

Charlie Ratchford Centre (Ref: 2015/0921/P)

CLARIFICATION OF TREES AND LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS

Overview

The purpose of this note is to clarify the outstanding queries in respect of the trees proposed to be removed as part of the planning application.

Tree Officer Queries

The queries raised by officers were set out in an email dated 17th April 2015 from Charles Thuaire. Clarification was requested regarding the number of trees to be removed from the grove of birch trees at the southern end of the site to make way for the development and communal garden. A discrepancy between the tree removal plan and the landscape plan was noted.

Clarification of Proposals

The landscape plan "Landscape Proposal (PRP AA4796/2020B)" identifies the removal of trees T11 - T17 (Silver Birch) to facilitate the creation of south-facing amenity space on site with limited opportunity for open naturally lit outdoor space and to enable the construction of a secure brick wall on the Crogsland Road boundary. T10 a Silver Birch as a good quality grade B1 specimen on the extreme south-east corner was shown as retained as single feature tree within the garden.

The dense shrubby Group, G1, comprising a mix of immature Field Maple, Box and Hazel are shown as removed to create accessible garden. The plan indicated the delivery of 9 no new trees introduced to scheme to compensate for loss of 8 no trees and single group (G1).

Since the queries were raised the plans have been reviewed by the architects and it was identified that a number of trees were identified to be removed in error. The attached revised plan "Landscape Proposal (PRP AA4796/2020C)" clarifies that trees T15 to T17 will be removed to facilitate the new building footprint and establishment of new secure wall boundary onto Crogsland Road. Trees T10 - T14 (Silver Birch) will be retained as a mature tree group at the heart of a new garden space.

Tree T19 is also to be removed to facilitate levelling of the garden to create an accessible garden path.

Dense shrubby Group G1 comprising a mix of immature Field Maple, Box and Hazel are to be removed to create an accessible garden. 10 no new trees will be introduced to the scheme to compensate for loss of 4 no trees and single group (G1).

Trees to be removed:

Refer to drawing PRP Tree Removal Plan AA4796/2021 attached.

We confirm that the proposals comprise the removal of the following trees:

- T15 *Betula pendula* (Silver Birch within southern group)
- T16 *Betula pendula* (Silver Birch within southern group)
- T17 *Betula pendula* (Silver Birch within southern group)
- T19 *Tilia cordata* (Small-leaved Lime on Crogsland Road boundary)

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Explanation of Proposed Tree Removal and Planting Plan

Throughout the design process, every effort has been made to retain existing trees that are in good condition.

A meeting was held at LB Camden's offices on 4 November 2014 where the proposals were specifically discussed with Camden's Tree Officer (David Houghton). Others present at the meeting included Nerissa Shepherd, Tom Luck from Greengage (Tree Consultant) and Tom Delhanty from PRP (Landscape Architect).

PRP summarised the landscape design strategy for the site and associated tree issues highlighting the proposed retention of T18 Magnolia and removal of T19 Lime on Crogsland Road, and removal of Group G1 and a proportion of Trees T11-T17. Their removal is proposed to facilitate the development and enable the creation of a fully accessible external amenity space at the southern end of the site and form a new secure boundary to the highway. New tree planting was proposed to mitigate for all tree losses and enhance the southern garden and structure tree planting along Crogsland Road.

David Houghton was new to the project and acknowledged our proposals but confirmed that he would need to visit site and consider the potential tree impacts and appropriate mitigation in more detail before providing formal comments prior to the application. Unfortunately this feedback was never forthcoming so the project team proceeded on the basis of the principles discussed on this meeting (and in the email received from LBC 12.11.14) with a view to addressing further comments on tree issues during the course of the application.

Since the original presentation to LB Camden the number of trees proposed to be removed has been reduced substantially from 7 to 4. We set out below explanation of why the proposed trees need to be removed:

- Tree T17 is within the footprint of the new building and therefore proposed for removal to facilitate development of the site.
- Trees T15 and T16 are proposed for removal to enable the construction of a solid boundary wall against the highway in compliance with Secure by Design principles and to create an external amenity space protected from the noise and overlooking of the highway and adjacent school access.
- T19 *Tilia cordata* (Small leaved Lime on Crogsland Road boundary) is removed to enable the introduction of a level gated footpath access off Crogsland Road (and to offer improved light and space for the adjacent Magnolia tree retained as requested by Tree Officer (David Houghton) as communicated in an email from Nerissa Sheppard 12.11.14).

The Arboricultural Report submitted in support of the application identifies that T17 is classified as a C1 tree (Category C trees are of unremarkable merit) which could be removed if required. At paragraph 5.3 it identified that *"an Arboricultural Method Statement will be prepared to ensure any retained trees are effectively protected during the redevelopment of the site and to support their future health and conservation"*.

Whilst the remainder of the trees to be removed are considered "healthy trees", their removal will facilitate the delivery of a new Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre and a much needed Extra Care housing scheme delivering 38 new homes for individuals requiring a supportive and assisted but independent style living environment.

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To mitigate against the removal of 3 healthy trees, the loss of a total of 10no extra heavy standard/semi-mature trees of minimum girth 18-20cm+ are proposed to mitigate for tree losses, to enhance the greening of the southern garden and reinforce the tree structure along Crogsland Road.

In conclusion, the design proposals have sought to minimise tree removal in so far as possible to enable the delivery of a high quality extra care and day centre scheme with a fully accessible garden.