

Our Ref: 3785

19 February 2018

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For the attention of Lesley Carus

Dear Sirs

Treverlen Park, Portobello
Ref No.: 17/05217/FUL

We refer to your emails dated 11 & 31 January 2018 relating to drainage strategy and landscaping respectively and respond as follows:

1. DRAINAGE COMMENTS

1.1. Flooding, surface water management plan, flood risk assessment for this site and concerns raised by neighbouring residents.

The design has been informed by a drainage strategy report and flood risk assessment. This has shaped the design proposals. The design has been developed to capture and convey surface water run off up to and including the 1 in 200 year storm plus 30% climate change. Please refer to the attached reports.

1.2. The extent of the drainage swales, the SuDS tank and the protection zone along the wall.

The storage feature should normally be dry. Water will only be stored during periods of high rainfall. The modelling results indicate an estimated water depth of:

- 2yr storm – 100mm
- 30yr Storm – 300mm
- 200yr Storm – 700mm

These water levels will recede as storm events abate.

In terms of landscaping, the grass swale located along the north boundary discharges into the attenuation basin, which will be seeded as a wet meadow comprising native perennial wild flowers and grass species.

A SuDS Health & Safety Risk Assessment Checklist was prepared by project engineers Aecom dated 16 May 2017 to identify and outline potential H&S risks and considerations associated with the development. The following design intervention was recommended to eliminate/reduce risk:

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RIBA The RIBA logo, consisting of the letters 'RIBA' followed by a stylized crest.

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“Install a fence or natural barrier i.e. continuous hedge to prevent access. Barrier should be of a height to maintain visibility into the basin if required.”

Drawing P49.L01 revision E and Planting Plan drawing P49.P02 revision B (copies attached) include a continuous evergreen hedgerow with integral post and wire fence between the entrance path on Hamilton Terrace and the SuDS basin to act as a formal barrier between the basin and members of the public using the circulation path.

The SuDS Health & Safety Risk Assessment Checklist also identified the requirement for a message board/signage describing the asset and describing associated risk as a residual risk.

Appropriate signage is proposed at two locations along the circulation path adjacent to the basin.

1.3. Existing wall condition, site levels and Hamilton Drive residents' concerns.

The levels have not been raised from current site levels. This is to maintain pre development drainage pathways associated with the previous school.

Existing situation

See below photographs which illustrate the existing situation.



Photo 1 - Existing north boundary. Photo 1 illustrates the existing situation to the north boundary whereby the ground levels were artificially raised to form a level car parking area.

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Photo 2 - Existing west boundary. Photo 2 illustrates the existing situation approximately half way along the west boundary.

Proposal

A grass swale has been indicated along the north boundary. The proposed ground levels fall from the existing boundary wall (and existing levels at this point) towards the swale.

1.4. Existing wall condition concerns.

Please refer to the appended inspection report by Will Rudd provided by City of Edinburgh Council (CEC). The report makes a number of recommendations for maintenance and repair and it is assumed CEC will action these as necessary.

The park proposals ensure no adverse loading effects on the walls i.e. retention loading will be maintained at its current level or reduced and the works contractor will be instructed to ensure no temporary loading arrangements resulting from their construction activities will cause any instability to the walls. The levels design has been developed with reference to this guidance.

2. LANDSCAPING COMMENTS

Landscape proposals submitted for planning purposes have been developed to Landscape Institute Work Stages D-E Technical Design and Detailed Proposals in conjunction with the project architects and engineers. These proposals were deemed to be of sufficient detail for Planning purposes. Whilst consideration has been given to the construction detailing, a set of fully developed construction details and design development of areas including the wheels area will be fully developed during work stages F-H Production Information to Tender Action.

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For example, the design team will be working with a steering group and specialist skate park designers to develop proposals for the wheels area which respond to the specific requirements of end users. An outline specification of surfaces, furniture and features was developed at work stage D. However, this document did not form part of the planning submission and it is now appended to this letter.

