

Landscaping Plan to accompany householder application

Mrs A Howarth – 2 The Dene, Hurst Green, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 9QF

This landscaping/planting plan is designed to screen the frontage and sides of the timber clad storage structure. The landscaping plan shows higher planting and maintained height along the whole of the exposed south side to reduce the risk of overlooking. This planting plan is to be read in conjunction with Plans 4 and 5.

Summary of proposed works

A planting scheme of small trees and shrubs submitted in this landscaping plan, to be agreed with the local authority, will be undertaken in the next planting season. Included is a pair of new raised planting beds with timber frontage between the points A and B. Further planting in front will obscure this new timber. A temporary four panel timber fence 1.8m high will be erected between points D2 and E to provide temporary screening of the property 6b The Dene during the 5 year establishment period of the planting for the south side. The temporary protection fence F–I around the existing young trees will be removed prior to the end of year five of this landscape plan. Noted is the screening effect of this fence which limits some of the overlooking from the new No 4 dormers to 6b. In time these trees will grow higher prior to seasonal pruning. The protection fence, the timber panelled fence and the ongoing maintenance/replanting will be conditioned if planning consent is granted.

Design

The east side of this proposal adjoins the approved original existing lawful structure which currently has limited landscaping. Within the storage space an element of space for installation of water tanks is possible. Such installation will provide year round storage of rainwater from the downpipes of the existing summer house and other outbuildings. The stored water will be used for irrigating the proposed planting plan and garden on the seasonally very dry soils so of positive benefit.

Access

The proposal is accessible from all areas of the garden and benefits from the existing private rights of way serving the property. By providing garden storage in the centre of an area of the garden this will assist in keeping the area tidy, well managed, and a better level of planting to assist maintaining varied levels of plant and tree cover. Tree and shrub planting comprised in this landscaping plan aims to provide screening of the 2018 timber structure from the footpath below.

Appearance

This planting scheme is considered to be in keeping in the context of this garden, surrounding gardens within the village limits, the village conservation area and in this area of the AONB. The applicant had planned to carry out planting to screen the timber walls on the south, west and north sides following completion of the storage in 2018. Last summer was one of the driest on record. The lack of significant rainfall until more recently has kept the elevated soil conditions unsuitable for successful planting and establishment. The applicant has followed the advice of his suppliers.

While the applicant has been keen to get on with this, as agreed with the local authority the next planting season is most appropriate and will be conditioned in the event of an approval. The aim of this planting plan will be to screen the storage from the close property to the south and from the very limited winter views from the public footpath below and the very long distance (150m) winter glimpses from the public footpath further to the west. The mix includes native species trees/bushes/shrubs also suitable trees/garden shrubs. More mature trees/plants could be bought in and then watered until well established. This will speed up the screening effect.

The planting within garden land to form screening of the timber clad sides is between the points indicated A – E on Plan 4. The temporary fencing is indicated D2 – E. The existing planting is to be retained together with the temporary protection fence F – I.

Details of planting zones and species

Proposed are two planting beds A-B which will leave 0.75m of the original timber showing above – to screen this a variety of flowering garden shrubs (including one climber) will be established to screen the north end of the original lawful structure.

Between points A and C is a concentrated strip of *Carpinus betulus* planted at 0.5m spacing in double staggered rows 0.3m apart and to be topped and trimmed at 1.2m to 2.0m (dependent on land contour). Given the gradient at this elevation and the existing trees and bushes below this will provide substantial additional screening of the timber structures both old and new whilst providing access to the garden storage. The presence of an existing rhododendron close by indicates the potential screening effect if pruned to thicken up during the five year maintenance period. Retaining winter leaf with colours complementing other hedges nearby the proposed planting on this section will provide good year round screening. No nurse crop is proposed given the existing trees lower down, the steepness of the bank for access and the backdrop being mainly the existing structure which has lawful consent.

Proposed between points C-D1 there are two sections of planting in rows :

Closest to the timber frontage (being 1.2m distant) a “nurse crop” being a number of *Thuja occidentalis* at 0.6m spacing to be topped and trimmed to a height of 2m and to be thinned during year five.

The front row (being 1.5m forward of the previous) of *Carpinus betulus* in a staggered double row at 0.5m spacing and topped at 1.5m. These hedge plants retain winter leaf with colours providing a seasonal contrast to the evergreen row required early in the period of screening.

Between points D1 and E there is proposed one row of planting closest to the timber side and temporary timber panels (1.2m distant) a number of *Cupressus sylvatica* at 0.6m spacing to be topped level and trimmed to a height of 2.3m – 3.3m to take account of gradient (but not to form a high hedge of any concern being distant from the property boundary).

Between the points D1 and G (being 1.5m forward of the previous) double staggered rows 0.3m apart of *Fagus sylvatica* at 0.5m spacing and topped at 1.5m. These retain winter leaf colour providing a seasonal contrast to the background evergreen row required for year round screening.

Existing and proposed planting within the area F,G,H&I trees and bushes includes approximately six *Malus*, three *Pyrus*, three *Prunus domestica*, two *Ficus carica* and two *Prunus persica*. This area is not required for the screening of the extensions to the structures in this application. However it does help break up the views of the original lawful structures from 6b and provides a use of land which is occasional and not intensive.

The added benefit is to provide some seasonal break from the overlooking of 6b from dormers and first floor windows of No4. The open views enjoyed from No 6 are not unduly infringed as the planted land is lower and usual seasonal pruning methods will be used from time to time.

Appraising the context

The proposal to retain the existing garden storage would appear reasonable when considered in the context of maintaining the existing extensive garden on the difficult topography. The addition of the planting scheme, getting this well established in year one and well managed in years two to five will be key to enhancing the appearance of the garden and mitigating some of the limited views.

The applicant via his agent has discussed with the tree officer a planting plan for approval and for inclusion in a suitable planning condition. This planting proposal is considered to be a positive step and have potential benefits for both landscaping and bank stabilisation if approved.

As already referred to above, with the benefit of the planting scheme, there are no adverse effects on users of the two public footpaths which are within the AONB. There are no long distance views of the site from other areas within the AONB. Overall there is no adverse impact of the proposal on the setting, landscape, rights of way or public places within the AONB.

There are not any listed properties close to or in sight of this proposal. The proposal is situated within the approved lawful garden area and also within the extended conservation area.

This suitable planting scheme does not unduly affect the residential amenity of any of the surrounding properties. Two properties to the east have hedges at an elevated level so living rooms and gardens are not overlooked. While views are generally not protected in planning, both properties by virtue of their elevated position and recent extensions enjoy uninterrupted views.

Properties situate to the north west may benefit from the proposed planting scheme which aims to screen what very limited views there may be in winter of the garden storage. The added benefit, although not required by the previous planning, provides some additional screening of the original lawful garden structures. Again a similar situation applies to the remaining property to the south. Both the retention and management of the existing boundary hedgerow established after purchase of the particular property and the applicants proposed temporary fence panels and planting plan will completely screen the south side of the timber garden storage and 0.7m above the existing south handrail. The net result is that there is no further overlooking of this property beyond that of the lawful uses of the land.

Conclusions

The applicant has demonstrated that a garden can be kept tidy with minimal impact on the local environment subject to providing this enhancing/screening planting scheme and showing the benefits of a sustainable rainwater storage system to serve the existing garden and the new planting scheme.

This statement sets out the overall benefits of the landscaping plan and results in a negligible effect on the immediate surroundings including the conservation area, AONB and adjoining properties.