

Section '3' - Applications recommended for PERMISSION, APPROVAL or CONSENT

Application No : 17/02468/CONDT4

Ward:
Bickley

Address : St Hugh's Playing Fields Bickley Road
Bickley Bromley

Objections: Yes

OS Grid Ref: E: 541958 N: 169210

Applicant : Kier Construction (Southern)

Description of Development:

Details of conditions submitted in relation to planning permission ref: 17/02468/FULL1

Condition 7 - Hard and Soft Landscaping Scheme

Key designations:

Smoke Control SCA 10

Proposal

This is an application for the approval of landscaping details reserved by condition of planning permission 17/02468/FULL1 which was granted on appeal for the Proposed erection of a 6FE Secondary Boys School comprising a part 2 storey, part 3 storey school building of 8,443m² including a sports hall (also for wider community use) together with hard and soft landscaping, creation of a new vehicular access on Chislehurst Road, 69 parking spaces, drop off/pick up area and associated works. Erection of a temporary 2 storey classroom block on site for 12 months to accommodate 5 classrooms, a laboratory, offices and toilets (amended submission of application DC/16/03315/FULL1).

The application was received and validated on 10th April 2019.

Condition No. 7 (hard and soft landscaping) states:

No above ground works or landscaping work shall take place until a hard and soft landscaping scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include materials to be used in hard surfacing, means of enclosure including the entrance gates and barrier, street furniture and bollards and a specification of plants, shrubs and trees. The scheme shall include a timetable for implementation and shall be carried out as approved. If, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting the plant, shrub or tree (or any replacement for it) is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another plant, shrub or tree of the same size and species as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place within the first

planting season thereafter unless the local planning authority gives its written consent to any variation.

The application is supported by the following documents and drawings:

- Application form
- Covering letter dated 8th April 2019
- Drawing 3817_LLB_ZZ_ZZ_DR_L_0001_P01: Landscape GA Site Wide
- Drawing 3817_LLB_ZZ_E1_DR_L_0001_C01: Detailed Landscape GA
- Drawing 3817_LLB_ZZ_E2_DR_L_0001_C01: Detailed Landscape GA
- Drawing 3817_LLB_ZZ_E3_DR_L_0001_C01: Detailed Landscape GA
- Drawing 3817_LLB_ZZ_E4_DR_L_0001_C01: Detailed Landscape GA
- Drawing 3817_LLB_ZZ_ZZ_DR_L_0002_C02: Planting Plan Site Wide
- 3817_LLB_SP_L_0001: Hardworks Specifications C2 (30/01/19)
- 3817_LLB_SP_L_0002: Softworks Specifications C2 (01/02/19)
- Drawing 0939_P_Bullers Wood: Topographical and underground utility mapping survey
- Email dated 12th June 2019
- Email dated 28th June 2019

Location and Key Constraints

The site is situated off Bickley Road in Bickley, Bromley. The site is designated as Urban Open Space and currently forms the playing fields and partial sports provision for Bullers Wood Girls School to the north east of the site. The boundary of the adjacent Conservation Area extends along Pines Road.

The site forms a triangular parcel of land with Bickley Road, Chislehurst Road and Pines Road bordering the site. To the western boundary of the site is a commercial car dealership garage (BMW). To the south eastern corner are a number of large detached dwellings and their respective garden areas which back onto the site.

The site is largely grassed or tree covered and all the trees on the site are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. The boundaries to the site are largely comprised of trees and hedgerow.

Existing vehicular access to the site is from Bickley Road and is formed of an old red brick wall with entrance gates and an original tree lined hard surfaced drive to central hard surfaced areas and an existing track through the trees. There is currently pedestrian access (used by the Girls School) from Pines Road.

The site is surrounded by residential properties to most boundaries and is in a predominantly residential area characterised by large detached and semi-detached dwellings.

Consultations

Comments from local residents (summary):

- new vehicle and pedestrian entrances on Chislehurst Road adjacent to the new school building, top playground and visitor car park will have a significant negative impact on residential amenity of neighbours living opposite
- It is important that adequate screening is provided along the Chislehurst Road frontage to limit the impact of the new school development as much as possible
- proposals will result in a significant reduction in the screening compared to what is currently provided by the existing boundary vegetation
- additional new planting should be required along the boundary to improve the existing screening given the close proximity of the new development to the road and properties opposite
- there is no extra new planting proposed between the vehicle and pedestrian entrances themselves
- The Planting Plan Site Wide shows that the proposed hedge consisting of *Carpinus Betulus* is not an evergreen tree and will not, on its own, provide adequate all-year round screening
- further new planting is required in front/behind this hedge, using trees/shrubs that will together provide proper all-year round screening
- request additional planting in the area between the new vehicle and pedestrian entrances
- The new black wire fence between the vehicle and pedestrian entrances to be brought forward to the line of the visibility splay
- With the fence moved forward, this will allow proper new planting to cover the area behind the fence and back to the delivery bay.