2.1. Missing information.

2.1.1. Some of the proposals are surrounded by a red bubble line – what does that mean?

The red bubble line identifies the most recent revision to the proposals.

2.1.2. The existing palisade gates and boundary treatment needs to be confirmed particularly for the north, west and south sides.

The existing north boundary brick wall and concrete cope topped with a fence is to be retained;

The existing east boundary brick wall and concrete cope topped with a fence is to be retained;

The south boundary comprises a variety of existing and proposed treatments. The boundary with the new St. John's RC Primary School is a 2.2m high metal railing fence. Please refer to Holmes Miller's drawing 3657-AL(9)110E and Q40 NBS specification enclosed. The easternmost boundary with the new St. John's RC Primary School is a 5m high weld mesh sports fence to the MUGA. The boundary to the lane to the rear of property nos. 2-8 Duddingston Road consists of existing masonry walls and fences, supplemented with new 1.8m high weldmesh fencing.

The existing palisade gates and flanking masonry walls to the Hamilton Drive entrance are being removed. Please refer to Holmes Miller drawing 3785-AC(2)110 enclosed 'Proposed Entrance Signage' for proposed entrance proposals.

2.1.3. Tree pit details, staking, tree protection or the incorporation of drainage pipes or layers, aeration pipes, etc.

This will be forthcoming at work stages F-H.

2.1.4. Topsoil

Intention is to set aside site won soils for reuse. The specification will include for topsoil analysis and recommendations for amelioration based upon intended use.

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2.1.5. Landscape maintenance/ management during the contract and thereafter. Will the Council's Parks Department take this over? If this is the case, then the materials used should be robust and vandal-proof and the planting proposed should be low maintenance.

- A maintenance/ management regime for the 12 months maintenance and aftercare period will be prepared at work stage F-H.
- The Council's Parks Department will take on this responsibility at the end of the 12 months M&A period and have been consulted as the design developed.

2.1.6. Information about the proposed play equipment and in particular about the wheels/ skatepark facility.

Please refer to attached outline specification of surfaces, furniture and features.

The detailed proposals for the wheels/ skatepark facility have still to be developed. The design team will be working with a steering group and specialist skate park designers to develop proposals for the wheels area which respond to the specific requirements of end users.

2.1.7. Details are required to ensure the allocated space will be sufficiently big enough.

As (2.1.6) above

2.1.8. Information on the materials used for the street furniture (benches and bollards) or the details of the products/ manufacturer.

As (2.1.6) above

2.1.9. The proposed drainage layout dwg indicates that the contractor is to carry out a dilapidation/ condition survey of the existing boundary wall along the north boundary. However, as this is a retaining wall and as the wall is very high in places, then a structural engineer should really survey this wall.

As (1.4.) above

2.1.10. Is a fence to be provided around the SuDS basin? If so, what type?

A SuDS Health & Safety Risk Assessment Checklist was prepared by project engineers Aecom dated 16 May 2017 to identify and outline potential H&S risks and considerations associated with the SuDS basin.

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The assessment recommended that a fence or natural barrier i.e. continuous hedge to prevent access. Barrier should be of a height to maintain visibility into the basin if required. Therefore, the landscape proposals include a continuous evergreen hedgerow with integral post and wire fence between the entrance path on Hamilton Terrace and the SuDS basin to act as a formal barrier between the basin and members of the public using the circulation path.

It is worth restating that this basin will only ever partially fill with water during prolonged periods of rainfall and at peak periods of intense rain fall. The likelihood of young children, who are assessed as being most at risk to drowning being unaccompanied in the park, is assessed as being minimal.

Furthermore, the adjacent Figgate Park has a permanent open waterbody and running watercourse, with unrestricted access.

2.2. Comments.

2.2.1. '....there is scope to include more planting around the edges of the park.'

