

LANDSCAPE CONSULTATION COMMENTS - 186/20/CON

Application: 202604
Address: Land at Brook Meadows, Tiptree, Colchester
Description: Outline application for the erection of up to 221 dwellings and associated infrastructure and works.
Response Date: 21/04/21
Site visited: 01/12/20 & 04/02/21

1.0 Comments:

- 1.1 Regarding the landscape content/aspect of the outline application proposals submitted principally under the DAS lodged on 26/11/20, the Landscape & Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) doc 7024.LVIA.003.VF lodged 21/01/21 and the overlaid draft landscape strategy plan drawing 7024/ASP4/LSP.C lodged on 16/04/21; the following points should be considered:
- 1.2 In support and addition to the policy/policies and guidance detailed in 3.1 below, the following point(s) should be taken into consideration. This to avoid potential harm to the existing and future character/amenity of the site and its environs that might occur through agreement of the currently proposed scheme, as it is considered it would not adequately conserve/enhance/restore the landscape of the site for the betterment of its wider setting:
- 1.3 The proposed development site lies outside the settlement boundary and is therefore subject to Core Policy ENV1. ENV1 requires that *'unallocated green-field land outside of settlement boundaries (to be defined/reviewed in the Site Allocations DPD) will be protected and where possible enhanced, in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment. Within such areas development will be strictly controlled to conserve the environmental assets and open character of the Borough'*. The issue of open character is important as it confirms the importance of the unbuilt countryside as a resource in its own right; irrespective of quality or value. The policy also requires that, *'where new development needs or is compatible with, a rural location, it should demonstrably ... be appropriate in terms of its scale, siting, and design ...'*.
- 1.4 The site lies within Colchester Borough Landscape Character Assessment Area F2 (CBLCA F2), Tiptree Wooded Farmland, this describes the character of the landscape in detail and identifies characteristic(s) of the Area shared by the site as *'Located at the eastern end of a broad, ridge that extends west into Braintree District', 'Character area influenced by nucleated Tiptree settlement within the centre of the area', 'Mosaic of small to medium-sized, predominantly arable fields, with a predominantly small-scale field pattern' and 'Linear settlement pattern'*, and specifically identifies the adjacent Tiptree Lakes SINCS as a distinct ecological feature that goes to make up the landscape character of the Area. It goes on to identify planning issue(s) as *'Potential for visually intrusive expansion to the settlement edges of Tiptree and Tiptree Heath'*, sets landscape strategy objective(s) to *'conserve and enhance'* the landscape character of the Area. Finally, it gives landscape

planning guideline(s) to 'Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of Tiptree and Tiptree Heath settlements'.

1.5 Regarding the proposed LVIA, the following points should be considered:

- The site description given within the Baseline Assessment under part 2 of the LVIA would appear for the most part acceptable. However, the description in 2.1 and 2.3 of the site and the field to the north-west of it as both being large fields needs to be reconsidered. This as these fields form part of the characteristic mosaic of small to medium sized fields to CBLCA F2 as noted in 1.4 above, i.e. fields within CBLCA F2 are specifically defined as either small or medium sized, unless noticeably much larger than other fields within the Area. In this case when assessing these fields against those around them, it can be seen here

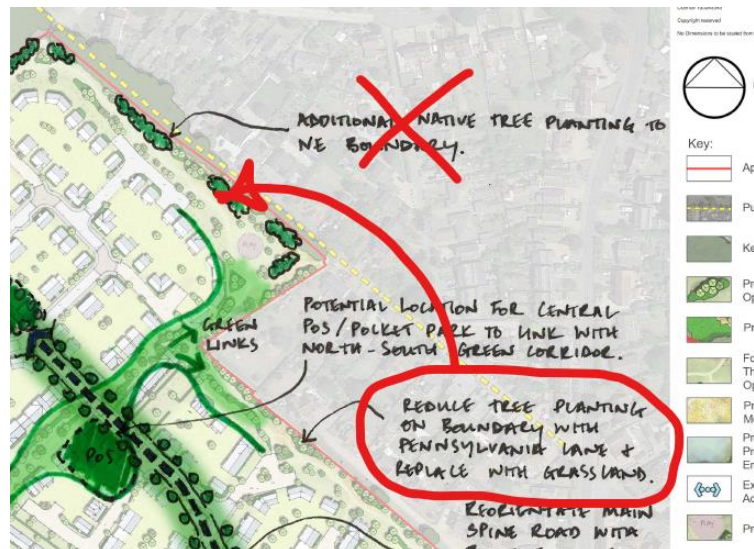


(Map data ©2021 Google) (site

outlined red, NW field in orange and CBLCA F2 in blue) that they are both not noticeably larger, nor particularly smaller than other fields in CBLCA F2, ergo they are both medium size fields characteristic of CBLCA F2, which is characterised by a mosaic of small to medium sized fields. Any revised LVIA should therefore revise all description of the site (and the field to the NW) as being medium size, and following on from that acknowledge within it's assessment that the proposed development would involve the loss of a characteristic part of CBLCA F2 through the loss of this medium sized field, revising the findings of the LVIA accordingly.

- As previously recommended, the LVIA needs to include a plan showing the digitised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZVT) of the development in order to comply with GLVIA3 (6.2 to 6.8) and so that, through assessment of this ZVT, it can be confirmed that all viewpoints have been captured. Also the that the visualisations need to be upgraded to Type 1 visualisations, this to comply with the Landscape Institutes guidance TGN 06/19, and in order to ensure that the proposed width and height of the proposed development is illustrated on the viewpoint photographs and therefore any potential '*visual intrusion*' can be accurately assessed.

1.6 Regarding the overlaid draft landscape strategy plan drawing 7024/ASP4/LSP.C; simplify the proposed landscape treatment to the north-eastern boundary of the site (bounding Pennsylvania Lane) to retain and reinforce the existing boundary hedge, whilst proposing wildflower meadow to the space between this hedge and the units, this to better complement and respect the underlying historic open field character of the site, i.e. simply



revise thus:

notation to read: Retain, gap-up and reinforce existing hedge to Pennsylvania Lane and replace proposed tree planting between this hedge and units with wildflower and species rich grassland.

and revise

2.0 Conclusion:

- 2.1 In conclusion; taking into account all relevant considerations and for the reasons set out above, this application cannot currently be supported on landscape grounds as it may cause harm to its landscape setting. To fully consider the proposals and mitigate the envisaged harm, the above point(s) will need to be satisfactorily addressed.

3.0 References:

- 3.1 NPPF: Part 15, para 170-183 & (where impacting on a heritage asset, e.g. listed park & garden) Part 16, para 184-202.
- Local Plan: Core strategy:
 ENV1 – Environment.
 UR2 – Built design & character.
 PR1 – Open space.
 Development policies:
 DP1 – Design & amenity.
 DP16 – Open space design & provision.
 DP21 – Nature Conservation & Protected Lanes.
- SPG: The Council's [Landscape strategy for development sites](#) under Landscape Guidance Note LIS/A (this is available on this CBC landscape [webpage](#) under Landscape Consultancy by clicking the 'read our guidance' link).