
MEMORANDUM

From:	Lindsey Abbott Tree & Landscape Officer	
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No: 261182
Address:	12 South Drive, Sonning, Wokingham, RG4 6GB.	
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed erection of a two storey front and side extension, part single storey part two storey rear extension, single storey rear extension with pitched roof, erection of terrace, garage conversion to create habitable accommodation plus changes to fenestration and erection of front gates.	
Type of Development:	Other Householder	
Site Visit Made:	Yes – 10 September 2026	

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

Subject to conditions, the Council's Tree and Landscape Officer has no objection to the proposed extensions etc.

The Officer visited the Site on 10 September 2026 and had a helpful conversation with the applicant/owner, Omer, who described some of his landscaping intentions for the Site's front garden and driveway/car park area.

The Site is located along residential South Drive. A band of mature evergreen trees act as a buffer between South Drive and Bath Road; Bath Road is a busy A-road and Green Route within the Borough. The Site is within a small community of detached dwellings north of Bath Road and surrounded by horse paddocks, a woodland block, and many recreation fields associated with a variety of Reading sports clubs to the north. There are no protected trees on Site or nearby.

The Site's frontage is currently vegetated with planting of low public amenity value but high ecological value. It contains a low brick wall with decorative iron gates, which is a similar front boundary treatment to other neighbouring properties along

South Drive. This low brick wall should be retained or replaced and as a condition, the Officer has requested additional inform about the boundary treatment including an elevation.

The Officer notes the revised location of the vehicular and pedestrian access in the *Block Plans: Car Park Layout* and considers the change acceptable. (Ref: Holtham + Newman, # 2605-P106, May 2026)

The Officer has identified a potential conflict between the location of the proposed two parking spaces and planting G17, Various Shrubs identified in the *Tree Protection Plan* (Ref: AllArboriculture, # AATPP12SO, 01/09/2026). Given the conversion of the existing garage to habitable accommodation along with the increase in habitable rooms, the Officer would like to understand the level of parking required and whether it will increase from the proposed two car spaces. If more than two spaces are required, then this may impact planting in the front garden / driveway.

In accordance with Policy CC03, replacement planting will need to be provided given the loss of vegetation by an increase in built form, the Site location adjacent to a greenway, and to retain a green street scene at the local street scene level. (CP3 c, d, f; CC03 2d, e)

As loosely discussed with the applicant/owner on-site and agreed with the Ecologist during an online meeting on 11 September 2026, the Officer would like to see the following specific retained or replaced vegetation in the front garden in a landscape plan, by condition.

- As per the TPP, G17 should be retained or replaced with native, wildlife friendly hedging or shrubs to provide a vegetated 'hop over' for foraging bats.
- High hedging should replace existing hedge/shrubs behind the front boundary wall to re-create the existing green screen along the Site frontage. During the Site visit the applicant-owner referenced the uniform hedge and brick wall front boundary seen at 10 South Drive. The hedge is Scarlet firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*) and would be an acceptable option.
- Mixed shrubs and/or herbaceous planting should be retained or replaced immediately in front of the dwelling.
- The TPP shows the removal of T13 and T16 Lawsons Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) in the front garden. Two replacement trees should be installed, ideally in the front garden or if there is inadequate space for these trees to thrive given the above parking concerns, then planted in the rear garden.
- T12 Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) is shown as retained in the TPP. This tree is surrounded by a multi-stemmed plum shrub-tree which provides screening from 11 South Drive. The Officer would like to see both of these trees-shrubs retained.
- T11 Laburnam (*Laburnum anagyroides*) shown as retained in the TPP. This tree has signs of decay and the Officer has no objection to its removal. See photos.



Holly surrounded by Plum Tree-Shrub.



Laburnum leaning and with substantial decay.

The Officer acknowledges the substantial hedging, shrubs and trees that are being retained and protected as illustrated in the TPP along the boundaries within the rear garden and the ecological benefit as well as substantial screening and privacy.

As a condition, the Officer would like to see a landscape plan that illustrates hard and soft landscaping, including:

- Retained, removed, and replaced trees and planting, specifying species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs in a plant schedule
- Hard landscaping changes and materials such driveway/carpark, paths and patio in the front and side gardens only
- Retained and proposed perimeter boundary treatment in the front garden

The Officer will need to ensure that the root protection areas of the existing to be retained trees and hedging in the front garden are not compromised during the construction period and to this extent all vehicles and storage of materials will need to be restricted to the existing drive and temporary Heras or similar fencing and protective boarding used, as per the TPP. (CC03 2d)

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

CL4 Landscape Details (small site)

Landscaping

Prior to the commencement of the development there shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority a scheme of landscaping, which

shall specify species, planting sizes, spacing and numbers of trees/shrubs to be planted, and any existing trees or shrubs to be retained.

Planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building(s).

Any trees or plants which, within a period of 5 years from the date of the planting (or within a period of 5 years of the occupation of the buildings in the case of retained trees and shrubs) die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species or otherwise as approved in writing by the local planning authority.

CC1 – BOUNDARY TREATMENT

CC1 Details of boundary walls and fences

Before the development hereby permitted is commenced details of all boundary treatment(s) shall first be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented prior to the first occupation of the development or phased as agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be maintained in the approved form for so long as the development remains on the site.

CL6 - RETENTION OF EXISTING TREES/SHRUBS/HEDGES

CL6 Retention of trees and shrubs

No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the local planning authority. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting of any tree that tree, or any tree planted in replacement for it, is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the local planning authority gives its written consent to any variation.

CL7 - PROTECTION OF EXISTING TREES etc.(small sites). Amended as detailed below.

- a. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the details within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan by AllArboriculture and dated 1st September 2026 (hereinafter referred to as the Approved Scheme).
- b. No operations shall commence on site in connection with development hereby approved (including any tree felling, tree pruning, demolition works, soil moving, temporary access construction and or widening or any other operation involving use of motorised vehicles or construction machinery) until the tree protection works required by the Approved Scheme are in place on site.
- c. No excavations for services, storage of materials or machinery, parking of vehicles, deposit or excavation of soil or rubble, lighting of fires or disposal of liquids shall take place within an area designated as being fenced off or otherwise protected in the Approved Scheme.
- d. The fencing or other works which are part of the Approved Scheme shall not be moved or removed, temporarily or otherwise, until all works including

external works have been completed and all equipment, machinery and surplus materials removed from the site, unless the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority has first been sought and obtained

Date:	11/09/2026	Signed:	L. Abbott
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