Design team were specifically asked by Police Scotland's Architecture Liaison Officer, Steve McGill, on the 26 February 2016 not to include planting to the boundary for security reasons. The reason is to facilitate passive surveillance from Hamilton Terrace. At the CEC Planning Application Consultee Meeting on 9 February 2017 it was advised that public consultation requested that no features or planting were to be installed on the perimeter of the site adjacent to residential properties. CEC advised this normally would be avoided to reduce potential for break-ins.

2.2.2. Existing boundary wall and fence with school

As (2.1.2) above.

2.2.3. Planting screening on boundaries.

During CEC consultation on 19 December 2016 CEC Parks, Scott Thomson, advised that "understorey planting in woodland areas is not recommended for safety reasons".

2.2.4. The 3D visual impression

The CGI is a representation of the proposed tree planting. Please see attached revised CGI 3785-SK05 and note the following:

- Trees on the foreground represent existing trees in Hamilton Terrace.
- Background trees are a backdrop for the image which represents the trees in the first roundel not a woodland.
- Columnar trees to the north removed as noted.

However, please note that the CGI is intended to provide a flavour of the proposals.

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- 2.2.5. The small roundel to the west is to consist of deciduous trees. Extra-heavy standard native and non-native Birch and Alder trees have been specified. However, both these trees are not long-lived at only 120 years for the former and 100-200 years for the latter. So the incorporation of some dominant longer-living species such as Oak would be beneficial. More diversification of the species choice would also provide greater visual interest and provide better opportunities for biodiversity. For instance trees that bear berries and fruit would be attractive for birds. Also with climate change then reliance of a small palette of species makes the landscaping vulnerable to future disease problems (e.g., Ash dieback).**

These points are acknowledged, however, in this instance the principal driver for the proposals is a designed aesthetic, and not a habitat creation, longevity of tree cover achieved through succession planting of pioneer and climax tree species or trying to mimic a natural woodland. We have taken the approach that two contrasting tree roundels will be both distinctive and awaken a curiosity in park users. The smaller roundel comprises varieties of native and non-native birch and alder trees, with a small percentage of cut leaf forms of both species to provide contrast and interest when compared with the native Common forms of alder and Silver birch. The birch has been selected for its white, peeling bark interest. The trees are deliberately uniform in size, and the close spacing is deliberate to intensify the experience of being within the roundel. The use of a variety of birch trees is to enable people to compare the differing varieties, such as bark, leaf margins, catkin size and form. To contrast the birch and alder roundel, the larger roundel comprises predominately of climax evergreen tree species. mostly the native Scots pine, Austrian pine and the Common and Japanese forms of larch. Here the spacing is much wider, befitting the size of the mature trees.

In terms of species bi-diversity, the common birch supports over 200 native insects, compared to 19 present in larch. Further, given that both forms of larch are affected by the introduced pathogen, *Phytophthora ramorum*, now established in south west Scotland, we have reconsidered the use of this species which comprise 20% of the roundel. On drawing P49 P02C attached we have included the substitution of larch with oak and rowan which will increase bio-diversity, address your observations on longevity of tree cover, and provide additional seasonal interest.

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2.2.6. The size of trees specified.

All deciduous trees have been specified as extra heavy standards. Evergreen trees have been specified between 175-250cm in height. Here the intention is to plant trees which are of sufficient size to provide an early impact and presence, whilst resistant to vandalism.

2.2.7. No shrubs or thicket planting or lower-storey planting is proposed.

Please see (2.1.2) above.

2.2.8. The proposed planting only consists of trees and wildflower meadow. ... So some diversification of the planting types would be beneficial.

The design intent is for the tree roundels set within meadow grass. Three species rich grass mixes are proposed. A hedgerow mix tolerant of light shade and woodland clearings which will be sown in the tree roundels and hedge lines. A wet meadow mix to the swales and SuDS basin, and a flowering lawn mix to the majority of the park. The tree roundels contain 10 tree species, and there are a variety of existing retained tree species to the boundaries including Whitebeam and ornamental cherries.

