

Planning Application Reference: 262120

Location: Land at Park Lane / Adjacent to Canberra Lake Way, Charvil

Submitted by: Lee Cripps

Objection Focus: Inadequacy and Unenforceability of Landscape Management Zone 01 (LMZ01) Mitigations

I am writing to submit a formal objection to the above-referenced planning application. Having thoroughly reviewed the submitted Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for the site, it is clear that while LMZ01 is nominally designated as a critical buffer zone, the current proposals fail to provide the technical specifics, timing commitments, or early physical mitigation required to make it fit for purpose.

LMZ01 is specifically required to act as an immediate ecological, privacy, and visual amenity buffer between the proposed development and the established residential properties along Canberra Lake Way. The submitted LEMP fails to secure this delivery on three critical grounds:

1. Complete Absence of a Detailed Planting Schedule for LMZ01

While the LEMP outlines broad habitat management objectives and references general seed mixes and scrub planting, it provides no granular, enforceable planting schedule for LMZ01.

- The document lacks specific species compositions, quantities, container sizes (e.g., standard, extra-heavy standard, or semi-mature), and exact planting densities for this specific zone.
- Without a detailed, hard-coded planting schedule embedded within the planning conditions, there is zero guarantee that LMZ01 will deliver the requisite physical screening or structural vegetation. Vague commitments to "native planting" allow Bellway to fulfil conditions with low-grade, slow-growing whips that offer no functional screen or habitat value for years. As noted by Charvil Parish Council during the planning committee... Bellway is 'minimally compliant' on many aspects of this development and this is another example of 'minimally compliant'.

2. Flawed and Differential Phasing Timeline for LMZ01 Works

The proposed timeline for delivering LMZ01 is fundamentally flawed. Under the current trajectory, landscape installation in buffer zones is routinely relegated to the final phase of construction or deferred until post-occupation of adjacent dwellings.

- Deferring the establishment of LMZ01 until during or after main construction activity leaves the boundary exposed throughout the entire construction lifecycle, subjecting existing residents to unmitigated noise, dust, and visual intrusion.
- Furthermore, late-stage planting risks high failure rates due to soil compaction, heavy machinery movement, and site pollution during the build phase. The LEMP must establish LMZ01 as a dedicated, protected work stage with clear, enforceable milestones before main site works progress.

3. Failure to Deliver a Day-One Buffer via Pre-Construction Advance Planting

The explicit purpose of LMZ01 is to serve as a visual, privacy, and ecological buffer for existing residents from day one.

- To fulfill this purpose, planting within LMZ01—specifically mature and semi-mature evergreen and native deciduous trees—must be carried out **prior to the commencement of any site clearance, groundworks, or heavy construction**, rather than post-occupation.
- Advanced pre-construction planting allows root systems to establish without construction stress, provides immediate visual screening during the build, and ensures that the receptor habitat buffer is structurally functional before any on-site disturbance or ecological displacement occurs.

Conclusion and Requested Action

The LEMP in its current form renders LMZ01 an ineffective, aspirational buffer rather than a robust planning safeguard. I request that Wokingham Borough Council refuse or withhold approval for this aspect of the application until the following pre-commencement requirements are secured by strict planning condition:

1. A fully detailed, site-specific **LMZ01 Planting Schedule**, specifying exact species, stocking densities, and tree sizes (prioritising mature stock, or at the very least, semi-mature stock).
2. A binding **Landscape Phasing Plan** that legally enforces the complete planting and fencing of LMZ01 prior to the deployment of construction machinery or site clearance.

3. An explicit condition requiring **advance pre-construction planting** to guarantee an operational visual and ecological buffer from day one of construction.