
MEMORANDUM

From:	Catherine Brimble Senior Landscape Officer		
Service	SDL Landscape and Trees	App No:	241861
Address:	Land At Church Lane And Hyde End Road, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross, Reading, RG7 1HB.		
Proposal:	Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to outline planning consent O/2013/0346 (130162) for the erection of the primary school building sub-phase of the development. Details of Layout, Appearance, Landscaping and Scale to be determined.		
Type of Development:	Major All other developments		
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

A number of plans and documents have been submitted to support this application which are listed in the covering letter and include a Design and Access Statement (DAS), Landscape Approach and Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan.

Revised information has been provided following previous comments and I have the following comments to make:

Landscape

I have no objection to the landscape approach as set out in the document and shown on the Overall Landscape Plan, and detailed in the planting strategy and hardscape strategy. This document provides details of the range and variety of planting relating to the different proposed play spaces.

With regard to strip of land between the existing footpath and the eastern boundary of the site, which although is currently fenced off and appears to be within the site boundary, is outside the site red line. It is helpful to have clarified that this narrow strip of land relates to the adjoining residential parcel under RM application 170010

of which the proposed planting will need to be implemented according to the approved landscape plans as soon as practically possible.

No changes have been made to the Drainage Strategy as previously requested to include possible innovative SuDS solutions that could be employed to help make a stimulating play space for children, but also address some of the surface water challenges across the site. As previously suggested it is essential that the Landscape Architects and Drainage Engineers work together to create a SuDS scheme which incorporates many of the features I have listed under the drainage section below. I note that the rain gardens indicated on the Landscape Softworks Plan included within the Appendix A of the Drainage Strategy are not connected to the wider drainage scheme and will need to be.

Arboricultural Information

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement & Tree Protection Plan has been provided for the development. The proposed development will not have any detrimental impact on the trees growing outside the site and adjacent to Hyde End Lane.

It is helpful to note that the trees identified as Veteran within the AIA are those on the WDTVA database. However we still would normally expect this to be assessed in detail as part of the tree survey and AIA.

Design and Access Statement

I feel that the further information given in the Consultation Log Response does not provide a detailed answer on materials choice and design of the school. It is important to understand why the design of this particular school in this location has been designed in this way and how it relates to the buildings and landscape beyond the site. The response references the Rotherhithe Primary School as a high-quality school which this application has drawn influence from. However the Rotherhithe Primary School was designed with particular reference to its inner city location and the aspiration to incorporate and integrate into a well landscaped setting so that staff and pupils benefit from gardens and landscape spaces around the school. Therefore I feel it would be helpful to understand the design brief and evolution of this school and how this relates to the particular site and surrounding community

Drainage and SuDS Strategy

The Drainage and SuDS Strategy by Jomas Associates has now been updated V3 (November 2024) which now shows the areas of playground to be an impermeable surface.

It is extremely disappointing that following on from my previous comments a more innovative SuDS solution has not been combined with the landscape scheme to use surface water in a fun and educational way as part of the play resource for the school and to inspire children to make connections between the weather, landscape and nature, or even a commitment to consider this more fully at the detail design stage. This does not necessarily mean that this will increase the project costs as stated in the Consultation Log Response. The aim should be to take roof and surface water drainage and to slow the flow as much as possible before it enters a piped system. This can be done by including the following:

- Water butts.
- Rain gardens, either close to the building to take water from the roof or using the landscape features and tree pits within or on the edge of the play area.
- Alternative to downpipes such as rain chains which can then feed into a rain garden. (This can be a feature of the building design).
- Using shallow channels and rills to create a temporary water and play feature.
- Planted swales.
- Small ponds.

These elements haven't been fully considered in the Drainage Strategy.

We still want to see an integrated SuDS and landscape scheme to provide a stimulating play space and an innovative solution to surface water and roof runoff and suggest the Drainage Engineers and Landscape Architects work together to achieve this. There are a number of good examples of how schools have incorporated SuDS features with their grounds and as part of their play space on the Susdrain website, the Landscape Institute website and GreenBlue Urban website, as a suggestion.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Possible additional conditions once the additional information have been provided.

Date:	2 nd January 2025	Signed:	C. Brimble
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