The choice of an evergreen species (Privet) to the hedgerow to the path was selected to provide year round interest.

2.2.9. The inclusion of some bulb planting should be considered...

The majority of the park comprises the flowering lawn mix by Scotia Seeds, sown onto a poor-quality soil, which is not conducive to the establishment of bulbs. Further the flowering lawn mix was selected as it can be maintained as long grass between April-May, allowed to grown long in June-July during flowering period, and returned to a cutting regime in August-September. We are aware that CEC has successfully trailed 'pictorial meadows' in Figgate Park and worked with Scotia Seeds to develop the Edinburgh urban seed mix.

Birch trees have been specified to provide winter stem interest.

2.2.10. The location of existing public utility services is not indicated. If there are any pipelines or cables on site then the proposed tree positions may need to be altered to avoid conflict and/ or root barriers specified.

The landscape proposals have been fully co-ordinated with the engineers drainage proposals, which are indicated together with the proposed electrical routing to the proposed safe route lighting, and the connection into the existing substation proposals associated with the new St. James Primary School.

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Please note that all redundant services associated with the former Portobello High and St. James Primary Schools are to be disconnected and removed.

2.2.11. Consideration should be given to create a more natural hedge barrier incorporating species that are good for biodiversity.

Please note that the design team had received direction from CEC at the consultation meeting on 19 December 2016 when it was noted that hedges provide potential for antisocial behaviour. Scott Thomson from Parks advised hedges to be kept 1m height Max. for visibility. Privet was specified as it provides year round barrier, a recommendation from the SuDS risk appraisal, and can be maintained at a height of 1m.

2.2.12. The Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey suggests the inclusion of Hawthorn and Hazel trees and Honeysuckle which are all good for wildlife. However, the tree species proposed, and the limited species selection means that they are not great for wildlife/biodiversity. This Survey also suggested the inclusion of a "wildlife garden" but this has not been included. So not enough has been done for nature or to encourage wildlife and birds.

Please refer to above restriction on hedges not exceeding 1m in height.

Please note that the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was intended to inform the landscape proposals for the new St. John's RC PS. Hence the reference to a 'wildlife garden'.

2.2.13. There is some existing lower-storey plants at the SW of the site. It would be beneficial if some of this could be retained.

We have not been able to locate any existing lower-storey planting. Does this refer to existing planting within the proposed St. John's RC PS site?

2.2.14. The existing sandstone effect masonry wall incorporating metal railings on the east boundary requires a condition survey to be carried out and any repairs identified to be rectified. I noticed one damaged area. The wall is not that attractive consisting of reconstituted stone rather than natural stone.

We would beg to differ and consider the existing wall to be an attractive feature. In particular when compared to modern masonry walls and railings which might replace the wall were it to be removed. We also appreciate that these walls provide a reminder to the sites former use as a school. We suspect that if asked, residents would also appreciate the retention of this wall.

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Indeed, the school walls, although a later addition, were designed to reference the adjacent low-level masonry walls to the properties on Hamilton Terrace. The proposals retain and enhance this retained feature. Please refer to Holmes Miller proposals, drawing 3785-AC(2)110, which retain and enhance the entrances.

A condition survey which makes recommendations for necessary repairs to masonry and metalwork will be undertaken at work stage F-H.

- 2.2.15. Timber edging is proposed to contain the loose paving materials (i.e., pea gravel and woodchip). However, this will cause maintenance issues as these materials often subside/ get displaced and so the timber edging is often left exposed. This does not look great visually and can cause a trip hazard. So the loose materials may need raking back in place, topping-up on a regular basis. Does the Council have the resources to do this? Where high wear is anticipated (e.g. around the high boulders) then a more hard-wearing surface (e.g., rubber play safety surfacing) should be considered for H&S reasons but also to reduce maintenance.**

We have discussed an appropriate surface below the climbing boulders with free climbing bouldering specialists 'Rockworks' and visited examples of bouldering facilities at Cunningar Loop and Balfron. Both these sites use pea gravel within the fall zone to free climbing boulders.

