

28 November 2016
Delivered by email

Paul Vertigen
Planning Department
Liverpool City Council
Municipal Buildings
Dale Street
Liverpool
L2 2DH

Ref: REDM2039

Dear Paul

LAND AT WOOLTON ROAD, ALLERTON, LIVERPOOL (160/1191)

Many thanks for providing a copy of the further consultation response from the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) in respect of the above application, dated 16 November 2016. This letter provides a response to MEAS's comments on behalf of the applicant, Redrow Homes NW ("Redrow") and Allerton Priory LLP. Further supplementary information is enclosed and comprises:

- Letter from Elizabeth Seal, TEP to Rachael Rhodes, MEAS and associated enclosures:
 - Indicative Planting Strategy (TEP drawing no. IN4729.018A)
 - Habitat Management Prescriptions (TEP document no. 5171.01.003)

The comments from MEAS raise a number of points to which they request a response prior to the determination of the outline planning application. These matters, and the applicant's response, are set out in turn below, with reference to accompanying documents where necessary.

At the outset, it is important to highlight that the application currently being considered comprises an outline planning application. It seeks approval of the principle of residential development on the site for up to 160 dwellings, and the means of access into the site. No details relating to layout, design or landscaping are, therefore, fixed at this stage. However, an indicative masterplan, which shows how the development could be accommodated within the site, has been submitted for illustrative purposes.

Habitat Loss

MEAS has requested further information in relation to the mitigation and long-term management measures that will be adopted to ensure the integrity and long-term function of the Calderstones – Woolton Green Wedge (and associated proposed Local Wildlife Site) in terms of wildlife and recreation.

As confirmed within TEP's enclosed response, the proposed housing parcels and associated roads and gardens will result in the loss of c. 7.3 hectares (ha) of habitat. The remaining 6.28 ha of habitat within the

1 New York Street
Manchester
M1 4HD

T 0161 233 7676 turley.co.uk

application site will be retained and enhanced. Overall, this represents a loss of c.7.7% of the total Allerton Green Wedge proposed Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

It is accepted that the proposals will result in a net loss of grassland and scrub habitats. However, those habitats of the greatest value within the application site will be retained, and other habitats enhanced and managed favourably for wildlife. The enhancement of the open space areas and creation of large private gardens is likely to increase opportunities for several bird species, although it is likely to reduce in value for birds of prey (barn owl and kestrel). In recognition of these losses, the developer is committed to making a financial contribution towards off-site mitigation.

The details of any off-site mitigation can be agreed at detailed design / Reserved Matters stage when it will be possible to calculate accurate habitat losses and gains to determine the financial contribution for off-setting requirements.

Management Prescriptions

The enclosed Indicative Planting Strategy (TEP drawing no. IN4729.018A) illustrates the habitat creation and enhancement provision that the developer is committing to and sets the foundation for detailed landscaping proposals, planting plans and management plan documents that will be delivered at Reserved Matters stage and designed in consultation with MEAS. This can be secured via a suitably worded planning condition, such as that provided below:

“As part of any reserved matters application relating to layout and / or landscaping of any phase, a detailed Habitat Creation and Enhancement Plan for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the approved Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timescales for that phase.”

I also enclose a document setting out the broad management prescriptions for each of the habitats provided in the Indicative Planting Strategy plan (TEP document no. 5171.01.003). These will be developed into a full management plan in consultation with MEAS during the Reserved Matters stage to ensure that it reflects the final landscape strategy. This can be secured via a suitably worded planning condition, such as that provided below:

“As part of any reserved matters application relating to landscaping of any phase, a detailed Landscape Management Plan for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service. Thereafter, the approved Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and timescales for that phase.”

Bat Surveys

MEAS suggested that additional bat emergence and re-entry surveys are required as a result of the bat roost potential survey of trees having been up-dated.

