

Date: 4 February 2026
Application: 260225



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

From:	Brigitte Crafer Landscape Architect		
Service	WBC Landscape and Trees	App No:	260224L – Phase 1 260225L - Phase 2
Address:	Land located to the east of Watmore Lane/Maidensfield, Winnersh, RG41.		
Proposal:	Application for the approval of reserved matters relating to scale, layout, appearance, landscaping and secondary access in respect of 118 dwellings pursuant to outline planning permission 230208 (as amended by 250640), including submission of details pursuant to conditions 10 (Arboriculture), 13 (BNG), and 14 (noise).		
Type of Development:	Major Dwellings (10+)		
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

Reserved Matters relating to Scale, layout, Appearance, landscaping and secondary access;

Planning Applications – 260224L and 260225 L

The submitted documents for both applications are reviewed on a single Memorandum and will be uploaded to the separate planning applications.

Drawings reviewed;
PA 236224 – Phase 1

Landscape Masterplan – Drawing CSA/7168/126 Rev. B 09.06.25

Soft Landscape Proposals Phase 1 Sheet 1 – Drawing CSA/7168/200

Soft Landscape Proposals Phase 1 Sheet 2 – Drawing CSA/7168/201

Soft Landscape Proposals Phase 1 Sheet 3 - Drawing CSA/7168/202

Hard Landscape Proposals Phase 1 Sheet 1- Drawing CSA/7168/211

Hard Landscape Proposals Phase 1 Sheet 2- Drawing CSA/7168/212

Hard Landscape Proposals Phase 1 Sheet 3- Drawing CSA/7168/213

PA 236225 – Phase 2

Landscape Masterplan – Drawing CSA/7168/126 Rev. B 09.06.25

Soft Landscape Proposals Phase 2 Sheet 1 – Drawing CSA/7168/217

Soft Landscape Proposals Phase 2 Sheet 2 – Drawing CSA/7168/218

Soft Landscape Proposals Phase 2 Sheet 3 - Drawing CSA/7168/219

Hard Landscape Proposals Phase 2 Sheet 1 – Drawing CSA/7168/220

Hard Landscape Proposals Phase 2 Sheet 2 - Drawing CSA/7168/221

Hard Landscape Proposals Phase 2 Sheet 3 - Drawing CSA/7168/222

The Landscape masterplan is the overall plan of the site which has been broken down into 2 phases of 3 separate notated plans with features keyed in and a Planting Schedule included on the Soft landscape Phase 1 Sheet 1 of 3 and Sheet 2 of Phase 2 and Planting Specification on Sheet 1 of Phase 2.

HARD LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS – comments applicable to both phases

The Landscape Masterplan shows the main access through from Maidensfield to the NW of the site, with a secondary access to the south. The main access in the NW shows 1.4m wide footways either side of a road width of 3.82, both of tarmac, but with a strip of concrete set paving as a threshold to the first crossroad junction on the new estate. The junction is of charcoal colour concrete block paving laid in a herringbone pattern.

The Hard Landscape Plans also include the boundary treatments which around garden consist of; 1.8m high brick walls where garden boundary is side onto the street. This makes an attractive addition to the street scene when combined with planting which it is.

Garden divisions are 1.8m close board fence panels which is acceptable although between narrow gardens trellis tops are less harsh and provide opportunities to talk to neighbour. Garden separation (orange line) is to developer specification – so unsure what this is at this stage – perhaps trellis tops are included, please clarify.

I have no objection to the proposed surfacing which although is overwhelmingly tarmac in the northern part of the site and more use of block paving in the southern part of the site. Contrasting block paving has the effect of lifting the setting and advise to look at the

northern part of the site for more opportunities to use block paving to match the southern site.

Tree planting within small areas of soft landscaping between hard landscaping needs to be properly specified with the correct soil volume and irrigation in order for the street trees to flourish. Detailed Tree pit drawings are required for planting in hard and soft landscaping scenarios.

SOFT LANDSCAPING PROPOSALS

The Inspector noted in his report the sense of the pleasant existing view from Maidensfield into the site will be adversely affected by development but the open space a sense of the existing view could be retained which the LM seeks to do.

The Inspector Report also states the main road into the site could be tree lined to ensure a sense of visual transition between the built up area and the countryside beyond. Although there is tree planting within the POS which will be visible on entering the site, there is a lack of street tree planting lining the main street opposite the POS to the front/side of the dwellings themselves. The approach emphasises a harder urban edge where a more transitional view was desired.

An Amelanchier (small tree) is proposed to the corner of Plot 103, could this approach not be replicated at Plot 101, 85 without additional land take?

There are no street trees between Plots 100 and 95 and 89 and 71 . Generally checking the street layout, although there are vistas of the open spaces through some of the streets, a green rhythm cannot be wholly achieved in all streets due to the density of the built scheme.

