

Comments to F/24/97874 56 Nichol Road

We received notice of this application for the neighbouring property to our north, have reviewed the submitted application and while sympathetic and supportive of the applicants to improve the accommodation at No.56 have the following comments to make re this application to achieve this:

1. The application is inconsistent re the trees at the front of No.54, our house.

In the arboriculture report it clearly states there are two substantial trees on No.54 at the front close to the boundary that need to be considered re RPA, works etc, yet only one is shown on the actual existing and proposed "elevations, floor plans and site layout plans".

Moreover, the tree types seem wrong.

- The large deciduous tree about 4.5m from the boundary (T1 in the arboriculture report, is a Sycamore (*Acer Pseudoplatanus*) not an Oak as shown on the house plans. The arboriculture report is right in this regard; however the report is incorrect re its comment re restricted access to assess the tree as the front garden is open to the pavement and all the arboriculturist needed to do was ask out of politeness. In fact Chris Hoare's team are our arboriculturalists and check the health of the trees when visiting for works.
- Forming a combined canopy to the North-East of the Sycamore (T1) is a substantial coniferous tree (T2 in the arboriculture report and not on the plans) and in 2018 Chris Hoare's firm produced an arboriculture report for our application stating this tree to be a Lawson Cypress 'Intertexta' (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana* 'Intertexta') not a Western Cedar per this application's arboriculture report. While we are not tree experts looking at online resources re tree form and habit the Lawson Cypress 'Intertexta' seems more likely.

The existing and especially proposed plans should show tree T2 to give a full perspective of its position etc to the development proposed especially as works are proposed in this application.

The proposed works consist of cutting back the evergreen coniferous tree to give 1.5m clearance at the corner of the proposed dwelling, which we believe aligns with the current southwest corner of the bungalow. This will necessitate cutting into the hardwood of the coniferous tree and rarely do coniferous trees grow new green growth in such circumstances and we believe from experience this tree does not grow new green growth. The net result will be a part of the tree with low amenity, especially for the occupants of No.56 from this brown deadwood area of the tree.

We believe any trimming to T2 or indeed T1, though none is currently proposed, should be the absolute bare minimum to ensure the ongoing health of the trees so consider the 1.5m to be an absolute maximum not a target and a condition to this effect is warranted.

- We note there is little or nothing said in the arboriculture report re mitigating any impacts of deep digging and/or piling necessary for the basement. After all this is a dwelling in what was and essentially is a woodland setting. Such deep digging will inevitably mean exposure of subsoil for prolonged periods during the build which will evaporate the moisture in the soil and impact the local water-table for the trees. There needs to be a condition re ensuring all measures are taken to avoid any impact to the

trees from such deep digging, e.g. length of time the subsoil is exposed to the air, time of year for the works etc.

- As an aside the application form states “no” to the question “are there trees on land adjacent to the development site that could influence the development or might be important as part of the local landscape character?” Clearly this is not a “no” it has to be a “yes” as the Sycamore and the Lawson Cypress on our site and probably others on No.77 Hocombe Road have TPOs, specific or Hampshire Woodland Orders.

2. The plans and arboriculture report seem to have omitted mention of the mature Acer Palmatum (likely a Dissectum) at the front of No.56 close to our common boundary and under the canopy of the Sycamore (T1 and Lawson Cypress (T2). This tree is beautiful when producing its leaves in Spring and especially its autumn colour. We cannot see any way to achieve the parking spaces shown in the plans towards the southern boundary without removing this Acer Palmatum. Yet is not mentioned nor listed as needing to be removed to build the proposed dwelling.

Further, we have concerns generally about the realisation of the drive and especially the parking for two cars towards the southern boundary, which necessitates removing significant amounts of soil, the grass and other plants etc from the frontage simply to provide space for two cars. For the health of trees T1 and T2 it is important the soil level is not impacted and the water available to them is not overly impacted by these works. Therefore the drive/parking needs to be very permeable to rainwater and the car standing level probably above the current lawn level with appropriate load spreading measures in place. Moreover while the arboriculture report states methods to mitigate impact when building a dwelling or drive there have been many examples of the actual building of the dwelling or drive not adhering to these. We are very concerned any root damage to T1 or T2 caused during the build may impact the health of the trees or worse destabilise them risking us or the occupants of No.56.

3. The ecology report is the one from the previous application for this property.

We noted then and now the report observed bats in the area but not emerging from or going into the property. We do not dispute this.

We believe bats were quite likely to have roosted in the old garage building at the back of No.56 which was covered in ivy etc with a roof structure that was likely to allow bats in. This garage was demolished when much of the back of the garden was cleared before the previous application.

Nonetheless bats can be often seen at dusk this time of year in our garden and whizzing up the gap between our home and No.56 as they head to the front. Where they roost, if indeed they do, at the front, e.g. in No.56 or the coniferous tree (T2 in the Arb report).

4. The description of the application seems wrong. Its stated as being a 1.5 storey yet in the Design and Access statement it says “about 1.5 stories”.

