

Dear Planning Officer,

Following on from our previous message regarding planning application **261262**, we have now reviewed the applicant's response to our comments.

We were pleased to note the applicant's acknowledgement that the Silver Birch and its associated root system present a recognised risk to adjacent structures and foundations, we do not believe the report provides the information needed for the Council to properly assess the proposal. In particular, it does not appear to include the information normally expected under BS 5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction).

We respectfully ask the Council to require a compliant BS 5837 Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) and supporting foundation information before determining the application, for the following reasons.

Complete absence of BS 5837 Root Protection Area (RPA) mapping

The applicant's submission consists of a general tree surgery assessment. It does not include a formal BS 5837:2012 tree survey, stem diameter measurements or a calculated Root Protection Area (RPA) shown on a site plan. Without an accurately plotted RPA, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the proposed foundations and associated excavation may encroach into, sever or damage the tree's structural root system.

Unresolved structural and foundation details

The applicant's own report identifies a risk of *"structural movement affecting shallow foundations"* and *"cracking/displacement of masonry."* Despite identifying these risks, the applicant has provided no structural details or foundation construction methodology to demonstrate how the extension can be constructed without causing significant root damage or creating future structural issues.

Absence of a Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement

The submission contains no Tree Protection Plan or Arboricultural Method Statement setting out protective fencing, ground protection measures or construction exclusion zones. We believe these are matters that should be assessed before the application is determined, rather than being left to Building Regulations or dealt with through planning conditions, particularly where the applicant's own report identifies a potential conflict between the proposed development and the adjacent trees.

We also respectfully request that the case officer undertakes a site visit before determining the application. We appreciate that site visits are not undertaken for every application. However, we believe that seeing the relationship between the two properties would assist in assessing the proposal, particularly:

- the proximity of the proposed extension to our property and shared boundary
- the visual impact and sense of enclosure when seen from our main garden area
- the very limited separation proposed between the new structure and our existing building

- the relationship between the proposed development and the mature Silver Birch trees, including the practical implications of constructing close to the tree's root protection area.

Conclusion

The applicant's own report confirms that there is a direct relationship between the proposed extension, its foundations and the nearby tree roots. However, without a BS 5837-compliant Arboricultural Impact Assessment and supporting construction information, we do not believe there is sufficient evidence for the Council to fully assess the impact of the proposal.

We therefore respectfully request that the Council requires the applicant to submit a BS 5837-compliant Arboricultural Impact Assessment, an Arboricultural Method Statement and preliminary foundation details before determining the application. This would enable the Council, neighbouring residents and the Tree Officer to properly assess the proposal before a decision is made.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these further comments.

Trevor and Gina Liddle