

Harrison, Liz

From: Griffin, Tim (Contractor)
Sent: 30 August 2024 22:45
To: Harrison, Liz
Cc: Dyer, Tim; Ellison, Mark; Oliveira, Marta (Contractor)
Subject: F/24/97945 - RETIREMENT LIVING APARTMENTS - LAND ADJACENT TO OAK COTTAGE, WINCHESTER ROAD, BOORLEY GREEN, SO32 2DH - landscape comments

Hi Liz,

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

Unfortunately I have not had the opportunity to visit the site, but have read through the submitted DAS and checked online images (particularly streetview images).

Having reviewed the comments I made at Pre-App stage, one of my main concerns at that time was to ensure that deliverable Green Infrastructure had been a key driver in the final proposals. I am therefore disappointed to discover that the landscape strategy plan I requested has not been submitted, and in reading through the DAS, it was fairly obvious that landscape considerations have only had a secondary influence on the site layout.

My other main concern at Pre-App was the retention and strengthening of boundary screening.

My landscape comments follow below:

a/ **Design and Access Statement**

02 site photographs - there is no photograph either from within the site or from Winchester Road of the existing boundary vegetation along the Eastern boundary. This is a key view and at least one photograph should be included.

02 Analysis - there is no mention under constraints of the distinctive Grassland-orchard landscape (I picked this up from email exchanges regarding BNG). Also, the existing boundary hedgerows should be identified as a constraint as they are an important contributor to the screening of the site.

02 Opportunities - I note the highlighting of a central vista which is picked up in other documents - has this been genuinely integrated into the proposals?

03 Proposal character courtyard - this image demonstrates the scale of the 3 storey apartments and how these will enclose the rear courtyard. This image shows notional tree planting which helps soften the built form.

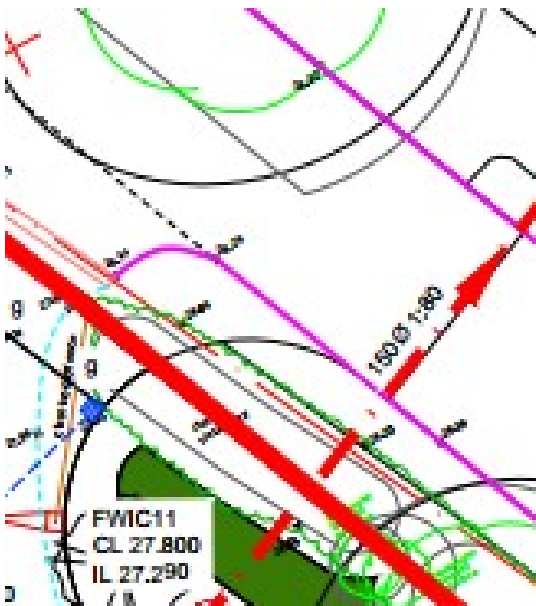
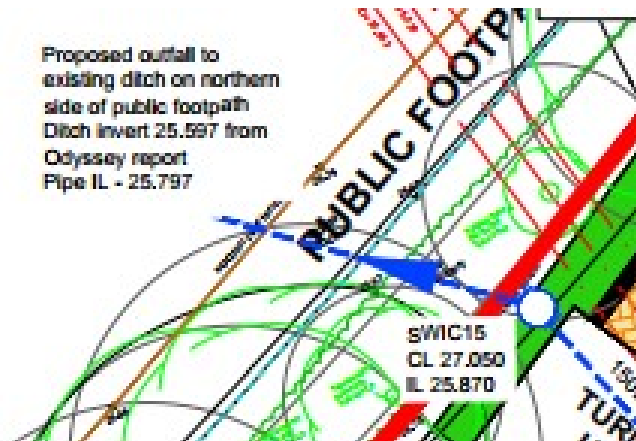
03 Proposal CGI's Winchester Road Frontage and Northern Pedestrian Link- these show neat, clipped hedges (evergreen?). The planting strategy plan indicates all these hedges as native, including thorny species such as Hawthorn and Blackthorn - I suggest that alternative native species such as Hornbeam or Beech hedging are specified.

03 Proposal CGI Courtyard and Gardens - this image shows how this central space is currently lacking any vertical softening due to a lack of tree planting (see comments later on landscape plan).

