

**From:** Marshall, Lee

**Sent:** 11 January 2018 12:12

**To:** Perkins, Carly <Carly.Perkins@torbay.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Planning <Planning@torbay.gov.uk>

**Subject:** P/2017/1133 Land To The South Of White Rock, Adjacent To Brixham Road, Inglewood, Paignton

Dear Carly,

I have reviewed the above noted application and can advise the following. I have divided my response into 3 sections, existing trees and hedges, proposed mitigation planting both non-residential and residential planting (including the school, pub and all other non-open space planting).

### **Appraisal**

1. My comments are based upon review of the following supporting documents/ plans
  - Tree Protection Plan and Method Statements 0377-TSE Nov 2017
  - Tree Survey and Constraints Analysis, AIA and TPP 0377-TSE 31 Jan 2017
  - Proposed Masterplan
  - Green Infrastructure Masterplan
  - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

### **Existing trees and hedges**

2. The proposed layout retains and provides adequate room for the majority of the principal existing arboricultural features (excluding the access road) which is welcomed.
3. Detail of road layout, principally the access roundabout does not carry through to discussing impact on tree loss along this visually prominent, and hence sensitive elevation, in fact the Tree Protection Plan depicts tree protective fencing to be installed and the trees to be retained where the road is intended to be formed. This may lead to confusion in parties wishing to make representations. This data would be expected to be a prerequisite to determine levels of mitigation required and an updated plan would be useful.
4. It would be helpful for the TPP to include a table of numbers of tree losses/ hedge length against retention, including categories. In the absence of this it is difficult to ascertain the impact of removals on a detail level, leading to potential loss of important features or lack of ability to comment on proposed mitigation.
5. Section 'Conclusions' within the tree report contains errors and does not accurately note which trees are important and which will be lost.

### **Conclusion**

The size of the land ownership for the development allows multiple opportunities for mitigation, which are brought forward within the applicants submission, but it is considered further detail level information is required to allow informed, and hence more pertinent, officer comment. Given the landscape sensitivity of the site it is imperative that Conditions that will be informed in part by consultee responses can be defensible and appropriate for their required purpose.

Phased early planting (including detailed protective fencing), soil horizon protection for receiving sites and greater detail of significant arboricultural features proposed to be lost are required to inform the necessary conditions if consent follows

### **Proposed mitigation planting (non-residential)**

6. The local landscape, as noted within the LVIA submission, contains occasional groups of evergreen planting, pines. This should be reflected within the detailed landscape plans to continue this local identity, acting as overstorey to lower canopy deciduous trees/ shrub layer occasionally or as discreet groups.

7. Agreement is found with the Landscape Officer comments, and additionally, given the landscape sensitivity, it is considered paramount that the following actions above those conclusions and without prejudice recommendations should be undertaken
- Agronomy report produced pertinent to receiving sites
  - Maintenance period extended to 10 yrs. from the typical 5yrs to ensure adequate management is undertaken to full establishment.
  - All receiving soil horizon's to be fenced off and protected prior to any plant movement on site other than normal farm equipment.

### **Conclusion**

Further level of detail on proposed species mix is required, which should be informed by the conclusion of the agronomy report.

The quantum and species composition of mitigation cannot be positively commented upon on the absence of detail required in 3 & 4 above.

### **Residential planting.**

8. At present planting in the street layout is indicative but the following conclusions can be reached.
- The paucity of existing significant arboricultural features confers reliance on the mitigating planting proposals for the residential and open space/ boundary planting schemes.
  - Restricting this within the residential area is the high proportional reliance on private front garden locations to create avenues/ linear visual features. Front garden size is limited in depth to numerous properties which restricts planting to only small sized trees of severely limited off site visual benefit.
  - If reliance on private garden planting is approved then as has been experienced in similar schemes, the effect will erode quickly due to resident removals as they seek to personalise their properties. The size of trees that would be suitable would be too small to protect by TPO and the time limit of the conditions would lead to their non-protection as soon as the condition expired.
  - The strongest linear features are orientated on a North South alignment seeking to break up the visual massing of the site from elevations at right angles to this alignment (i.e. East and West). View receptors from the North and South would see greater massing of buildings, amplified by the small size of trees that would be available given the space limitations.

### **Conclusions**

- The proposed 'street' planting is restricted in its intended purpose to a high proportion by the size of front gardens, and its long term retention would be at risk as condition periods expire.
- Concerns arise upon the ability of trees in the residential area to mitigate for the development in the context of the landscape sensitivity and departure from the Local Plan, which may be a result of unit density or development layout, or a combination of both.

### **Summary**

That potential of development of the site in strictly arboricultural terms is feasible given the open nature of the field systems and the main features appear to have been retained where possible (excluding access point as noted above).

Little understanding of the nature of the impact of the new access is gained from review of the submissions, leading to difficulty in commenting upon the efficacy of the proposed mitigation locally to this point and the impact across the wider site.

The importance of proposed mitigation as a tool to allow the departure from the Local Plan necessitates detailed study of soil and its suitability for such planting, and obviously remediation or improvement actions as necessary.

The proposed residential planting is not considered to be suitable to achieve its desired aims in both visual and temporal terms.

**All landscape related matters should be approved prior to any reserved matters consent given the clear connection between spatial availability for sustainable, appropriate residential planting and the quantum of units approved.**

Regards

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