Comments from Consultees

Tree Officer

The loss of trees is not clearly identified on the plans illustration and will actually involve a loss of some established screening. As individuals there is little amenity value and on this basis they do not present a constraint to the visibility splays. However, the new planting shown on the landscape plan for this aspect of the site would not satisfactorily mitigate the additional losses. An opportunity therefore arises to implement buffering on the northern boundary of the site.

Specimen trees are not going to be appropriate for this location and in view of the future use of the area. It would therefore be necessary to select hedgerow species. A mix of native species including hornbeam and beech would ensure a degree of screening is retained year round.

Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) as boundary hedging is a suitable species for the site boundaries and would be fitting in the context of the site. The hedging on the southern boundary already gives a picture of what long term hedge management

looks like at the site and we would not want to encourage the wrong choice of boundary treatment that may lead to future conflict or over dominance.

The applicant subsequently submitted further information which confirmed that the area to the west of the existing access is already heavily vegetated and the area to the east behind the existing boundary screening is running track and a playing field. As such it would not be possible to provide additional planting in these areas. The Tree Officer has agreed that on that basis, there is no further room for mitigation planting.

The applicant has also amended the proposed hedgerow species in response to comments received from neighbouring residents. While the Tree Officer had no objection to the initial hedging and considers that the change of species has led to a less desirable hedge composition, if this is what is required to address screening objections, then they would not oppose the proposals.

Highways:

The internal roads are as per the agreed plans so I would have no comments. The vehicular junctions will be subject to the s278 agreement so there may be adjustments but they are likely to be very minor tweaks.

The sightline at the new Chislehurst Road access must be kept clear so there should be a regime of cutting back / trimming the vegetation to achieve this. There is a note on the planting plan that pruning must take place to keep the sightline onto Chislehurst Road clear.

Furthermore, the pedestrian gate onto Bickley Road is now shown opening inwards which is acceptable.

No objections to the condition being discharged.

Drainage

The submitted information including "External Works Construction Details" Plan DRW No. 08473-EAL-00-XX-DR-C-0003 Rev C dated 07/07/2017 to incorporate permeable paving to store surface water run-off is acceptable. Recommend the discharge of condition 7.

Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that the determination of these applications must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In determining planning applications, the starting point is the development plan and any other material considerations that are relevant. The adopted development plan in for this proposal includes the Bromley Local Plan (2019) and the London Plan (2016). The Draft new London Plan was published by the Mayor for consultation in December 2017. The consultation period ended on Friday 2 March.

The examination of the draft new plan in public opened on Tuesday 15 January 2019. The weight attached to the draft policies increases as the preparation of the new London Plan process advances.

Relevant policies and guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) as well as other guidance and relevant legislation, must also be taken into account.

The NPPG states that Development that is ready to proceed should not be held back by delays in discharging planning conditions. In most cases where the approval is straightforward it is expected that the local planning authority should respond to requests to discharge conditions without delay, and in any event within 21 days, unless a longer period has been agreed in writing between the applicant and the local planning authority.

The relevant policies are:

London Plan (2016)

- 2.18 Green Infrastructure: the multi-functional network of green and open spaces
- 3.18 Education Facilities
- 3.19 Sports Facilities
- 5.3 Sustainable Design and Construction
- 5.11 Green Roofs and Development Site Environs
- 5.13 Sustainable Drainage
- 6.9 Cycling
- 6.10 Walking
- 6.13 Parking
- 7.1 Lifetime Neighbourhoods
- 7.2 An inclusive environment
- 7.3 Designing out Crime
- 7.4 Local Character
- 7.19 Biodiversity and Access to Nature
- 7.21 Trees and woodlands

Bromley Local Plan (2019)

- 27 Education
- 28 Educational Facilities
- 32 Road Safety
- 33 Access for All
- 37 General Design of Development
- 40 Other non-designated heritage assets
- 42 Development adjacent to a Conservation Area
- 55 Urban Open Space
- 69 Development and Nature Conservation Sites
- 70 Wildlife Features
- 72 Protected Species
- 73 Development and Trees
- 78 Green Corridors

79 Biodiveristy and Access to Nature
115 Reducing Flood Risk
116 Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
123 Sustainable Design and Construction

