



Delegated Report

Approval of Details Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230448

Location: Land At Former Northfleet Cement Works The Shore Northfleet
Gravesend

Description: Application for approval of condition 12 attached to planning permission reference number 20220078 relating to a detailed soft landscaping scheme

Applicant: Bellway Homes Limited (Thames Gateway)

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;
Covering Letter;
Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1 – Planting Plans 1 of 2;
Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-LA-10 Rev P1 – Landscape General Arrangements Surface Finishes;
Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-11 Rev P1 – Planting Plans 2 of 2; and
Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-11 Rev P1 – Landscape General Arrangements Surface Finishes.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20230442	Application for approval of condition 9 attached to planning permission reference number 20220078 relating to details of the appearance and form of street lighting equipment.	Approval of Details	26.06.2023
20230389	Application for approval of condition 3 attached to planning permission reference number 20220078 relating to details of the archaeological watching brief.	Approval of Details	15.06.2023
20230392	Application for approval of condition 10 attached to planning permission reference number 20220078 relating to details of the boundary treatment.	Approval of Details	09.06.2023
20230476	Application for approval of condition 4 attached to planning permission reference number 20220078 relating to further assessments for contamination (in accordance with the CLEA guidelines and LCRM methodology) and, if necessary, an associated remedial strategy, together with a timetable of works.	Under Consideration	
20230391	Application for approval of condition 7 attached to planning permission reference number 20220078 relating to the architectural details.	Approval of Details	08.06.2023
20230352	Application for approval of condition 11 attached to planning permission reference number 20220078 relating to details of the form, appearance, and materials to be used for the cycle and	Approval of Details	09.06.2023

	bin stores to all houses within the development		
20230374	EDC Consultation - Discharge of Condition 11 (Cycle and Bin Stores) pursuant to reserved matters approval EDC/22/0015.	Under Consideration	
20230375	EDC Consultation - Discharge of Condition 13 (Parking Management Plan) pursuant to reserved matters approval EDC/21/0081.	Observations Sent	04.05.2023
20220373	EDC Consultation EDC/22/0015 - Application for the erection of 3 dwellings along with hard and soft landscaping, car parking and associated infrastructure.	No Objections	24.02.2023
20220078	Erection of 3 dwellings together with associated infrastructure including details relating to parking and landscaping and the reconfiguration of parking to a consented dwelling approved under permission Ref: EDC/21/0081. Former Northfleet Cement Works, The Shore, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 9AN	Permission	24.02.2023

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS11 - Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 4 – Decision-making
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places

Consultations

KCC – Biodiversity

We have reviewed the submitted documents in relation to condition 12 (wording in Appendix 1) and advise that additional information is needed before a discharge can be recommended.

Planting

Condition 12 states that the “soft landscaping scheme shall accord with details illustrated and annotated on the approved drawings, but notwithstanding reference to planting mixes shown on drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 (Phase 1C - Detailed Illustrative Soft Landscape Plan), it shall adopt a planting approach which is not reliant on large areas of planting mixes.” We have compared drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 with drawing no. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1 and note the following differences:

1. Trees

- Drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 includes six trees: four large (1 *Acer platanoides* 'Globusum', 2 *Sorbus aria* and 1 *Sorbus torminalis*) and two small (1 *Crataegus laevigata* 'Paul's Scarlet' and 1 *Crataegus persimilis* 'Prunifolia splendens'). Three of these trees are native species.
- Drawing no. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1 includes four trees: two large (1 *Sorbus intermedia* 'Brouwers' and 1 *Tilia cordata* 'Rancho'), and two small (2 *Crataegus persimilis* 'Prunifolia'). One of these trees is a native cultivar.

The reduction in number of trees proposed and change to the tree species/varieties proposed is considered to result in a reduction in the ecological value of the proposed trees. Native trees are generally better for nature than non-native trees, although cultivars with double flowers generally have poor biodiversity value.

We would recommend that the number of trees be increased to at least match those on drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02. Ideally the trees should be native species of wildlife value.

2. Hedging

- The AAe Environmental Consultants report (February 2022) indicates that *Carpinus betulus* (native) hedging will be included in landscaping plans although, no hedging is indicated on drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02.

Native hedges can provide good wildlife value if they are at least 1.8m high x 1.8m wide, which may or may not be possible within the red line boundary. If it is possible, then native hedging should be included on plans as far as this is consistent with previous approvals.

3. Bed planting

- Drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 includes planting of 'Street Type Three Mix' and 'Street Type Four Mix'. It is not clear from the drawing what plants these mixes include (and so the biodiversity value unclear), but it is noted that one of the planting areas as per drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 has been changed to amenity grassland in drawing no. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1. Amenity grassland has very low ecological value. Some of the plants proposed on drawing no. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1 do have some ecological value (e.g., *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote', *Rosmarinus officinalis*, *Jasminum officinale*).

It is unclear how submitted bed planting compares in terms of ecological value to drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02. However, it will no longer be possible to include a log pile in the area that now contains amenity grassland. The log pile could be included elsewhere on the site, or shrub planting reinstated in this area.

Habitat Features

Condition 12 states that "The scheme shall include details of the ecological enhancement measures shown in Figure 1 of the Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Strategy by AA Environmental Limited dated February 2022."

