

Notes on the full email exchange between the resident/applicant and Sarah Lacey, Wirral Council Planning Officer.

The email exchange is presented in reverse chronological order. The following notes summarise that exchange and highlight significant emails and notable anomalies.

Pages 61 – 110 (often referred to throughout these pages as the 50+ page report) is the Applicant's substantial response to the planning officer's objections (to the first set of plans) which she sent to him on Tue, 5 Mar 2024 at 14. This report is dated 12th April 2024. Of particular note, is that much of the document is spent in responding to the neighbours objections, and that their behaviours are consistent with the racist behaviours as laid out in John Barne's book "The Uncomfortable Truth about Racism" and a Guardian article "Why I no longer speak to White People about Race" by Reni Eddo-Lodge, a detailed description of the tree incident, along with the neighbour slamming the door in the faces of his wife and three year old mixed race girl when they went to discuss the planning.

He adds on the 7th of March," I corresponded with the planning officer to acknowledge and agree to her proposed time extension. I highlighted our eagerness to engage with any objectors", yet none came forward and still haven't to this day with the arguable exception of two people on the day the council's contractors came to make the tree safe much later in 2024. This is covered in other parts of these pages, but a quick re-cap - a male from a block of flats who told him that "we don't like your sort around here" and the lady with the baby who stated that she had come to stop the applicant's contractors from cutting the tree down" on behalf of the owner", but then she refused to look at the two tree reports saying the tree was dying, decaying, hollow, couldn't sustain its own weight and at 90ft high was potentially fatally dangerous, nor the email from the Council that the land the tree was on was unregistered and therefore the council had a responsibility to make it safe and no one "owned" it. She also declined the applicant's offer to email her the two tree reports and the council email, all in front of witnesses.

Throughout the email exchange from March to November, you will see that the applicant agrees to the Planning Officer's request for a time extension on many occasions and regularly.

On Friday, April 12, 2024 4:34 PM an email from the applicant refers to two letters of support which are included in his document. Other neighbours and associates also told the applicant they sent in letters of support, but the Planning Officer's final reports clearly states that only one was sent in, and the Freedom of Information (FOI)

response only show the 2nd page of the support letter from the Labour Lord.

On April 22, 2024, 10:35 AM an email to the Planning Officer confirms their on site meeting on Tuesday 30th with the architect, along with the applicant confirming the planning officer's request for an additional extension.

He also adds "I would be useful to have your thoughts on a compromise before our meeting so that we can think about these before we meet. Our main requirements for the extension are: A first floor kitchen / dining / family room as the existing one is not large enough to support a property that has 6 bedrooms. First floor as it benefits from the views for a room where most of the time is spent. This isn't the only what I would call 'design flaw' in the existing property which I'm trying to address with the extension.

A 'balanced roof' as outlined in the proposal. The current roofline is positively 'ugly'

And the Planning Officer replies Monday, April 22, 2024 11:28

Thanks for confirming our site visit date and EOT, I will see you and James next week. It would be very helpful if you could provide a set of drawings for our meeting, thank you.

I am happy with the proposed pitched roof above the existing flat roof. I am also open to the potential of this roof space incorporating front and rear dormer windows if the design is appropriate, but please be aware new additions to the proposal would require further neighbour notification.

If you wish to amend the plans, we need to reduce the scale and proximity of the extension to the south boundary, to significantly lessen the impact on the rear garden and windows of Ashlar. If the proposal was single-storey I think the proposal would likely be acceptable in close proximity, but I need to see amended plans before I can confirm this. This staggered appearance would also appear more acceptable when viewed from the street scene, similar to the CGI image from Shack Architecture you included in your representation (pg. 26).

If you require additional first-floor space I would suggest exploring the potential for a 1.5 storey side extension which is set approximately 5m off the boundary to achieve the 14m separation distance, reducing to single-storey to the rear of the property. This would reduce the overbearing impact to the neighbouring garden, again I would need to see amended plans before I can confirm this is acceptable. Balconies are acceptable if you can demonstrate there is no additional overlooking to neighbours.

Alternatively, a two-storey or three-storey extension to the rear of the existing property is another option you may wish to consider as there are good separation distances to the property to the rear.

You also have the option of appealing the current scheme as submitted whilst concurrently submitting a second smaller proposal, we can discuss all this at our

meeting next week.”

When the Planning Officer meets with the applicant and his architect on site, this is exactly what they all agree to, and this is measured and marked with pegs. The distances between the extension and the neighbouring property referred to in the email exchange called Ashlar is measured with an electronic device and the Planning Officer is happy with the separation distances, as indeed is the architect.

Also worth a mention is that as the Planning Officer was leaving, the applicant mentioned that the neighbours had recently been cutting down the hedging between their two properties, providing visibility between the two rear gardens where previously there was none as the hedging was thick. He thought it strange as these neighbours are averse to this type of work and mentioned two instances where they asked or had other neighbours cut their hedges for them (himself being one of them). He took a video of the cutting of these hedges which also contains metadata in the form of date and time the video was taken and the geo location i/e GPS location where it was taken from. The Planning Officer said she didn't need this video. This is highly relevant when you read the notes on the Planning Officer's final report.

You will note that throughout the remainder of the email exchange that the Planning Officer makes numerous requests to the applicant and his architect, mostly just minor changes etc. All of which, they agree to, in order to get her design and specification passed.

It is undisputable that the second set of plans that are submitted are the design and specification that the Planning Officer has specified.

Throughout the remainder of the email exchange, you will note that the Planning Officer stating on 10 separate occasions that specific items are need by the Planning Committee. They include phrase such as “the planning committee will want to see this and that” and “this is needed for the planning committee” etc.

