RESPONSE TO LANDSCAPE COMMENTS – SANDYGATE LANE, LOWER BEEDING (DISC/24/0162)

Services

The combined services layout doesn't accurately represent trees in plan. Please amend to coordinate with landscape proposals to avoid potential conflicts with the landscape strategy. An overview plan of the Landscape Scheme has been provided to allow read across with the services layout. There are no material conflicts between the proposed services layout and existing or proposed planting. The main density of services is run in a service margin under the footway and therefore do not conflict with the position of proposed planting.

Soft Landscaping

1. Please provide tree pit and staking/underground guying details with additional details for planting on sloping ground. Provided – see drawing M387-401 Rev P1
2. While we welcome the proposed planting palette, sizes and densities, there is opportunity for further planting in line with Condition 19, '*Particular focus shall be made to enhance planting along the western boundary of the site to enable an appropriate transition from built development to rural countryside'*, as well as previous comments made under DC/22/0708, '*Further mitigation planting is required to reflect the scale of the proposed development. This could be accomplished by retaining a larger proportion of the western aspect as a structural landscape area, predominantly through restoration of hedgerow, woodland shaw / belt planting of native species and the creation of an 'eco-tone' of native scrub / thicket to assist the transition from built development to rural countryside'.* These comments were made in regard to the proposed site plan under DC/22/0708 which had more trees on the western boundary than currently proposed. As a minimum we expect missing trees to be reinstated and hedgerow reinforced/enhanced with native species, however we recommend that the proposal is modified to address the requirements of Condition 19 and comments shared above. The planting along the western boundary have been significantly enhanced and reinforced to provide transition as requested. This takes the form of a combination of additional tree planting, native hedge and an understory of native shrub planting.
3. Information is requested as to the purpose of the lawn in the south east of the site. There may be opportunity for planting in this area to become better integrated with the scheme, with potential to explore rain gardens or a wildflower meadow in order to improve visual amenity and enhance biodiversity. This area has been revised to turf edged meadowgrass with additional tree planting introduced to provide a less formal feel than the previous lawned areas.

SuDS

4. While the proposed pond is welcomed, modification is requested. We recommend the following:

    a. Adjust the footprint further west from the RPA of the T24 Oak (see indicative suggestion below). While it currently does not conflict with the minimum RPA, precaution is advised in order to lessen impact on fibrous rooting which is critical to the health and long term retention of the tree. The shape and footprint of the pond has been adjusted as requested to move further from the RPA of T24.

    b. Introduce varied depths using a combination of shelves/benches with a maximum 1:3 slope in between. This will provide the opportunity for marginal planting and a wildlife habitat which has high potential for biodiversity and therefore ecological and amenity benefits. The pond has been reconfigured to introduce an intermediate shelf and graded slopes as requested. Aquatic planting is not appropriate as the pond is only seasonally wet (not wet all year round); however, we have introduced clumps of planting around the margins of the pond comprising grasses, perennials and native shrubs, and additional around the headwalls to help naturalise these.

    c. Combine with variations in vegetation structure to ensure habitat diversity and landscape effect. As per HDC's *Open Space, Sports & Recreation Review*, we advise using solely UK native species and a range of vegetation types including wildflowers and other nectar rich plants, trees, shrubs and grasses of various heights. These should be included within the planting schedule and their specific maintenance within the LMMP. See comments above.

5. Please provide detail for headwalls. We recommend a naturalistic approach such as cladding in Horsham stone and introducing planting to soften their appearance. Headwalls are to be formed in sandbags with planting as described above to soften appearance. So they will not appear as harsh or urbanised engineering.

Levels

6. It is noted that earthworks are proposed within the RPAs of existing trees on the site boundaries (see example below). Trees are highly susceptible to rapid decline due to sudden changes in their rooting medium, therefore RPAs should be left clear of mounding/earthworks as sufficient oxygen levels are essential for their long term retention. The loss of these trees would result in adverse effects

to the landscape character and amenity of the area, therefore their longevity should be secured. Please modify earthworks to avoid the RPAs. This has been amended on previously submitted revised levels drawing.

Boundaries & surfacing

7. Please provide treatment for brick wall boundaries, noting that detailing would be preferred for visual amenity and interest. If detailing is not proposed, climbing plants should be provided in addition to these boundaries as per comments made under DC/22/0708. Climbers have been introduced to bricks walls to assist in softening and provide additional visual interest.

8. We recommend the use of bound gravel for the proposed footpaths for permeability and in order to be sympathetic to the rural surroundings. The footpath to the frontage of the site has been amended to a more rural bound Hoggin surface as requested.

9. Please amend the boundary in orange (below) to post and rail as a softer treatment to better reflect the rural character of the area. This has been amended to post and rail fence as requested.

10. Please amend the boundaries in purple (below) to brick. As per comments made under DC/22/0708, '*Where visible and where abutting the public realm and parking courts, close boarded fencing should be avoided and other boundary treatments such as brick or stone walls should be proposed*'. The rear garden boundary to Plots 1, 2 and 8 (visible within the parking court) have been amended to brick wall as requested.

11. Please amend the boundary in pink (below) to brick or closeboard fence given that it abuts private amenity space This section of fence to the side of Plot 22 has been amended to a 1.8m closeboard fence as requested.