**From:** Tim Screen
**Sent:** 26 July 2016 12:03
**To:** Caroline Ford
**Cc:** Rhodri Jones
**Subject:** FW: 16/00300/DISC - Bicester Eco Town Exemplar Site Banbury Road Bicester

Caroline

I comment as follows.

Play Area Near School

1. Play area has rather low play value for children of age range 2 - 6. A more interesting range of equipment is required.
2. Surfacing materials under equipment are to be clarified in respect of fall heights and circulation through the activity area. Grass cutting and strimming will damage paly equipment. Grass surfaces become eroded and compacted. Therefore wet pour safer surface is preferable.
3. Construction details are required for our consideration
4. It is unclear as to the nature of the boundary fence to the play area. The children should be prevented  from running into the surrounding traffic with galvanised hoop-top play area fencing  and self-closing gates.

5.    ‘No dogs’ signage is require to warn dog owners:  a concrete slab sign is to be laid in paving at the beginning of each entrance.

6      The self-closing gates should open outwards away from the play activity, an in order to achieve this successfully a transitional space for buggies, prams and wheel chair can be temporarily parked while the gate is opened.

7      Reduce the number to trees in the play area: remove Prunus avium from the play areas  because of the future problems of bird fowling and root encroachment.  Replace the proposed trees with Pear trees 'Beurre Hardy' and a Victoria Plum, and also a Medlar, but ensure that there is no play equipment under tree canopies.

8.    Attractive planting within the fence is necessary for the benefit of the children in respect of plant form, texture, scent and movement) – consult *Elizabeth Dauncey’s Poisonous Plants  A guide for parents and childcare providers* for guidance

 Proposed Trees

1. Any tree that is proposed to be planted  within 3 m of a wall at the design stage needs to be reallocated to open space. The subsequent gaps are to be planted with shrubs and climbers (native honeysuckle) for  structural framework, mitigation  and amenity – structural appraisal permitting.
2. Delete the problematic  Prunus 'Kanzan' in favour of P. dulcis.
3. Reduce Chanticleer Pears and diversify the tree mix with 25% each of Field Maple, an eating apple variety (to be determined  Chanticleer Pear,  and Midland Thorn (Crataegus laevigata)
4. Remove the potentially large Corylus avellana and fig species (Ficus cerica), plus Mulberry,  from the gardens because these plants will get too big in relation to  the size of gardens, and therefore replace with the smaller Brown Turkey Fig,  Malus domestica (crab), and Blackthorn
5. Delete the potentially very large Mulberry and the Fig species (cerica) in favour of Malus domestica (crab), and Blackthorn. Also plant Plum, Prunus domestica ‘Thames Cross’ and with P. Victoria for better success with pollination between the plum varieties. This will encourage fruit sharing between neighbours.
6. The supply, handling and planting and maintenance operations for the proposed  trees are to be in accordance with BS8545:2014

PLANTING PLAN 2 OF 5 AL4908-2022 C:

1. The larger area of tree planting north of the plots identifies trees of ornamental varieties that will look incongruous on this semi-rural edge. Therefore delete Prunus avium ‘Stella’, Prunus x maackii 'Amber Beauty',  Betula pendula 'Fastigiata', Malus domestica 'Spartan', and replace these tree with natives Alder,  Alnus glutinosa and silver birch, Betula pendula, and Buckthorn, Rhamnus cathartica.

PLANTING PLAN 4 OF 5 AL4908-2024 C:

1. The 3 No.Prunus fruticosa 'Globosa' are non- native trees and will look incongruous in the semi natural area beween the retained hedgerow (G15) and the access. They should be deleted.
2. The trees to the northwest side of the allotments are too close to the edge of the macadam path and their root will damage/lift the surface. They should be deleted for this reason.

PLANTING PLAN 5 OF 5 AL4908-2025 C:

1. From the semi-natural area north east of the plots delete Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer', Prunus avium 'Stella' in favour Rhamnus cathartica.

Many of the trees on the north-eastern  are too close to the edge of the kerb  and must relocated at least 3 m away and root barriers installed (to be indicated on revised planting plans).

1. The border to Parking plots 255 to 257 and 253 – 254 has large areas of Lirope muscari in not robust against the car park wher it will be trampled. There should be a 1 m grass verge with climbers to the wall and robust groundcover.

Planting Strategy

1.    Increase shrub species/cultivar diversity for  the front gardens for the benefit of residents.

1. Plants are to be grown and supplied in accordance with the National Plant Specification, and planted and maintained to BS4428: 1989.
2. Community garden boundary treatment is to be clarified, and to be visually mitigated where possible with native honeysuckle and clematis (old man’s beard) planted every two metres. Ensure that there is enough space with the boundaries of the community gardens to achieve  to achieve this planting.

Please note that self-binding gravel surface is only acceptable in the community gardens, but when it gets wet it will travel and stain adjacent surfaces…………otherwise hard landscape details are acceptable.

Please let me know if you have any questions on the above points and issues.

Regards

Tim

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**Landscape Architect**

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