These dates / times and contents of these are as follows:

- In an email from Sarah, on April 17, 2024 11:46:47, Sarah emails “... Because of the elections there is no Planning Committee in May, the next available Committee date is 6th June.
- On July 3, 2024 5:44 PM, Sarah emails “I can argue in the Committee report....”
- On 05 September 2024 16:47, Sarah emails “... as we have discussed that I am happy to recommend for approval to the next available Planning Committee (7th November 2024) following a second public consultation”.
- On September 10, 2024 4:11:18 PM, Sarah emails “I’ll renotify the neighbours and we’ll take the application to November Planning Committee with a recommendation for approval (the final decision will lie with Planning Committee).

- On 25 Sept 2024 at 11:42 she emails “I need to send the neighbour letters out today to meet the Committee closing deadline”
- On, 25 Sep 2024 at 17:04, Sarah emails “I’ve changed the description and TSU are in the process of sending out the neighbour letters, so we are still on track for November Committee”
- On October 1, 2024 9:31 AM Sarah emails “Thank you James [Architect]. The neighbour letters went out last week so we can still make the November Committee. No further comments received yet”
- On October 14, 2024 12:23:40 PM Sarah emails “Committee closing is this week and I need to have all the information together by Wednesday 16th October at the latest. Thank you.
- Also, on 14 Oct 2024 at 14:19 Sarah emails “In my committee report I have to summarise all the representations received”
- On 15 Oct 2024 at 12:02 Sarah emails “Committee will want to know the distance from the boundary”

You will note that throughout the entire email exchange there are no references to any destination other than the committee. Apart from the on-site visit with the architect present, all communications are via email.

It is undisputable that the documented and clear intention for the final decision was the Planning Committee, so why didn’t it get there?

You will also read that the applicant and his architect concede to all the requests that the Planning Officer makes throughout the entirety of the email exchange

Note the **significant** email from the Planning Officer to the applicant Tuesday, September 10, 2024 4:11:18 PM

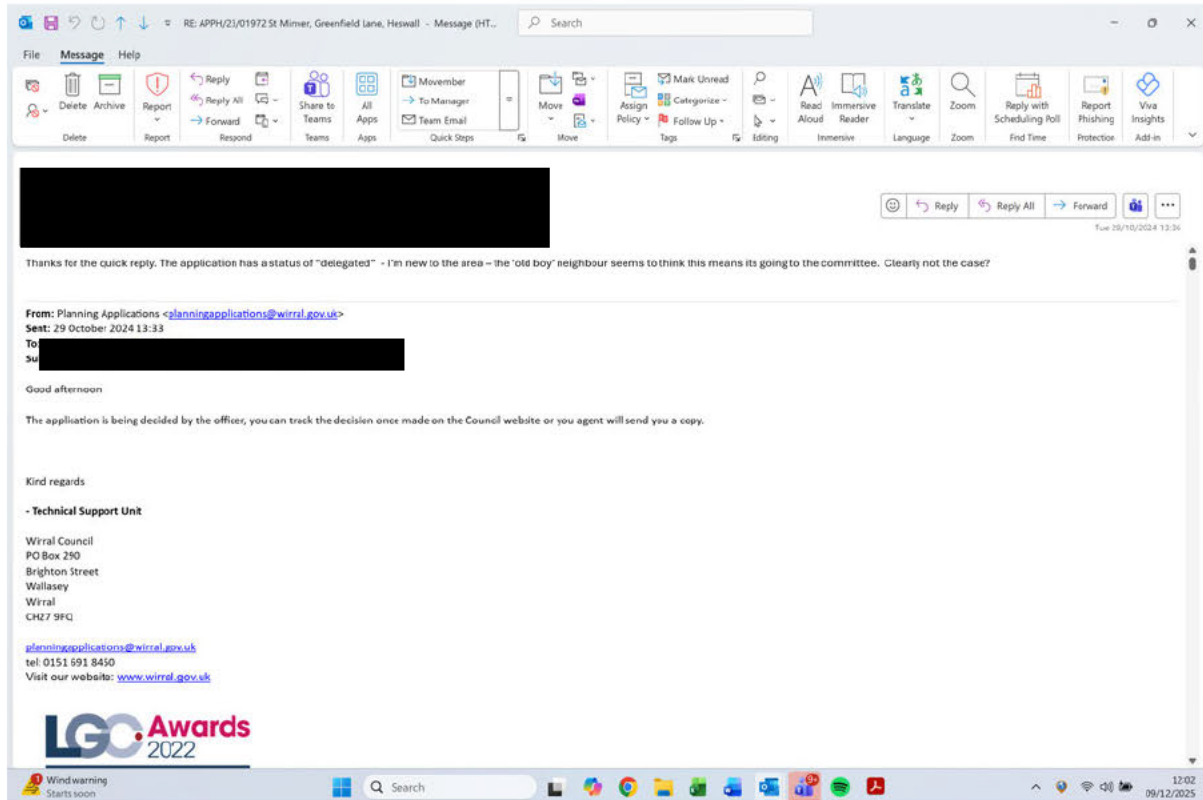
Thanks for your email and keeping me updated. Please send me the drawings and if I consider they comply with the policy and I can support the amended scheme I’ll renotify the neighbours and **we’ll take the application to November Planning Committee with a recommendation for approval (the final decision will lie with Planning Committee)**. I’ll provide feedback as soon as possible.

For the purpose of absolute clarity – she has confirmed that she is recommending her own plans and that they are destined for the Planning Committee.

Note the email sent to the Planning Officer on Tuesday, October 29, 2024 1:26 PM from the applicant which states “I’ve been told by the neighbour (looking at the planning portal) that we have been awarded the privilege of a full planning committee hearing. Could you let me know the location and the time so I can attend. Would I be

right in thinking that I get an opportunity to speak”.