We have reviewed Figure 1 of the Strategy and note that the two building integrated bat boxes and two building integrated bird boxes, as well as the two log piles have not been included on plans. Plans therefore need to be updated to include these features in appropriate locations, of appropriate makes/models and construction.

Tree Protection

Drawing no. 2956-PH1B-LA-10 Rev P1 includes hard landscaping details. However, measures for the protection of retained trees is not clearly referred to in any of the submitted documents. It may be helpful to update this drawing to include those measures, or at least reference to those measures shown on the "Tree Protection Plan attached as Appendix 3 of the Arboricultural Implications Report prepared by SJA Trees dated February 2022 (Ref. SJA TPP 22070-041)". Failure to include clear links to the relevant Tree Protection Plan could result in mitigation measures failing to be implemented.

Officer's Analysis

Procedural Notes

This is a condition details application submitted to Gravesham Borough Council relating to the discharge of Condition 12 (Soft Landscaping) pursuant to reserved matters approval GBC Ref. 20220078 (EDC/22/0015) which was a cross boundary planning application with Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) as joint determining authorities. Currently these details have only been submitted to Gravesham Borough Council, therefore an informative will be added to the decision to ensure that any associated condition details should be submitted to Ebbsfleet Development Corporation.

Application 20220078 was for three additional dwellings within the redevelopment of the Former Northfleet Cement Works. Whilst some of the information may appear to be outside of the red line plan, this is due to the application forming part of the wider development and as part of the masterplan which was approved under EDC application EDC/16/0004. In terms of this submission of details, they relate to the three additional dwellings only.

Submitted Details

The following information has been submitted to discharge condition 12:

Planning Application Form; *Incorrect Form as it states Condition 10.*

Covering Letter;

Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1 – Planting Plans 1 of 2;

Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-LA-10 Rev P1 – Landscape General Arrangements Surface Finishes;

Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-11 Rev P1 – Planting Plans 2 of 2; and

Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-11 Rev P1 – Landscape General Arrangements Surface Finishes.

Condition 12

Soft Landscaping

12. No development above ground level shall take place until details of the appearance and form of street lighting equipment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The street lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and in the approved locations shown on drawing no. 46600/5501/1300/002 Rev. D prior to first occupation of any dwelling hereby approved.

Reason: In order to ensure an acceptable standard of development upon completion, in accordance with adopted Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS19.

In relation to Condition 12, the Local Planning Authority have the following response to make on the submitted details:

Trees

Drawing No. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 includes six trees: four large (1 Acer platanoides 'Globosum', 2 Sorbus aria and 1 Sorbus torminalis) and two small (1 Crataegus laevigata 'Paul's Scarlet' and 1 Crataegus persimilis 'Prunifolia splendens'). Three of these trees are native species.

Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1 includes four trees: two large (1 *Sorbus intermedia* 'Brouwers' and 1 *Tilia cordata* 'Rancho'), and two small (2 *Crataegus persimilis* 'Prunifolia'). One of these trees is a native cultivar.

The reduction in number of trees proposed and change to the tree species/varieties proposed is considered to result in a reduction in the ecological value of the proposed trees. Native trees are generally better for nature than non-native trees, although cultivars with double flowers generally have poor biodiversity value.

The number of trees should be increased to at least match those on Drawing No. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02. Ideally the trees should be native species of wildlife value.

Hedging

The AAe Environmental Consultants report (February 2022) indicates that *Carpinus betulus* (native) hedging will be included in landscaping plans although, no hedging is indicated on Drawing No. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02.

Native hedges can provide good wildlife value if they are at least 1.8m high x 1.8m wide, which may or may not be possible within the red line boundary. If it is possible, then native hedging should be included on plans as far as this is consistent with previous approvals.

Bed Planting

Drawing No. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 includes planting of 'Street Type Three Mix' and 'Street Type Four Mix'. It is not clear from the drawing what plants these mixes include (and so the biodiversity value unclear), but it is noted that one of the planting areas as per Drawing No. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02 has been changed to amenity grassland in Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1. Amenity grassland has very low ecological value. Some of the plants proposed on Drawing No. 2956-PH1B-PP-10 Rev P1 do have some ecological value (e.g., *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote', *Rosmarinus officinalis*, *Jasminum officinale*).

It is unclear how submitted bed planting compares in terms of ecological value to drawing no. 10986-LD-PLN-161 Rev P02. However, it will no longer be possible to include a log pile in the area that now contains amenity grassland. The log pile could be included elsewhere on the site, or shrub planting reinstated in this area.

The submitted details are not considered acceptable and additional and/or revised details need to be submitted in order to satisfy Condition 12 of 20220078.

In line with KCC – Biodiversity comments, additional / revised information is required before a discharge of Condition 12 can be recommended.

Conclusion

The details submitted pursuant to Condition 12 of planning permission 20220078 would result in a reduction in the number of trees and species/varieties of less ecological value, together with lack of native hedging of sufficient height and an unacceptable change of the planting area to amenity grassland. The proposed planting would lead to a development that would be detrimental to visual amenity and would not sufficiently enhance biodiversity. As such, they would be contrary to Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Unacceptable and insufficient information has been submitted to discharge Condition 12 of planning approval 20220078.

Recommendation

RDET - Refusal of Details

(For detailed conditions / reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Amanda Grout	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>A Grout</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	21 st July 2023	Dated:	11th August 2023