

I refer to our telephone conversation of last week in connection with the above application where it was agreed that I would write to set out the points I wish you to consider when discussing this application with your line manager.

1. Investigations into the root zone of the protected oak tree have been undertaken and the results of the study are contained in the report prepared by B Haverson reference 1188.bjh. June 21 dated which have been submitted to the LPA. This report confirms there is no risk of harm the protected tree resulting from the proposed building and that no further facilitation pruning works are required. The tree will be retained and will continue to provide screening of the application site when viewed from the public realm as well as adjacent properties.
2. Following exploratory excavations in the vicinity of the proposed building, a concrete foundation was exposed which indicates a building was previously constructed in this location of the site. Photographs of these excavations are included in the attachment to this email for your reference.
3. The floor of the proposed building will be set at the level of the existing slab foundation which is approximately 800 to 1000mm lower than the highway land located to the southeast of the front boundary to the property. This means the height of the building will appear at a correspondingly lower height when viewed from the public realm or from any adjacent properties. The attached drawing has been amended to show this relationship and dimensions have been added to help assess the relative levels of the proposed building to the existing boundary wall and public footpath.
4. The proposed building is single storey and modest in scale with walls clad in shiplap boarding which are designed to blend into its setting and be screened from view by soft landscape planting. The building is also set away from the front boundary wall to allow space for additional planting to help contain the site and maintain the verdant character of the setting. The applicant has extensive experience in the tree industry and the retention/reinstatement of soft landscape features has always been central to the design brief. The applicants have also indicated their agreement to the imposition of a condition of consent to ensure provision of a suitable scheme of soft landscaping.
5. The orientation of the building is such that the lowest part of the proposed building i.e. the eaves, is nearest to the boundary with roof pitching up away from the road frontage. This, coupled with the proposed screening as well as the retention of the large mature protected oak tree, would mean the building would not be wholly apparent when viewed from London Road and even if the building were in part visible it is not considered harmful in this setting where it would be viewed in the context of the 2-storey development which sits on higher land to the southwest of the application site.
6. The character of London Road is diverse and varied with a mixture of building types and heights some which front onto London Road and some which face in the opposite direction with rear elevations and back gardens fronting the highway. Some sites are enclosed and some quite open with buildings staggered and in differing relationships to each other which tends to dilute any sense of a common building line or building typology. These relationships are examined by a series of photographs which are included in the attachment to this email
7. There also examples of similar garage buildings located on the forecourts of properties fronting London Road. Photographs of these are included in the attachment although these examples are regrettably of a much lower quality than the building proposed in this application and are located on smaller sites which create less satisfactory relationships to adjoining buildings, boundaries, and other site features.
8. It is understood the proposals have not been subject to a peer scrutiny at a Design Review Panel as I am given to understand, this facility is not operated by Havant Borough Council