03 Proposal Communal Spaces - the entrance square and formal garden are key spaces which need to be carefully designed to create focal areas.

b/ Drainage Strategy

I have 2 areas of concern where installation of proposed SW and FW mains connections may lead to unacceptable loss of vegetation:



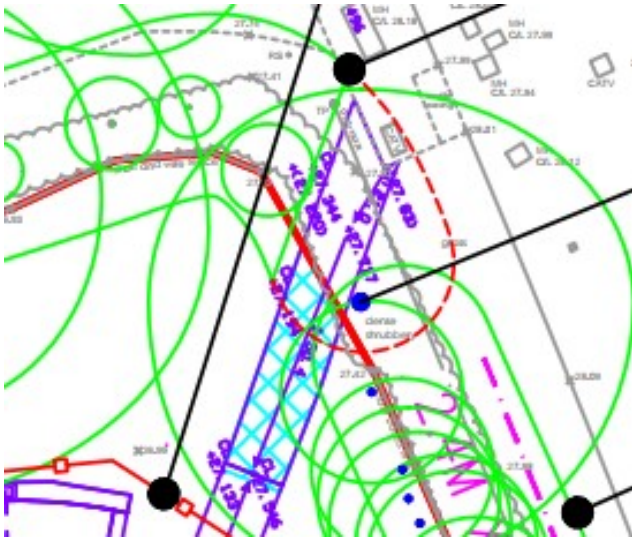
The drainage Engineers and Landscape Architects to liaise to ensure any vegetation loss is reduced to a minimum, and where there is unavoidable loss, it is balanced by new planting.

Please ask the agent to confirm there is no need for any soakaways on this site (the external services layout appears to show a soakaway in the formal courtyard garden).

c/ Tree Survey and Impact Assessment

I defer to the Tree Officer on this report but note the loss of a number of fruit trees to enable development of the site.

The suggested pedestrian link to Winchester Road passes too close to the trunk of T21 Oak and should be realigned.

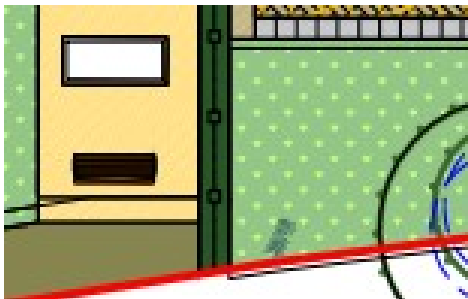
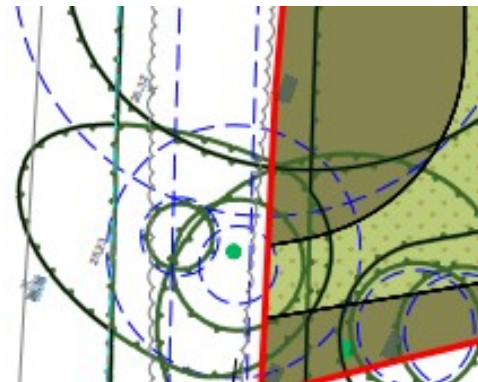
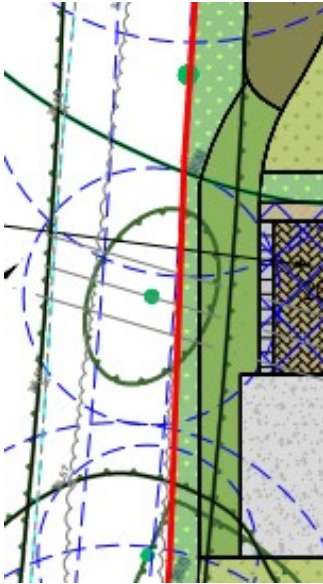


Parking bays 1-3 will lead to potential loss of part of hedgerow T29. This is not acceptable, and the final approved layout must avoid any gaps opening up in the boundary screen along Winchester Road.



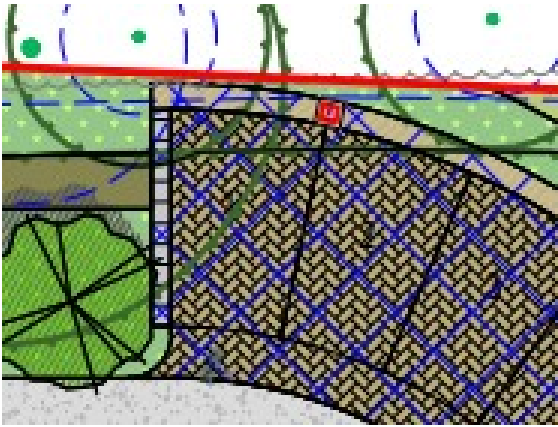
d/ Landscape General Arrangement

The native shrub planting indicated along many boundaries is welcomed since maintaining and bolstering lower-level boundary screening is crucial to soften the impact of this development. However, there are some odd gaps in the continuity of this planting which should be closed. For example:

