



02/05/2024

Savannah Cobbold
West Suffolk Council

By email only

Thank you for requesting advice on this application from Place Services' landscape advice services. This provides advice to planning officers to inform West Suffolk Council planning decisions with regard to potential landscape impacts from development. Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have, must be directed to the Planning Officer who will seek further advice from us where appropriate and necessary.

Application: DC/24/0366/FUL
Location: The Fox Ph Haverhill Road Little Wratting, Suffolk
Proposal: Planning application - a. one convenience store b. one drive-through coffee shop with associated parking and landscaping (following demolition of existing public house)

Dear Savannah,

Thank you for consulting Place Services on the above application.

With reference to the above-named application and submitted documents received by Place Services asking for Landscape comments, based on a desktop survey and site visit our comments on the Planning Application as submitted are provided below.

We have reviewed the following documents:

- Detailed landscape proposals, E.L.D. (dwg no. WELL617/1-002 P0)
- Concept landscape proposals, E.L.D. (dwg no. WELL617/1-001 P01)
- Arboricultural report, J M Moore
- Tree Constraints and protection plan, J M Moore (dwg WELL/FHH/01)

Site Context

The site is a former public house with adjacent parking and open space. Its sits adjacent to the main road and roundabout which serves new housing developments immediately to east and west. The site is open to arable fields to the north and a large area of woodland bounds the perimeter of the site to its west and to the rear. A public footpath follows closely the site boundary with the housing development at Great Wilsey Park.

Landscape Character

At the district-level the 'West Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment' identifies the Site as being within area B1 'Haverhill Farmlands'. The key characteristics of this area are [inter alia]: shallow bowl landscape focused on Stour Brook comprising gently undulating arable farmland, Haverhill surrounded



by rising farmland, mature hedgerow oak trees and notable areas of ancient woodland on upper slopes, striking contrast between rural landscape and urban development within Haverhill. The site sits on the edge of the Haverhill settlement where landscape character has seen substantial change with the growth of new residential areas which is ongoing.

The proposal

The Fox Inn building after demolition will be replaced with a convenience store and a drive-thru coffee shop with associated parking, an electric charging area, internal roads and substation enclosure.

Review of the Submitted Information

We have reviewed the submitted information which includes landscape plans, arboricultural assessment and street scene elevations. We have the following concerns relating to landscape and visual amenity and the design of the layout.

Landscape and visual amenity

The site plans and elevations show the proposed drive-thru building much in the same area as the public house building. This replacement, more contemporary building, would not therefore be visually intrusive. The proposed retail store sits tight to the back of the site with parking in front occupying the former car park. A public footpath and housing frontage are located directly behind. The Street Scene elevations illustrate the arrangement but not in a landscape context which would be more helpful. Some 8 metres in height and of significant volume, the store building will be dominant in its setting. From the rear it will be visible above the existing vegetation alongside the footpath behind and will have an adverse impact on amenity from this public open and also on overlooking residents.

Site layout and landscape design

The site proposal is very developed with a predominance of buildings and hard surfacing leaving very little scope for landscape planting within the site. The landscape plan shows tree planting across the site frontage which is welcome and will give a sense of enclosure and green interface with open countryside opposite. The proposed design and layout fail to provide a buffer between the residential areas to the rear which is of concern. There is some landscaping along the boundary with the stream however this is minimal. There is an opportunity to improve the site-side of the stream with natural landscape and tree planting which has been missed.

With regard to the parking layout, this appears very restrictive, particularly near the site entrance and directly in front of the store. The end bay of the electric vehicle charging area to the back of the site is also restrictive.

With a revised layout that satisfies the above main concerns of insufficient landscaped area, impacts on visual amenity, inadequate measures of mitigation, a replacement commercial concern on this site would be acceptable in landscape terms.

If minded for approval, we would recommend the following conditions for your consideration:

1. PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: SOFT LANDSCAPING SCHEME

No development above ground level shall take place until a scheme of soft landscaping for the site drawn to a scale of not less than 1:200, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include accurate indications



of the position, species, girth, canopy spread and height of all existing trees and hedgerows on and adjacent to the site and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection during the course of development. Any retained trees removed, dying or becoming seriously damaged or diseased within five years of commencement shall be replaced within the first available planting season thereafter with planting of similar size and species unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent for any variation. The works shall be completed in accordance with the approved plans and in accordance with a timetable to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To enhance the appearance of the development and to ensure that the most vulnerable trees are adequately protected during the periods of construction, in accordance with policies DM2, DM12 and DM13 of the West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015, Chapters 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework and all relevant Core Strategy Policies.

2. PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT : HARD LANDSCAPING SCHEME

No development above ground level shall take place until details of a hard landscaping scheme for the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include proposed finished levels and contours showing earthworks and mounding; surfacing materials; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other vehicle and pedestrian access and circulations areas; hard surfacing materials; minor artefacts and structures (for example furniture, play equipment, refuse and/or other storage units, signs, lighting and similar features); proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (for example drainage, power, communications cables and pipelines, indicating lines, manholes, supports and other technical features); retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration where relevant. The scheme shall be implemented prior to the occupation of any part of the development (or within such extended period as may first be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority).

Reason: To assimilate the development into its surroundings and protect the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with policies DM2 and DM13 of the West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015, Chapters 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework and all relevant Core Strategy Policies.

3. PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF DEVELOPMENT: LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

No development above ground level shall take place until a landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules and periods for all soft landscape areas (other than small privately owned domestic gardens) together with a timetable for the implementation of the landscape management plan, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The landscape management plan shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and timetable.

Reason: To ensure the longevity of the landscaping scheme and protect the visual amenity and character of the area, in accordance with policy DM12 and DM13 of the West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015, Chapters 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework and all relevant Core Strategy Policies.



4. DETAILS OF BOUNDARY TREATMENT:

No development above ground level shall take place until details of the treatment of the boundaries of the site have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall specify the siting, design, height and materials of the screen walls/fences to be constructed or erected and/or the species, spacing and height of hedging to be retained and / or planted together with a programme of implementation. Any planting removed, dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced by soft landscaping of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted. The works shall be completed prior to first use/occupation in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy DM2 of the West Suffolk Joint Development Management Policies Document 2015, Chapters 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework and all relevant Core Strategy Policies.

Should you have any queries regarding the matters raised above, please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Coupat BA(Hons) MLD CMLI
Senior Landscape Consultant

Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of West Suffolk Council

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.