

Ms L Wells
Planning Services
Havant Borough Council
Civic Centre Rd
Havant
Hampshire PO9 2AX

25 February 2021

Dear Mrs Wells

Re. Planning application no. APP/20/01220, land adjacent Saxted House, Tower St, Emsworth

Having studied the above application against the 2003 permission for two complementary dwellings and the revisions presented by the applicant during 2020, I have a number of objections which I would like to make.

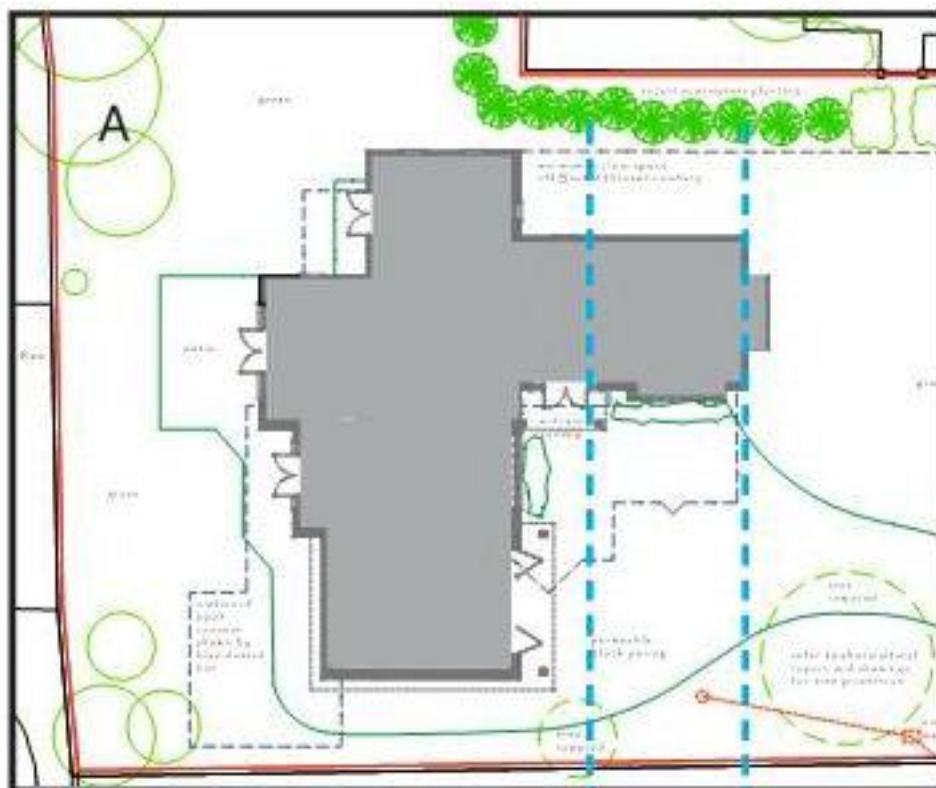
1. I object to the continuing increase in the mass of the proposed development and the jump step towards Saxted House (please refer to plans A, B and C on page 2)

The proposed scheme has increased its mass and moved closer to Saxted House. It also does not use the site to its full advantage. Using a dotted line to show the footprint of the 2003 permission on the applicants block drawing is highly misleading, as the original footprint shows an east wing with only a single storey conservatory. The current proposal now shows an extended east wing which incorporates a first floor and gable roof that has now advanced towards the walled garden of Saxted House. Please see plans A and B on page 2. B shows how the single story conservatory (no.1 in light gray) permitted an uninterrupted view to the south .

This degree of movement towards Saxted House cannot be justified. From Saxted House the view will always be of a mass of roofs bunched up against the historic walled garden. At the southern end of the proposed dwelling, the garage has also acquired a raised roof line to allow for a first floor level. This increase in mass against the southern boundary also creates a sense of a crowded site.

