

**UTT/13/1153/DFO (THAXTED)**

**PROPOSAL:** Details following outline application UTT/1562/11/OP for the erection of 55 no. dwellings with approval for landscaping

**LOCATION:** Land off Wedow Road, Thaxted

**APPLICANT:** Croudace Homes Ltd

**AGENT:** N/A

**GRID REFERENCE:** TL 614-312

**EXPIRY DATE:** 6 August 2013

**CASE OFFICER:** Mrs K. Mathieson

---

**1. NOTATION**

1.1 Outside Development Limits

**2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE**

2.1 The application site has an area of 1.93 hectares and is on the eastern edge of Thaxted and accessed via Wedow Road which terminates in a hammerhead adjacent to the site entrance. To the north and west is existing residential development in Weaverhead Close, Wedow Road and Brook View. The north eastern boundary of the site is adjacent to a field of predominantly scrubland within the ownership of the applicant. To the east is agricultural land. The southern boundary is marked by a brook with Walnut Tree Meadow to the south, an area of land used as public open space.

2.2 The site falls from north to south and land levels change by approximately 11m across the site. The site was previously covered by scrubland with some areas of brambles and self-seeded saplings but has now been cleared and fenced off. There is an official public right of way along the southern and western edges of the site. The area adjacent to the brook is covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

**3. PROPOSAL**

3.1 This application relates to the reserved matter relating to landscaping following the grant of outline planning permission for the erection of 55 dwellings in December 2011. The reserved matters relating to access, appearance, layout and scale were conditionally approved in February 2013.

3.2 The proposed landscaping scheme relates to proposed boundary treatment along the east and northeast boundaries adjoining the agricultural land to the east of the site, planting to the front of the previously approved dwellings and around the parking spaces and planting within the area of public open space.

3.3 Details of the boundary treatment between the dwellings have previously been approved as part of the layout details contained within application reference UTT/12/5970/DFO.

#### **4. APPLICANT'S CASE**

- 4.1 The applicant has submitted a detailed design and access statement in support of the proposals. This includes an assessment of the site, surrounding areas and site constraints with details of pre-application discussions, the proposals, design, landscaping, typical materials and design features used in Thaxted and access.

#### **5. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY**

- 5.1 UTT/0477/11/OP
- 5.2 Outline application for residential development with all matters reserved - refused June 2011. Appeal allowed January 2012.
- 5.3 UTT/1562/11/OP
- 5.4 Outline application for erection of 55 dwellings with all matters reserved – conditionally approved and subject to a legal obligation December 2011.
- 5.5 UTT/12/5970/DFO
- 5.6 Details following outline application UTT/1562/11/OP for erection of 55 No. dwellings with approval for access, appearance, layout and scale conditionally approved February 2013.

#### **6. POLICIES**

##### **6.1 National Policies**

National Planning Policy Framework

##### **6.2 Uttlesford District Local Plan 2005**

Policy S7 – The Countryside  
Policy GEN2 – Design

#### **7. PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS**

- 7.1 Screening is required behind the properties adjacent to 44 Weaverhead Close. The Parish Council is willing to take over the open space as per the plan included.

#### **8. CONSULTATIONS**

##### **Landscape Officer**

- 8.1 Original Plans: It is of principle importance that the boundaries of the site abutting the open countryside are strengthened with native agricultural type hedges and trees to provide containment of the development and separation from the countryside beyond. The hedge species mixture should reflect the character of field hedges common to the surrounding area with a dominant species in the mix.

The hedge species mixture [HM1] proposed in the submission is not considered appropriate. The dominant species is shown to be Common Privet [30%] which is not a dominant species in agricultural hedgerows; a percentage of Common Broom [5%] is proposed which does not occur in the locality; uncommonly high percentages of Common Dogwood [20%] and Guelder Rose [20%] are also detailed.

It is recommended that the HM1 hedging mixture is substituted with the following specification:

- 60% Common Hawthorn
- 20% Field Maple
- 5% Hazel
- 5% Guelder Rose
- 5% Dogwood
- 5% Wayfaring Tree

Hedge runs to be planted in 2 parallel staggered rows set 350mm apart with subjects at 400mm centres in each row. Where the width of planting strips allows additional rows should be planted.

In addition, existing hedgerows to be retained should be strengthened by interplanting with the hawthorn to achieve 3 plants per meter run inclusive of existing subjects

All hedging subjects to be planted at a size of 60-80cm. which species occurring at random.

The native hedge planting should be extended to provide boundary planting to plots 55, 54, 53, and 50 to provide containment of the site. In addition, a native hedge run should be provided along the full length of the boundary with the 'David Wilson land' in order to provide enclosure of the northern end of the public open space and continuity of treatment along the access road.

The proposed tree planting within the open space area and the tree and shrub planting to the individual plots is considered acceptable.

N.B. Following further discussions it was agreed to revise the proposed hedge mix to:

- 60% Hazel
- 20% Field Maple
- 5% Guelder Rose
- 5% Dog Rose
- 5% Dogwood
- 5% Wayfaring Tree

- 8.2 Revised details: I am happy to agree to the exclusion of hedging around the David Wilson Plot. If this plot is brought forward for development at a later date we can address the issue of suitable perimeter treatment at that time.

The native hedging specification I have recommended, they have agreed to and they will include the provision of hedging to plots 50-55.

## **9. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 9.1 10 Letters of representation have been received. Period expired 10 June.
- 9.2 Of the 10 letters received, only 1 of these makes reference to the proposed landscaping of the site. That letter makes an observation that the [previously approved layout] plan does not allow enough space to landscape in accordance with the requirement to reduce the visual impact and enhance the appearance of the development. A lot more hedging and tree planting would be required around the entire border of the development but also on the roads inside the development.

## **10. APPRAISAL**

The issues to consider in the determination of the application are:

- A The acceptability of the proposed landscaping scheme with regard to species, layout and design.
- 10.1 The submitted landscaping scheme has been considered by the Council's Landscape Officer who requested some revisions to the proposed hedge mix. This revised mix has been incorporated into the proposed scheme and the overall landscaping provision is now acceptable and appropriate to the characteristics of this site adjacent to agricultural land on the edge of Thaxted.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

The following is a summary of the main reasons for the recommendation:

- A The proposed landscaping scheme is acceptable and appropriate for this edge of village site adjacent to agricultural land.

**RECOMMENDATION – UNCONDITIONAL APPROVAL**