Landscape & Biodiversity Consultation

Proposal: Discharge of condition 11 (hard/soft landscape works) of 19/00028/FUL	**Location:** Brampton Park House 41 North Road Brampton
Case Officer: AWO **Landscape Officer:** PBAI	**Application No:** 25/80144/COND

Documents Viewed:

- Landscape Proposals - Sheet 1 of 6 001 Rev C
- Landscape Proposals - Sheet 2 of 6 002 Rev C
- Landscape Proposals - Sheet 3 of 6 003 Rev C
- Landscape Proposals – Masterplan 004 Rev C
- Landscape Proposals - Detail Design 005 Rev C
- Landscape Proposals - Detail Design 006 Rev A
- Landscape Proposals - Detail Design 007 Rev A
- Landscape Management Plan

Condition 11:

Prior to the first occupation of the dwellings hereby approved, full details of:

i. Hard landscape works, to include but not be limited to, full details of surfacing products (manufacturer, type, colour and size); method of demarcation of parking bays; details of all bollards (specification, material and colour); specification of the ornamental footpath bridge over the ha-ha including brick walling and capping.

ii. Soft landscape works, to include planting plans (which show the relationship to all underground services and the drainage layout), written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with tree, plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants noting species, plant sizes, proposed numbers and densities, tree pit details (where appropriate) including, but not limited to, locations, soil volume in cubic metres, cross sections and dimensions along with full details of the trees to replace the Cedar (ref L/TPO/325 TREE T49) and the Cedar removed due to storm damage).

iii. Full details of landscape maintenance regimes.

iv. iv. An implementation programme for the landscape works.shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out in full in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to enhance the character and appearance of the site.

The proposal involves the redevelopment of the existing building to provide new residential dwellings accompanied by private gardens, shared open space, and associated parking. Vehicular access will continue to be taken from North Road. A structured landscape scheme, including new native and ornamental planting, is proposed to integrate the development into its wider context, enhance visual amenity, and contribute to local biodiversity gains.

Site and Heritage Context

Brampton Park House forms the principal historic building within the Site at the heart of the wider RAF Brampton redevelopment. The established northern approach remains as intended: access from North Road through mature trees to a formal, landscaped roundabout that frames views to the House and Coach House buildings, with parking kept to enclosed courts so vehicles do not erode setting.

To the south, the landscape is in transition. The open character is being retained as part of the approved design approach, but the ha-ha has not yet been constructed and the formal metal estate railing is currently being installed. The remaining southern garden areas are at an early stage of development, allowing scope to refine the soft-landscape structure and boundary treatments now under discussion. This recognises that, while near-field openness is maintained, the former long parkland views have been replaced by a more suburban context arising from the wider RAF Brampton redevelopment.

Role of Mature Trees in the Setting.
Mature and veteran specimen trees are integral to the site's character and legibility—both along the northern approach and within the grounds—providing scale, structure and seasonal interest appropriate to a parkland / arboretum setting. The design intent for the redevelopment explicitly relies on large, long-lived specimens to reinforce the sense of arrival at the northern roundabout and to soften hard-landscaped areas without interrupting key views to the House. Replacement and new tree planting therefore carries heritage significance as well as landscape and ecological value.

Implications for Species Selection.
Given spatial constraints around the TPO replacement position and the need to sustain the estate character, a narrow, pyramidal/conical species is required to re-establish vertical structure without excessive lateral spread. *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* meets this need while aligning with the consented species list for protected tree works (21/02230/TREE), thereby ensuring both compliance and a fitting successor to the former Cedar within a heritage landscape dominated by specimen trees.

Purpose of this Submission

This submission seeks the discharge of Condition 11 (hard and soft landscape works) attached to planning permission 19/00028/FUL for the redevelopment of Brampton Park House, North Road, Brampton, Huntingdonshire.

The approved development comprises the conversion of the existing building into residential dwellings with associated private gardens, shared open space and parking. Vehicular access will continue to be taken from North Road. A comprehensive hard and soft landscape scheme is submitted, providing details of planting design, surfacing materials, boundary treatments and long-term landscape management intended to integrate the development into its wider setting, enhance visual amenity and support local biodiversity enhancements.

