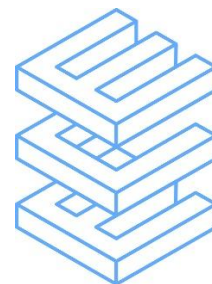


Client	Rocco Homes		
Project	P2228 – Land to the East of Mousdell Close, Ashington		
Document	Landscape Note	Revision	A
Date	20 November 2025		
Author	M Smith	Checked	H James



Thank you for the detailed landscape comments provided. The project team has undertaken a thorough review of the matters raised and has updated the Landscape Masterplan where feasible and appropriate.

Set out below is a clear summary of the items we have addressed, alongside reasoned justification for elements that cannot be amended for planning and technical reasons. This should assist the Council in understanding how the design has evolved and why certain requests fall outside what is reasonable, necessary, or deliverable in planning terms.

Items Addressed Through Revised Landscape Plan

1. Additional Street Trees

We acknowledge the comments regarding increased tree planting across primary routes. Updates have now been incorporated throughout the layout. These enhancements strengthen green infrastructure, reinforce the character of the development, and support compliance with HDPF Policy 31 and emerging Strategic Policy 20.

2. Play Space Provision

The officer's observations regarding play have been fully addressed. We have reconfigured the communal space to the rear of the apartment blocks and embedded informal play and play-along-the-way elements into the wider landscape masterplan, offering doorstep opportunities that are safe, accessible, and well-overlooked.

3. Boundary Treatments

All queried boundaries have been reviewed. The plan has been updated to reflect a clearer hierarchy of treatments, including enhancements to peripheral interfaces.

The officer's concerns regarding the southern boundaries of Plots 16 and 33, where close-board fencing had originally been proposed, have been fully addressed. These boundaries have now been upgraded to brick walling ensuring a secure, attractive, and policy-compliant treatment at these sensitive public-facing locations. Additionally, defensive planting has been proposed to provide both amenity value and greater security. The revisions eliminate the previous reliance on timber fencing in public areas and deliver a coherent and resilient boundary hierarchy that enhances both amenity and character.

These amendments reinforce site edges, respect neighbouring amenity, and support a coherent landscape structure consistent with Strategic Policy 17.

4. SUDS Attenuation Basin

The planting strategy for the attenuation basin has been revised to address concerns about the potential invasiveness of reed beds. The feature is not intended to have a permanent water level; instead shrub and herbaceous perennial planting suited to soil inundation is to be proposed, providing a rich wetland scrub habitat that will provide visual interest year round.

Items Not Addressed – With Planning Justification

1. Relocation of Visitor Parking at the Site Entrance

We recognise the officer's preference to reposition visitor spaces away from the main entrance; however, there is no viable alternative location given the spatial requirements to appropriately distribute visitor parking equally throughout the proposal, and limitations related to highways and services margins.

Relocating the visitor parking would:

- disrupt the balanced parking strategy,
- compromise internal movement and refuse strategy, and
- displace parking into areas where it would have materially greater visual impact or generate amenity conflict.

On this basis, and with no policy conflict arising, the existing configuration remains the most effective and least intrusive solution.

2. Removal of Maintenance Strips

The officer's suggestion to omit maintenance margins is noted; however, these strips are necessary to deliver and maintain the biodiversity enhancements required to meet the scheme's Biodiversity Net Gain obligations.

Removing them would:

- undermine long-term habitat management, and
- risk non-compliance with the BNG management plan and 30-year maintenance commitments.

3. Increased Connectivity to Neighbouring Sites

While we understand the aspiration for wider connectivity, the suggested links fall outside the land-ownership of the site. The applicant has reached out to neighbouring sites regarding connectivity, however due to third-party ownership we cannot guarantee this can connectivity at this stage.

The proposal retains appropriate and policy-compliant pedestrian and cycle connectivity into Ashington.

4. Introduction of Additional SuDS Features

Following a detailed technical review, the project team has reconsidered the potential to incorporate additional SuDS features within the scheme. While we acknowledge the landscape officer's aspiration to integrate more visible SuDS elements, there are significant practical and adoptability constraints that limit their feasibility on this site.

The only realistic locations for rain gardens would be within roadside verges or private frontage planting. However, both areas present clear technical barriers:

- Highway service margins: Adoptable roads require unobstructed service corridors. Rain gardens or swales cannot be accommodated within these spaces without compromising statutory service runs, utilities access, or future maintenance requirements.
- Private curtilages: Front garden areas are too constrained to support functional SuDS features. Effective rain gardens require continuous linear form and sufficient depth for infiltration; fragmented or incremental installations at dwelling frontages would not perform adequately and would create long-term maintenance liabilities.
- Highway authority considerations: West Sussex County Council is unlikely to adopt rain gardens within highway verges due to safety, maintenance, and liability concerns. Locating SuDS features in these areas would introduce risks to adoption and therefore jeopardise deliverability.

Importantly, the approved drainage strategy already provides a robust and policy-compliant SuDS solution elsewhere within the scheme. The design achieves appropriate attenuation, treatment, and surface water management without placing pressure on constrained verge spaces or creating conflicts with highway adoption standards.

For these reasons, additional SuDS interventions in the form suggested would not be deliverable or proportionate, nor would they offer meaningful benefits over the established drainage approach that is already integrated into the scheme.

Summary

The design has been constructively refined in response to the Council's feedback, strengthening street character, play provision, and boundary definition. Where amendments have not been made, this reflects firm technical or planning constraints rather than unwillingness to engage.

We trust the rationale set out above provides clarity and reassurance that the proposal continues to strike the right balance between high-quality placemaking and deliverability.

