

MEMORANDUM

From:	Lindsey Abbott Tree & Landscape Officer		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	261696
Address:	29 The Square, Spencers Wood, Wokingham, RG7 1BS.		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a single storey rear and side extension following demolition of the existing lean-to extension, erection of front boundary wall, replacement of the rear first floor roof from pitched to flat, plus changes to fenestration.		
Type of Development:	Other Householder		
Site Visit Made:	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 Council's Tree and Landscape Officer objects to the proposed development. The Site lies within The Square, Spencers Wood Area of Special Character (AoSC) and the dwelling has been specifically identified as an "undesigned heritage asset that make[s] a positive contribution to the AoSC" in WBC's *Historic Environment Topic Paper Appendix C: Areas of Special Character pro-forma assessments* (September 2024, p 78 & 80). This AoSC is summarised as follows on p 79 of the topic paper:

"The Square, Spencers Wood Area of Special Character is located within the parish of Shinfield. The area is laid out in an irregularly shaped grid and can be characterised as being predominantly residential, comprising two-storey semi-detached and detached buildings with tile roofs and decoratively patterned brickwork on the front and side elevations dating from the late Victorian/early Edwardian eras.

A mix of red, yellow and grey bricks have been used to create repeating patterns around the windows and doorways, and in some cases, a decorative horizontal line of bricks that visually separates the ground and first floors. The design of the dwellings varies, but all are based on the same three brick colour patterns. It is noted that there has been more recent housing development along The Square at various points, but in each case, buildings have been carefully designed so as to blend in with the original housing, using the same-coloured bricks and featuring similar brickwork patterns."

Under Policy TB26 in the adopted Local Plan:

"2. Planning permission will only be granted for proposals to or affecting Buildings of Traditional Local Character and Areas of Special Character where they demonstrate that they retain and enhance the traditional, historical, local and special character of the building or area and its setting."

and

"3.128 Where development affecting either an Area of Special Character or a Building of Traditional Local Character is proposed, this should protect the architectural integrity of the building and its setting or the special character of the area. Special regard should be given to the historical context, outbuildings, scale, form, massing and materials together with retaining key architectural features or detailing which contribute to the character of the building or the area." (p 65)

The form and materials for the proposed development are not in keeping with the architectural style prolifically observed throughout the AoSC and therefore contrary to Local Plan Policy TB26.

Additionally, the application proposes to remove the existing established front boundary hedge and replace it with a 2m high brick and metal panelled wall, as per the Existing and Proposed Block Plans (Ref: JET Arch Design, # A4/483/10 and A4/483/11, July 2026). This boundary treatment is neither in keeping with the local character of The Square nor with the immediate street scene, where hedging, low brick walls or low timber fencing define the public footpaths/highway from the private front gardens. Removing existing hedging and other established vegetation which currently provides public amenity and contributes positively to the public realm is contrary to Policy CC03 2 d. Furthermore, the proposed boundary wall does not consider WBC's Design Guide R12 which recommends 'boundary treatments should be designed to contribute positively to the character of the areas and to the quality of the public realm.'" (p 42)



Google Maps, June 2025

The Officer cannot support the proposed development on these grounds.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Date:	17/09/2026	Signed:	L. Abbott
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