

MEMORANDUM

From:	Catherine Brimble Senior Landscape Officer	
Service	SDL Landscape and Trees	App No: 242252
Address:	Moat House, Biggs Lane, Arborfield, Wokingham, RG2 9LN.	
Proposal:	Full Planning Permission for the change of use of the Moat House building from office (Use Class E) to residential (Use Class C3) to provide 4no. residential dwellings and associated internal roads, parking, landscaping, drainage, plant, bin, and cycle storage.	
Type of Development:	Minor Dwellings (1-9)	
Site Visit Made:	Yes - 17th June 2024	

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

This application has been submitted following a pre-app consultation where a number of issues were discussed as part of a site visit, and which have been addressed through this application.

Layout / Landscape Proposals

The Proposed Site Plan (24-J4633-100) and Landscape Masterplan (1665/001 Rev B) indicates that the boundary of the site will be reinforced with additional hedgerows where appropriate and in association with estate railings in order to maintain the views through the parkland type character to the Moat House from Buttenshaw Avenue.

The drawings indicate the front of the building and entrance will be defined by landscape treatment and parking layout ensuring there is a buffer between the circulation space and the front of the building respecting the listed building status. We will need to understand these landscape details including the type, form and materials for this arrangement, which can be provided through a conditions application.

The cycle / bin store is now located away from the listed building and set within the landscape which is acceptable.

The proposed extent of the informal grassland and wildflower area to the south of The Moat House may need to extend further from the veteran tree to include a greater proportion of the root protection area. This is to restrict possible activity under the canopy of the tree and reduce disturbance to the Badger Sett.

Arboricultural information

An Arboricultural Implications Report by SJA Trees and dated August 2024 is provided as part of the application. The proposals don't require the removal of any trees within the site although several are identified as a category U and may need to be removed due to poor health. The only category A tree identified within the site is tree 185 (English Oak) and has also been identified as a veteran tree. This tree is growing in an area of open grassland which will remain as grassland and no construction activities are planned that will encroach into the extended root protection area.

A small number of incursions into the RPA's of several trees have been identified within the report, which relate to minor changes around the parking area and replacements of kerbs etc. This will have a negligible impact on the adjacent trees (including TPO trees) to which I have no objection. A detailed method statement will need to be provided through a conditions application.

Section 5 of the report gives details of eleven trees to be pruned. Three trees (36, 50 & 56) require crown lifting above the access road to allow sufficient space for construction traffic and other subsequent uses. Following the site visit I'm not entirely convinced that tree 56 (Sweet Chestnut) needs as much work as identified as the majority of the lower limbs are not over-hanging the access road.

Other pruning work identified include seven trees on the boundaries of the site which are identified to be crown lifted by 2.5 – 3m to open up views to the surrounding area. Again I'm not entirely sure this is necessary for all the trees listed and would welcome a discussion through the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement regarding this detail.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Standard conditions:

CL5 – Landscape details

CL6 – Retention of existing trees/shrubs/hedges

CL7 – Protection of existing trees etc

CL9 – Landscape Management Plan (or Landscape Environmental Management Plan)

Date:

1st October 2024

Signed:

C. Brimble