

Case Officer: Caroline Ford

Recommendation: Approval

Applicant: A2 Dominion Group/P3Eco (Bicester) Ltd

Proposal: Partial Discharge of Conditions 31 & 72 of 10/01780/HYBRID – the area immediately to the north and south of the southern site access only

Expiry Date: 02 June 2015

Extension of Time: 11 October 2019

1. APPLICATION SITE AND LOCALITY

1.1. The application site relates to the southern access frontage of the Exemplar site (now known as Elmsbrook) and the landscaping within this area. The Elmsbrook development is under construction (phases 1 and 2 are complete and the northern fields, phases 3 and 4 are being worked on). The development is being constructed in accordance with the development granted planning permission by 10/01780/HYBRID (which was EIA development) as amended through an NMA process and in accordance with details approved through various discharge of condition applications.

2. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1. The application seeks to discharge conditions 31 and 72 of the permission specifically for the frontage landscaping works. These are to cover the proposed landscaping works in this area and due to the fact that in some places, translocated hedgerows to the south east entrance of the site have not survived. The proposal therefore provides for a mitigation scheme.

2.2. The application has sat in abeyance for some time following comments raised by the Landscape and Arboricultural Officers seeking some amendments. In the meantime, the frontage has been landscaped with ornamental planting to give an attractive entrance to the site alongside the marketing suite. In time, once the marketing suite has been removed and the development completed in this area, the existing landscaping is proposed to be replaced by the scheme for approval here so this will follow in some time. Nevertheless, the applicant is keen to secure approval now for an acceptable landscape scheme for this area and so the plans have been amended.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

3.1. The relevant planning history is predominantly the original application that granted permission for the site – 10/01780/HYBRID. There has been a number of discharge of condition and non-material amendment applications pursuant to this application.

4. RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

4.1 CDC Landscape Team – after further amendments being made to address comments, a response confirming that the plans are acceptable has been provided.

- 4.2 CDC Arboriculture – In response to the amended plans, it has confirmed that there are no further concerns.

5. APPRAISAL

- 5.1 Condition 31 seeks a landscape design for each phase which should include a number of points – these are generally relevant for whole phase areas, but the current proposal is a part phase and specifically relates to the landscaping proposed to the front of the site to the north and south of the site entrance. The reason for the imposition of the condition is in the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to ensure the creation of a pleasant environment for the development.
- 5.2 Condition 72 requires that should any translocated hedgerow die or be removed within 5 years of the works being carried out, a replacement hedge shall be planted in accordance with details to be first approved. The reason for the imposition of the condition is in the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to provide an effective screen to the proposed development.
- 5.3 The landscaping scheme for approval is submitted pursuant to both conditions 31 and 72. Initially, the intention was that hedgerows would be translocated to create a hedgerow entrance to the site at the southern entrance. However, parts of these translocated hedgerows have not survived and as such the proposal is in mitigation for the translocated hedgerow (condition 72) and a landscaping scheme for the site frontage (condition 31). The initial landscaping scheme was considered by the Landscape Team and various comments were made seeking amendments. These were not responded to, however now the applicant wishes to agree these details and has amended the scheme. A couple of iterations of the plans have been provided responding to comments made through this recent process and the Landscape and Arboricultural Teams have now confirmed that the landscaping scheme for this frontage is acceptable.
- 5.4 I have no reason to disagree with this assessment. To the Northern side of the site access, the proposal shows a native hedgerow mix incorporating trees to be maintained at 0.8m high with a mown amenity grass strip and two quercus robur fastigiata (oak) (which have been reduced from three in number to two given their proximity to the adjacent dwelling to be constructed) surrounded by a wildflower mix. To the Southern side of the site access, it is proposed to remove the existing laurel hedges and to provide in its place a carpinus betulus (hornbeam) hedge to be 1.5m tall to be close to an existing line of trees although two of which need to be replaced (also oaks which reflect those to the northern side of the entrance). As this area was also to include an orchard, three apple trees are to be planted within a trenched area to give them the best chance of survival. The existing grassland within this area would be removed and replaced with a wildflower mix. In my view, these proposals will provide for an acceptable landscaping scheme at the site frontage and which will be more native than ornamental therefore creating a more suitable frontage more in line with what was originally envisaged.
- 5.5 The original application was EIA development. The EIA is dated now, however given that the proposal seeks to reintroduce native landscaping to the site frontage (where it was intended that the hedgerow was to be relocated, the principle of which was considered within the EIA as well as native planting as habitat enhancements), I consider that this would accord with the original intentions for the site and therefore the EIA. As such, the EIA is considered sufficient for the purpose of considering the information provided for this condition and it has been taken into account in considering this subsequent application.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That planning conditions 31 and 72 be partially discharged for the area immediately to the north and south of the southern site access only based upon the following:

Condition 31: The landscaping scheme shown on drawing numbers PL401 Rev P06 (South Frontage Soft Landscape Scheme) and PL402 Rev P05 (North Frontage Soft Landscape Scheme) is considered to be an acceptable landscape scheme for the area to the north and south of the southern access only.

Condition 72: The landscaping scheme shown on drawing numbers PL401 Rev P06 (South Frontage Soft Landscape Scheme) and PL402 Rev P05 (North Frontage Soft Landscape Scheme) is considered to be an acceptable landscape scheme for the area to the north and south of the southern access only.

Planning note

This decision has been considered in the context of the information contained within the Exemplar Environmental Statement Report (report no. 0505-UA001881-UP31R-01 dated November 2010 prepared by Hyder Consulting) and the Exemplar Environmental Statement Addendum (report no. 0513-UA001881-UP31R-01 dated April 2011 prepared by Hyder Consulting) which is considered sufficient for the purpose of considering the information provided and has therefore been taken into account.

Case Officer: Caroline Ford

DATE: 09/10/2019

Checked By: Alex Keen

DATE: 11/10/2019