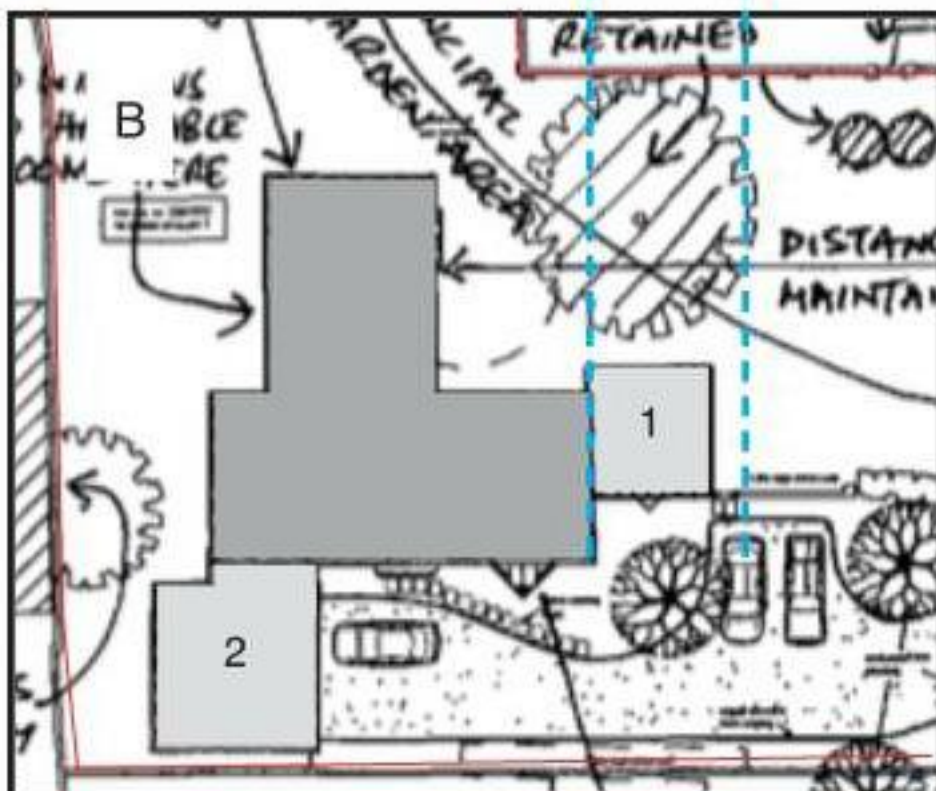
2. The planting of evergreen laurels against the walled garden of Saxted House in March 2020 has encouraged a building proposal that is challenging in scale and location for a Grade II listed building.

The initiative to plant a row of semi-mature trees against the walled garden of Saxted House was intended to offer the occupants of Saxted House much needed protection against overlooking and increased privacy in their garden from a new neighbour. Instead its real purpose seems to have been to provide a temporary shield behind which a proposed house can be expanded in size and advanced as close as possible to the tree line and the garden wall. As the proposed house has moved towards the treeline it has also reduced the level of privacy for residents of Saxted House.



A shows a plan of the proposed extent of the first floor and roof level in the current proposal.

The blue dashed lines show how far the first floor level and roof of the east wing extends beyond the 2003 permission.



B shows a plan of the 2003 permission and the position of the first floor level and main roof in dark gray. The lighter gray shows the position of the single storey structures, i.e. the conservatory with a glass roof at 1 and the garage with a tiled roof at 2.

C shows an enlarged section of the 2003 permission placed over the proposed ground floor and east wing. This clearly shows how much the proposal has expanded towards Saxted House from the original approved position.



Trees such as these, south-facing and closely planted, are very dependant on a good supply of water. Given the constant daily supply of water these trees needed last summer and the hotter summers we are now dealing with, it is fair to say that these trees will not flourish, are very likely struggle in the near future and so are not sustainable over the long term. Should this proposal be granted, at some point in the near future the residents of Saxted House will lose the benefit of these trees and a loss of amenity when the proposed house comes into view and its proximity is fully appreciated.

