



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2025

by **John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/T0355/D/25/3372845

Oakwood, Broomfield Park, Sunningdale, Ascot, Windsor and Maidenhead, SL5 0JS

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Tom Gale against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
 - The application Ref is 25/00866.
 - The development proposed is the erection of boundary fence with associated external landscaping.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the area, including upon a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to a detached dwelling occupying a corner location on the inside of a ninety-degree turn along Broomfield Park, a leafy residential suburb comprising an eclectic mix of detached homes set in large plots. The side return boundary to the appeal property is currently marked by an evergreen hedge adjacent to a grass verge. There are two oak trees immediately adjacent to the boundary on the verge, one of which is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO 51 of 2006). Both trees appeared to me to be healthy and in good condition, contributing positively to the verdant qualities and leafy character of the area. The proposal seeks to remove the existing hedge and to erect a 2m high length of close-boarded fencing along the side return set back 500mm from the boundary, with laurel hedging planted in front.
4. The proposal would replicate an arrangement which currently exists to the side boundary of the neighbouring plot to the rear at Tudor House. I saw for myself an approximate 2m high close boarded fence shrouded by mature laurel hedging immediately to the back edge of the grass verge. I have no reason to doubt that a similar arrangement at Oakwood would provide an equivalent form of enclosure that would be in-keeping with the verdant character and semi-rural feel of the area.
5. However, retention of existing important landscape features and the implementation and upkeep of a successful hedge planting scheme would be essential in order to maintain the character and appearance of the area. In this

regard I share the Council's concern that the application details are sparse and sketchy.

6. The appellant points to the use of spiked supports for the fence posts. The suggestion is that around five of these would be likely inserted within an estimated 10m length of the root protection area (RPA) for the preserved oak tree. I note the intention to bridge the fence over any roots but, in the absence of any technical and professional supporting evidence, I am unable to conclude with confidence that the health and wellbeing of the tree would be unaffected. I have similar concerns relating to the smaller oak tree positioned nearer towards the appeal site's rear boundary. Any harm to either of these trees would be damaging to the character and appearance of the area.
7. Turning to the hedge planting, there are no details of any planting schedule or maintenance programme. Again, without technical and professional advice, I cannot be certain that planting could be successfully undertaken within the space proposed, including adjacent to and within the RPA's of the oak trees. Neither can I be certain that planting would take place to an appropriate density in order to achieve a successful screen.
8. I have considered the imposition of conditions requiring an arboricultural impact assessment and planting schedule to be submitted to and approved by the Council. However, these elements are fundamental to the proposed boundary fence's successful assimilation into the street scene. Given this, I do not consider it would be appropriate to grant a planning permission with conditions.
9. Based on the information before me, I am not satisfied the erection of a boundary fence would not impact the health of nearby trees, including one covered by a TPO, or that it would be adequately screened from any adverse impact upon the verdant character and appearance of the area. As such, there would be conflict with Policies QP3 and NR3 of the Council's Borough Local Plan adopted in 2022 and Policies NP/DG1 and NP/EN2 of the Ascot, Sunninghill & Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2026, adopted in 2014. Between them these seek to ensure development displays a high quality of design that, amongst other things, respects and enhances the local character of the environment, including the retention and protection of trees and landscaping.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR