate security to private rear gardens where adjacent to a public area we would normally expect these enclosures to be a 1.8m brick wall rather than a pre-formed 'instant hedge' 180cm tall (page 16). A hedgerow can be grown in front of the brick wall.
19. It is helpful to have further information on the swales and attenuation areas and how the landscape proposals relate to these features. I note that the Landscape Masterplan includes tree planting in the Riverine Swale and therefore it is important to show how the trees will be incorporated into this feature and shown on the detail on page 19 of the LDS.
20. It is helpful that the LDS indicates that trees planted in areas with limited rooting volume will have underground soil cells to extend the size of the tree pits to enable healthy growth of the tree.
21. There is insufficient space for *Platanus x hispanica* (London Plane) to mature in the space shown for this tree to be planted on the Tree Planting Plan, either in relation to the street scene or adjacent dwellings and will need to be replaced with an alternative more suitable tree species.
22. A number of trees shown on the Tree Planting Plan are abbreviate as AD, this tree is not shown on the Tree Planting Schedule and will need to be.
23. The information within this document in association with the Landscape Masterplan and the Tree Planting Plans will need to take into consideration comments I have made on the layout to ensure the level of tree cover is maintained. Fully detailed landscape plans can be conditioned.

Arboricultural Report

24. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment dated December 2024 has been provided as part of the application. I have the following comments to make:
 - The Retention and Removal plan is at a scale (1:2000) which is too small to identify any issues relating to the layout and existing trees to be retained. We would normally expect this to be 1:1000 or 1:500.
 - The site layout is obscured by the opaque tree canopies and suggest the canopy extent and root protection areas are clearly shown to enable the site layout to also be viewed.
 - The tree schedule will need to be revised as it appears the details of each tree or tree group have been transposed into the wrong columns.
 - Although it is indicated in section 6.12 of the AIA that there will be no significant ground level changes, it is not clear from the information provided with the application whether development platforms are proposed and if the grading back into existing levels will have an impact on existing root protection areas.

Drainage

25. The extent of one of the underground attenuation crates in the Loddon Green open space will impact on tree planting proposed in this area and will need to

be amended to ensure the trees can be planted in accordance with the Landscape Masterplan drawing.

26. The design of the headwalls into the attenuation basins will need to be naturalistic, i.e. not a standard concrete design.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Conditions to be provided once changes have been made as requested.

Date:	3 rd February 2025	Signed:	C. Brimble
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