

MEMORANDUM

From:	Brigitte Crafer Landscape Architect		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	261486
Address:	1 Ilbury Close, Shinfield, Wokingham, RG2 9DE.		
Proposal:	Permission in principle application for the proposed construction of 2 dwellings on land adjacent to 1 Ilbury Close.		
Type of Development:	Minor Dwellings (1-9) PiP		
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

Site Setting

- The site is located within the Shinfield Modest Development Location, in an established residential area which is dominated by redbrick spacious semi-detached post war social housing. On the opposite side of Ilbury Close is a later development of 1960s / 70s semi-detached dwellings with attached garages some of which have formed extended living space. Front gardens are common to both sides of the road, where green verges separate road and footpath. Common to the front gardens on the south side of Ilbury Close are front garden boundary hedges with pedestrian gates accessing the gardens. Some have accessible drives, and there is also parking partially on the verge

Character of Site and its Surroundings

- The site is No. 1 Ilbury Close located on the south side of the road, and one of the older redbrick dwellings. It is an end house on the corner of the junction with Wheatfield Road and Ilbury Close. The existing front garden is 23.5m wide x 10m in depth. The rear garden is 18m in depth x 22m wide at its widest point and contains a garage which is accessed via Wheatfield Road.

3. The proposal is to use the side garden as a separate plot to erect a pair of dwellings creating what will look like an extended terrace of 3 dwellings because of the narrowness of the gap with the existing No. 1 which is 1m wide, and the increased scale of the dwellings compared to that of No. 1.
4. The plot measures 34.5m in depth and 13m at its widest point. The proposed dwellings comprise of Plot 1 and 2 on the submitted Area Plan – KICR PL101 20.5.26. The plan shows the dwellings footprint to be larger than the existing No. 1.. The proposed dwellings are 10m depth x 5.8m wide. Plot 1A has parking for 2 cars at the front and a 1m wide side access. Plot 1B is accessed from the front. It has a triangular shaped front garden to account for the junction and the route of the public footpath. It has a side access and parking is at the end of the back garden on Wheatfield Road. The garden of Plot 1A is 15.4m long and Plot 1B is 9m in length.
5. There is no elevational drawing to see how the design of the frontage to Ilbury Close and Wheatfield Road will work with the character of the existing dwelling and the immediate area which will be a key aspect of a successful approach to development on site.
6. Site photos show that at least 2 trees and group of bushes/hedge to the front corner of the plot have been removed and a section of the front hedge, and replaced by timber hoarding in preparation for development.

Submitted Information

7. Minimal information is submitted with the application – just the basic layout plan and a Planning Statement which says that the land is a vacant parcel but is also part of the residential curtilage of No. 1 Ilbury Close. The existing garage and a side extension have been demolished to reduce activity on the plot and prepare it for development. The Planning Statement says that the surrounding area exhibits a spacious suburban character consistent with a residential character. I observe that the spaciousness is a result of the original layout and planning associated with the neighbourhood such as the wider end / corner plots such as the site which are pauses and pleasant spaces with landscape enhancements, all of which combine to create a spacious / less dense feel to the area and provide an enhanced amenity which helps to contribute to the mitigating the effects of climate change. It is not clear to me how the proposals can provide a consistency in this approach.

Wider Landscape Character

8. The site is located within the settlement area of Shinfield, but its proximity and historic association to the countryside is reflected in nearby features such as Hollow Lane a designated Green Route, and in nearby areas of open countryside associated with the SANGs. The areas of countryside and SANGs are accessible via nearby footpaths such as SHIN7 and SHIN28.
9. The site is within Landscape Character Area J3 (see Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2019). Key characteristics of the J3 LCA

include;

- *Small scattered mixed deciduous woodland blocks and copses some ancient and many designated as Local Wildlife Sites such as St. Johns Copse to the NE, and Tanners Copse to the south.*
- *Remnant parkland at Shinfield Grange, Loddon Court, Shinfield Lodge, Stanbury Park and Highlands. A number of these are clustered along the top of the ridge overlooking the clay lowlands of Grazeley to the west. These parklands contain BAP priority habitat lowland wood pasture and parkland and ancient woodland. Visually prominent parkland veteran trees include many Wellingtonias, there is a prominent avenue of these trees along the drive to Wellington Court, originally the Stanbury Park estate.*

Required Documentation

10. Due to the site location and its potential impact on the surrounding townscape, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be required as part of the technical information in order to assess the impact the proposal may have on the setting and surrounding landscape features and other uses such as residential properties, roads and public amenity. The LVIA shall include;
 - Baseline information, what is on the site already such as site context, vegetation, land use, landscape features and site character
 - Description of the proposals
 - Visual assessment of the proposals including the impact on surrounding landscape features within and outside of the site, including landscape and built character
11. The LVIA will need to fully consider how the proposals address the key characteristics of the character area and surrounding areas and specifically how the impacts of the development can be reduced and mitigated by sympathetic and appropriate design principles. No information has been provided with the application to assess landscape character and therefore the application is contrary to Local Plan policy TB21 and CC03.
12. Further to LVIA Landscape details will need to be prepared and include hard and soft landscape proposals and include replacement tree planting to those lost to development.

I have no objection to development of this site but it needs to be sensitively carried out and acknowledge the very definite built character of the red brick dwellings along the south side of Ilbury Close, and ensure that the proposed dwellings relate to that and to its position on the corner plot. The proposed dwellings must not be out of place in terms of scale and should create a sense of place see Policy CP3 of the CS. This may only be possible with 1 dwelling.

In order for it to reflect local and national planning policy in terms of landscape and built character the documentation listed above is required as Technical Details which must be compliant before being approved.

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Date:	15.7.26	Signed:	BRC
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