The Inspector remarks the interface with the countryside could also be carefully designed with houses to face east over the open space. This has been achieved along the eastern side facing the Emm Brook corridor but along the southern boundary the extent of the existing retained landscape is very narrow in which case there should be more in the way of large tree species planted such as Quercus. Tilia, Carpinus.

A general approach should be where there is no shadowing affecting the front of dwellings space should be made for trees within the public realm

An enhanced public open space arranged around the retained Oak trees is located to the north of the main access road and forms a continuous park along the site perimeter which follows the course of the Emm Brook and retained ASNW and other trees and small woodlands along the site's eastern boundary.

The eastern park contains 2 large attenuation basins with large swales between them. A play area is located to the north of the swales. The arrangement of the basins and swales creates interest by a change to the topography. Planting proposed in the basins consists of a mix of wetland plants as well as larger groups of single species native to UK such as rushes and reedmace.

A central landscaped space extends from the eastern part of the park into the estate. Although this linear park does not extend completely to the south-west side of the site it is a welcome addition to break up the density of the estate and the lack of street trees in some streets, particularly the street where Plots 112-131 and 173 to 144 are located. The central space includes opportunities for play and should be a pleasant thoroughfare.

The MP retains the boundary vegetation although much of this is shown over wildflower meadow planting, of which some will be existing presumably. There are gaps along the boundary and areas / sections of the path where it should be possible to add native hedgerows for example around boundaries that back onto the POS such as opposite Plots 1-5 where Hornbeam hedge is used around front gardens and to the opposite boundary to POS – it should be possible to specify a mix of native hedge plants that can produce an dense attractive hedge by using Hornbeam in addition to Hawthorn, Native Privet, Blackthorn, *R. rugosa* etc. This would create a better transition between dwellings and what is a semi-rural park.

A layered approach showing 2 rows of hedging to the park include a Hornbeam hedge to the rear with mixed ornamental evergreen planting adjacent to the road. A mixed native hedge would have more visual interest/be more appropriate to the semi-rural park setting than a single species hedge.

I note the mix of evergreens in the edges of the park that create a planting scheme facing the estate including Cherry laurel 'Otto Luyken' a vigorous and invasive plant with some other species uses typical plants specified for landscape schemes over the last 25 years which are frankly uninspiring and could include other well performing evergreens such as Abelia, Cistus, Berberis verruculosa, Bupleurum fruticosum, Ceanothus, Choisya 'White Dazzler', Olearia xscilloniensis, Osmanthus 'Variegata', Phlomis, and a selection of grasses etc. would help to provide a site wide approach which is more refreshing.

I cannot see in the Key some of the proposed meadow / seed mixes, for example the dark green with black dots overlaid, dark green with grey spots overlaid, greenish brown shading with grey spot overlay which appears to be part of the play area. Some of the proposed trees do not have labels attached. Please ensure all is clear of condition drawings.

Management of Veteran Trees

The VTMP states that the trees have few veteran characteristics and no features that require specialist veteran tree management. The Arboricultural Consultant advises the trees are pre-veteran that the most appropriate way of managing them is not to manage them.

Dead branches within the canopy structure of the trees should not be removed as they are features of ecological resource.

Consideration of the management of the area in which the tree grows can deliver benefits. As the trees on site are good quality management objectives should include minimum intervention allowing the tree to develop naturally.

The prescription for minimum work is a good start but the proposal to retain the existing scrub around the veteran trees is acceptable but must not be allowed to grow too high. The Veteran Tree Management Plan should include cutting back of the scrub every 15 years. Scrub should not be wholly removed but cutting back should be staggered over selected areas only leaving other areas to continue to provide nesting opportunities. This will ensure the vegetation is managed to prevent changes in the local environment ensuring insects can continue to feed off deadwood. Management must also include securing an appropriate environment for the tree and to avoid deliberate veteranisation.

The issue of the mown grass paths through the Veteran tree buffer zones need to be addressed in the conditions drawings and documents and management of the grassland and scrub to ensure there is no change to the growing environment of the tree. Cultivation of area within the veteran tree Buffer zone needs to be included in the landscape specification and veteran tree management plan.

Summary

Please review comments in relation to forthcoming conditions applications.

Street trees – is there scope for the addition of smaller trees or street corners / public realm frontages

Inclusion of native hedges – please make sure that native mix hedgerows are included in the scheme, and review the species in the ornamental evergreen shrub mix.

Review of inclusion of more contrast paving in the north of the site

Clarification on the fence type between rear gardens

Review of Veteran Tree Management Plan with regard to staggered scrub management

Clarification of items on the drawings and their inclusion on the drawing key.

A key plan on the drawings would be helpful

Conditions & Reasons (if required)

Date:	1.4.26	Signed:	BRC
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