

MEMORANDUM

From:	Brigitte Crafer Landscape Architect		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	251135
Address:	The Old Thatch, Lower Sandhurst Road, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 3TH.		
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed erection of 1 no. detached self-build dwelling and carport with associated landscaping following demolition of the existing dwelling and outbuildings.		
Type of Development:	Minor Dwellings (1-9)		
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 located in the countryside, set back from Lower Sandhurst Road which is set back from Moor Green Country Park, a series of lakes associated with historic gravel pit restoration and the flood plain of the river Blackwater. There are trees within and close to the site, and to the NW boundary is an area of BAP priority broadleaved and wet woodland.

The proposals include the demolition of the existing dwelling and a replacement dwelling and car port.

Where trees are present on the site, Policy CC03d requires that they are retained and protected. Policy TB21 also states that proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Councils Landscape Character Assessment, and shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

The site is divided by 2 landscape character areas; the northern part of the site is located in LCA M1 '*Finchampstead Ridges Forested and Settled Sands*' in the northern part of the site and LCA B1 '*Blackwater River Valley with Open Water*' in the southern part of the site. Both the landscape character areas are moderate

quality landscapes with moderate sensitivity and a modest capacity for change. Valued Landscape Attributes with the 2 LCAs include;

LCA B1

Wooded context and remnant pockets of traditional pasture, mosaic of wetland and woodland habitats including BAP priority habitats. Area valued for recreation. Localise areas of tranquillity.

LCA M1

Large expanses of mixed woodland containing mature trees, distinctive long straight rides, settlement pattern of post war properties in large plots along long straight rides and noted occasional wooded gaps, valued areas for recreation, continuous network of woodland and forestry which helps to provide physical and visual separation between settlements. Localised areas of tranquillity.

The site is located within the 'Forest and Rides' Valued Landscape (see Valued Landscape Assessments WBC 2024). Development proposals located within or affecting a valued landscape should have particular regard to the following attributes:

- a) Landscape quality (condition);
- b) Scenic quality;
- c) Rarity;
- d) Representativeness;
- e) Conservation interests;
- f) Recreation value;
- g) Perceptual aspects; and
- h) Associations.

Development proposals affecting Valued Landscapes will only be supported where they protect, and where appropriate, integrate with and/or enhance the special features, characteristics and qualities of the landscape, unless the benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the harm.

Arboriculture

The site is set back north of Lower Sandhurst Road and is accessed via Drift Lane. Drift Lane is characterised by mature trees and this character extends into the site. There are no trees protected by TPO within the site, and the site is not in the Conservation Area – but it is within a Valued Landscape where trees are an essential feature of the VL.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment Report along with plans including Tree Constraints Plan, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan and an Arboricultural Method Statement Report have been submitted with the application.

The report identifies many mature and high quality trees along Drift Lane and vehicles associated with construction will be travelling along the lane during the project, risks have been identified in the AIA. There is no information in the AIA regarding the height of the tree canopies (on Tree Survey Schedule) over the lane,

some of which may need pruning to protect them from construction vehicles. The only information regarding works to trees within the AIA is the felling of 5 trees within the site; T16 Beech 'C', T17 Apple 'C', T18 Fig 'C', T38 Hazel 'C', T40 Holly 'C'.

Incursions from development are noted as being associated with the proposed dwelling; impact of T34 'A' Oak from reconfiguring the driveway, and on G2 Beech from the patio. There is no information as to the mitigation proposed – we would expect Cellweb to be used over the driveway and surfacing in gravel rather than a block paved driveway in view of the rural setting. More information is required regarding the incursion of the nature of the patio and use of a retaining wall/edge and any level changes proposed.

There is no mention of the surfacing along Drift Lane and whether any ground protection is required.

The demolition and construction phases of the project are detailed within the AIA/AMS and tree protective fencing associated with demolition as well as construction are detailed on the plan.

Although the impact on trees will generally be minimal, I require additional information which can be included in an updated Arboricultural Method Statement and TPP as a condition (CL7) that addresses the queries on the proposed surfacing and how it will be installed including driveway and patio. Also information on the need to lift canopies of trees along Drift Lane, many of which are high quality trees that contribute to the Valued Landscape. The areas of storage of materials and working areas for chemicals / mixing can also be included in an updated TPP commensurate with the information provided.

I also require a Landscape Scheme that shows hard and soft landscaping, and replacements to trees lost to development in accordance with Policy CC03e, and TB21 of the Local Plan.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

CL5 – Landscape Proposals

CL7 – Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan updated

Date:	2.6.25	Signed:	B. Crafer
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