

MEMORANDUM

From:	Coralie Ramsey Trees and Landscape		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	242011
Address:	Land east of Warren Lodge, Warren Lane, Finchampstead, RG40 4HR.		
Proposal:	Full application for the proposed change of use of land for the siting of 2 no. Gypsy and Traveller pitches with creation of a second access off Finchampstead Road and associated installation of soft and hard landscaping.		
Type of Development:	Minor Gypsy and traveller pitches (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 a field within Countryside and has a landscape character of High quality and sensitivity and lowest capacity. The north boundary is adjacent to Public Right of Way FINC35. The site presents as a welcome rural gap between settlements. The west boundary features 3 lime trees which are part of Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 1306/2009, T1, T2 and T3. According to the Ancient Tree Inventory (ATI) T1 is a veteran (no.46644) and T3 is a veteran (no.218700).

I refer to submissions PEA May 24; Arboricultural Statement Ref: LAS_746
Date: 05.06.24; planning statement 5.8.24 and Soft Landscape Proposals LAS 746
04 27.5.24.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF), Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions (Government Guidance). 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 refer.

The demarcated tree information can be summarised thus –

Tree T1 of the Tree Survey. TPO T1, lime. Veteran tree number 46644.

Tree T6 of the Tree Survey. TPO T2, lime.

Tree T14 of the Tree Survey. TPO T3, lime. Veteran tree number 218700.

Tree T13 of the Tree Survey, sweet chestnut. Veteran tree number 46643, noted on the ATI as felled (Update sent to ATI 19.9.24).

Tree T30 of the Tree Survey, oak. Accredited by the Tree Survey as a veteran.

The Government Guidance for veteran trees states ‘You should not approve development proposals, including gardens, within a buffer zone.’ The proposed driveway access is within a buffer, therefore it is untenable. Any ingress of development activities into the buffer would be unacceptable, for example, the planting proposed by the ‘Soft Landscape Proposals’.

The existing public realm view is of a small, hedge bounded field featuring mature trees. It is possible to see the back boundary from the arterial Finchampstead Road. This would be irrevocably changed by the installation of built forms and associated paraphernalia - although street scene views have not been submitted, so I use other sites as a guide. Ten trees and 2 groups of trees are to be removed, including those classified as ‘B’. These ‘B’ trees are 3 oaks being 9m to 10m tall with canopy spans from 5.5m to 7.5m, offering verdant visual and amenity impact within the plot. Tree planting is proposed (2.5m to 6m tall trees), but it would take many years to successfully replace the existing in form and function. Planting to screen the scheme would also take years to become effective, if at all, due to the close proximity of the structures to public realm views. Regardless, driveway access gaps would still allow views through to urban constructions.

In my view, the installation of urbanising built forms; access and hard surfacing on a small, narrow undeveloped field in a rural location would have an incongruous, detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area and countryside. I suggest the development is contrary to T&L parts of policies such as CP1, CP3 and CP11, policies CC01, CC03 and TB21, the Design Guide SPD and sections 180 and 186 of the NPPF December 2023.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)			
n/a			
Date:	19.9.24	Signed:	C Ramsey