

# MEMORANDUM

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                  |                |        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------|
| <b>From:</b>                | Catherine Brimble<br>Senior Landscape Officer                                                                                                                    |                |        |
| <b>Service</b>              | Tree and Landscape Team                                                                                                                                          | <b>App No:</b> | 251089 |
| <b>Address:</b>             | 29 Arbor Lane, Winnersh, Wokingham, RG41 5JE.                                                                                                                    |                |        |
| <b>Proposal:</b>            | Householder application for the proposed garage conversion and first floor extension with rear dormer. Along with a detached garage and changes to fenestration. |                |        |
| <b>Type of Development:</b> | Other Householder                                                                                                                                                |                |        |
| <b>Site Visit Made:</b>     | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                           |                |        |

## Summary Of Recommendations

- ☐ No comment
- ☐ No objection
- ☐ No objection subject to conditions (and reasons) **stated below**
- ☐ Request further information before determination as **stated below**
- ☒ Objection due to the reason(s) **stated below**

## Comments On Proposal

The Oak tree to the front of the property and adjacent to Arbor Lane is protected by a TPO (1553/2016). The larger Oak to the front of the adjacent property, 27 Arbor Lane, is also protected by a separate TPO (1693/2019). A Pine tree is also growing within the front garden of the site which is not protected. The trees make a substantial contribution to the verdant character of this section of Arbor Lane.

This application includes a number of amendments to the existing dwelling as well as a proposed double garage in the front garden. The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Development Report by Wood's Tree Consultancy dated 11<sup>th</sup> April 2025. This document provides details of the trees and suggests specialist foundations for the garage. The proposed garage and extended parking area will be wholly within the root protection area of tree T1 and partially within the RPA of T4.

The document indicates the root protection area as a circle even though the rooting area to the north of both the large Oaks are likely to be restricted by the existing ditch and highway to the north of the trees, therefore a significant proportion of the rooting area of T1 within the site are likely to be impacted by the proposed garage.

There appears to be no assessment or analysis within the Arboricultural Development Report regarding the impact of the proposed garage construction and

change of surfacing on the trees, with the only comment on this being one sentence at the end of the fairly generic AIA section which states:

*The proposed garage is within the RPA of all trees, however with the detailed specialist foundation there will not be any reduction of the rooting function of the tree.*

Specialist foundation design is suggested, using ground screws in combination with a lightweight timber structure for the garage. The Arboricultural Report indicates the foundation design is outside the scope of this report stating it is essential that a competent structural engineer is consulted on this issue. If screw piles are used with an above ground deck over a void as suggested in Appendix 3, this will have an impact on ground levels around the garage and the need for a ramp to access the FFL of the garage. Changes to ground levels or structural foundation design are not addressed within the application.

The drawings submitted for the proposed garage show a standard construction in terms of materials, foundation (not specified) and FFL. This construction will have a significant detrimental effect on the rooting area of the two protected trees causing harm to the trees. Even if a revised garage design (or technical solution) is submitted in line with that suggested in the Arboricultural Report I would still have concerns as BS 5837 states that the default position should be that structures are located outside RPA's of trees to be retained (para 5.3.1). It goes on to say that there should be an overriding justification for development within the RPA. The term '*overriding justification*' suggests to me cases where trees might be compromised for the greater public good (hospital development or perhaps for national defence works). I do not see any case for this here. There is no overriding justification for putting these trees at risk from development on this site.

I therefore am unable to support this application and recommend refusal as the proposed garage will cause harm to the TPO trees which contribute to the verdant character of the area which is contrary to Core Strategy policy CP3 and Local Plan policy CC03.

| Conditions & Reasons (if required) |                              |         |            |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|------------|
| N/A                                |                              |         |            |
| Date:                              | 12 <sup>th</sup> August 2025 | Signed: | C. Brimble |