

**From:** [Redacted]  
**To:** [MU1](#)  
**Cc:** [Redacted]  
**Subject:** 2021/1089 and 2021/1090 Reconsultation Forestry Officer  
**Date:** 15 December 2023 15:12:30  
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Please log this consultation response onto M3 and on SP

Kind Regards



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*Please be aware that the Development Management Team are currently experiencing temporary resourcing pressures. Unfortunately, this means we may not respond as to correspondence as quickly as we would like. This situation is expected to last for a temporary period whilst a recruitment exercise is undertaken. I would like to thank you for your continued patience at this time*

\*Please note that we are operating a hybrid working model, If I am unavailable please leave a message including a contact telephone number so that I can return your call \*





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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 14 December 2023 17:25

**To:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Subject:** 2021/1089 and 2021/1090

[REDACTED]

The arboricultural information provided relates to both the applications in the single document and as such rather than trying to split the elements I will provide comments on both applications and the documents provided singularly rather than for each separate application.

### **Introduction**

The site although largely open agricultural land does contain a significant number/amount of trees hedges and woodland and whilst many of the trees and hedges are considered of low value (Category C) when classified under BS5827:2012 individually they do still have high amenity value as part of the whole for the site. The prioritisation of the higher value (Category A and B) trees, hedges and woodlands is expected as is their retention unless significant justification as to why they can't be is provided as noted in the Masterplan Framework which states the following.

*'Trees on the site represent a constraint that must be taken into account when designing future development. All the trees and groups of high and moderate quality must be retained as part of the development unless it is clearly demonstrated and evidenced that this is not possible. Trees of low quality are also a constraint and must be fully considered as part of any proposal and retained where possible. Retained trees must be provided with sufficient space to protect their roots, as defined by the root protection area and the full extent of their crown spreads during any works, as well as sufficient space for future growth and development without causing a conflicts with any new features or structures on the sites.'*

Where hedgerows are concerned the Masterplan Framework notes that species rich hedgerows must be retained, buffered and managed as part of the proposed schemes and that where this is not possible the hedgerows should be transplanted to maintain them and their value. The Masterplan Frameworks states the following regarding species rich hedgerows.

*'Retain, buffer and manage the species-rich hedgerows and boundary features. Where this is not possible transplant hedgerows including root balls and associated soils.'*

The Masterplan Framework document also clearly sets out that the Local Plan Policies and Supplementary Planning Documents must also be adhered with when looking at schemes for these sites. The most pertinent ones in arboricultural terms are Local Plan Policy BIO1 and the

## Trees and Hedgerows Supplementary Planning Document.

The dominant arboricultural features of the site are the woodlands and from an arboricultural perspective these must remain unaffected during the works as detailed in our Local Plan and be retained not only as part of the schemes put forward but be maintained and remain in situ in perpetuity. The tree survey also notes that as well as the surveyed woodlands (W1a and W1b) that there are 7 individual trees and 3 groups which merit retention Category A along with 35 trees and 31 groups in Category B, 79 trees and 66 groups in Category C and 5 trees and 2 groups in Category U. The Category U trees are those which require removal for arboricultural reasons regardless of development on the site. No categorisation has been provided for the Hedgerows but I understand that some of those affected are deemed important as per the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.

