

MEMORANDUM

From:	Catherine Brimble Senior Landscape Officer		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	251458
Address:	Jardine Meadows, Croft Road, Shinfield, RG7 1YP.		
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed erection of 2no. detached 4-bedroom dwellings, access and associated landscaping.		
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 within the settlement of Spencers Wood but adjacent to the settlement boundary. The trees within the site on the northern, southern and eastern boundaries are protected by a TPO (1968/2024) and contribute to the semi-rural character of the countryside beyond the settlement boundary to the east. Collectively these trees are an important landscape feature that contribute to the setting of Croft Road and Hyde End Lane where the two roads meet. This landscape buffer has also been retained on the adjacent new development north of the site and along Hyde End Road.

A TPO was served on the remaining trees within the site due to the unauthorised removal of trees that were previously shown as being retained in relation to the previous applications for dwellings in Jardine Meadows.

The current application requires the further removal of 11 trees, and two tree groups as identified in the Arboricultural Implications Report by SJA Trees and dated April 2025 in order to construct the two additional houses and to provide access and utility connections. This will further deplete the woodland copse to a thin line of trees to the east of the site. This incremental tree removal over time of trees within the 'woodland' of whatever category has had a detrimental effect on the character of this area, and further tree removals will have a significant detrimental impact on this important landscape feature that provides the semi-rural character to this part of Croft Road.

The removal of trees in order to create more usable rear gardens for the two new dwellings, will then allow increased visibility between the new housing development to the north and the proposed new dwellings, where currently there is some vegetative buffer between the two sites. I also note from the photos that due to earlier vegetation removal there is already a view out from the site into Hyde End Lane when looking east so therefore following more proposed tree removal and some proposed removal of understorey planting, there will be direct views into the site of the new dwellings as there will be insufficient trees left in the woodland belt to provide that screening function.

The Arboricultural Report includes in Appendix 4 indicative proposed tree replacement planting. The majority of this is proposed to the east of plot 2 outside the red line of the development site but within land owned by the applicant and will consist of whip planting of approximately 100 plants of approximately 1m high and six larger specimen trees. Six additional specimen trees of between 2.5m and 3.5m tall are proposed within the red line. No information is given as to who of how this will be maintained in the long term. Although this will help in part in the long term to thicken up what remains of the narrow tree belt this doesn't address the fact that this development will formalise and urbanise undeveloped land by the construction two proposed dwellings in an area that originally contained trees, nor will it mitigate for the loss of open land and the construction of two large detached dwellings closer to Croft Road / Hyde End Lane.

In considering the proposed development and its impact on important landscape features that contribute to the semi-rural character of the adjacent lanes and countryside beyond the settlement boundary, I object to the application. The proposals will be contrary to Core Strategy policy CP3 and Local Plan policies CC03 and TB21 as the proposed development cannot retain and protect existing landscape features that contribute to the character of the surrounding landscape plus there is insufficient space to accommodate a high-quality landscape scheme within the site boundary.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)			
N/A			
Date:	7 th August 2025	Signed:	C. Brimble