

MEMORANDUM

From:	Brigitte Crafer Landscape Architect		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	250148
Address:	Liberty House, Strand Way, Earley, Wokingham, RG6 4EA.		
Proposal:	Full planning permission for the erection of 3no. two storey buildings each comprising of six apartments (18 in total), together with associated ancillary development, hardstanding, landscaping and footpaths		
Type of Development:	Major Dwellings (10+)		
Site Visit Made:	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 site is an area of grassed open space located next to the Liberty of Earley House. The immediate location is a pleasant residential area of Earley, and leads to an additional two cul de sacs. The site is within Earley Major Development Location.

There are trees adjacent to the south-east boundary protected by TPO 1799/2021, an area protection order that consists of mixed species such as Sycamore, Maple, Cherry, Ash and Oak. The line of trees is associated with Cutbush Lane pedestrian path and cycle track. The trees screen the rear of the site and provide a sense of a garden enclosure that will benefit the amenity space for the development.

There are a number of trees on the original site frontage G1 comprising Cherry and Field Maple B2 quality. The Tree Works Schedule on the Tree Protection Plan – Arbtech TPP 01 2/25 states that 5 individuals from the group will be removed to facilitate access to the car park for 12 vehicles.

In addition, a Cherry Stump T1 will be removed.

The Treework Schedule also requires the partial fell of G2 group to facilitate the installation of a hard surface to connect a path to Cutbush Lane and to install a cycle store.

There is a group of trees along the eastern boundary G3 some of which conflict with the proposed Block 3 . A 15m length of the group will be removed, and the remaining trees will be pruned to raise the crowns over proposed footpath to give a minimum clearance of 3m .

Hedge H1 will also be removed.

'No Dig' surfacing is proposed over the connecting path to Cutbush Lane and to the shed base which will be installed at ground level or above.

It is unfortunate the design of the new development involves the removal of so many trees, where a more sympathetic approach could have retained more of the existing landscaping.

I am mindful of the comments from the Secure by Design officer which raises concern over the connecting path to Cutbush Lane – which seems unnecessary when it is more or less the same distance to walk along Strand Way to Kensington Close. I object to both the path and the shed base being located beneath the protected trees. I agree that the cycle store could be placed in a more accessible location. A redesign would be compliant with Policy CC03 of the Local Plan in terms of protecting and retaining existing trees. I request a rethink of this part of the layout.

It looks as though there is plenty of scope for landscaping, and in fact sufficient space needs to be made available for replacement hedging along the front and east side of the site facing Strand Way, and ensure that sufficient space is made available for replacement tree planting where there is adequate soil volumes available for new trees to thrive into maturity. So for example in order for trees to survive in smaller pockets along Strand Way they need a fully integrated tree pit system. Where the spaces for trees are too small, I suggest large shrubs instead. It will be important for the landscape scheme to reflect the high quality landscape character of the existing site and surrounding dwellings, and to retain something of the character of the open space, trees and hedges some of which will be lost. The development looks very urban so it will be very important to ensure that adequate space is made available for sustainable landscape scheme.

The arboricultural information may need to be updated as a result of a redesign of the scheme – see my comments above.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Date:	13.5.25	Signed:	B. Crafer
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