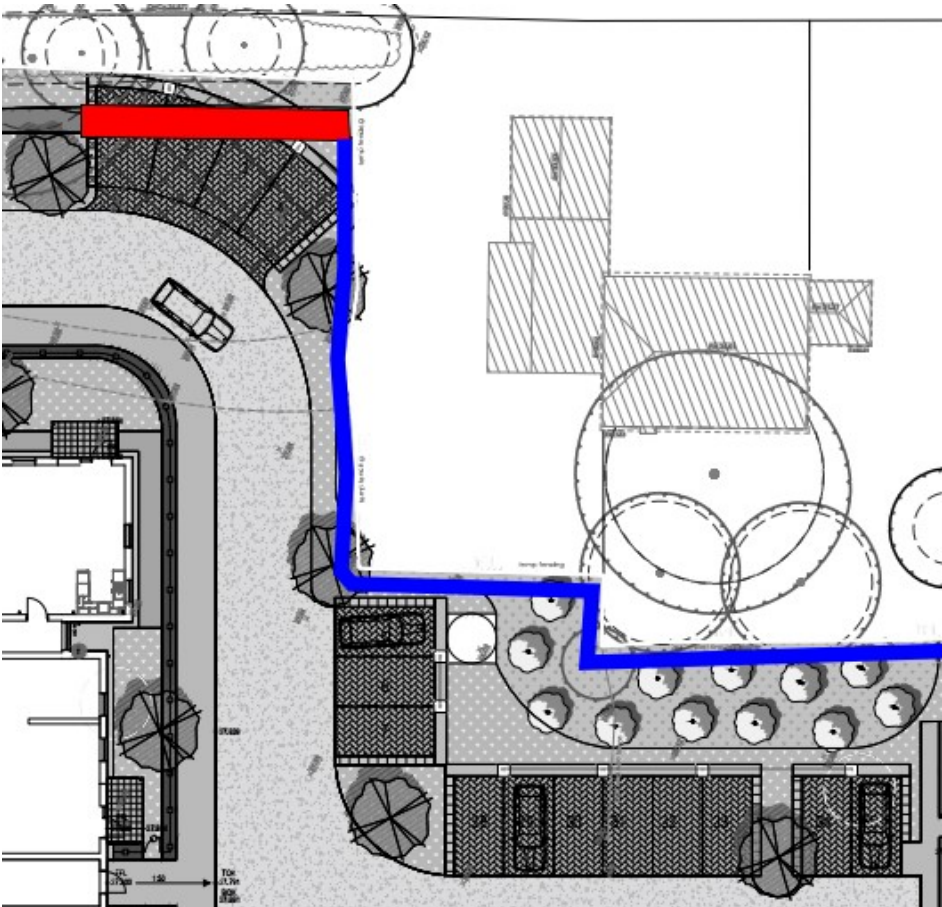


I would emphasise the importance of this boundary screen planting being continuous and would ask that the designers check that screening will be maintained and bolstered.

These 4 parking bays may well lead to loss of existing screening and also obstruct any new screen planting - these bays should be omitted or relocated.



I would prefer to see a native mix hedge running along the SE & S boundaries as per this mark up:



Red = extend boundary screen planting

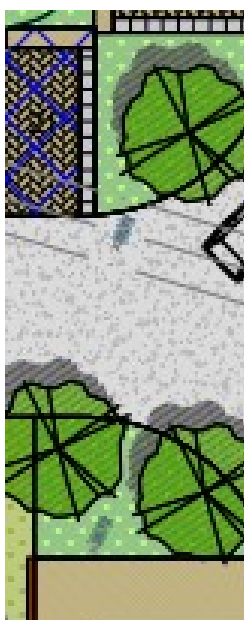
Blue = native mix hedge to create new wildlife corridor

Proposed trees - there is scope to increase the numbers of trees planted, especially around the boundaries. The trees closest to the apartments are in very restricted spaces and should be replaced with small tree species (currently *Betula* specified) and some additional small trees should be included to soften the western elevation.

The orchard trees underplanted with wildflower grass are welcomed. One fruit tree needs to be relocated so it is also within the wildflower area.

The clipped hedges shown provide the planting with a good framework but additional hedges are required to soften the sub station and the parking area in the south of the site.

