

From: [Steve Massey](#)
To: [Bob Phillips](#)
Cc: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: SMD/2022/0199 - Reserved Matters -Land adjacent to Daisy Bank Farm, Uttoxeter Road, Upper Tean
Date: 02 November 2023 09:43:02

Bob

Following our previous discussion about the tree and landscape-related details of this reserved matters application I have further comments as set out below, with reference to the latest revised plans and details including:

- Proposed Site Block Plan Drg. No. E-652.01 Rev F
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement report Ref: MG/6838/AIA&AMS/REV D/SEP23
- Tree Protection Plan Drg. No. 6838.02 Rev D
- Landscape Proposals Drgs. Nos. 6838.03 Rev G, 6838.04 Rev F, 6838.05 Rev F, 6838.06 Rev F, 6838.07 Rev F
- Applicants "Response to LPA and consultee comments" document

Tree and hedge impact

It is disappointing that the proposed layout brings the dwelling at Plot 1 further forward towards Uttoxeter Road, and further back against the northern boundary. This not only dilutes the landscaped access into the site, but requires removal of existing trees and hedgerow along this stretch of the northern boundary resulting in loss of existing habitat and loss of existing established/mature screening. Even with the layout as proposed, it is not immediately apparent why, for instance, 26G (mixed species hedge) would need to be removed at all. The applicants response document suggests replacement hedging will be included along this boundary "where possible" – implying that it might not be possible? I don't see why it should not be possible, and we do not want close board fencing or other hard boundary treatment abutting adjacent open fields (here or elsewhere around the overall site boundaries). Whilst the trees to be removed at the northern boundary of Plot 1 are of relatively low quality (Retention Category C) and outright objection to this would therefore be unlikely to be defensible, it is considered poor planning and design to remove existing established screening/habitat in order to accommodate built development structures (dwelling and fencing) hard up against the site boundary.

Equally it is not clear why removal of existing stretches of established hedgerow need be removed along the rear boundaries of Plots 50 – 53 inclusive (forming the boundaries against existing properties Daisy Bank Farm and The Hayloft). This again appears to be unnecessary loss of existing established habitat and screening, as it is not required to accommodate built development (dwellings, roads, drives, drainage infrastructure etc).

The shared private drive serving Plots 35/36/37/38/43 has been revised but still encroaches into the Root Protection Area (RPA) of Tree 2T, a large mature Sycamore at the Uttoxeter Road frontage (although it is noted that the drainage layout has been amended to avoid RPA encroachment by the proposed new drain runs). Such encroachment, although relatively minor, runs against the basic premise of BS 5837 which is that all development including hard surfacing

should be located outside the RPAs of retained trees unless encroachment is “unavoidable” – in which case technical solutions may be available which can reduce the risk of root damage. It is not clear why encroachment is unavoidable in this instance, given that the site is a large open field and the indicative layout at outline stage managed, just, to avoid encroachment into the RPA of 2T. Be that as it may, the applicant’s response document and revised Arb Impact Assessment/Method Statement propose use of no-dig cellular confinement specification for construction of any areas of hard surfacing within RPAs; this can be an acceptable approach and can be secured by condition, making it unreasonable in planning terms to object to/refuse the reserved matters application on these grounds – although as ever its success would depend on strict implementation of and compliance with the tree protection measures including sequences/timeframes set out in the AIA/Method Statement which, experience shows, is often the exception rather than the rule with significant root damage caused by preparatory site stripping and set-up work and unrestricted construction vehicle access before any tree protection barriers or ground protection measures are in place.

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Landscaping

It is also disappointing that the formerly indicated (at outline) central formal space has now been omitted in favour of a more standard/universal suburban cul-de-sac treatment which lacks any real sense of place or individual character.

The proposed planting scheme has a good emphasis on native species, which is appropriate to the open countryside/semi-rural location and surroundings.

However, there appears to be an indication of mixed groundcover planting to the base (south-west side) of the proposed new native hedgerow along Uttoxeter Road to the north of the main site access; this includes non-native species (*Euonymus*) and non-characteristic species (*Vinca*) which would be notably out of keeping with a rural hedgerow verge and these are not considered appropriate. Whilst Ivy (*Hedera*) is suitable and typical, it would be more appropriate for this verge to be landscaped using a suitable wildflower/grass mix specifically designed for the base of a native hedgerow.

On plot frontages there are a few instances where trees are indicated at inappropriately close proximity to dwelling front elevations, and even where more compact/fastigate species are specified there is little prospect of some trees being retained for long as they will soon become, or be perceived as, overly dominant, encroaching and liable to cause structural damage and they will be likely to be removed prematurely or heavily lopped. For example, the Silver Birch on the front of Plot 41 is shown at less than 2.5m from the front elevation of the dwelling; this tree won’t stand a chance. There are a few other cases where proximity is down to 3 – 4m which again is a bit too close in practice. If distances cannot be increased, to around 5m minimum, it may be worth considering substitution with individual specimen shrubs which won’t achieve the same mature size even as some of the smaller/more compact tree species.

The landscaping scheme has responded to the request to consider inclusion of orchard tree species to support local priority habitat objectives. Unfortunately these have been located within an area of native shrub mix where they will be anonymous and the light-demanding fruit trees will quickly become swamped and suppressed by the general mass of large native shrubs and

they are likely to struggle to flourish. Fruit trees would be better targeted towards an open grassed area – ideally where species-rich wildflower meadow can be established and maintained around/beneath them.

Conclusion and Conditions

Whilst the layout-related comments above cannot reasonably be applied as grounds for outright objection or refusal, it would be useful if the applicant could review and address the planting/landscaping comments with a view to securing further amendments as suggested.

In the event that planning permission is granted, with or without further amendments, I would request that the following conditions be imposed (to supplement those already included on the outline planning permission decision notice SMD/2018/0509):

1. The development hereby approved shall be carried out only in full accordance with the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement report reference MG/6838/AIA&AMS/Rev D/SEP 23 submitted in support of the reserved matters application. In particular, the first action on commencement of development, prior to any further action (including any site clearance, site stripping, site establishment or formation/improvement of temporary/permanent access) shall be the erection of temporary tree protection barriers, advisory notices, and ground protection measures for the protection of the existing trees to be retained, in accordance with guidance in British Standard 5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations*, and as set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement report, and these barriers and notices 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.
2. The planting scheme shown on the Landscape Proposals Drgs. Nos. 6838.03 Rev G, 6838.04 Rev F, 6838.05 Rev F, 6838.06 Rev F, 6838.07 Rev F **(or updated drawing numbers as may yet be further revised)** 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 etc 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.

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