Supplementary Planning Guidance

London Plan:

Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment (2014)
Sustainable Design and Construction (2014)

Bromley:

SPG1 - General Design Principles

Relevant Planning History

16/03315/FULL1: Proposed erection of a 6FE Secondary Boys School comprising a part 2 storey, part 3 storey school building of 8,443m² including a sports hall (also for wider community use) together with hard and soft landscaping, creation of a new vehicular access on Chislehurst Road, 68 parking spaces, drop off/pick up area and associated works. Erection of a temporary 2 storey classroom block on site for 12 months to accommodate 5 classrooms, a laboratory, offices and toilets -

Refused and dismissed at appeal on 11th December 2017, the main issue being the effect of the proposal on highway safety in the surrounding area.

17/02468/FULL1: Proposed erection of a 6FE Secondary Boys School comprising a part 2 storey, part 3 storey school building of 8,443m² including a sports hall (also for wider community use) together with hard and soft landscaping, creation of a new vehicular access on Chislehurst Road, 69 parking spaces, drop off/pick up area and associated works. Erection of a temporary 2 storey classroom block on site for 12 months to accommodate 5 classrooms, a laboratory, offices and toilets (amended submission of application DC/16/03315/FULL1) -

Refused and Allowed at Appeal on 19th December 2018.

19/00370/FULL1: Stationing and temporary use of a modular building for educational purposes for a one-year period with associated access and parking -

Permitted on 1st May 2019.

Considerations

The main issues to be considered in respect of this application are the impact on the character and appearance of the area, the impact on highways safety, the impact on trees and ecology and the acceptability from a drainage perspective.

In her Appeal decision, the Planning Inspector specifically commented on the landscaping for the scheme having particular regard to the impact the development would have on the Chislehurst Road frontage:

Para 43: Whilst a landscape masterplan has been submitted further details are necessary of the new trees, hedgerows and shrub planting proposed. This should particularly provide for new landscaping along the Chislehurst Road frontage and behind sight lines to replace trees and vegetation removed for the highway works and infrastructure.

The construction of the proposed vehicle and pedestrian accesses for the new school, along with the required visibility splays would involve the loss of some established screening along the Chislehurst Road boundary. The Tree Officer has not objected to the loss of the individual trees which hold little amenity value.

In response to Tree Officer's and neighbouring residents concerns that the proposed screening would not mitigate the losses, the applicant amended the scheme to provide additional mixed native hedge planting to the rear of the new sections of boundary fence either side of the new vehicle access. The Tree Officer considered that the proposed hedge species: hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) was suitable for the site boundaries and would be fitting in the context of the site.

However, following ongoing concerns from local residents that the planting regime would not provide adequate screening of the development from the houses opposite on Chislehurst Road, the applicant has revised the planting again to include evergreen species. While the Tree Officer is of the view that the change of species has led to a less desirable hedge composition, it is considered the revised proposals would provide better screening of the site all year round and is more in line with the landscaping which was indicated at application stage.

While local resident's request for the 1.8m high wire mesh fence to be moved forward in line with sight lines, and additional planting introduced to the area behind is noted, this would make the fence appear more prominent in the street scene, whereas in the current proposals, the view of the area to the left hand side of the vehicle access (when viewed from Chislehurst Road) would be one of trees and planting. Furthermore, directly behind the proposed fence is a retained tree and there is very little scope for increasing planting density in this area.

With regard to other additional 'buffer' planting behind the existing line of vegetation to the east of the proposed access on Chislehurst Road, the applicant has advised that this would not be possible as it would directly impact upon the usability and size of the playing field. This is accepted. Furthermore, to the west of the proposed access, the site is already densely planted along the boundary and will be retained as such.

Overall it is considered that the proposed hard and soft landscaping scheme would provide an attractive setting for the development and sufficient measures will be put in place for new and replacement planting along the Chislehurst Road frontage. Furthermore, the proposed planting to the east of the Chislehurst Road access also comprises native species including pedunculate oak, field maple (*Acer campestre*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and beech which were all highlighted as species beneficial for wildlife within the Ecological Assessment which was approved at application stage.

The proposal to incorporate permeable paving to store surface water run-off is also acceptable.

The applicant states that all external planting will be completed no later than the first planting season prior to the end of practical completion.

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE

- 1 The details are acceptable to approve the condition. The scheme shall be carried out as approved. If, within a period of 5 years from the date of planting the plant, shrub or tree (or any replacement for it) is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective, another plant, shrub or tree of the same size and species as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place within the first planting season thereafter unless the local planning authority gives its written consent to any variation.**