

MEMORANDUM

From:	Built Heritage Officer		
Service	Green Infrastructure	App No:	242195
Address:	8 South Drive, Wokingham, RG40 2DH		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed single storey extension to facilitate leisure facilities followed by the erection of a detached garage.		
Heritage Assets:	Murdoch Road Conservation Area Setting of 7 South Drive – Grade II listed Host, 8 South Drive - NDHA Listed building along with Conservation areas are classed as designated heritage assets under the NPPF (2023) and in the Council's Local Plan policies.		
Site Visit Made:	No		

Summary Of Recommendations

Principle acceptable from a heritage perspective, design revisions required.

Comments On Proposal

The proposed development consists of the erection of a single storey extension to the main house as to contain an indoor swimming pool, and the erection of a detached single storey triple garage. No. 8 South Drive is a fine example of an Edwardian Domestic Revival dwellinghouse, built c1908. Constructed as part of the Batty's Barn development by the People's Investment Company the building, and indeed South Drive, hold significance interest with respect to the development of the town. Whilst altered and extended it retains a significance amount of historic detail and character, and given its age, the architectural and historic interest as well as positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Murdoch Road Conservation Area, no. 8 South Drive is identified as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

As noted, the property is located within the Murdoch Road Conservation Area, an area characterised by large sub-urban detached and semi-detached properties, generally set in their own gardens. Laid out in the 1900s, the area contains some fine examples of Arts & Crafts, Domestic Revival and inter-war design. One of the notable Arts & Crafts buildings, is the Grade II listed no. 7 South Drive, designed by Frank Morris in 1908. Morris' practice was responsible for much of the

development and is a key figure in the town's history. As no. 7 South Drive is the direct neighbour, the application site lies within the setting of the listed building.

No. 8 is set in a substantial plot, towards to the bottom of South Drive. As with most of the properties in the vicinity, there is a strong verdant character, defined by mature trees, established hedging, lawns and shrubbery planting. As noted, whilst altered, the building contains a substantial amount of its Edwardian character, which is drawn in part from the materials used in construction and the details of design. As such strong significance remains, it is important for any alteration to the building, and thus Conservation Area, respect and embrace such elements.

With respect to the proposed swimming pool addition, the size, form and proportions of the element are considered acceptable in relation to the host, however revision is required as to include a greater detail which reflects the Edwardian language. A brick string course should be included as to run consistent with the main house, the oeil-de-boeuf (circular) windows (front and rear) are too small and out of proportion, they should be increased in size, and/or consideration given to greater detail (raised brick surround) and/or oval design – as per authentic Edwardian Domestic Revival architecture. Similarly, the triple light window is out of the proportion for the amount of blank walling. This should be either increased in size as to form a quad-light window, or separated into two evenly spaced windows.

With respect to the proposed garage, given the substantial plot and open nature of the setting that would remain, this proposal is considered acceptable from a setting perspective. Coach houses/garages are not an uncommon feature of the Conservation Area and early 20th century development as a whole, and given this and the separation from no. 7, it is considered not to harm the significance of either of these two designated heritage assets. However, as with the swimming pool element, revision to the design is required. At present, the building is presented as standard, plain triple garage, of limited architectural interest. It fails to adequately respond to the host in detail and thus not reflect an authentic historic coach house/garage. No objection is raised to the form, massing, position or orientation of the building. However, greater detail should be added – the garage doors should be of the typical early 20th century type, timber plank construction with part multi-panelled glazing (as per the extant garaging), side hung or concertina in opening. These doors should be evenly spaced as to create a better sense of proportion – at present the blank walling to the right-hand-side of the front appears odd and disjointed. Further consideration should be given to detailing such as a string course, stronger barge boards and soffits. There should be deeper eaves to the front and rear, perhaps introducing a sprocketed roof form. Inspiration should be drawn from authentic Edwardian coach houses, thus to better harmonise with the host, and wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

In conclusion, provided revisions are forthcoming and are of sufficient quality and reflect the above commentary, the application would be acceptable from a heritage perspective.

Conditions

N/A			
Date:	23/09/2024	Signed:	Roderick McDonald Built Heritage Officer

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Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.