

# Assessment of Screening Planning Condition

Ref: S/2019/1694/FUL

With regards to the planning Decision notice produced on the 28<sup>th</sup> October I would like to ask the officers to reconsider the terms of the condition number 5 which states:-

5. Notwithstanding the details shown in the document '08 Site Fencing', alternative details showing the exact position and types of all boundary treatments (i.e. fences, gates and walls) shall be provided to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the development progressing above slab level, or such alternative time frame as agreed in writing by the developer and the Local Planning Authority. The landscaping improvements as set out in document '04b Screening of Site' received 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019, along with the boundary treatments approved by this condition, shall be implemented by the end of the first planting season following occupation of the development.

**Reason :** To ensure that a satisfactory landscape scheme is provided in the interest of well planned development and visual amenity, to safeguard the amenity of the nearby neighbouring property, and to accord with Policies G3(D, L) and EV29 of the South Northamptonshire Local Plan and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

I believe I can demonstrate that the requested information is already included in the current set of planning documentation and would ask to amend this condition such that the re-wording enables all of the conditions can be dismissed at the same time.

To understand better the nature of the condition I have referred to the officer's report for this planning application. In this report the subject matter of screening the site is reviewed in detail, as indicated by the following:-

Officers continue to consider it to be very important for there to be minimal, if any views of the buildings and paraphernalia from vantage points on the PROW while facing towards the site. A site visit concluded that glimpses towards the site, buildings and boundary treatments will be possible.

Officers also note that any boundary treatment is likely to take the form of 1.8m high 'V' Mesh Security Fencing, which, despite being green, is likely to create an undesirable form of visual intrusion. Officers do accept that a degree of security fencing is necessary given the use of the site and its isolated location, making it at higher risk of crime.

The PROW mentioned runs along the entirety of the west side of the owner's site starting directly behind the location of the new development and continues along the southern hedgerow to the access point at the A5. To improve the screening from this southern angle of view the following requirement has been added and agreed:-

For these reasons, Officers are keen to secure some form of reinforcement planting within the existing hedgerow in order to screen the site more thoroughly from view.

The applicants have provided a document entitled '04b Screening of Site' which explains in detail how this will be achieved. Essentially, the applicants are looking at completing the screening that was granted approval in 1999 as part of a previous permission. Officers noted the existing hedgerow and planting which was, in fact, part of this earlier scheme. The applicant acknowledges that there are gaps in this hedge to the south of the access where plants did not take, and states that this will be completed in accordance with the planting species guide from the 1999 permission.

What remains is the PROW view from the western aspect. '08 Site Fencing' document included as part of the application detailed a V-mesh security fence to be erected around the facility to not only retain the dogs whilst in care but to also offer a high level of security in this rural location. This type of security fence is very expensive but is already being used for the entire perimeter of the neighbouring 'Hatchery' building which forms part of the existing Hobby Fish Farm business. This will have been observed by the officers during the site visit in May 2019 and I have included photos below if none were taken at the time. Seeing as this fence is already in use at the location it makes more sense to replicate this visual amenity rather than select a wooden panelled fence which, although costing a great deal less, would have a far greater impact on the neighbouring amenity and from the PROW.

To assist with reducing the view of the development this section of the V-mesh fencing on the western side has been offered with additional screening of a natural reed screen. This solution came after our ecologist providing the report dismissed the idea of growing a parallel hedgerow screen as this would make this section very thick with vegetation reducing the effectiveness of the natural hedgerow corridor currently being provided. The officer's consideration of the V-mesh and reed screen options is stated as:-

To mitigate the visual impact of the security fencing, the applicants intend to use a natural reed screen to partially mask 1.8m of the security fencing that is proposed. Officers are not convinced by the reed screen, which is unlikely to sit comfortably within the landscape and make the more transparent, less solid security fence appear as a more opaque boundary treatment. Furthermore, the plans do not clearly show where any of the fencing is proposed to go.

Therefore, Officers will use a modified landscaping condition only requiring further details on the location of the boundary treatment, and will seek to remove the proposed reed screen at this stage.

The remaining issue raised in this last extract from the officer's report regards the positioning of the V-mesh fence in particular with regards to this last PROW view point towards the western fence. This detail of fence position I feel has been fully addressed in the application and the following extracts will demonstrate this.

In light of the

- Agreed condition of improving the screen on the southern side,
- The selection of the same style and type of security fence as is already situated on this site by our neighbour

The condition reason "To ensure that a satisfactory landscape scheme is provided in the interest of well planned development and visual amenity, to safeguard the amenity of the nearby neighbouring property" has been met in full.

I would conclude from the details of this clarification document a request to make a change to the mentioned condition to state we are to adhere to the submitted documentation plans without the development restriction. This will enable all of the conditions to be dismissed together in a timely and cost effective manner.

## Documented details showing fence positioning.

'04 Design and Access document' page 15 shows:-

Where the proposed site meets the bridle path at the north west end a distance of 8 metres will be maintained between the field boundary and the security fencing of the site. This fence will be covered to screen users of the bridle path from the site. We will take responsibility to keep this path clear at all times.



'04b Screening of Site' document Page 2:-

## 2) Screening From the West Side of the Bridle Path.

Currently there is no provision to screen the site from this section of the bridle path with the development's security fence maintaining a 7 to 8 metre wide path for easier access.

Identified in the Ecology report for both West and Northwest boundary:-

The neighbouring mature hedgerow habitats are considered to offer some good value to a range of species, however, the proposed development would ensure these habitats are retained and protected both during and post development with a 13m buffer to the north-western hedgerow (associated with the neighbouring PLWS) and an 8m buffer to the hedgerow to the west of the site boundary. When considering the proposed plans, all proposed buildings are to be located to the south and immediately adjacent to the existing hatchery building, therefore disturbance associated with the use of these buildings would be further buffered by the existing building and the proposed outdoor areas.

Photos of V-mesh fence in use around 'Hatchery' building.





