
MEMORANDUM

From:	Catherine Brimble Senior Landscape Officer		
Service	SDL Landscape and Trees	App No:	242696
Address:	Hogwood Farm, Sheerlands Road, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG40 4QY.		
Proposal:	Application for approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline Planning Consent O/2014/2179 (as varied by 181194, dated 14/11/2018). The Reserved Matters comprise details of sports pitches, sports pavilion, allotments, car parking and play areas; along with associated landscaping, highways and drainage infrastructure. Details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale to be considered		
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

This RM application the Sports Hub area has been submitted in conjunction with a full application for 48 dwellings, therefore some of the comments for this application may also relate to the residential application.

Layout

The landscape buffer as shown on the eastern boundary of the residential site will also need to continue along the eastern edge of the allotment site in some form. The allotments are currently shown to extend right to the boundary fence. As there is currently no meaningful boundary vegetation in this area, a hedgerow and a few smaller hedgerow trees will need to be shown along this boundary with the countryside. There will also need to be a grass buffer strip between the allotment plots and the new hedgerow to allow for access and maintenance of the hedgerow. This will also apply to the where the allotment plots are adjacent to the southern boundary and a grass buffer strip will be required between the plots and the new hedgerow.

The layout will need to incorporate a pedestrian link from the bridleway and the proposed play area, into the residential parcel, as discussed in application 242653.

We will also need to see indicative pedestrian accesses into the wider play area site from the bridleway to the north, the north-eastern corner of the site to provide a direct link from P15 and from the adjacent housing development as discussed above.

There appears to be two vehicular access points to the attenuation basin south of the allotments, one via a gravel track through the allotments and the other via a reinforced grass track north of the proposed orchard area. Is it necessary for both to be shown or could this be reduced to one route.

Hard and Soft Landscaping

- A new hedgerow is shown around the southern and eastern edges of the pavilion car park at the top of a slight embankment adjacent to the allotments. However on the allotment Landscape Plan the new hedgerow is shown at the base of the embankment. I presume only one hedgerow is intended to be planted in this area, therefore these drawings will need to coordinate with each other only showing one hedgerow in the same location.
- It would be helpful to understand the reason for the choice of the plants in the various thicket mixes and whether the different thicket mixes are provided for different purposes. Some of these mixes should contain Hazel as a native shrub. Photina should be removed from Thicket Mix 4 as it's not appropriate plant to be used in semi-natural spaces.
- Hazel should be included in the woodland mix to increase the species diversity.
- I would like to see a number of Oak tree specimens to be included in the planting at the edges of the site where there is adequate space for these to mature over time. These tree species are a significant component of the wider landscape and will need to be included.
- I would also like to see the inclusion of three other tree species (Aspen, Rowan and Whitebeam) where appropriate, instead of some of the more ornamental varieties or as well as those already listed.
- The planting specification is provided on Sports Hub Landscape Proposals Plan Sheet 3, however it would have been preferable to have this in a separate document rather than on the drawing which is difficult to read at this scale.
- The specification will need to refer to the relevant British Standards for Trees from Nursery to Landscape (BS 8545:2014).
- I would like to see a greater number of benches provided around the pavilion on the surrounding hardstanding, as on busy days spectators should have the opportunity to sit down.
- The alignment of post and rail fencing proposed to the edge of the thicket planting along the western edge of the site at the south western corner of the 3G pitch will need to be amended so that it follows the base of the low earth bund rather than crossing over the top of it and crossing back again.
- Not sure why the boot scrapers are sandwiched between the bench and the vegetation. I would expect to see boot scrapers on the edge of the footpath leading from the pitch.
- It is noted the details of the wider play areas will be brought forward at a later stage which is acceptable.

Trees

A Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment dated 4th October 2024 has been provided. The majority of TPO trees within and adjacent to the site will be retained as part of the proposals with only one dead individual being removed along with parts of several groups to enable the construction of the new bridleway running parallel to Park Lane. I have no objections to these minor removals.

There will be some above ground construction works within the RPA's to a number of TPO trees to create the bridleway, however this will either correlate with an alignment of an existing track or will be in accordance with the design principles set out in APN12. I have no objection to these principles and request design details to be provided within an AMS.

Overall the majority of trees and hedgerows within and adjacent to the site can be retained and protected as part of the proposed development.

Levels

It would be helpful to see section D-D extended to the site boundary as shown on the Site Context Plan to show the position of the bridleway.

Drainage

- It is not clear whether the attenuation basins are to be dry or wet basins, and this will need to be clarified.
- If the basins are to be mostly dry they should include a low flow channel which is normally lined with stones and gravel to prevent erosion.
- The attenuation basin to the south of the allotment area has been designed with undulating sides and a variety of side slope gradients. This is very welcome but wonder whether a number of level benches could be included to break up the some of the slopes to enable different types of planting to be included.
- I note that the attenuation basin to the south of the pitches has an undulating shape but standard 1:3 slopes which I presume is limited by the space available in relation to the pumping station.
- I am not able to find any information regarding the need for the low earth bund running parallel to the western boundary of the site, other than it is required for drainage purposes. A more detailed explanation is required.
- The design of the headwalls for the drainage features will need to ensure these relate to the informal and naturalistic appearance if the SuDS features. Therefore standard concrete headwalls will not be acceptable.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Possible additional conditions to be provided following the requested changes and additional information being submitted.

Date:	11 th December 2024	Signed:	C. Brimble
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