

MEMORANDUM

From:	Coralie Ramsey Trees and Landscape		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	242348
Address:	Sulby Croft, Heathlands Road, Wokingham, RG40 3AR.		
Proposal:	Householder application for proposed raising and modification of the existing roof form and erection of a first floor front extension, a two storey front/side extension, a single storey side and rear extension and a two storey rear extension with balcony, plus changes to fenestration including addition of 2 no. Juliet balconies.		
Type of Development:	Other Householder		
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 in Countryside on a rural highway featuring a few properties and with a sylvan backdrop. Sulby Croft has a notable design style with 'arts and crafts' influences in the wide, recessed porch, pointed window arches and large, low roof covering the first-floor walls, prominent chimney and windows with small panes of glass. Style features such as these are reflected in neighbouring properties, for example, Bevere Lodge and the new property, 'land at Heathlands' 230887. Notable mature trees of high local amenity value impact the plot, these and others have recently been included in Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) 1960/2024 and 1961/2024.

I refer to submissions 231528; photos 5.12.23; application form PP-13394693; proposed overlaid ground floor 9230-111 11.9.24; proposed elevations 9230-109 A 6.4.23; existing elevations 9230-105 19.6.23; existing and proposed block plan 9230-101 17.10.24; planning statement, and Arboricultural report 2024005 v2.0 9.10.24.

Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (Adopted 29 January 2010), CP1 – Sustainable development, CP3 - General Principles for development, CP11 - Proposals outside

Development Limits (including countryside) and Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document (Local Plan) – Adopted 21 February 2014, Policy CC03: Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping and Policy TB21: Landscape Character, Wokingham Borough Council Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document June 2012 and BS5837:2012: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 refer.

Trees:-

The application form states that there are no trees or hedges on the property or on adjoining properties which are within falling distance of the proposed development. This is erroneous. On-site, and third-party hedges and trees of high amenity value are within falling distance and/or within harming distance of the proposal. An Arboricultural report has been submitted anyway.

A major tree issue regards the pool complex. T6, a third party B1 category oak and number T19 of TPO 1960/2024 will have over 20% of its root protection area (RPA) removed to create the swimming pool void. This amount is contrary to the BS5837:2012 section 7.4.2.3, it will irreparably harm the tree and given the legal constraints the Authority has given the oak, I find this unacceptable.

The Arboricultural report states that for T1, T5, T6, T7 & T8 a 'specially engineered foundation with a suspended floor beam will be used'. Patently this is not the case for T6, possibly adjacent TPO trees too. It appears T1 is not due to have built form near it, so I am unsure why it would need an engineering solution. Overall, I find the Arboricultural submissions do not satisfactorily address the trees in relation to the BS5837:2012.

As it stands the tree aspects of the application do not adhere to policies including CP1, 1, 10; CP3, b, d; CC03, 2a, d, 3 and TB21, 2.

Landscape:-

The application form is incomplete as existing external materials for roof, windows and doors are not noted. This is required so that comparisons can be made to ascertain the impact of the proposals on the character of the area. This issue is further compounded by the 'existing elevations' drawings which incorrectly show white render on the roof, stone detail and timber cladding on the walls and arrows with no detail added.

Within the planning statement is the phrase 'some more traditional detailing and architecture' is incorporated. This is not explained.

The planning statement asserts that '*The two storey extensions attached to the main dwelling are modest....*' but no volumes have been provided to support this claim. It appears that overall, there is more built form than the 50% limit suggested in RD11 of the design guide. The property size is contrary to that guidance and policies including CP3, a, f and CP11 4/5.

Please request the relevant and accurate information so we may fully assess the application.

The increase in mass and built form will obscure the green backdrop from public view. This green infrastructure is a key feature of the Road and countryside location, so its permanent visual loss would be unacceptable in landscape policy terms such as CC03 3 and Design Guide R23. .

The above WBC policies and guidance are consistent with the NPPF in terms of its emphasis on the importance of good design in new development (nb. this application will appear as a new build). The scheme should be visually attractive because of good architecture, layout and landscaping and the retention and protection of trees based on an understanding of and respect for local character. My view is that this application does not respect the local housing design character, green infrastructure or setting, for the reasons given.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)			
n/a			
Date:	5.11.24	Signed:	C Ramsey