



# SUNNINGDALE PARISH COUNCIL

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Clerk: Ruth Davies

15<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Adam Jackson  
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead  
Town Hall, St Ives Road  
Maidenhead, Berks SL6 1RF

Dear Adam,

**20/02434/FULL**

**Construction of a two-storey building with accommodation in the roof to provide x7 apartments and bin and bicycle storage with altered access, parking, and landscaping, following demolition of the existing dwelling house.**

**Wilbury Cottage Beech Hill Road Ascot SL5 0BN**

The Parish Council OBJECT to this application for the following reasons:

**1. Reflecting the Townscape Assessment**

The applicant states that *'the proposal would respond positively to the local townscape and fully takes into account the setting of the site which is identified within a 'Victorian Villages' character area 5F (Rise Road, Sunningdale) in the RBWM Townscape Assessment (TA).'*

There are few if any features of the proposed building that echo a 'Victorian Village'. It is not expected that all new developments should be carbon copies of Victorian houses, but the Parish Council believe the design and style of this proposed building is so at odds with the Townscape Assessment that the building will be out of place in this location when compared against neighbouring properties. The development is not really sympathetic to the character of the area and therefore conflicts with policy NP/DG1.2.

Looking at the diagrams of the proposed building design and appearance as shown below it is difficult to see how this responds positively to the local townscape thus conflicting with Policy NP/DG1.1.



This difference is even more obvious when you compare the proposed building with the current building, see below.



## 2. Scale and Bulk

It is clear that the proposed development is considerably larger, both in footprint, height, and width than the original building. No streetscape comparison is provided by the applicant, but it is clear from viewing the neighbouring houses, that this proposed building would have a much higher ridge height than its neighbours, one of which is a bungalow.

Whilst the plot size would allow some increase in scale, we believe this level of increase is not in keeping with the surrounding area and therefore conflicts with policy NP/DG2.

### 3. Pressure to Prune and Remove Trees

The boundary of the site is extensively wooded with a Blue Atlas Cedar TPO tree located on the Western boundary. The top floor apartment is the largest one on the site comprising two bedrooms and one combined lounge/ dining room. The lounge area faces West and is located in the roof space. Apart from a very small dormer window there is only one medium size window providing natural light to what is effectively the main habitable room in the entire flat apart from the bedrooms. The only other medium size window on this Western elevation provides natural light to a staircase. These windows can be seen on the West elevation drawing below.



The applicant has also included this photograph shown below (from the Design & Access statement) to demonstrate that the proposed new building will be hidden when viewed from both Rise Road and Beech Hill Road. However, the unintended consequence of using these mature trees as a screen is that they also provide uninterrupted shade to the whole Western elevation of the property. These mature trees are very close to the proposed building (and as they are on the Western boundary) they will in fact shield all the natural light in the afternoon and evening from the

upper flat but also all the other flats facing West on both the ground and second floors. There will therefore be considerable pressure going forward from any future residents to extensively prune these trees. The flats are small- just one bedroom and one lounge -so it will not be possible to use another room - say on the Eastern side of the building -where there might be more natural light in the morning. The rooms on the Eastern side are separate flats.



A useful comparison can be made here with Refusal at Appeal of a planned development of 10 apartments at Hill House, Cross Road, Sunningdale on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2019. (18/00624) The Inspector concluded that the positioning of the apartments close to protected trees would be detrimental. It should be noted that the Hill House refusal referred to undue pressure on two trees. On this site there are considerably more trees. The relevant extract from the Inspector's conclusions are:

***'The design of the scheme before me would also not overcome the pressure to prune the trees that would be generated by the perceived nuisance generated by issues such as blocked gutters from falling leaves, roosting birds and fears associated with dominance. As such, there remains a risk of long-term decline of both trees as a result of the development. This would result in a detrimental impact on the verdant character and appearance of the area given the positive contribution made by the trees. The presence of the TPO designation would not overcome the pressure that would be placed on the trees.'***

#### **4. Parking- effect on trees, bin storage location**

The Parish Council note the many comments from concerned residents about the pressure on existing parking within the immediate vicinity that will only be exacerbated by this development. However, adherence to the RBWM planning guidelines for allocated parking spaces is likely to take precedent over any real congestion on nearby roads or interference with RBWM delivery vehicles or emergency service vehicles. However, all the proposed 8 car park spaces on this site at Wilbury cottage are positioned on the East and South boundaries. They can be seen in the proposed site plan below. Positioning all these car park spaces in such a position is likely to have two consequences. Branches falling on to expensive cars will result in increased applications to prune the trees and construction of the car park spaces – even with a no dig method- could result in damage to the RPA of the trees.

The bin storage area is located in the south Eastern corner of the site so RBWM vehicles requiring access to this area would be required to negotiate past parked vehicles. Additionally, unless they reversed along the entire length of the access road, they would have to drive in, collect the refuse and then try and turn around in a rather restricted area. The 8 parking spaces would be woefully inadequate for visitor parking so there may be a tendency for double parking making RBWM vehicle access more problematic.





Proposed site plan

## 5. New wider access road- effect on trees

The arboricultural survey accompanying the application identifies 23 surveyed trees of which 2 are category A (including the protected Blue Atlas cedar T3), 10 are category B and 7 are category C with just 4 category U trees. Hence, the trees on the site are in overall excellent condition and within full public view on the intersection of two roads in the heart of the village.

The existing access road will be widened, the tree protection fencing- (shown by the purple line in the diagram below) is in very close proximity to a TPO tree. Additionally, there is a relatively small area of this Western boundary section of the site that will not be developed. This area is also where all delivery vehicles must enter the site during construction. The above all contributes towards a harmful effect on the RPA of the Blue Atlas Cedar tree



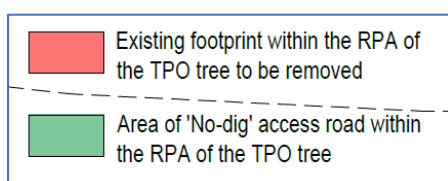
## 6. Trees for removal

The Merewood arboricultural report mentions on page 10 that Category U trees could be subject to removal, but the report does not identify which, if any, of those category U trees will be felled. The extract from the report is shown below.

### Trees for Removal

Category U = Trees in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years.

However, on the site plan extract (drawing no, 2645-PL-103) shown below there is reference to the area shaded red and the accompanying map legend which states: ***'Existing footprint within the RPA of the TPO tree to be removed'***. But no trees are identified for removal on the main Merewood report. This seems to be an oversight. The legend is very small on the chart so again this is included in a more readable version below.





## 7. No dig access road

As can also be seen in the area shaded green in the chart above there are 52 square metres on the Western boundary where a no- dig access road is proposed. That is 52 sq. metres within the RPA of a TPO tree that is in full public access.

The Parish Council believe the proposal would conflict with Policy NP/EN2 by compromising both the mature trees on the site as well as the green and leafy character of the area.

## 8. Communal amenity space

The application states there are two main areas of communal amenity space to the front (215m<sup>2</sup>) and rear (285m<sup>2</sup>). However, it also mentions that the front amenity space would be mostly used by Flat 1 which has direct access. That leaves the rear amenity space (about 50m<sup>2</sup>) that would need to be shared by all the remaining 6 apartments. The applicant says this is considered a generous provision but it is less than the 52m<sup>2</sup> of no dig access road at the front of the property that is considered small enough not to interfere with the RPA of a TPO tree.

In conclusion, the Parish Council are of the opinion that this application should be **REFUSED**.

Yvonne Jacklin and Michael Burn

Co-chairs of Planning