

PLANNING REF : 251864
PROPERTY ADDRESS : Ashdown House
: Warren Lane, Finchampstead
: RG40 4HS
SUBMITTED BY : Mr Robert Milligan
DATE SUBMITTED : 27/08/2025

COMMENTS:

Whilst we do not object to the application in principle, we do have some concerns and observations that we would like taken into account before a final decision is made.

Referring to the Arboricultural Report:

We understand and appreciate the measures proposed to erect a lightweight building using low-dig ground screws for foundations.

However, there are a number of statements made that we would like to draw attention to:

* pg7 - "All other trees are growing in a wooded area on land to the north of Brooklands"

That is our front garden, where children play.

* pg11 - "The default position in planning is that every effort should be made to retain and protect category A & B trees on site and that new structures should be located outside of the identified RPA's of trees to be retained."

and:

* pg12 - "BS:5837... advises that any new permanent hard surfacing should not exceed 20% of any previously undeveloped land within the RPA.

The attached Tree Protection Plan clearly shows that the canopies (and therefore assumed the root systems) of the trees on our property extend completely through the proposed area for development. Whether these are protected trees or not is irrelevant we feel.

* pg12 - the proposal "requires a small incursion into the rooting areas" which is "well below the threshold of 20% which is broadly indicated as being acceptable"

and:

* pg12 - "incursion into the root protection areas of offsite trees is not expected to have and significant impact on the trees' health or stability"

But what if it does have a significant impact? We are also concerned by the "acceptance" that a <20% incursion into the root system of some very large trees on our property is deemed acceptable.

* pg12 - "without the foreseeable need for the trees to be cut back

in the future"

There would be no need to cut them back if there was no permanent structure above their roots and below their canopy. And leaf drop and other debris is an inevitability. If this goes ahead, the applicants must accept and understand this on-going annoyance, and for it not to become an issue between us, or between future owners of either or both properties.

* pg13 - "Offsite trees will be protected with the retention of the existing boundary fence"

We would certainly hope so. It is our fence (although the applicant's boundary). Constructed in 2007 with the agreement of the then residents.

Questions for WBC:

* a) what happens if during construction or in a few years' time, any of the trees start to display signs of damage or decay? Arborcultural work is very expensive. We should not be expected to pay. Will WBC assume this responsibility if planning consent is granted?

* b) What if the trees' ongoing root development and growth over time start impacting the foundations of the garage? Who is liable?

Finally, Finchampstead Parish Council have voiced no objection, but 5 days after that, the proposal was amended, and just 2 days before the end of the consultation period.