TEP's response to MEAS confirms that, of the trees identified as having bat roost potential, only one tree (T124) requires felling to facilitate access to the proposed development. The felling or pruning of all the other trees listed relate to health and safety measures (7 no. trees) or management to ensure the longevity of retained trees (4 no. trees); those measures would be included in the long term ecological management plan for the site to ensure positive management of the woodland habitats for biodiversity. It is not necessary for those details to be submitted or put in place to facilitate the development.

An aerial inspection of tree T124 was undertaken on 23 November 2016 and supervised by a licensed bat consultant. The aerial inspection identified several woodpecker holes in the trunk at approximately 10m

above ground. All holes were found to be shallow, some with water pooled at the base. A squirrel dray was also identified. No staining, droppings or any other evidence of bats was identified in any of the holes. In addition, the tree's location is also fairly cluttered by surrounding trees which can discourage bat roosting. As a result, the most up-to-date information confirms that the tree remains as having Low bat roosting potential.

In line with Bat Conservation Trust 2016 guidance, no further surveys are required; instead a supervised 'soft fell' will be undertaken when the tree is removed.

Archaeological Investigations

MEAS notes that the submitted geophysical survey suggests that further archaeological investigation should be undertaken through a programme of limited trial trenching, and requests that this work is undertaken prior to the determination of the application.

The applicant accepts the requirement to undertake trial-trenching on the site, in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the geophysical survey. However, it is not considered that these works are required to be undertaken prior to the determination of this application and they can, instead, be secured using a standard planning condition.

Such an approach is entirely reasonable, particularly as the final layout of the proposed development and, therefore, potential impacts on the 'anomalies' identified within the geophysical survey cannot be known until detailed design stage.

This approach is also consistent with previous decisions made by Liverpool City Council (LCC) in consultation with MEAS.

For example, LCC resolved to grant full planning permission for a student accommodation development adjacent to Lime Street station in October 2016 (LPA ref. 16F/1539). The proposals include a condition requiring archaeological investigation to be undertaken prior to the commencement of development. The condition wording was suggested by MEAS, and states:

"No development within any phase shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme."

A similar condition could be applied to any planning permission for the Woolton Road proposals. Suggested wording is provided below:

"No development within any phase shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work for that phase in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme for that phase."

Matters to be Conditioned

MEAS also commented on a number of other environmental matters that can be secured via the use of planning conditions on any planning permission for the development. The applicant is happy to agree to these conditions in principle. To assist LCC, we have set out below some suggested wording for draft conditions to secure the measures required.

Ecological Management Plan

"Prior to the commencement of development within any phase, an Ecological Management Plan for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the Ecological Management Plan shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details for that phase."

Badger Surveys

"Prior to the commencement of development within any phase, a further site survey to establish the absence of Badgers within that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Should Badgers be identified, a Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement for Badgers for that phase shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the statement and any approved measures for that phase."

Buffer around Boundary Trees

"Any Reserved Matters application relating to layout for any phase shall be accompanied by details to demonstrate that a minimum buffer of 5 metres, or the extent of the tree canopy (whichever is the greatest), will be achieved between existing trees around the boundary of the site and the location of housing, private gardens, roads and utilities."

Invasive Species

"Prior to the commencement of the development within any phase, a method statement detailing avoidance, control and eradication measures for Japanese knotweed, Himalayan balsam and Rhododendron for that phase shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement shall include:

- *A plan showing the extent of the plants;*
- *What methods will be used to prevent the plant spreading further, including demarcation; and*
- *What methods of control will be used, including details of monitoring.*

Thereafter, the approved method statement shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details for that phase. Upon completion of the approved measures, a validation report confirming the remediation treatment carried out and that the site or phase has been free of invasive species for 12 consecutive months shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority."

I trust that the above summary and the enclosed information provides a comprehensive response to the comments made by MEAS and will enable the Council to impose conditions, as appropriate, to address any outstanding matters. Please do get in touch if there is anything further that you need.

Yours sincerely



Anna Noble
Senior Planner

anna.noble@turley.co.uk