Protected Trees: Consented Works and Replacement Requirements

This submission also includes full details of the proposed replacement tree required in connection with the consent granted under application 21/02230/TREE for works to protected trees at Brampton Park House. The decision notice confirms that consent was granted for the felling of T45 (Atlas Cedar) due to its poor and dangerous condition, subject to the planting of a replacement tree—specified as *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, *Pinus sylvestris* or *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* at a minimum 3-metre planting height—within the first available planting season following removal.

Details are therefore provided for the replacement tree to address both the removal of the TPO-protected Cedar (ref. L/TPO/325, Tree T49) and the Cedar previously removed due to storm damage. The submitted specification covers species selection, planting pit design, soil improvements, staking and irrigation measures, and a two-year establishment and aftercare regime aligned with the requirements set out in the consent notice for 21/02230/TREE.

Comments on Wider Hard and Soft Landscaping

This submission is not restricted to tree replacement proposals; it also seeks approval for the wider hard and soft landscaping. While the detailed assessment of hard materials is deferred to the Urban Design Officer, it is important to highlight several matters relating to the landscape character and its interaction with the listed building.

Northern Setting

The northern setting, including the Coach House curtilage and northern grounds, is largely built out and occupied. The layout follows the historic arrival sequence described in the heritage material, in which visitors approach through mature trees and arrive at a formal roundabout before circulating east and west.

The landscaping in this area is functioning as intended and is broadly supported, except for the replacement tree, addressed earlier. Elsewhere, the landscaping proposals are appropriate and consistent with the approved design intentions.

Southern Setting

The southern aspect remains open in its immediate character and continues to provide essential breathing space around the listed building. However, it no longer connects visually to the wider countryside or estate parkland from which the original designed views were derived; this is now a suburban context resulting from the wider RAF Brampton redevelopment. This evolving setting requires a sensitive approach to landscape planning—one that maintains an appropriate relationship with the listed building while acknowledging the altered external environment.

Urban Design colleagues have recently highlighted an alternative version of the proposed landscaping plan which has circulated publicly, including material presented on Rightmove. (extract overleaf). This alternative proposal differs from the submitted Landscape Masterplan by omitting a sizeable area of hard surfacing currently shown across the southern frontage of Brampton Park House. The omission of this hardstanding is considered a significant improvement, enabling the southern garden to adopt a more verdant, garden-led character, while also creating the opportunity for enhanced and more private patio areas for apartments on the southern elevation. This refined arrangement establishes a clearer hierarchy between communal and private space and aligns more closely with the heritage setting of the listed building.

The critique of the submitted layout (Sheets 2 and 3 of 6 and the Landscape Proposals – Masterplan) is reinforced by the current configuration of the private patio areas for Units 6 and 9, which is notably weak. The patio spaces provided for both units are extremely narrow—approximately 1.3 metres in width—rendering them functionally un-usable for residents. Such constrained spaces fail to deliver meaningful amenity value and appear visually compressed against the building, offering little opportunity for seating, planting, or practical outdoor living. In addition, the large side patio positioned to the east of Unit 9 introduces an imbalance within the layout, drawing disproportionate visual weight to one side of the garden composition and undermining the intended symmetry of the southern frontage. This results in a disjointed appearance that neither reflects the dignity of the listed building nor supports coherent landscape structure.

These shortcomings further strengthen the case for adopting the alternative Rightmove arrangement, which distributes private amenity space more logically and discretely, avoids awkward narrow strips, and achieves a more balanced spatial composition across the entire southern garden.

Furthermore, removing the extensive hardstanding would provide a more fitting setting for the centrally positioned feature tree. While the current Landscape Masterplan proposes *Acer campestre*—a serviceable species for this location—it is recommended that a more formal and open-crowned specimen be considered. An evergreen Magnolia, particularly *Magnolia grandiflora* in cultivars such as ‘Goliath’, ‘Saint Mary’, or ‘François Treyve’, would provide enhanced ornamental value, a stately presence, and year-round visual interest appropriate to the frontage of Brampton Park House.

