

ENVIRONMENT TEAM RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION REQUEST

App ref no: 10/04015/FUL	Development proposal Erection of 112 dwellings	
Job no: 02/10	Site address Cautletts Close, Midsomer Norton	
Date received: 20/10/10	Environment Team case officer and job title Andrew Sharland Senior Landscape Architect	
Response date: 4/11/10	Requesting DC officer Sarah James	

No objection or comments	
No objection subject to conditions described below	
Not acceptable in the current form. See comments / suggestions below	✓
Object, Please see comments below.	

Summary of observations, recommended conditions and relevant policies

See Full Comments Below

Full response:

<p>The site is allocated for housing and therefore in principle is supported.</p> <p>The key attributes of the site are the River Somer which runs along the northern boundary of the site and the species-rich hedges particularly the one which borders Withies Lane along the site's eastern boundary.</p> <p>I welcome the provision of Public Open Space along the eastern boundary which provides greatest potential for the long-term retention and management of the hedgerow along the Withies Lane boundary. In the time available I have been unable to find if sufficient information has been provided on the length of hedge that would require removal or whether any trees are affected. Information is required including how trees near the accesses would be protected during the construction phase.</p> <p>Are improvements proposed for cyclists / pedestrians along Withies Lane? The Design and Access statement refers to access to the lane and unintrusive improvements would be desirable so the lane can be used after rain.</p> <p>While the Withies Lane hedge has been integrated into the design other boundaries have been left in a way that is likely to lead to problems and conflicts due to the proposals for back gardens backing onto existing hedges and trees along the southern and northern boundaries. The houses are particularly close to existing trees and hedging and this unnecessarily gives potential for shading of gardens and other conflicting issues. The scheme would no longer allow consistent maintenance of the hedges leaving it to individual householders to manage</p>
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the adjoining hedges with potential for deterioration in the quality of the hedges. Likewise houses proposed in the north-western corner are close to a line of tall conifers which would give potential for similar problems. The most acute problem appears to be at plots 69, 91, 01, 08 and 21. Confirmation is required as to who is responsible for management of the hedges to ensure they are managed consistently and to prevent ownership passing to householders with the resultant risk of removal.

My preference would be for an informal path to be provided through the riverside public open space. It would be necessary to ensure it doesn't pass too close to the river and any valuable ecological areas. Provision of a path, possibly using a crushed stone surface, would have the advantage of formalising access arrangements so that the area is appreciated, used and informally supervised while discouraging access to the areas most valuable for wildlife. A mown grass footpath as shown through part of the area if used is likely to become uninviting due to puddling and encroaching vegetation.

I have been unable to find inlet / outlet details for the proposed balancing pond. The detailing is important to ensure a natural and pleasing appearance.

Has it been agreed that no play provision would be included on the site?

Apart from a balancing pond there seems to be a lack of an integrated Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme.

I would like to support Jane Brewer's request for conditions for tree and hedge protection.

Landscape proposals

There are a number of issues I would like reviewed before accepting the landscape scheme in particular achieving the optimum use of significant trees in appropriate places, clarification on the location and species of existing trees and showing those to be retained and those to be removed.

Landscape conditions LND1 and LND2 need to be applied.

Landscape management

There is need for a mechanism in place (eg a Section 106 agreement) to ensure future maintenance of the open spaces and hedges forming part of the site.