Our home is considered to be a two-storey house. Yet looking at the illustration of the street view axis and as proposed (see “Existing site and floor plans and elevations” it can be seen

that said “about 1.5 stories” has the roof ridge height about the same as our home. So at the very least this should be described as a 2-storey house and given what appears to be a basement it should be a 2 storey dwelling plus basement given the wording of the 2023 regs.

5. While the author of the design and access statement discusses contemporary design to justify this design the examples are all of like/similar dwellings. Other extensions and re-builds have been much more sympathetic to the surrounding dwellings, the local environment, etc. It's a shame this isn't a little more sympathetic to the legacy of buildings in Nichol Road, Randall Road etc which were built about the same time especially in the light of the special planning considerations in the Character Area appraisals covering Nichol Road, and given its proximity to Hocombe Road those for Hocombe Road as well.
6. The size of ground floor depth adjacent to our home seems both the same depth and the same distance from the boundary.

However, the current bungalow roof does not impede on the gap between the Nos. 54 and 56 whereas the proposal for No.56 shows an eaves overhang of about 0.6m, i.e. very close to the gap from No.56 to the common shared boundary. This causes three problems.

- It will be nigh on impossible for No.56 to service the southern side of their house, e.g. to remove leaf litter which will inevitably collect from the two significant trees to the front, T1 (Sycamore) and T2 (Lawson Cypress), from No.56 and challenging to do so from our side with our consent especially as there is a 6ft panelled fence on our side of the boundary, this is not the boundary.
 - It will be nigh on impossible to build the proposed No.56 as there will be negligible room between the roof and any scaffolding erected solely on No.56 for the purposes of building the house. We regret to say having scaffolding on our property to facilitate the build of the proposed No.56 has not been asked for nor will we want to give it as our only realistic access between our front and back garden is via this northern side gap as the gap between our southern wall and boundary is not dissimilar to that of No.56 to its southern boundary and we took great care to ensure the design of our extension permitted it being built without having scaffolding on our neighbours property thereby impacting their amenity. This northern access to our back garden is used daily especially as we have not yet completed some aspects of our build and have some garden remodelling to do and so this access must be unimpeded. At the very least there needs to be a condition re preserving this access unimpeded by scaffolding, bracing etc.
7. The southern elevation of the proposed dwelling is much higher than the existing bungalow wall, the new height to eaves being c.4m to the lowest part of the roof facing towards us. The proposed wall has two windows on the first floor and one on the ground floor.

We wish to make the following comments re this.

- All the windows and especially those on the first floor on the southern wall should be obscured and not openable in such a way as our amenity from the rear of our house is not compromised.

- The wall material is not clearly defined; all the plans show is a different shading pattern for the first floor than either the roof or ground floor. Today the wall is a dull well weathered yellowish coloured brick and does not glare in the sunlight. We note the application states materials of brick and render. Whichever of these is used to build the southern elevation we would appreciate it not being a “white” or light render, as this will glare dreadfully in bright sunlight and impact our amenity and the reflected light on the planting in the garden. Brick for all the elevations would be more consistent with Chandlers Ford’s heritage of being a source of clay-based building products, e.g. bricks and tiles
 - The roof material is stated as being slate. Slate seems to feature on a number of recent applications yet this material is often imported slate, e.g. Spanish, rather than Welsh or other British slate, e.g. Delabole. Yet again this does not play to Chandlers Ford’s heritage of clay tiles. While not particularly liking the colour of slate the most significant issue is slate chattering in the wind, subsequent cracking, breaking and slipping and we have a substantial greenhouse at risk from any wind-blown slates. Clay tiles are much less likely to shatter or be conveyed in the wind in the same way. The southern roof is going to be the part of the roof taking the worst of the predominantly SW winds.
8. We commend the intent re sustainability and the environment, e.g. solar PV and air-source heat-pumps.

We note the basement has a plant room and our reading of the plans is that the basement is under the northern half of the proposed dwelling. However we cannot see on the plans a proposed location for the air-source heat pumps. We request they are not sited in such a way as to impact our amenity, ie close to our shared boundary. We understand air-source heat pumps are not permitted within 1m of the of the boundary under permitted development and request the same condition applies for this application if Eastleigh Council decide to permit this or a subsequently updated application for reasons or protecting our amenity.

9. We commend the applications stated intent to reestablish the biodiversity in the garden. Perhaps this intent becoming a condition should Eastleigh planning decide on a Permit for this or a subsequently updated application.

To recap. While sympathetic to the desires of the current owners of No.56 to improve the accommodation at No.56 there are aspects of this proposal which we find need addressing. Some are administrative, for example having a complete arboriculture report, list of proposed works, the plans actually showing all the relevant trees etc. Some more impactful to our amenity and so need to be addressed as changes or conditions, e.g. materials on the southern elevation, obscured glazing etc to protect our amenity and unimpeded access to our rear garden during any subsequent build by virtue of scaffolding etc.