

Friday November 3rd, 2023

Dear Luke,

In anticipation of our meeting on Saturday: with regard to Tom's suggestions, we are puzzled by the desire for trees along or near to the western fence-line of the playground when the PC has plans in progress to make changes to the playground, possibly to expand it and also to change the fence itself. Newly planted and growing trees within a metre or two of the fence will potentially restrict the PC's choices as well as risk the trees being damaged or destroyed during the alterations. Trees could be planted along the new fence line once that work has been completed – the Woodland Trust gives free trees out twice a year, in March and November, and Sustainable Leaffield would be happy to organise them if requested to do so by the PC.

But in the meantime, might the PC also reconsider our choices from our first plan – we will alter the positions slightly to make sure that they do not interfere with any other plans for that area, and will bring a revised plan to the meeting on Saturday morning.

In a spirit of cooperation and in support of West Oxfordshire County Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2020, the plans for which support tree planting, it would be good if the Parish Council would reconsider and include the areas that we have suggested; no objections to those stands have been voiced per se. Planting trees is an easy win; they are free, require almost zero maintenance [what is needed will be done by Sustainable Leaffield], and would enhance the whole area, as well as showing that the PC is supporting WOCC in its Climate Emergency plans.

You are correct about the 50cms apart being too tight – the literature that I was looking at was for planting whips for a hedge rather than as individual trees. The silver birches outside Tate Modern in London are 1-1.5 metres max apart, which is plenty. We are not planting for a wood, we are planting for stands of trees, and such spacing would be appropriate.

Looking at our planting plan and referring to each stand:

1. This stand is tucked up into the top right-hand corner but could equally be top left which may be preferable.
2. With trees going down the west side of the playground [later potentially if playground and fence changes go ahead], it might be better to move stand 2 to the far side – opposite to where currently indicated.
3. This tree stand we thought could mirror the one on the other side of the skate park.
4. This still needs to be discussed with Jodie from the pre-school as the area is quite well treed already – but she would like the children to be involved in the tree planting in some way anyway, so we are going to discuss that with her.
5. It would be good to have a stand of trees close to where the ash tree has fallen.

We look forward to meeting on Saturday, to coming to mutually acceptable plans and finalising them so that they can be approved on the 8th. These plantings would be a plus to the area for the whole village whilst also contributing to WOCC's plans. We look forward to working with you.

Many thanks.

Best regards,

Maren White and Jen Yaxley
Sustainable Leaffield