Building this close to the trees and garden wall does create problems for Saxted house and the rest of the site. When viewed from the entrance area, the current proposal will appear to be backed up against the treeline and garden wall of Saxted House and at the same time look too big or overdeveloped for the site. The proposed location also cuts off access between the northern section of the garden and the garden to the east of the site.

The previously approved location and layout made a positive feature of both gardens by allowing sight of the northern garden when entering the site and both gardens to be easily accessed from the house, or from each other. The distant view of the northern garden showed both the depth of the site and also emphasised the separation between Saxted house and the new building. The northern garden was accessible from a study and the eastern one from a conservatory. Both gardens were far more accessible and integrated with the house than the current proposal.

The interaction between house and gardens is a major feature of houses and landscapes designed in an Arts & Crafts architectural style. Unfortunately, in the current proposal the northern garden with its rare tree plantings seems to have been neglected.

3. The proposed development does not compare at all well to the scheme approved in 2003.

The current proposal fails in terms of its layout, and absence of information on materials and architectural details of the Arts & Crafts style it proposes to incorporate. The Heritage Statement is very thin and does not address the issue of the effect of the proposed house in this new position on the setting of Saxted House, or the Emsworth Conservation Area. The 2003 proposal showed an awareness of the sensitive issue of overlooking, proximity to Saxted House and privacy. These are planning considerations but need to be dealt with firmly, in bricks and mortar in order to be of equal and long term benefit to present and future neighbours.

The scale and location of the house in the 2003 permission to build provided far more privacy for Saxted House. (Please see visual on page 5.)

4. A 'semi-mature planting' against neighbouring wall may cause structural damage and the loss of significant natural light and amenity.'

I have already raised an objection to this feature on the previous planing app. no. 20/20142, please see my letter dated 11.09.20. Drawing no. **02** for the Site Layout of the this application still shows the legend 'semi-mature planting' against a line of eight unidentified trees alongside the flanking wall of no. 3 Orange Row.

However, drawing no. **02a** does not include the line of trees and has been described as 'amended' but this may be for other reasons that I cannot identify at the moment. Location Plan drawing no. 1A which is also described as 'amended' continues to show the location of the proposed planting. With this level of inaccuracy as I have no wish to leave anything to chance, I am outlining my concerns so they are also on record for this application.

While an owner is free to plant trees wherever they wish on their land without a need for planning permission, this is usually done on the basis that they are not likely to cause damage to neighbouring property, or a loss of amenity by blocking light, etc.

This many trees so close together and planted against the wall of 3 Orange Row will have the potential to cause structural problems for no. 3. During the hotter summers and warmer autuums that are expected these trees will compete for water which will in turn cause their root systems to extend their reach. The ground along the length of the flanking wall dries out during the summer months and in no. 3 there are internal cracks indicative of structural movement which have been attributed to the clay component in the ground.

The issue of access to light for the rear of these properties due to the lower level of the ground floor rooms compared to the site level on the other side of the boundary wall, must also be re-stated for this new application. Trees should not be planted to fill in the remaining gap on the boundary wall at the rear of no. 3. This gap currently allows morning light through to the ground floor rooms and the terraced gardens. Even the 1866 Ordnance Survey map shows a row of cottages in the same location which had the benefit of this amenity from over the same wall at the same location.

I am not persuaded that the current proposal will integrate well into the site and that its affect on Saxted House and its previously appoved companion building to the south will be detrimental. This means that the proposed scheme will not '*conserve and enhance the environment of a historic conservation area*' over the long term. (Source: NPPF, *Proposals affecting heritage assets, para 189, page 57*) historicengland.org.uk C9 "*Setting of Heritage Assets*")

I have no wish to see conflict between neighbours designed into a scheme, nor a building that might challenge the intent behind the creation of the Emsworth Conservation Area.

I would be very grateful if you could take these concerns into consideration.

Yours sincerely



Plan from page 2 of document titled 'Maps & Plans' relating to the 2003 planning permission granted for planning application ref.no. 03/53651/016', showing the architect's notes of various constraints and critical positions.

