From:	Steve Massey
To:	Haywood, Ben
Cc:	Planning Comments (SMDC)
Subject:	SMD/2019/0451 - Land at rear of former St John"s School, Mill Road, Wetley Rocks (replacement access road)
Date:	11 September 2019 16:47:30

Ben,

I have the following comments on this application:

Summary: No objection subject to conditions

This application relates only to a proposal to construct a new access along a different alignment to that previously approved as part of a scheme for the development of 6 new dwellings at the rear (north) of the former school.

The proposed new alignment would move all but the last 33m or so of the access road further away from existing mature trees in the church yard of St John's Church, hence reducing any risk of impact on these trees. No other significant trees would be affected by the proposed re-alignment. I therefore have no objection to this application on the grounds of impact on trees, but for the avoidance of doubt I would request that the following condition for tree protection be imposed in the event that planning permission is granted (a similar condition already applies to the main development permission SMD/2014/0777):

1. The first action on commencement of development, prior to any further action (including any site clearance, site stripping or site establishment) shall be the erection (within the application site only) of temporary tree protection barriers and advisory notices for the protection of the existing trees to be retained at St John's Church, in accordance with guidance in British Standard 5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations*, and this shall be retained in position for the duration of the period that development takes place, unless otherwise agreed by the LPA. Within the fenced areas there shall be no excavation, changes in ground levels, installation of underground services, provision of hard surfacing, passage of vehicles, storage of materials, equipment or site huts, tipping of chemicals, waste or cement, or lighting of fires unless otherwise agreed by the LPA.

In terms of visual impact, whilst the re-aligned access road would be longer overall than that of the previously approved scheme, its proposed access point onto the A520 Main Road would be less prominent and the road itself would follow the northern edge of the field, an arguably less prominent alignment than meandering down the field away from the boundaries. In addition, the current application includes indication of new landscape planting along the new road which, once established, would assist in better assimilating it into the landscape. I therefore consider that overall the proposed re-aligned access road would have a lesser visual impact than the previously approved scheme.

The proposed layout plan includes details of new tree planting, comprising suitable native species, and this is considered appropriate and also sufficiently specified in terms of numbers, positions and planting sizes. In addition, the layout plan indicates new native hedgerow to be planted along the southern side of the new road; this again is considered appropriate, but the

drawing does not include a specification for the hedge. Whilst this could be subject to a condition, it may be simpler (and avoid a pre-commencement submission conditional requirement) to amend the plan prior to application determination by adding a suitable standard specification for species/numbers/spacing/planting sizes for a double-staggered row field hedgerow; in doing so, I would suggest the inclusion of a few irregularly spaced native standard trees (a selection from the tree species already annotated would be appropriate) and also a further annotation to show similar specification infilling of gaps (of which there are a few) in the existing hedgerow along the northern boundary of the field.

A suitable landscaping implementation/maintenance condition is also requested:

2. The planting scheme shown on Sammons Architectural "Site Layout Plan and Section" Drg. No. 2010-1714-37 ***(*****OR REVISION NUMBER IF UPDATED TO INCLUDE AMENDMENTS TO LANDSCAPING AS NOTED ABOVE*****)*** shall be fully implemented before the end of the first available dormant season (November to February inclusive) following completion of the development hereby approved. The trees and shrubs planted in accordance with this landscaping scheme shall be properly maintained for a period of 5 years following planting. Any plants which within this period are damaged, become diseased, die, are removed or otherwise fail to establish shall be replaced during the next suitable season.

Steve Massey

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