

Report

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LEADERS IN ENVIRONMENT,
PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY.

Report for – Ashford Borough Council
M20 Junction 10A and A2070 Link
Deadline 7 – Environmental Masterplan Update Report Review



Document version control

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1.0 Deadline 7 Environmental Masterplan Update report Review

The above document (including environmental masterplan drawings) has been reviewed. The document is welcomed and it is considered to provide much greater clarity on the intent of proposed mitigation, and gives a stronger framework within which detailed design and implementation of the scheme can take place and be monitored, if approved.

ABC wish to make a few further minor comments and suggested additions to Section 3 -Design Intent as follows:

1.1 Design Intent

ABC would like to see the following detail added to the design intent statement. It is felt that these additions will provide a strong set of principles from which the next state of detail design can be developed.

- Detailed design and mitigation will be developed in more detail in association with adjoining landowners, addressing issues in the following areas in particular:
 - Aylesford Stream ensuring this land does not become an isolated area of remnant landscape but contributes to the wider Ashford Blue Green Grid physically, functionally and visually;
 - Sevington roundabout and attenuation fencing where it adjoins Stour Park;
 - Junction between the A2070 link road and Stour Park;
 - alternative scheme and entrance to Stour Park including creation of attractive views and vistas.
- Mitigation planting and landscape creation in the Aylesford Stream area will seek to create a meadow river valley character and emphasise the course of the stream with the planting of characteristic alder trees.
- Mitigation planting between the stream and the A2070 will avoid being 'bitty' in character but instead will physically tie into existing features and landscape elements; help to define and create views and vistas for the road user particularly when travelling east along the A2070 and on exiting Stour Park; and screen views to unsightly margins of attenuation ponds and maintenance access tracks.
- The rural lane character of Kingsford Street and Highfield Lane is reinforced ensuring hedges / grass verges are retained and urbanising elements are kept to a minimum.
- Mitigation planting on the A20 at the Kingsford Bridge area is sufficient to effectively screen the urbanising effects of the new pedestrian bridge on the wider rural landscape including views from lanes and public rights of way within the Brabourne Lees Mixed Farmland LCA.
- The landscape and visual effects of lighting and signage will be considered in detail and where necessary minor refinements to location will be sought along with enhanced mitigation to reduce urbanising effects and visual clutter.

- Ensure mitigation planting integrates development into the wider landscape through the use of native planting typical of the area but also includes the planting of distinct groups of plants to enhance and create sense of place.

The Inspector seeks clarification on whether agreement has been reached on matters a-i and if not which matters remain outstanding. Following this review ABC is content that landscape matters have largely been resolved. For clarity ABCs position is now as follows:

- a) Mitigation has been improved and with a design intent statement which incorporates the above, ABC is content these matters are resolved;
- b) These issues are addressed in a design intent statement which incorporates the above suggestions;
- c) Mitigation has been improved and along with a design intent statement is likely to be successfully developed at next stage;
- d) Mitigation has been improved and along with a design intent statement is likely to be successfully developed at next stage;
- e) No details are provided on the quantity of landscape to be removed as a result of the proposed development. However improved mitigation planting now proposed is considered to mitigate this to a large degree;
- f) Design intent statement will help to ensure detailed mitigation proposals follow through the concepts behind mitigation planting;
- g) Resolved;
- h) Resolved;
- i) These issues are addressed in a design intent statement which incorporates the above suggestions;
- j) Mitigation has been improved and along with a design intent statement is likely to be successfully developed at next stage;
- k) Mitigation has been improved and along with a design intent statement is likely to be successfully developed at next stage;
- l) No details are provided on the quantity of landscape to be removed as a result of the proposed development. However improved mitigation planting now proposed is considered to mitigate this to a large degree;

Although there remain concerns regarding the landscape and visual effects of the turning circle on Highfield Lane, it is considered that the development of the Environmental Masterplan and the 'design intent statement', along with the matters raised above, will ensure the landscape and visual effects of the proposed scheme are minimised and mitigation optimised.

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