The proposed formal arrangement of self-binding gravel paths, clipped yew hedges, and *Prunus padus trees*, complementing the orchard planting to the east, is welcomed. This combination of high-quality materials and structured planting introduces elegance, provides evergreen architectural form, and contributes seasonal interest while reinforcing the orchard theme. It enhances the coherence of the southern landscape and strengthens its relationship with both the listed building and surrounding treescape.

Collectively, these adjustments would create a southern setting that is more sympathetic to the listed building, more functional for residents, and more consistent with the intended character of the site's heritage-influenced design.

Image below of landscaping from Rightmove.



The Proposed Ha-Ha

A ha-ha has been included within the submitted landscaping proposals as a heritage reference, drawing on its historical use as a concealed boundary that enabled uninterrupted views from formal gardens into surrounding parkland while preventing grazing livestock from entering ornamental areas. In the context of Brampton Park House, however, the proposed ha-ha is not considered necessary. A 1.5-metre-tall five-bar metal estate railing is already being installed along the southern boundary to Central Avenue, creating a visible and formal edge that a ha-ha would traditionally have been designed to avoid. With the railing already providing a clear physical and visual boundary, the ha-ha would offer no additional functional purpose and would be redundant.

The visual rationale for a ha-ha is similarly diminished. Its effectiveness historically relied on the presence of open, uninterrupted views extending into wider rural parkland. Those conditions no longer exist, as the southern outlook now terminates in a more suburban residential setting created through the RAF Brampton redevelopment. Consequently, the ha-ha cannot recreate or reinforce the continuous parkland vistas that once justified its use, and its presence would do little to enhance the legibility of the site's historic landscape.

In addition to its lack of functional and visual relevance, the ha-ha would represent a significant and unnecessary construction cost. Ha-has require excavation, retaining structures, careful grading, and durable finishes to ensure stability and safety—elements that add considerable expense to the landscape scheme. Given that the feature would provide no meaningful heritage, visual, or practical benefit in this setting, its installation would not represent a proportionate or justified use of resources.

While the proposed ha-ha acknowledges the site's architectural past, it does not materially contribute to the setting of the listed building or enhance the understanding of its historic landscape. In light of its redundancy, visual incompatibility with the changed context, and the unnecessary cost associated with its construction, it is not supported as part of the final landscaping scheme.

Overall Assessment

Subject to the amendments outlined for the southern frontage, the wider soft-landscaping strategy—including the overall planting structure, lawn areas, and boundary treatments—remains broadly appropriate and proportionate to the listed building's setting. The principal reservations relate specifically to the southern garden composition as currently shown on the submitted Landscape Masterplan and associated Landscape Proposals. In this area, the extent of hardstanding should be removed and replaced with a more verdant, garden-led arrangement, consistent with the alternative layout highlighted by Urban Design colleagues and circulated publicly (including via Rightmove). This alternative approach enables discrete, usable private patios for the southern apartments and results in a calmer, better-balanced composition that is more sympathetic to the listed building and its heritage context.

In particular, the current private patio design for Units 6 and 9 is deficient. The approximately 1.3 m-wide strips presently shown provide little or no functional amenity and read as visually compressed against the southern elevation. Meanwhile, the oversized side patio east of Unit 9 introduces an imbalance that undermines the frontage's symmetry. The alternative arrangement resolves these shortcomings by redistributing private amenity space more logically and discretely, while supporting a stronger planting framework and improved spatial hierarchy across the southern garden.

The ha-ha proposed in the submitted plans is not supported. With a 1.5 m metal estate railing already being installed to form an explicit southern boundary—and with long parkland views no longer achievable in the now suburban wider context—the ha-ha would be redundant in visual and functional terms and would introduce unnecessary construction cost without enhancing heritage legibility. The southern landscape objective should instead be to maintain dignified openness close to the building while strengthening structure and seasonality through planting.

