

South of Hawkshead Road, Little Heath: HS24 BrP7

Addendum to Statement of Common Ground between Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and Royal Veterinary College.

Introduction

The Inspector requested that further analysis be undertaken of the western boundary treatment of site HS24 (BrP7). This statement sets out revised proposals compared with the first Statement of Common Ground (Ex232). They provide significantly improved screening of the site in views from the west.

Summary of EX232 Proposals

The following map illustrates the landscaping proposals contained within the Statement of Common Ground EX232, providing for a multifunctional green corridor along the western boundary. This corridor consisted of an open space containing specimen running alongside the edge of development bounded to its west by a 2m high traditional hedge with hedgerow trees.

Plan A Landscaping proposals in original statement of common ground (superseded)



Inspector Concerns

At the hearing session the Inspector stated his concern about the robustness of the proposal and residual views from the west. He suggested that a revised scheme

with more substantial planting be prepared to assist him in considering the site. RVC agreed to provide an update.

Revised Scheme

A revised landscaping scheme has been prepared by Terence O'Rourke on behalf of RVC and is indicated in the plan below.

Plan B Revised landscaping proposals



The two key changes are as follows.

- The outer bounds of the open space corridor, formerly proposed as a tall hedgerow with trees, has been replaced by a 15m plus thick tree belt on and either side of a 2m high bund. This will provide greater height and visual containment.
- Within the site a new layered approach to screening is provided by an additional internal tree corridor running roughly north – south through the site. This will support the screening of the existing development in particular together with the new development.

Cross sections have been prepared to indicate the screening potential of this proposal. These show that views from the footpath to the west of the site will be of the tree screen and the dwellings will not be visible. This includes the existing

dwellings which are currently visible on the skyline in these views. The cross sections are in Annex A to this addendum.

Possible Main Modification

The original statement of common ground contained a potential Main Modification. A slight change to that modification would be required to reflect this revised landscaping scheme. The following wording change to Table 16 indicates changes from the submitted version with underlining and strikethrough and changes from the original statement of common ground in red font (deletions) and blue font (additions)

~~Green buffer to help~~ multifunctional corridor along the western edge of the site to minimise impact on the wider landscape, strongly define the green belt boundary, mitigate heritage impacts on Gobions Historic Park and Garden and the Grade II* Listed Folly and contribute towards biodiversity net gain. Width sufficient to include a substantial tree belt on a bund, tall traditional hedgerow, linear natural/semi-natural greenspace, tree planting, retention and management of existing trees and pond.

Green corridor with tree planting across the upper slopes of the site to further enhance visual containment.

SuD's should be used to suitably manage surface water flood risk to, within and from the site with a preference for surface water features which contribute to amenity and ecology and coordinate with site's open space provision.

~~Green buffer and retention of existing trees to help mitigate impact on local ecology. Retain the existing pond, or compensate for its loss.~~

Stage 1 habitat survey required at planning application stage.

~~Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood SSSI.~~

For clarity the revised wording without any changes indicated would be as follows.

Green multifunctional corridor along the western edge of the site to minimise impact on the wider landscape, strongly define the green belt boundary, mitigate heritage impacts on Gobions Historic Park and Garden and the Grade II* Listed Folly and contribute towards biodiversity net gain. Width sufficient to include a substantial tree belt on a bund, linear natural/semi-natural greenspace, tree planting, retention and management of existing trees and pond.

Green corridor with tree planting across the upper slopes of the site to further enhance visual containment.

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Stage 1 habitat survey required at planning application stage.

Conclusion and Agreement

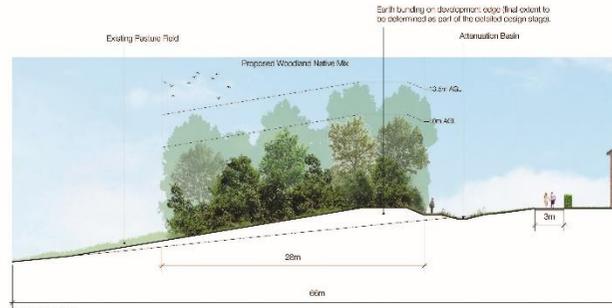
The signatories agree that the revised landscaping scheme would mitigate the visual impact in views from the green belt in accordance with the Inspector's request.

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council continue to recommend removal of the site from the local plan by a Main Modification whereas RVC support its continued allocation.

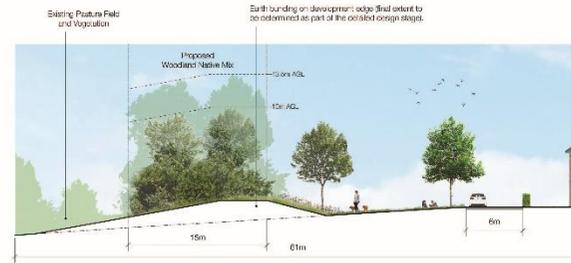
Annex A - Cross Sections



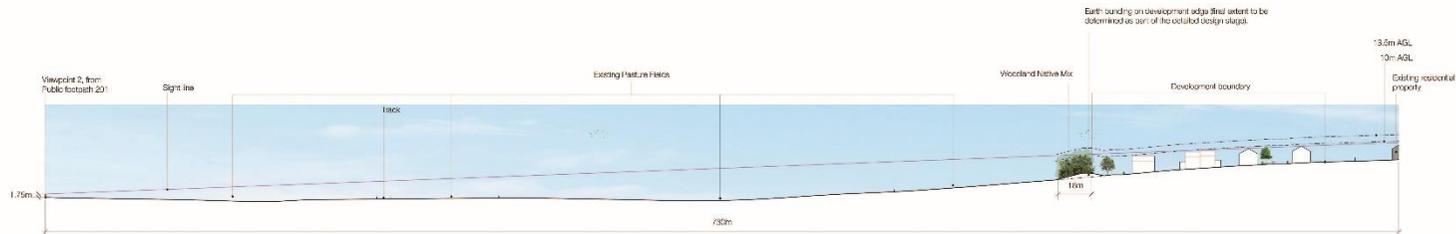
Section Location Plan
Scale 1:500



Section A-A
Scale 1:200



Section B-B
Scale 1:200



Section C-C
Scale 1:1000
Reference: Measurement 2 from L246

Site HS24
Royal Veterinary College

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Landscape and Green Infrastructure Sections
22/07/21 - ICR - 2/11
Scale 1:1000 @ A1
04/08/21
Do not scale from this drawing

