

Condition 5 Statement 2024/62/91002W

Planning Condition discharge Application: Application 2024/62/91002/W

Condition 5: 8-m Wide Ecological Buffer Zone

This condition stipulates: *'No development shall take place until a scheme for the provision and management of an 8-m wide ecological buffer zone alongside the River Holme and Hagg Dike has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority.'*

As the site boundary identified on the planning application in places is very close to the two water courses named above, it is very important to protect the valuable riverbank habitats and ensure the proposed development has not significant impact on them.

The accompanying drawing: LAD-563.PP-CD-1 *Tree Protection and Buffer Zones* shows the extent of such an 8m buffer zone, the site boundary as submitted in the approved planning application and the different elements of the proposed development.

The works covered by the planning permission are to be delivered across the following three phases:

1. Construction of covered Padel Courts
2. Carpark and associated landscape works
3. Uncovered 'Panoramic' Padel Court and relocation of Fitness Studio Building

The works for phases 1 and 3 largely occur well away from the buffer zones, but there are parts of phase 2 that slightly overlap in places. Where they do however, they are designed to soften the boundary of the existing parking area and create a less formal transition between developed area and the semi-natural woodland that forms the boundary.

Phase 1:

The proposed works are all well outside the buffer zone, although the main site access unavoidably passes within 8m of the River Holme, along an existing asphalt road, with parking bays on the river side. This area will be marked out on the ground throughout construction works, and will only be used as access – all works, storage, refuelling areas, site compound, workers facilities etc will be kept beyond the 8m buffer zone. All re-fuelling will take place within a designated area, on the existing tennis court area (well beyond any buffer zones) and will be bunded to ensure the potential for spillages to escape into the wider environment is minimised.

One corner of the existing tennis court slightly overlaps the 8m buffer zone around Hagg Dyke, but this will be identified as out of bounds for the construction works and protected with braced 'Heras' type fencing, as used for tree protection, throughout

Condition 5 Statement 2024/62/91002W

this phase of the works. The remainder of the tennis court area will be available to the contractor for their site compound and storage areas etc.

In the existing car park area similar fencing will be erected as shown on the drawing preventing any construction traffic or operations from encroaching upon the 8m buffer zone, although it will be laid out in such a way as to allow large delivery vehicles to reverse and drive back out of the site forwards.

Phase 2

Phase 2 of the works will follow on from the covered padel court construction. It consists of a works designed to soften existing car parking area, which was created many years ago when the main indoor courts were built and has been surfaced with road planings. Largely this is outside the buffer zones as well, but overlaps slightly on the northern edge, towards Hagg Dyke and also the southern-most corner, adjacent to the River Holme.

Works will be minor, largely consisting of carefully excavating discrete areas to create planting between the designated parking bays. To create an informal feel to these parking bays and generate a space better suited to its green-belt location than there currently is, the extent of any demarcation will be minimal, with only a short section of timber set into the existing surface at the end of the parking bay, to minimise the 'formality'.

Where it overlaps the buffer zone on the northern edge, the extent of the existing surfacing will be reduced, with some tarmac planings removed, so the edge is moved further from the river, with additional native tree planting in the newly greened space. Although excavation works will be required in the area to do this, any risk of impact to the water course itself will be minimal as the current surfaced parking area is entirely surrounded by raised bunds, which will not be dug into, preventing any chance of materials washing into the river. The protective fencing will be erected along the site boundary, with all works taking place from inside and no vehicles being allowed access to the raised bunds themselves. It is envisaged that any excavations will be undertaken using a small, rubber tracked mini digger, or by hand nearer to any tree roots.

Going forwards, after completion of the works, these raised edges will continue to provide protection to the valuable riverbank habitats, preventing vehicles or surface water (and any water borne contaminants) from washing into the water course, or down its banks. While much of the wider, flatter area will be periodically trimmed (as it has been for many years), this will allow it to retain its existing character and valuable, floristically diverse composition. In fact, this habitat will be extended into the newly created green areas between parking bays.

Condition 5 Statement 2024/62/91002W

Phase 3

The third phase of the project is the open air (referred to as 'panoramic') padel court. As this is to be located where the modular fitness studio building is currently located this needs to be moved first. It can be broken down into smaller sections and once this is done, they can be moved across the site and situated in the NW corner, on the existing asphalt surface, behind the main building.

This new location for the building is completely enclosed by existing welded steel mesh fencing, which along one edge very slightly overlaps an 8m buffer zone drawn around the now largely dry ditch (presumed to be an old Mill-race or similar). It is all beyond a similar buffer zone around the actual channel that Hagg Dyke now follows.

Even if the buffer zone is taken from the ditch, the placement of the building is outside of it. Through the works, and going forward, the existing fencing provides a physical boundary and offers high degree of protection to the habitat behind it and at no point should construction operations need to be carried out beyond this fence or have any access to the area. It is also worth noting that there is a further physical barrier created by a c.2.5m high vegetated bund, outside the fenceline and that the floor level of the site is at a lower elevation than Hagg Dyke, again ensuring nothing could be washed into the watercourse from here.

Once installed, any windows on the building facing towards Hagg Dyke will be shielded with blackout blinds to prevent light spill into the woodland area.

d) details of how development will be restricted to the hard surfaced areas to ensure this does not exceed 25m².

The accompanying plan shows the existing surface types (as hatch patterns) and clearly identifies the only area that is not currently either compacted road planings, tarmac or the Synthetic tennis court surface (laid over a tarmac base). There is only one small area at the edge of the existing car park, where the end of an existing bund is to be reduced slightly, with a total surface area of 12.8m².

General.

Throughout the works, the buffer zones would be protected either by existing welded mesh permanent fencing or the tree protection fencing in line BS 5837:2012, constituting braces Heras style panels, with a protective debris mesh fixed to them.