From: Steve Massey
Sent: 08 September 2023 15:29
To: Hollins, Hannah
Cc: Planning Comments (SMDC); Kate Dewey
Subject: DOC/2023/0051 - Land at Churnet Works, Macclesfield Road, Leek

Categories:

Hannah

"Landscape Plan" Drg No. 18222-VL-McD_L01 Rev A, and "Raised Planters – Planting for Pollinators" Drg. No. 18222-VL-McD_L02 Rev A were submitted with the parent planning application SMD/2022/0361, and were specifically approved on the planning permission decision notice. However, Condition 15 of SMD/2022/0361 also states that "Notwithstanding the details submitted with the application, prior to the development being brought into use a detailed landscaping scheme ……. shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. This shall include the planting of locally native trees and shrubs of local provenance ....."

The same Revisions of the same two landscaping plans have now been submitted under application DOC/2023/0051 to discharge Condition 15. Overall, these landscaping proposals are considered appropriate, however I would request a few amendments/additions in order that the scheme better reflects the intentions/requirements regarding use of locally native and characteristic species to be more in keeping with the local area and provide even greater biodiversity habitat value. Obviously the application relates to a commercial development site within the urban area, and so it would not be necessary or appropriate to rigidly require use of only local native species, and others – whether native or non-native – can make a welcome contribution to the visual landscaping of the site and its biodiversity value, but a few relatively minor amendments or additions would further enhance these benefits.

The proposed 3 raised planters (Drg. No. L02 Rev A) are considered acceptable as currently submitted, with no amendments required, so the comments below all relate to the main Landscape Plan as set out on Drg. No. L01 Rev A; requests/suggestions as follows:

1. Tree planting schedule – substitute *Corylus colurna* (Turkish Hazel), as currently proposed, with *Betula pendula* (native Silver Birch).
2. Tree Planting schedule – *Prunus avium 'Plena'* as currently proposed is a specially bred double-flowered variety of Wild Cherry, but is sterile so it is of no particular benefit to pollinating insects. Replace with basic native Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*, which still has attractive springtime blossom.
3. Currently proposed specimen shrubs either side of the Electric Kiosk at the south-east corner of the site ("3 No. PtP" and "1 No. PAQ") could be replaced native shrubs eg *Corylus avellana, Viburnum opulus*.
4. The two stretches of Mixed Species Native Hedge Planting 01 and 02 should be linked/infilled by more of the same around the south-east corner of the site opposite the outdoor sitting/patio area.
5. Mixed Species Native Hedge Planting 01 and 02 schedules – Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)is not a locally characteristic component of native species hedgerows in Staffordshire Moorlands - replace with Field Rose (*Rosa arvensis*) or Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*); Beech (Fagus sylvatica) is also not a characteristic component of local native field hedgerows – replace with Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa).
6. A few irregularly spaced native species standard trees should be included within the (linked – see note 4 above) Mixed Species Native Hedge Planting 01 and 02; around 8 -10 trees in total, suggestions include Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Oak (*Quercus robur*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*).
7. The drawing annotation appears to suggest that the native hedgerow would be planted on the inside (development side) of a 2.4m acoustic fence. Whilst I can appreciate the desire to avoid a visually hard/abrupt bare fence facing into the site, the same equally applies to the external views from the undeveloped land beyond to the south/south-east of the site. Perhaps the best solution would be to set back the acoustic fence another metre or so away from the development, have the native hedgerow

planting (including standard trees – see note 9 above) outside the fence i.e. to its south/south-east, and put in some pollinator-friendly shrub planting against the inside of the fence to reduce its abrupt visual impact on that side.

8. Noted that the drawing key/annotation states that mixed species native hedgerow planting is to be maintained at 1.5m high. However, this would not screen the 2.4m high acoustic fence, and also allowing the native hedge to grow naturally higher and achieve a more mature phase/structure will increase its visual interest and biodiversity value through being more likely to flower and fruit if not kept close trimmed at 1.5m.
9. The large open area to the south of the site is denoted "Existing grassland" with no landscape proposals, implying it would be retained. In fact this land was not grassland but hard core which had become attractively naturalised by native saplings and scrub and other pioneer colonising vegetation. Sadly, however, all the vegetation has already been cleared from this area in association with the on-going development work on site, even though seemingly unnecessarily so. Some form of landscaping treatment/re-instatement is now required for this part of the site – maybe an informal mosaic of suitable wildflower grassland and patches of native scrub.

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:

E-mail:

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

Do you really need to print out this Email? Be green - keep it on the screen.

This email is intended for the addressee(s) only and may contain sensitive, privileged or confidential information that could be protectively marked. If you are not the addressee please do not use the information in any way. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately and delete it from your system. Thank you.

The Council may be required to disclose this email or any responses to it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The way in which we handle personal information is set out in our privacy notice and is available at https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/YourData

---