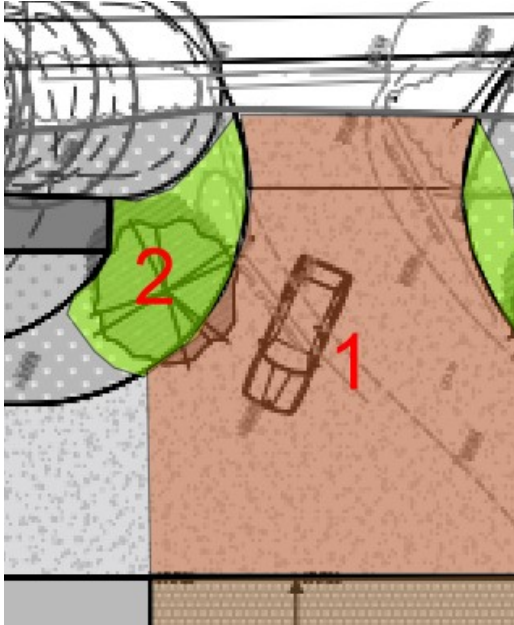
The areas of ornamental planting are generally effective, however, some further low shrub and ground cover planting should be planted in areas where it would be awkward to cut grass. For example:



Amenity grass - there are some places where amenity grass appears to extend into hedgerows which is not feasible. Please adjust and avoid narrow strips/small areas of grass that are more difficult to maintain.

Wildflower grass - in numerous locations these areas have curved/wavy lines. How will these be indicated on the ground to help the landscape maintenance crew locate the boundary between mown and wildflower grass? There are some thin and isolated areas of wildflower grass that should be omitted as they will be hard to maintain.

The main entrance is a key area along the identified central vista. I suggest this zone is given an uplift similar to the markup below:



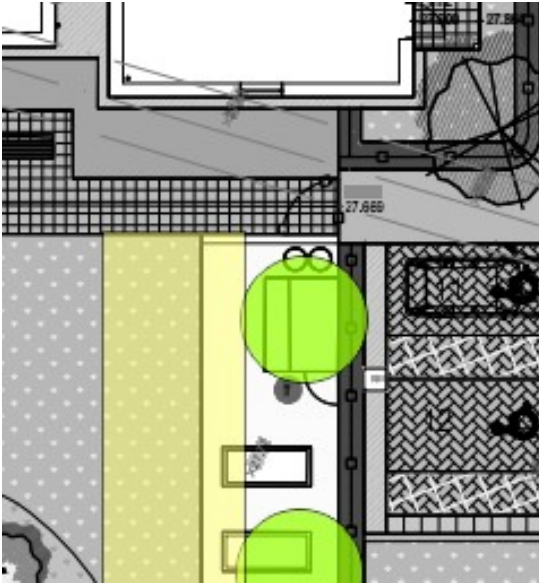
1 = area of contrasting block paving to mark arrivals and slow traffic

2 = low shrubs and groundcover to frame drive

3 = further design work to provide this key area of paving with added interest

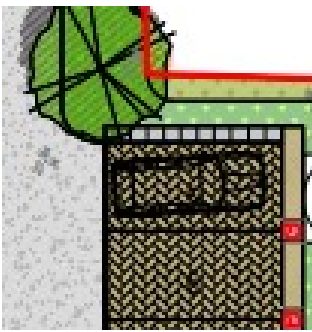
Rear courtyard - in the submitted documents this area is described as a formal courtyard. At present it is a mix of formal and informal elements - the layout should be re-visited with some tree planting included within this key space to soften the proposed 3 storey buildings. The proposed gazebo is 'floating' in the space and there is generally a lack of coherence with the layout. The pergola over the main terrace is rather small and not integrated well into the design. This is a feature area and the design needs to be improved to create a genuine focal point.

I suggest the growing garden area is moved slightly north to create space for some additional trees as per markup below:



The hard landscape information is generally acceptable, although I would prefer to see pedestrian routes as blocks not bitmac.

Please clarify what this white square/inner circle represents?



e/ **Planting Strategy**

This drawing is incomplete with only some species indicated. We assume a fully detailed planting plan at 1:200 scale will be conditioned.

Trees - there is an over-use of *Betula* and *Tilia* species. Some failsafe species such as *Acer campestre* 'Elsrijk' and *Carpinus betulus* 'Lucas' should be included and perhaps an occasional *Quercus robur*.

The hedges closest to the new apartments are all shown as native mix hedges, including thorny species. I suggest these are changed to Hornbeam or Beech.

f/ **Landscape Management Plan**

Since this document is labelled draft, I have not reviewed it in detail.

One immediate comment - the plan should include a requirement (for each planting type) that where failures occur, replacements to match the original species shall be undertaken in the first planting season following failure.

I hope all these comments are helpful and I look forward to receiving revised landscape plans in due course.

I am happy to attend a Teams meeting with the designers to run through these points if this will assist.

KR Tim

Tim Griffin

Landscape Consultant

Working on behalf of Eastleigh Borough Council

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