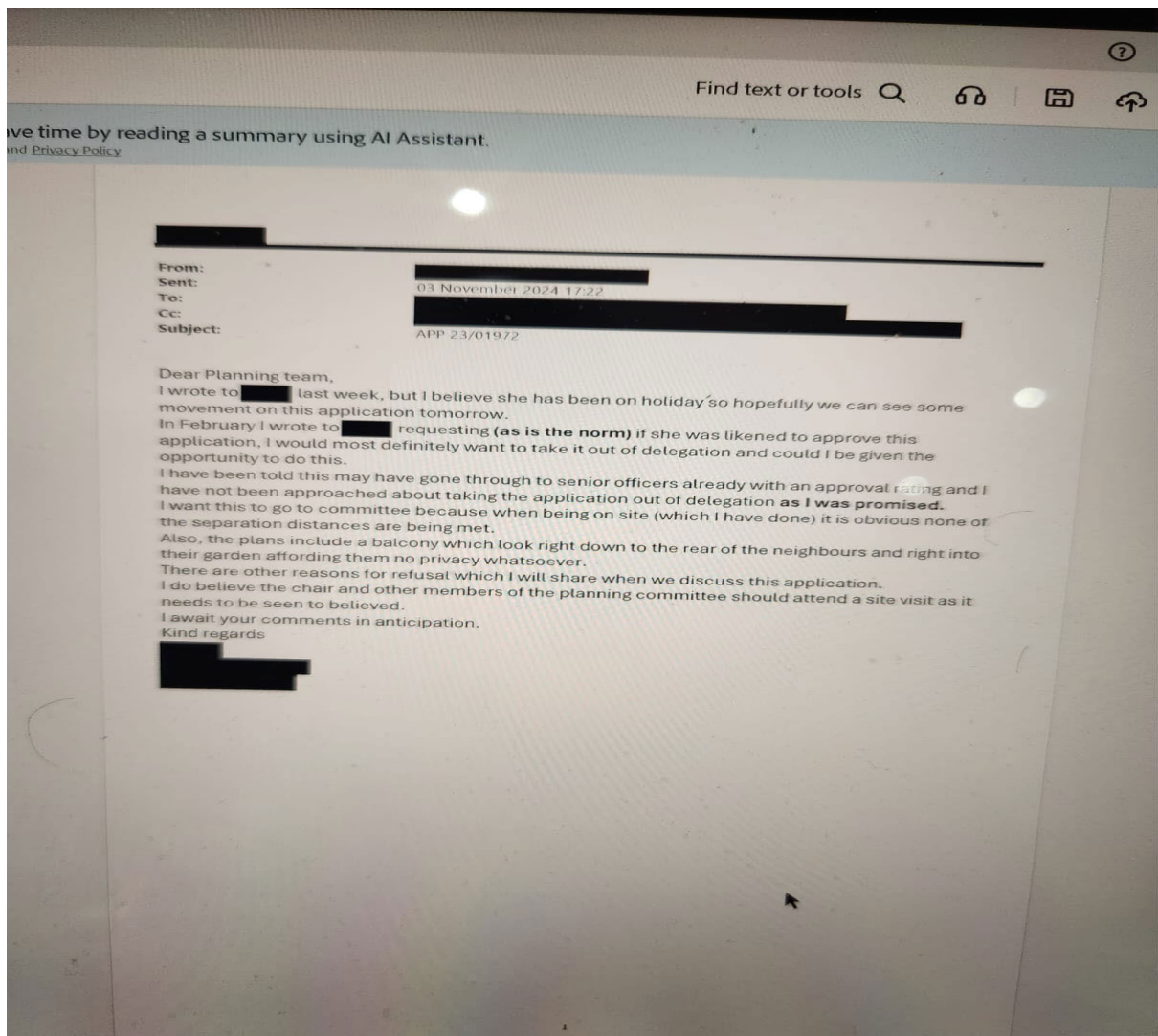
The Applicant receives an “out of office” from the Planning Officer advising to email The Planning Team Group email address, which he duly does and he gets the following response.



In summary at this point – apart from all of the other evidence you will read about on these pages, The planning officer states on Tuesday, September 10, 2024 4:11:18 PM (Page 23) that she is recommending her own plans for approval, and that its going to the Committee.

The Wirral Council Planning Portal then shows its status of delegated which the Planning Team in their email above dated 29th October confirms the status of delegated means the planning officer will decide on her own plans.

This should now be straightforward – the planning officer will now decide on whether to approve or reject her own plans that she has stated on Sept 10th 2024 that she is recommending for approval. So what has happened?



This is what happened. You will read about this in more detail in the FOI response notes. It is an email from Cllr Hodson (received from Wirral Council in a reply to a Freedom of Information Request). The email was sent by Cllr Hodson on Sunday evening of 3rd November, evidencing him seriously and significantly interfering with what should be a regulated and democratic planning process. The email was run through sentiment analysis software.

The analysis returned a highly coercive rating, with elevated scores for authority leveraging, entitlement posture, pressure, and guilt or moral pressure. These linguistic markers are consistent with an individual actively using perceived status and power to influence or obtain a preferred outcome, as well as to exert procedural and interpersonal pressure on decision-makers to steer results away from normal regulatory processes.

And yes, this is the same Cllr Hodson that conspired with the same applicant's neighbour to lie about the tree's ownership and leave a potentially fatally dangerous 90ft high tree in place despite having a report on how dangerous it was and knowing that it was the Council's responsibility to cut it down and make it safe.

When The Planning Officer returns from her holiday (assume Monday 4th or 5th November) she is clearly unlikely to be aware of the above email exchange between the applicant and the Group Planning team re delegated status and that the applicant now knows she is to make the final decision on the her own application, she emails the applicant on Tuesday, November 5, 2024 10:14:49 AM "I'm sorry, the Principal Planning Officer who was to present your application at Committee considers the amendments you have made do not go far enough to address the concerns of scale and the impact on the neighbours and the character of the street scene. As such the application will not be heard at Planning Committee." Shortly afterwards the application on the planning portal has a status of rejected.