The loose surfaces will be set 50mm below the adjacent ground level to contain the surfaces.

There is an ongoing maintenance requirement to regularly inspect loose surfaces, infill low spots and top dress.



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Timber edging is a suitable edging in this application, as the boards can be formed to the elliptical shapes.

2.2.16. The Council's Play Area Officer (in Park's Dept?) should be consulted

Please refer to consultation notes dated 19 December 2016 enclosed, we note the following points:

- CEC parks (Scott Thomson, James Galloway, Paul Naughton, Alan Bell) were consulted and comments / advise implemented in current design.
- Point 2. At the time, in the community group layout presented all new trees were specified as Scot Pine, following recommendation from this meeting birch and alder trees were incorporated in the small roundel and a mix of evergreen tree species, mostly the native Scots pine, Austrian pine and the Common and Japanese forms of larch in the large roundel.
- Point 13. Park name signage in the entrances follow recommendations noted during meeting. We confirm no gate has been incorporated in the design but instead low level drop down bollards are proposed as per Holmes Miller drawing 3785-AC(2)110.

2.2.17. It is noted that no ball facility has been provided and so the inclusion of a kick-wall/ basketball hoop should perhaps be considered.

The new St. John's RC PS includes a MUGA which is accessible via a cat flap from Treverlen Park. No requirement for such facilities resulted from public consultation.

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- 2.2.18. It is noted that the site has good views of Arthur's Seat but the park proposals should not affect this and so that's OK. The proposals do not mention the good view and so do not actively take advantage of it (e.g., some seats could be orientated to face this).**

Please kindly note that the alignment of the sweeping path where it dissects the smaller roundel has been orientated to create a vista which is aligned with Arthur's Seat. The clearance within the tree roundel responds to the design intention to visually connect with Arthur's Seat and borrow from the wider landscape.

- 2.2.19. The SuDS basin shows a connection for the overflow to a Scottish Water sewer. However, Scottish Water have not confirmed approval of this yet. Scottish Water tend not to approve a further burden on their network and so a contingency alternative maybe required for the surface water.**

As (1.) above.

- 2.2.20. Only a wetland wildfora mix is proposed for the SuDS basin but some planting could be incorporated here including marginal plants, water loving trees (e.g. Alder and Willow) and some native lower storey vegetation.**

For ease of future maintenance, it was chosen not to plant up the SuDS basin.

- 2.2.21. The facilities within the park seem to be more geared towards children with the incorporation of a lot of play facilities both formal and natural. The Design and Access Statement Reports do not actively mention any provision for adults or older people. Facilities for other uses should perhaps be considered such as dog walking (dog bins to be provided in that case), trim trail, nature trail, green gym and quiet zones for older people.**

The park proposals and facilities were designed to respond to feedback at community consultation events.

The bouldering will appeal to all ages. From children aged around 5 years, to more experienced adult climbers.

There are litter bins in which dog waste can be deposited, however designated litter bins for dog waste have not been requested by CEC Parks to be included.

The following information is attached to this letter and has been uploaded onto the planning portal in digital format:

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- Aecom's Drainage Strategy Report & Flood Risk Assessment
- Aecom's Drainage Calculation Report.
- Aecom's CEC Surface Water Management Checklist.
- Aecom's Self-Certification.
- Holmes Miller's and MBLA drawings and specifications as per attached register.
- Boundary fence between new school and park data sheet from manufacturer.
- Holmes Miller's revised CGI
- Will Rudd Davidson Wall Survey report

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Holmes Miller". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

Holmes Miller

ADM/GC/cg

cg

Enc

cc. Currie & Brown – George Webb (+Enc)
City of Edinburgh Council – Pete Almand (+Enc)