### **Arboricultural Impacts**

The AIA notes that the removal of 27 individual trees, 25 groups and the partial removal of 13 groups of trees will be required to implement the scheme as it currently stands. It also notes that 20 hedgerows are proposed to be removed to facilitate the schemes along with the partial removal of 15 hedgerows. The AIA also notes significant impacts on many trees on the site with the vast majority to facilitate the level changes to create the development platforms across the site. These were in general expected as the undulating nature of the site meant that significant cut and fill works would be required to provide developable areas. The proposals do impact on several category A and B trees and groups with regards to level changes, however many of these appear as though with some minor amendments they could be remedied such as for Cat B T31 where level changes are proposed in part of the rooting area, it would therefore seem sensible to amend the extent of the level changes where possible where trees are on the edges of these works so as to minimise as far as possible the loss of these trees. I have also noted that some trees are shown for removal including category A trees and groups which are shown in areas of open space such as T49, T126 and G102 due to level changes. I would therefore again question ground level changes in some of these areas and how necessary they are given these areas are not to be built on. I am fully aware that in many instances these level changes will be so great between the newly created developable area and the area proposed as open space that it is not possible but I feel as noted previously and as laid out by policies and guidance that every effort should be made to retain these better quality trees and groups wherever possible.

Of more concern in general are the impacts on trees outside of the major engineering works as given the impacts in terms of removals due to level changes then every effort should have been made to avoid construction issues for the retained trees and hedges. There is however an extensive list of other implications on the trees such as for hard surfacing etc. These should be avoided and amendments to the scheme be sought to ensure as far as possible those trees which can be retained are done so without works in their rooting area or pruning to facilitate the scheme. Trees such as T18 are an example of this where the tree is to be removed to construct a footpath. I feel strongly that where issues like this occur the footpath should be moved slightly rather than removing the tree even though it is only Cat C.

I also note in the AIA that rather than being a document which solely sets out the impacts on the trees as required by the scheme and how to deal with these it caveats many of these proposed impacts and notes that changes to the scheme should be made to alleviate them. Table 3 has

many instances where the arboricultural consultant notes changes to the scheme should be made and I feel it is imperative that these are followed to negate implications for the trees wherever possible. I would therefore ask that the scheme be looked at in terms of these impacts and amendments made as noted. I appreciate that elements of the proposals within this document are currently only outline and are not subject to a full submission but ultimately if the information is being submitted at this time for consideration it need to reflect what is proposed. This is particularly pertinent for W1 where there are still uncertainties over what is proposed with regards to footpath construction etc. as well as for works relating to directional drilling etc. It should therefore be noted that I would have to object to any works within W1 or its buffer zone which could be detrimental to the trees. I would therefore ask that the necessary additional survey work etc. noted in the documents be undertaken at the earliest opportunity so these details can be finalised in the AIA.

The Masterplan Framework notes that important hedgerows must be retained wherever possible and if not be translocated to a suitable location within the sites. Having read through the AIA no mention is made of the outcomes of the assessment of the hedges under the Hedgerows regulations 1997 and nor is there any mention of translocation of these hedges and how this will be achieved. This is key to the works involving the hedgerows and as such I feel it must be included in the AIA so the entirety of the Impacts on the trees, woodlands and hedges can be adequately assessed.

### **Arboricultural Impact Conclusions**

The trees are recognised as a constraint to the development in the Masterplan Framework and the requirements to retain trees wherever possible especially moderate and high quality examples (Category A and B trees) unless significant justification can be provided as to why this cannot be achieved. Likewise it is clear that where trees are to be retained they must be given sufficient space so as to remain unaffected by the proposed development works. Although the current proposals are a major improvement on those originally submitted back in 2021 there are still some areas of ambiguity and concern. I therefore feel that there are still actions which need to be taken to try and minimise the impacts on trees both in terms of removals and works within rooting areas etc. To summarise I feel the points below need to be addressed.

- The recommendations for amendments to the scheme noted in the AIA need to be looked at and acted upon
- Amendments to the proposals need to be looked into where trees are implicated by the proposed scheme for level changes on the edge of rooting areas or for hard surfacing etc.
- Amendments into the scheme need to be looked into where trees located in areas of open space are proposed to be removed/impacted upon.
- Undertake additional survey work required with regards to W1 etc.
- Include details of important hedgerows and how they will be translocated as required in the AIA

When these points have been looked at and remedied where possible the AIA will need to be updated to reflect these changes and provided for re-assessment.

### **Landscaping – Tree Planting**