Finally, removal of the hardstanding strengthens the setting for the central feature tree. While *Acer campestre* is acceptable, we recommend considering a more formal, open-crowned evergreen Magnolia—such as *Magnolia grandiflora* cultivars 'Goliath', 'Saint Mary' or 'François Treyve'—to provide year-round presence and a stately focal point befitting the listed building's principal frontage. The proposed formal composition of self-binding gravel paths, clipped yew hedges and *Prunus padus* (complementing the orchard to the east) is welcomed and should be retained and refined within the greener, reduced-hardstanding layout.

On-Site Planting Review and Suitability of the TPO Replacement

During the site review it was observed that two young trees have already been planted—one in the position intended for the TPO-required replacement tree and one within a feature turning circle—and that both specimens appear to be *Platanus orientalis*. While the Plane is a suitable and robust choice for the roundabout location, it is not appropriate for the designated replacement tree position due to its ultimate canopy spread, vigorous lateral growth and the spatial limitations of the planting area. Its long-term presence in this constrained location would likely lead to conflict with adjacent structures and hard surfaces, necessitating management that would compromise both the tree's form and its contribution to the setting. This assessment remains valid irrespective of the southern garden refinements described above.

In contrast, the replacement tree requires a species with a narrower, more upright, pyramidal habit, capable of providing strong vertical structure without imposing excessive lateral spread. In this context, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* represents a more suitable choice. It aligns with the species permitted under application 21/02230/TREE and offers an elegant, space-efficient form that is inherently more compatible with site constraints. Its architectural shape also complements the listed building and the broader treescape, which is characterised by mature specimen trees associated with a parkland or arboretum setting.

As a successor to the former Cedar, *Metasequoia* provides a clear vertical accent and reinforces the established landscape structure without overwhelming nearby planting or built form. Its long-term resilience, distinctiveness and ecological value ensure that it will continue to contribute

positively to the landscape over time. Its suitability is further supported by the fact that it is explicitly listed as an acceptable replacement species within the consented TPO works, ensuring full compliance with 21/02230/TREE.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion.

The proposed hard and soft landscaping, as amended through this consultation, will better preserve the dignity of Brampton Park House while improving resident amenity and the legibility of the heritage setting. The Landscape Management Plan is accepted, and the tree pit specifications and other technical details contained within the Landscape Proposals – Detailed Designs are accepted, with the exception of the proposed ha-ha, which is not supported for functional, visual and cost reasons in the present context (southern boundary railing and loss of long parkland views).

Recommendations:

- Adopt the greener southern layout that omits the large hardstanding shown on the submitted Landscape Masterplan and follows the alternative arrangement highlighted by Urban Design colleagues (as circulated publicly, e.g., on Rightmove). This provides a more verdant character and enables discrete, usable private patios to the southern apartments.

- Reconfigure private patios for Units 6 and 9 to remove ~1.3 m-wide unusable strips and eliminate the oversized side patio east of Unit 9, achieving a balanced, heritage-appropriate composition.

- Omit the ha-ha (redundant alongside the 1.5 m estate railing; incompatible with the now suburban wider context; expensive to construct) and redirect resources to planting structure and seasonal interest.

- Confirm the central feature tree as a formal, open-crowned specimen—preferably *Magnolia grandiflora* (cultivars ‘Goliath’, ‘Saint Mary’, or ‘François Treyve’)—in place of *Acer campestre*, to deliver year-round presence befitting the principal frontage.

- Accept *Platanus orientalis* on the roundabout but replace the TPO replacement tree with *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* (permitted under 21/02230/TREE) due to space constraints and heritage fit.

- Retain and refine the formal arrangement of self-binding gravel paths, clipped yew hedges, and Prunus padus to complement the eastern orchard and reinforce the estate garden character.

We understand that the application will be resubmitted as a full application; we urge that resubmission to include updated landscape plans reflecting the recommendations above, so that the approved drawings align with the agreed southern layout, species selections, boundary treatments, and patio reconfiguration.

Signed: PBAI

Dated: 24/03/2026