This explanation, based on the evidence above, is demonstrably untruthful - the status of the application was delegated so at this point, it wasn't going to the planning committee anyway, and we know from the Planning Group email that it was her decision. Yet she responds untruthfully to the applicant. Over one year later and despite numerous communications with the CEO, Paul Satoor and despite two FOI requests, the applicant has still not had the following questions answered.

1. Is the Planning Committee aware of the circumstances of this application, the fact that they were denied the opportunity to fulfil their function along with the conduct of the so-called review.
2. What is the name and title of the person who made the decision that the plans would not go to the Committee.
3. What was that person's legal authority to block the official process and what was their documented rationale.
4. What is the name and title of the person who made the decision to reject the Planning Officer's designs and specified plans.

Email correspondence between Sarah Lacey, Council Planning Officer , Applicant and Architect between 5th March 2024 and November 5th

From:

Sent: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 12:40 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>;

Subject: Re:

Sarah, these are not my plans, they are your plans...we've gone along with everything you have asked us to and you've stated all along that these meet planning policies and guidelines .

It's a bit late now with 2 days before the decision where we have given you extensions on multiple occasions to be telling us that the principal planning officer isn't

synchronised with your own plans, policies and guidelines.

I think you should show the principle planning officer the entirety of the email trail between us so he can satisfy himself that these are your plans and not mine.

I think we should be given further extension to consider our options having now been told by you with just 2 days to go that the councils own planning officer's plans are not going to be approved by their colleagues in the very same planning department. Can you give me his / her name and email address and tel.no. so I can communicate with him / her directly.

Btw the racism that we have suffered throughout the tree incident has now been picked up by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] an AlJazeera / Sunday times / world in action (and others). investigative journalist [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

You may recall that I did say to you, my write up of the tree issue was not just for the purpose of responding to the objectors . I'm sure [REDACTED] will also be most interested in this last minute U turn which gives us no time to react.

I look forward to receiving the principal planners details

Thanks and regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 10:14:49 AM

To:

Subject: RE:

,

RE:

I'm sorry, the Principal Planning Officer who was to present your application at Committee considers the amendments you have made do not go far enough to address the concerns of scale and the impact on the neighbours and the character of the streetscene. As such the application will not be heard at Planning Committee and will likely be refused under delegation this week. This will then give you the opportunity to appeal the decision (as both schemes have gone through public consultation the Inspector is likely to be able to consider both proposals), the details will be on your decision notice.

Kind regards,
Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Tuesday, October 29, 2024 1:26 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>;

Subject: RE:

Sarah,

I've been told by the neighbour (looking at the planning portal) that we have been awarded the privilege of a full planning committee hearing.

Could you let me know the location and the time so I can attend. Would I be right in thinking that I get an opportunity to speak .

Regards,

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 October 2024 12:20
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE:

Thank you, I confirm I'm happy they correspond.
Sarah

From:

Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2024 12:14 PM
To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>
Cc: ;

Subject: Re:

There you go

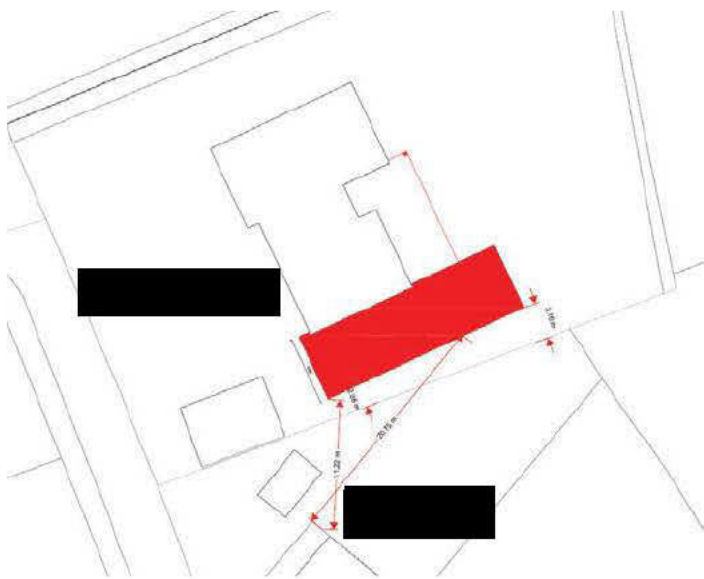
Both are the same now, as per site location plan

Thanks

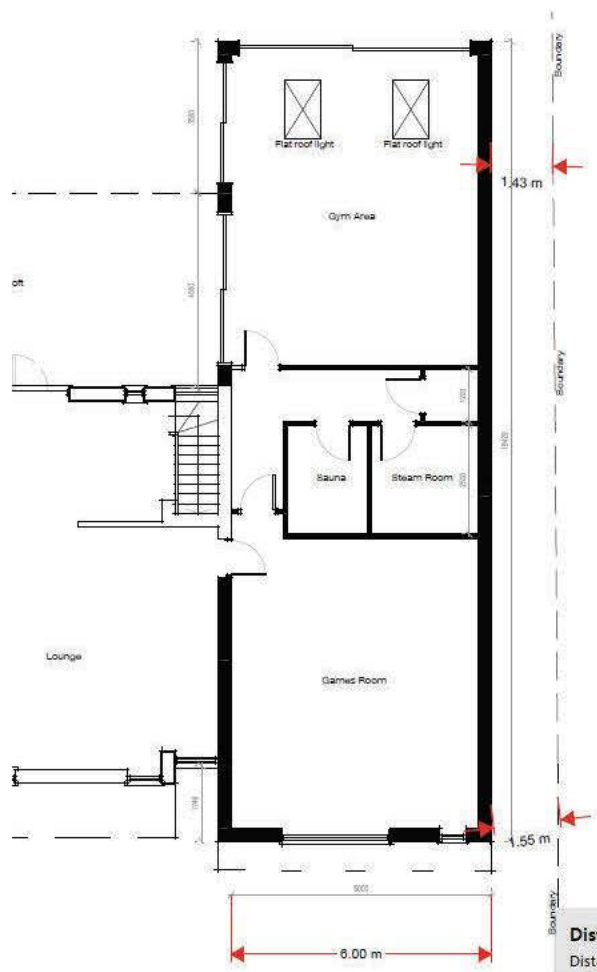
On Tue, 15 Oct 2024 at 12:02, Lacey, Sarah C.

<sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:

Thanks . On the site plan it shows the side extension is 2m away from the boundary, becoming 3m further down the garden.



But the proposed floorplan shows it to be 1.5 – 1.4m



Committee will want to know the distance from the boundary and the plans need to be consistent, please can you confirm the distance and send an amended drawing today so the distances match and I can put this in my report. Thank you.

Kind regards,
Sarah

From:

Sent: Tuesday, October 15, 2024 10:43 AM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: Re:

Morning Sarah How does this look ?

I've tried to depict the terrace area on it also

Happy to alter it today if you need me to

Thanks

On Mon, 14 Oct 2024 at 14:19, Lacey, Sarah C.

<sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:

Thank you, tomorrow morning for the drawing would be fine.

I've received 2 additional objections to say they object to the amended scheme. In my committee report I have to summarise all the representations received, I will list the objections from the first and second consultations separately. The report will be made public to view on the Wirral Council website on 31 October

<https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=157&MId=11344>

Kind regards,
Sarah

From:

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2024 1:48 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>;

Subject: Re:

Hi Sarsh,

will reply with the drawings.

By representation, do you mean objections ? And the obvious question is do people have to re object as this is a revised application and very different to the original one.

Thanks and regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Monday, October 14, 2024 12:23:40 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Good afternoon,

RE:

Further to my last email, apologies if you have already sent the requested site plan (updated to show the amended footprint, with a scale bar, and measurements on the drawing if possible) but I cannot find it in my emails.

Committee closing is this week and I need to have all the information together by Wednesday 16th October at the latest. Thank you.

Only 2 additional representations have been received following the second consultation, no additional issues raised.

Kind regards,
Sarah

From: Lacey, Sarah C.

Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2024 9:31 AM

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Thank you The neighbour letters went out last week so we can still make the November Committee. No further comments received yet.

Sorry one last thing, please could you provide an updated site plan showing the amended footprint of the extension. If you could send it me tomorrow I'll make sure it's uploaded. Thank you.

Kind regards,
Sarah

From:

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 5:17 PM
To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>
Cc:

Subject: Re:

Hi Sarah

Yes the description is fine

Thanks

On Wed, 25 Sep 2024 at 17:04, Lacey, Sarah C.

<sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:

I've changed the description and TSU are in the process of sending out the neighbour letters, so we are still on track for November Committee.

Thanks both for your help.

Kind regards,
Sarah

From: Lacey, Sarah C.

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 4:30 PM

To:

Subject: RE:

Thanks the plans now scale and I'll upload them now.

We need to agree an amended description, I suggest the following:

Proposed second floor roof extension with front and rear gables and balcony to front. Pitch roof above existing first floor flat roof. 1.5-storey extension to front, side and rear with first floor balcony to front elevation. First floor balcony to rear elevation and single-storey rear extensions (AMENDED DESCRIPTION AND AMENDED PLANS RECEIVED).

Please can either of you confirm this is acceptable, thank you.

Kind regards,
Sarah

From:

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 4:03 PM

To:

Cc: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Subject: Re:

This is the best I can do being put under extreme pressure like this

On Wed, 25 Sept 2024 at 15:55,
wrote:

Roof lanterns are fine.

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From:

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 4:38:18 PM

To:

Cc: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>;

Subject: Re:

Just canceled my job I'm going home to do it now

On Wed, 25 Sep 2024 at 15:35,
wrote:

Sarah please call me urgently

On Wed, 25 Sep 2024 at 15:32,

wrote:

Hi Sarah

I'm sorry I'm not home at the moment and I will not be home until about 7pm

Can I get them over first thing tomorrow?

Thanks

On Wed, 25 Sep 2024 at 15:14, Lacey, Sarah C.

<sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:

I'm happy with the principle of option B which reduces the bulk of the extension if we can condition the flat roof is not to be used as a balcony (you could annotate the drawing or include a roof lantern to demonstrate it won't be used as a sitting out area).

But I cannot accept the option B drawings as when I scale them they do not correspond – the floorplans show a 18.5m projection and the elevation measures 16.3m. Option A showed a 14.9m projection – I consider this the maximum projection acceptable.

In addition the roof plan doesn't show the proposed flat roof, please include this.

Please can you send me one set of complete plans (to scale with the dimensions shown, the correct roof plans and the “not balcony” and north/south/east/west annotations). I need to leave the office at 4pm today so I need them in the next 30 minutes please so I can check the dimensions scale before I upload them.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | e: sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | w:
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 2:44 PM

To:

Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Subject: Re:

Sarah, ignore option a, we are submitting b..the one that you are happy with .

Sorry for any confusion

Regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From:

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 2:13:43 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: Re:

Hi Sarah

Please see attached revised proposed elevations, sorry the side elevation had been drawn slightly incorrect

Also with regards to that area to the front you have outlined in green, this is not a dormer its just the front façade of the main body of the house, the vertical line drawn on shouldn't of been there

As I'm sure you can appreciate its a tricky building to draw !

