

From: [Steve Massey](#)
To: [Curley, Jane](#); [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: SMD/2021/0538 - Land east of Barnfield Road, Leek
Date: 05 January 2022 12:35:14

Jane

The application includes a detailed landscaping scheme. Given the proposed site layout, with the large majority of (the industrial development part of) the site area taken up by the building and parking/turning/access provision, the landscaping scheme as proposed (General Arrangement Plan: Drg. No. UG_1145_LAN_GA_DRW_07 Rev P03, and Soft Landscape Plan: Drg. No. UG_1145_LAN_SL_DRW_08 Rev P03) probably represents the most that is reasonably achievable in terms of amount and structure within the industrial development section of the site. But I do have some comments on detail, as follows:

1. There is a proposed stretch of Beech hedge behind the 4 parking bays along the eastern boundary – this is annotated on the Soft Landscape Plan as being 7m long, but is shown significantly longer. Scaling off, I think this is nothing more than an accidental typo and should read “17m”, but this should be corrected and of course the number of plants and the planting schedule also amended accordingly.
2. Could we also request that this same 17m stretch of Beech hedge is then returned/continued for a further c.5.5m westwards (outside the weldmesh fence) to meet the north side of the indicated gateway between service yard and grass area, in order to complete the hedge planting along the southern edge of the industrial development part of the site and “finish” the boundary with the future link road protected corridor ?
3. At the front (western) boundary to Barnfield Road, could there be a slight amendment so that the hedge was on the outside (public side) of the weldmesh fence (along with the 2 trees already shown outside the fenceline) ?
4. The single specimen Liquidambar tree (Sweet Gum) at the south-east corner of the parking/yard area is shown in a small square bed proposed to be also planted with native understorey shrub mix (24 shrubs here). However, this square bed is much too small to accommodate shrubs of such potential mature size, and in such numbers – as well as being a maintenance headache in themselves they would also be likely to swamp the specimen tree. I would suggest the native understorey shrub mix for this square bed is replaced with the low sun shrub mix, to the specification already included in the schedule. And retain the Liquidambar tree as indicated.
5. The native understorey shrub mix proposed for the eastern boundary is appropriate in principle; however, I think the planting density for this given in the schedule (3 plants per square metre) is actually significantly greater than needed, given the size these large structural shrubs will achieve, as the large majority would be removed very early if the bed was thinned out, or if not thinned would lead to unnecessarily spindly growth as they fight each other for space/light. I would suggest 1 plant per square metre would be more appropriate and sufficient for the native understorey shrub mix.
6. The application site includes the line of the future link road, although since this is

currently not a firm proposal nor are specific details of alignment/width/ancillary works known at this stage, the landscaping scheme for the current application understandably shows simply grassing over the protected line of the link road in the meantime, together with new Beech hedging along the service yard boundary (appropriately outside the weldmesh fenceline) to provide a structural green landscape finish to the developed part of the site. Although it's tempting to seek through the landscaping for this application some advance tree planting along the line of the link road, given the uncertainties over alignment and ancillary works there would be a significant risk of such planting being damaged, or needing to be removed, to accommodate road construction, and it's probably better to consider landscape treatment of the link road as a whole in a comprehensive and coordinated manner as/when detailed proposals are brought forward.

Subject to further revisions as noted above, the landscaping scheme is otherwise considered appropriate and acceptable for approval as part of the application, if planning permission is granted – in this event, an implementation/maintenance condition should be included in the decision notice as per:

1. The planting scheme shown on **Urban Green General Arrangement Plan: Drg. No. UG_1145_LAN_GA_DRW_07 Rev P03**, and **Soft Landscape Plan: Drg. No. UG_1145_LAN_SL_DRW_08 Rev P03** (*specific drg nos. amended to suit any further revisions*) 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, shrubs and grass 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.

It would also be appropriate to include an informative note highlighting the need for this development to comply with Conditions 20 and 22 of the parent outline planning permission SMD/2014/0750 with regard to trees:

1. The applicant's attention is drawn to Conditions 20 and 22 of outline planning permission reference SMD/2014/0750 which relate to the development hereby approved and require, respectively, no removal of any trees/shrubs during the bird nesting season (without appropriate precautions), and the submission and approval prior to commencement together with subsequent implementation prior to and during construction, of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement including tree/hedge protection scheme.

Steve Massey

Arboricultural Officer / Development Services
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and High Peak Borough Council

Moorlands House, Stockwell Street, Leek, Staffordshire Moorlands ST13 6HQ
Tel: 01538 395788

E-mail: steve.massey@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk

www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk www.highpeak.gov.uk

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