

## **Comments on Planning Application No. WSCC/055/20**

We wish to comment on this Planning Application as immediate neighbours on the northern boundary of the proposed development.

### **1. Overall Planning Design**

At the outset, we would wish to state that we recognise the existing facilities for Woodland Meed College are outdated and in urgent need of total replacement rather than any minor tinkering with existing facilities.

We believe the proposed building is too close to our property and too intrusive on our view.

However, we remain unconvinced that given the individual component elements for a new building & the constraints of the slope of the land, for example, on wheelchair navigability on level flooring, that the planned overall building & external facilities had to be put together in such a way as to be in such close proximity to the private properties to the north of the proposal.

### **2. Retaining wall to the north of the proposed development**

We wish the retaining wall on the northern edge of the development to be a minimum of 4 metres from the boundary fence of Conifers & Appletree Cottage along its full length.

The design brings the retaining wall closer to our fence line in order to accommodate a sprinkler tank and pump, which we wish to be located elsewhere.

We have been advised that a green hedge will be planted on a supporting framework close to our boundary but this is not confirmed in the Application as to precise location & nature. It is also not confirmed that the retaining wall will incorporate drainage at its base to prevent any hindrance to water draining off our land.

We remain concerned about any adverse impact on the silver birch in our garden & any intrusion into the Root Protection Area both during and after construction has been completed. It is of little reassurance to learn that an arborologist will be on site during construction to guard against damage & believe that prevention (in design) is better than cure (stopping at the first sign of damage).

We have also been informed that a tree will be planted close to the south east corner of our property but do not know the precise location, species, size or any possible impact on mains sewerage on our property that runs parallel to the fence line, some 4-5 metres away from the south east corner of our property.

### **3. Electricity Substation**

An electricity substation is planned next to the northeast corner of our property.

Access from Birchwood Grove Road to the substation is planned, requiring part of the long hedge running from the north east corner of our property to the exit from the school to be removed. It would create an eyesore, especially to facing properties.

We believe a better siting for a substation with 24 hour access without the need to destroy any hedging would be adjacent to the existing exit from the school, between the school gates and Birchwood Grove Road, there exists adequate space behind the existing hedge line.

As an alternative, we do note that there is already a substation, presumably supplying both Birchwood Grove School & the existing Woodlands Meed College, to the northeast of the

planned development, north of Birchwood Grove School and adjacent to a public footpath/bridleway. It appears to have plenty of room for upgrading, and already has 24 hour access for emergency access.

We would also bring to your attention that Birchwood Grove Road has an overhead electrical supply to domestic properties and could not support a further supply to a substation, should that be the route of mains supply. This road has recently been resurfaced and is currently the subject of a Road Protection Order, preventing any digging up other than for an emergency.

We have pointed out that on the other side of our drive on that corner, close to the proposed siting, we have a TPO protected, 200 year old, 120/130 foot high Macrocarpus tree. We are concerned about any impact on the Root Protection Area.

In short, we believe the proposed siting for a substation is unsuitable, unsightly and that an alternative location could be found.

4. Hydrotherapy Pool

There is planned to be a hydrotherapy pool on the ground floor immediately to the south of our property. We note that the planning application makes no mention of the method of water treatment. If it were to be chlorine based then we would have major concerns about general odour issues as well as safety issues regarding the storage of any chlorine cylinders.

5. Site access to construction traffic

Finally, we understand that there is a plan to control construction traffic both onto & exiting the proposed development. Birchwood Grove Road must have a total ban on any construction traffic. There must be a total ban on construction traffic during the start and end of the school day so that parents can have ease of access to the existing schools, both on foot and by car. Neighbouring properties to the access route should not be subject to any on-street parking bans.

We trust the Council will take due note of our comments and would welcome the opportunity for any further discussion.

Brian & Ann Austin  
Conifers  
Birchwood Grove Road  
BURGESS HILL  
West Sussex  
RH15 0DN