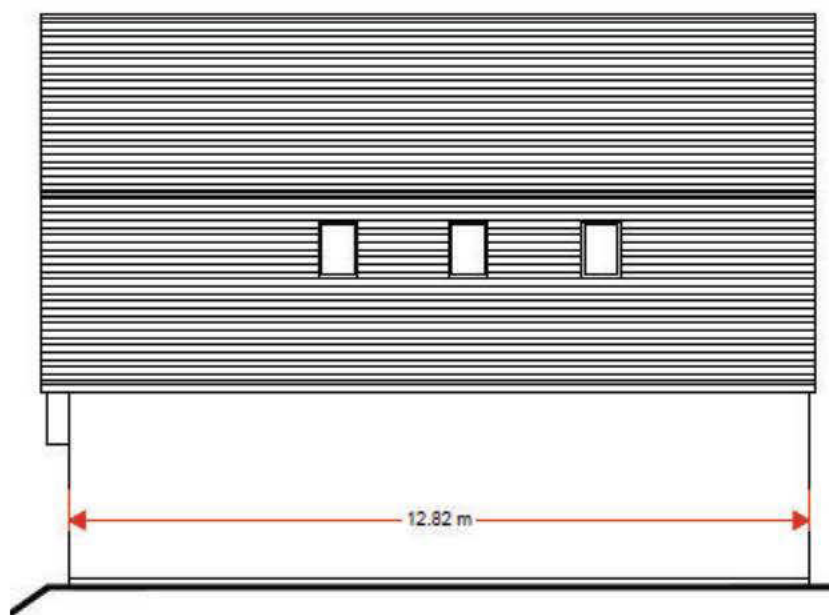
Thanks

Regards

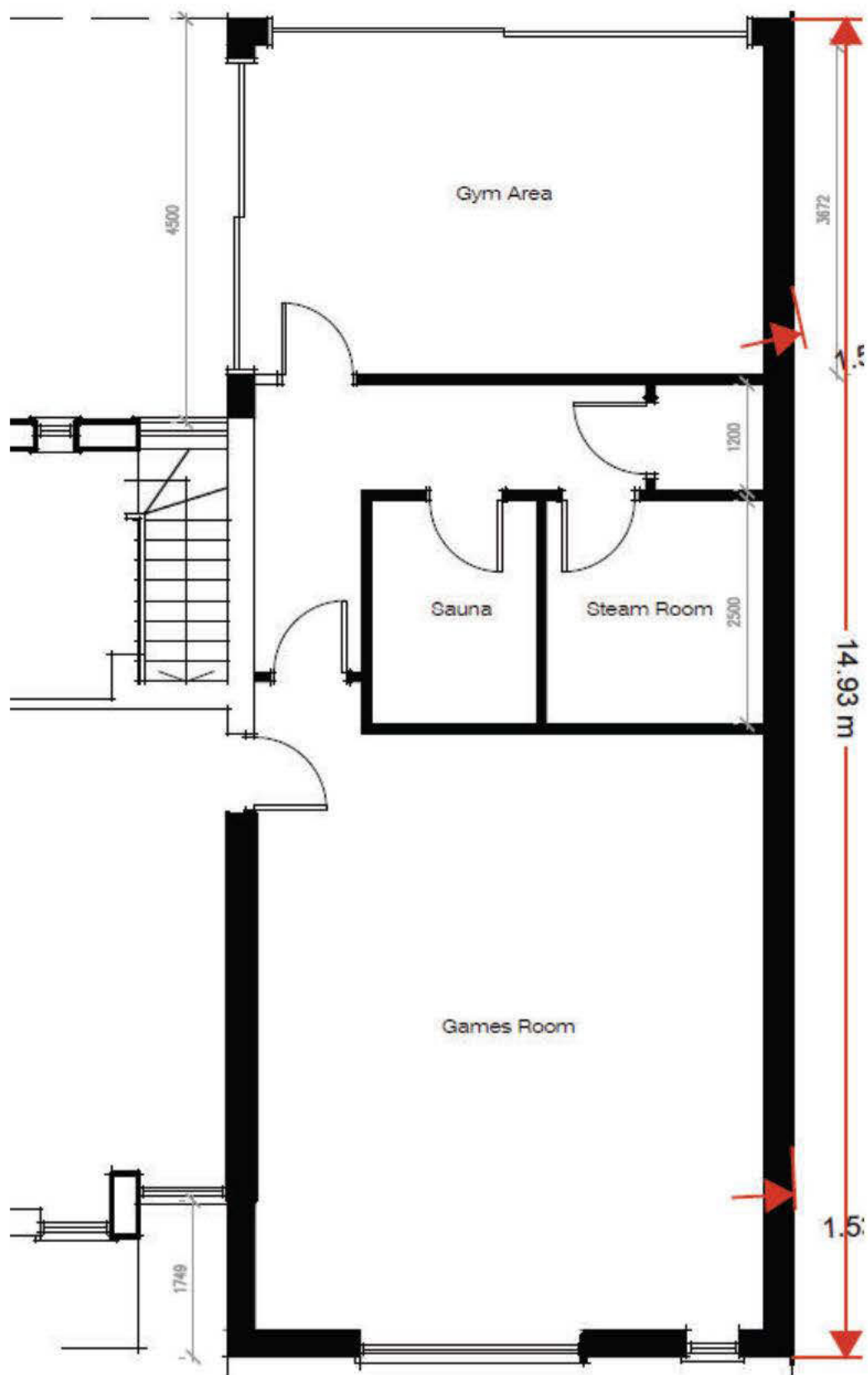
On Wed, 25 Sept 2024 at 12:46, Lacey, Sarah C.
<sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:
Thanks ,

Option A looks acceptable but when I measure the drawings the elevations and floorplans are not corresponding.

The length of the extension differs by 2m – measuring 14.93m on the floorplan and 12.82m on the elevation. Please can you ensure all plans correspond and it would be helpful if you show the dimensions and the north/south/east/west facing to make it clear to neighbours/Members. Thanks.



Proposed Side Elevation



There is also this triangle but the roof plan doesn't show a dormer, please can you clarify.



Kind regards,
Sarah

From:

Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 11:57 AM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

;

Subject: Re:

Hi Sarah/

Here is both options

Thanks

On Wed, 25 Sept 2024 at 11:42, Lacey, Sarah C.

<sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:

Good morning,

RE:

I've not received the amended plans yet. I need to send the neighbour letters out today to meet the Committee closing deadline.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing

Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**

www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 7:14 AM

To:

Cc: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>;

Subject:

Morning Both

I'm sorry for the late reply to this email I'm extremely busy at the moment

Would it be ok if I get these new plans ready for early next week, as its one of those jobs that just takes ages to redesign

Yes I'm happy with the extension of time also

Thanks

Kindest Regards

On Tue, 10 Sept 2024 at 18:53,
wrote:

Hi Sarah,

Yes we agree to your requested extension

I've had a tree survey carried out . I've sent these previously. Will dig them out and re send

Understood on the wall. I'll drop this for the time bring.. I was hoping I could sneak it in with this application.

Thanks for all your help and support

Best regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 4:11:18 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Good afternoon,

RE:

Thanks for your email and keeping me updated. Please send me the drawings and if I consider they comply with the policy and I can support the amended scheme I'll

renotify the neighbours and we'll take the application to November Planning Committee with a recommendation for approval (the final decision will lie with Planning Committee). I'll provide feedback as soon as possible.

Currently I'm due to issue your decision this Friday based on the initial drawings submitted, please can you confirm you are happy to agree to the Extension of Time until 8th November to allow me to assess the final drawings, thank you.

I previously requested a drawing showing the position of trees within and adjacent to the site which identify any trees that will need to be removed and detail how the retained trees will be protected during construction. I don't think I have received this and Committee will want to see this. If we are moving the extension away from the boundary this will reduce the impact on the neighbouring trees.

Front boundary walls/fences/gates require planning permission if the height exceeds 1m above ground level – where the ground is not level you take this measurement from the lower adjacent land level. There is planning history and it looks like the wall was approved under planning application [REDACTED] where condition 2 sets out the wall must be constructed in accordance with the submitted plans. If you raise the sections between the pillars the structure will not comply with condition 2. I haven't measured your wall but it appears planning permission is required and you should submit a second planning application if you wish to raise the height of the wall. You can apply for pre-application

advice prior to the submission of an application for advice to whether such a proposal would be granted planning permission, and the assigned officer would look at the planning

history <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-permission/applying-planning-permission/pre-application-advice>

Kind regards,
Sarah

From:

Sent: Tuesday, September 10, 2024 2:25 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject:

Good afternoon Sarah,

We are both well thank you, and congratulations to [REDACTED] on the recent birth of his son.

Let's try and get this closed out to our mutual agreement – we will go with the plans as you've suggested that you will support as option A

We will also enclose a second set of plans as option B that will extend the 1st floor of the side extension to the

same length as the lower floor – this is my preferred option and was what we thought you had outlined when you were on site – apologies if we have misunderstood that.

Option C will be the initial submitted plans. This causes me the least internal turmoil through the building process as it can be built in isolation to the rest of the house, be fitted out etc. then all we have to do is break through at the last minute.

My preference of all the options to meet with the planning guidelines(and appease the neighbours as much as they can be 😊) will be option B

As you suggested if option B does not get approval, then we will appeal options B and C. If option B is approved, then there is no need for an appeal.

I trust that works with you .

Thanks and regards , and all your help with the application and ideas has been much appreciated.

Ps quick question – the front wall is castellated with some parts lower and other higher - can I raise the entire wall to the height of the highest point . Do I need planning permission to do that ? pic attached - cheers

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 September 2024 16:47
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE:

Good afternoon,

Re:

I hope you are both well. I am conscious we need to determine the above planning application soon, either by determining the drawings originally submitted (which I'm afraid remain contrary to policy and the application would be refused by 13th September), or by submitting a smaller amended scheme as we have discussed that I am happy to recommend for approval to the next available Planning Committee (7th November 2024) following a second public consultation.

Unfortunately, as I set out in my previous emails I do not consider I can approve a higher boundary wall or balcony, and cannot accept amended plans showing these proposals under this planning application.

If you would like to submit a final set of amended plans in line with my previous comments by **Wednesday 11 September 2024** we can agree to a final Extension of Time until **8th November 2024**, but I'm sorry I cannot accept any further EOT after this.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | e: sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | w:
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 1:12 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: Fwd:

Hi Sarah, could you please comment on the proposed pics / rear balcony sent 2 weeks ago. Then we can submit the final agreed plans and move forward

Thanks and regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From:

Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 3:04:00 pm

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Dear Sarah, please find pics of the rear extension area and where the rear balcony over the round floor gym area is being proposed.

In terms of the wall, with the racism that we have received plus the fact that the area is frequented by the general public making their way down to the Wirral Way and the subsequent 'goldfish bowl' effect that brings , our preference is 3 metres high.

Let me know if you need anything else.

Regards

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 9:32 AM

To:

Cc:

Subject:

Thanks problem getting back to me next week
with the photos and proposed height of the wall.
Kind regards,
Sarah

From:
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2024 6:10 PM
To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>
Cc:
Subject:

Happy with extension. I also want to add increasing
height of front garden walls to this application..

I'm travelling atm but would like to discuss the balcony .
I'll get some.fotos to you as this area is not overlooking
at all and see if I can get you [to.re](#) consider this. Thanks

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2024 4:59:49 PM
To:
Cc:

Subject: RE:

Good afternoon,

RE:

Thanks for your email. I agree if we remove the rear portion of the roof to create a flat-roof rear extension this will reduce the bulk of the building. I cannot accept a balcony above as I consider this would introduce overlooking and loss of privacy.

If you wish to submit amended plans please can you ensure all the drawings have a scale (1:100) and scale bar, and please can you provide an updated block plan of the site.

Would it be possible to have these drawings by next week? Due to the neighbour re-consultation I would expect the application to go to the September Committee. Please can we agree an Extension of Time until 13th September 2024 please?

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Thursday, July 4, 2024 1:18 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject:

Hi Sarah, thanks for your comments.

