

Joseph Swift

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 November 2025 12:21
To: Joseph Swift
Cc: planninginvestigations; Dick Sweatman (Cllr)
Subject: Condition 14 discharge plans - DM/23/0925

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To be uploaded to the planning portal

Mr Swift,

Yet again I am having to write in regarding the ongoing planning process for the build at number 9 Morton Road, as a result of the developer's clear disregard for anything but maximising profit from this site at the expense of the amenity of existing and future residents.

An application was made last week to discharge condition 14 in relation to landscaping and the tree plan. The seems to be an attempt by the developer to cut corners and alter the already approved plans so that they don't conflict - residents including myself had pointed out many times at the previous approval stage that the two plans conflicted but our concerns were, as usual, disregarded.

The new proposed plans have multiple issues that need addressing before any decision can be made, I list my main observations below and would welcome a response to each point:

- 1) I was previously told by your colleague Andy Clarke in Planning Enforcement that he would be telling the developer to reinstate the tall hedge on the southern boundary of the plot that was erroneously removed by the developer during the site clearance phase, against the approved plans, and which would have provided some (paltry) level of screening for existing residents of Morton Road - this has not been reinstated in the new plan and I'd like to know why.
- 2) The new plan has 10 fewer trees than the previous approved plan. Given environmental recommendations and good practice, which dictates that new developments should not incur a net loss in this regard, these trees must be reinstated, and they must be mature trees not the lower level shrubs the developer seems to now be suggesting. Given the devastating loss to the area of what was previously a site that included a full mature orchard surrounded by many tall trees that had been in situ for decades, the least the developer can do is meet the already sadly minimum approved numbers in the previous plan.
- 3) There were multiple major concerns raised by residents throughout the planning process about the discrepancy between the developer's diagrams of the site and the actual slope, size and scale of the site. It now seems we were right. The size of the gardens allocated to these 8 houses is significantly smaller than was suggested, perhaps not a surprise given the developer is trying to squeeze in so many houses to maximise profit. In particular, the north facing gardens to the top of the site (P3 and P4 in particular) now include banking which makes the useable portion of the gardens absolutely tiny. Surely this cannot be considered an adequate amenity for future residents of a three bed house?? These gardens are half the size of the garden I had in my Victorian one bed flat in London! This is a new build project and no new build should be constructed with this kind of postage stamp garden -

most are also north facing so will have almost no natural light given they are sandwiched between the houses and the sharp slope and tall retaining wall leading up to Paddock Gardens. Nothing will grow in these gardens. The Planning Committee even raised concerns about the size of the gardens during the process. They were assured by your department and the developer that the redesigned plans addressed this concern, but as you can see from the newly submitted landscaping diagram they were clearly misled as to the actual size. I would urge the committee to re-look at this, as the committee's approval relied on promises which are now proven to be false.

4) Why is the material being proposed for the surface of the access road and other hard surfaces now shown as asphalt when for drainage on this heavy clay site a permeable surface must be used to prevent flooding downhill of the site in the gardens of Morton Road? This is another example of the developer seeking to save money by cutting corners. I work in a garden office bordering the site and hear daily conversations among the building team about requests by the developer to save money and use ever cheaper suppliers and materials - this is a recipe for sub standard construction and I can already foresee multiple issues for future residents on this plot.

5) I am surprised this new landscaping proposal has even been submitted before the lighting plan has been approved as the two must surely be viewed in tandem. I note there has not been any revised lighting plan posted to the portal since August when myself and other residents raised significant concerns, and subsequently the independent ecological advisor you consulted did also. I don't believe you can properly consider condition 14 until condition 6 has been met and approved.

The developer has consistently tried to get away with submitting sub-standard applications like this that lack the level of detail needed to ensure a quality build, and seek to revise already approved plans in order to save them time and/or money. You and your department need to hold the developer to account for this sloppy work. The council is meant to support and represent its residents, not building firms seeking a quick buck.

As ever, the easiest way to see how small the plot and gardens really are is to visit the site and I would urge you, your colleagues and the Councillor to do so. I am very happy to meet you in person during your visit to expand further on the points I have raised.

Regards,

