

Altman, Rebecca

Subject: FW: F/23/96606 Land rear of 12 Sydney Avenue, Hamble le Rice, SO31 4JP - Landscape Comments

Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 12:32 PM

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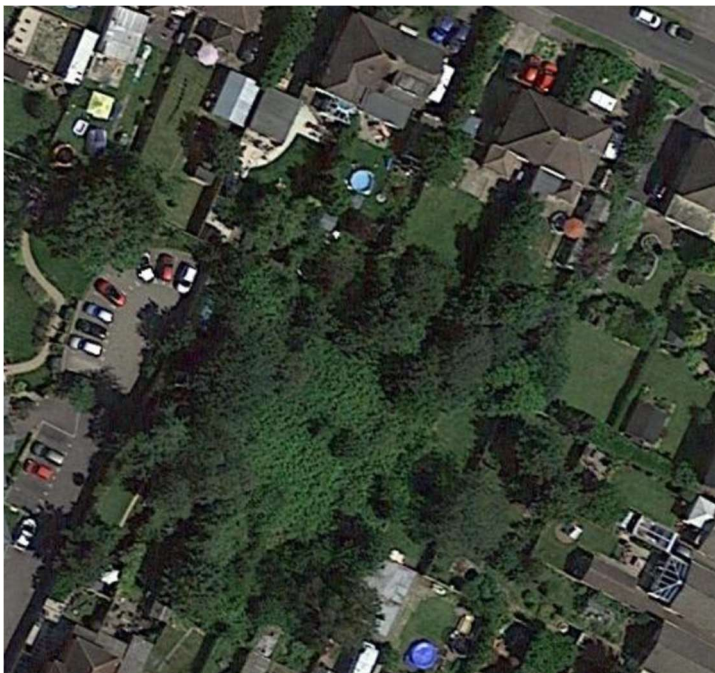
Hi Rebecca,

I have been asked to provide landscape comments on this application.

Background:

I have not had the opportunity to visit the site but have undertaken a brief desktop review of online satellite and street view images.

I note the EBC Ecologists comments regarding the extensive removal of existing vegetation for this latest application. Previous applications described the site as 'heavily vegetated and containing trees'. Google images clearly show a matrix of existing established vegetation on this site:



It is highly regrettable that the site has been cleared with the loss of significant habitats and visual amenity. To balance this loss we will be looking for deliverable Green Infrastructure.

I am mindful of Eastleigh Boroughs commitment to taking action on Climate Change, which includes the retention/protection of existing trees and maximising opportunities for planting including establishing new trees on development sites.

Landscape Comments:

1\ Whilst I have no Landscape objection to the principle of development on this site, in my view the current site layout is unconvincing, cramped and an overdevelopment of this backland site. As a result the

opportunities for significant structure planting are limited. There does not appear to be any clear landscape strategy, with many areas of landscape being narrow strips of land. The arrangement of the bungalows to create an open courtyard character could work well, however, the high density of development and parking requirements results in the area of parking extending into this landscaped court. This negatively impacts this key central open space.

The group of 4 staggered bungalows do not relate well to the 3 larger bungalows resulting in a disparate overall effect. The layout of the footpaths is random and could be improved. Opportunities for boundary screen planting are sporadic.

Overall the site plan lacks cohesion and appears cramped.

2/ Since so much existing vegetation has been removed, it is important that replacement connected Green infrastructure can be delivered. This planting should be outside private ownership to ensure it is not removed in the future at the whim of residents. This will require areas to be handed over to be maintained by a private management company. The applicant should submit a landscape strategy plan which shows a continuous belt of native hedgerow planting around the boundaries of the site with some scattered trees to create new wildlife corridors. To make space for this planting some of the layout will need to be revised.

3/ The layout of the central courtyard needs to be re-visited to reinforce a formal courtyard feel, separated from the parking area with planting. If the 3 most southerly parking spaces were dropped (assuming a reduction in the number of bungalows) this would allow this space to be designed in a more legible manner. The planting in this key space could include small fruit trees arranged in a pleasant formal manner.

4/ I object to the use of grasscrete for the parking area. Although this may have been proposed to 'green up' the plan, in reality this is yesterday's product and creates more of a concrete, not a grass effect. The parking area is likely to be well used resulting in any grass being quickly degraded. A reinforced buff gravel surface using plastic grids would be an effective alternative. Any visitor parking spaces that will be less often used could be finished using reinforced grass (the same plastic grids just filled with topsoil and seeded).

5/ The frontage to Sydney Avenue needs to be carefully considered and any existing\proposed planting shown on plan to contribute to the streetscene. At present there is a blank on the plan.

6/ The site is tight with space for larger canopy tree species limited. However, there are some locations where larger native species could be included and these opportunities should be maximised.

7/ The hedge planting indicated alongside the footpath to Hamble Lane and either side of the access drive to Sydney Avenue are welcomed but the applicant needs to double check this can be delivered as space is somewhat tight.

8/ Allow for hedgehog gaps in the gravel boards of any closeboard fencing to allow hedgehogs to move freely across the site.

Overall, from a landscape perspective, the current site layout is unsatisfactory and would benefit from redesign. It would be helpful if the landscape constraints/opportunities are identified as these could then feed into a coherent landscape strategy plan.

I hope these points are clear but should you require any clarification do get in touch.

KR Tim

Landscape Consultant

Working on behalf of Eastleigh Borough Council