

5/2020/3022 Land Rear Of Burston Garden Centre North Orbital Road Chiswell Green St Albans

Landscape and Trees Comments:

Landscape and Visual Appraisal:

- The viewpoints and visualisations presented seem to be reasonable.
- The approach to layout and views into and across the development seem reasonable.

Landscape proposals:

- A greater depth of perimeter landscaping represents a great improvement in the quality of the setting for the development. More space is allowed for perimeter soft landscape and integration of SuDS features (swales and ponds) throughout the communal landscaped areas, and perimeter landscaping. This in turn gives an improved soft landscape buffer along the northern boundary with Burston Manor and the eastern boundary with the existing bridleway and How Wood.
- The enlarged green is now linked with the more informal perimeter landscaping and greater choice of pedestrian access routes, including links to the surrounding area.
- The layout of the Assisted Living elements, community facilities and associated external spaces and relationship to the southern boundary is fairly similar to previously and may be related to the specific requirements of these buildings. Increased planting within the two north facing courtyards would be an improvement as they are dominated by car parking.
- The layout of the proposed bungalows is still quite formal including external spaces close to the buildings, but within a more informal and varied landscaped setting, creating a series of spaces of distinct character all linked to the green and community hub.
- Altogether, the reduced proportion of built development provides opportunities for creating a better quality environment and sense of place
- The landscape strategy aims to promote biodiversity and the proposed integration of SuDS features with the landscape scheme has the potential to support this. The overall site management and community use of external spaces would need to be aligned with the planting scheme and landscape management strategy to achieve the full benefits – this is the expressed intention in the submitted documentation.
- The Arboricultural Integration report including tree protection plan is acceptable.

If approval was to be considered landscape conditions 565 Design, 566 Soft Landscape, 567 Implementation, plus a condition requiring a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan should apply. In addition, a condition requiring the recommendations of the Arboricultural Integration report to be implemented in full.

5/2018/1324 appeal decision:

NB. The following paragraphs relating to landscape, character and appearance still seem to apply:

46. In combination with the bungalows and parking, the built elements of the proposed development would take up a large proportion of the site. This would give a distinctly urban form which would contrast with both the character and appearance of BGC and the general built form of the dwellings of the surrounding areas.

49. Overall, despite the visual containment at the site, and the positive aspects of the development relating to legibility, design and landscaping, the resultant effect would be of an urbanised site which would be out of step with its wider surroundings. This would therefore give rise to a moderately harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area in the vicinity of the site. This would be in conflict with LP Policies 69 and 70 which require high standards of design, having regard to setting and character, and massing and siting. These LP policy objectives are consistent with those of the Framework.