The size of the ground floor of the extension is important to us – although its shows use as a gym, it will be a dance studio for our 4 year old daughter for her ballet – she is already at her age, showing promise and winning awards .

As a compromise, once again, may I suggest that we leave the ground floor as is, but bring the 1st floor in line with your marker , using the area above the ground floor as a balcony.

I think also the staggered form at the rear of the building, created by the ground floor area is cosmetically more appealing to the rear of the building, than if this area was 'flat'

I trust this is acceptable.

Regards

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, July 3, 2024 5:44 PM
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE:

Good afternoon,

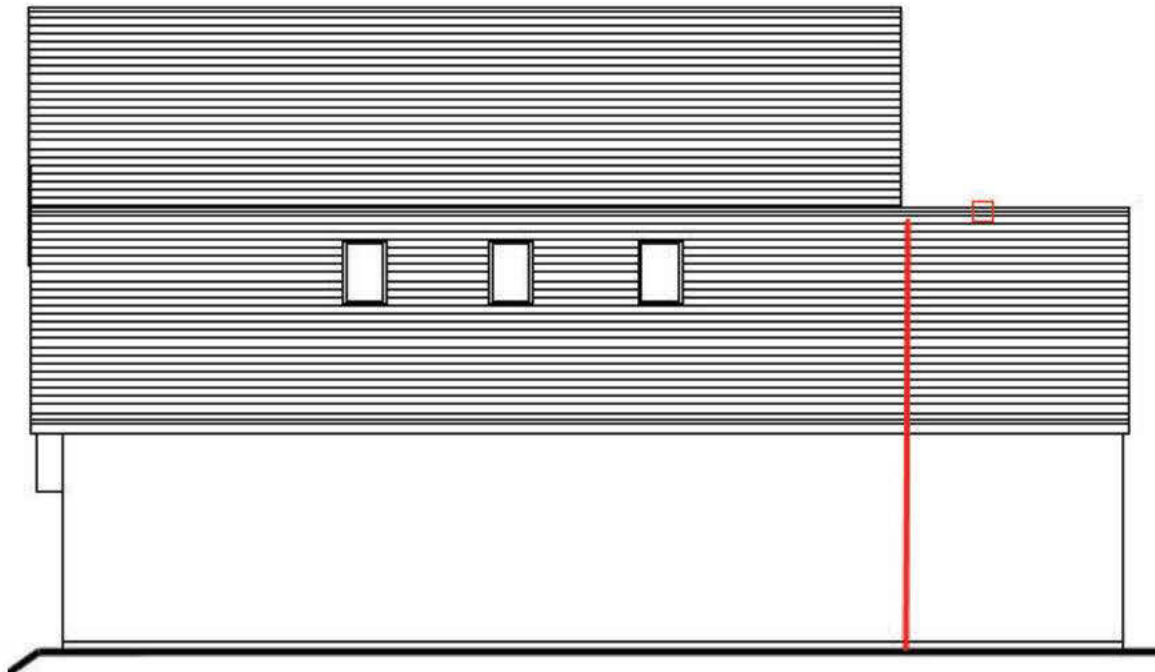
RE:

Thank you for the amended plans and the tree survey.

I am happy you have sufficiently reduced the height of the eaves and the ridge of the side extension, and along with reducing the width this has significantly reduced the impact on the neighbour's garden. However I still consider the length of the side extension is too large given it runs the length of the neighbouring garden. If the length is reduced by at least 3.5m (at ground floor and first floor) I can argue in the Committee report the bulk of this side structure will be read against the two-storey building. If you wish to submit a further amended plan I would be in a position to recommend the application for approval.



Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed Side Elevation

If you wish to submit amended plans please can you ensure all the drawings have a scale (1:100) and scale bar, and please can you provide an updated block plan of the site.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Tuesday, June 25, 2024 7:22 AM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject:

Morning Sarah/

Please see attached revised plans that we would like to proceed with

Any queries let me know

Thanks

Regards

On Tue, 11 Jun 2024 at 12:40,
wrote:

Hi Sarah, thanks for your comments. We'll bring the side extension in 1 metre to 6 metres and I trust that shows that we have compromised in that respect, as we have in all other's. I apologise for completely missing the tree point as I stated in my initial response that no trees will be affected. No trees are in my plot. I'll do a rough drawing of the neighbours trees and if that isn't satisfactory, then we'll get a trees assessment carried out.

I trust the above is satisfactory

Regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 11:25:46 AM

To:

Subject: RE:

Good morning,

Re:

Thank you for the amended elevation which incorporates a lower ridge as discussed, and I am happy has less impact on the neighbouring property. However I still consider the width of the side extension should be reduced by 1-2m to keep the extension away from the boundary and to demonstrate to Planning Committee we have addressed the neighbour's concerns. If you would like to submit a full set of proposed elevations and floorplans (with scale bar) I would be happy to consider them and provide feedback.

I previously requested a drawing showing the position of trees within and adjacent to the site which identify any trees that will need to be removed and detail how the retained trees will be protected during construction. A full Tree Survey may be required which identifies the ages and condition of the trees in accordance with the British standard.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 4:21 PM

To:

Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Subject: Re:

Hi Sarah/

Please see attached revised plans for discussion

In terms of the proposed elevations, I've only drawn the front for now

Sarah, we will appreciate your comments when you get the chance

Thanks for all your help

Kindest Regards

On Mon, 3 Jun 2024 at 14:46,

wrote:

Hi Sarah , yes very well thanks and trust al is good with you also.

Yes, please extend . We are looking to submit based on your recommendations.. work and travel has just delayed slightly.

Thanks for your patience and you should have a submission from james this week or early next.

Thanks and regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Monday, June 3, 2024 2:27:03 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Good afternoon,

RE:

Hope you are both well. Following on from our site meeting, I'm just checking you want to proceed with the

above planning application and wish to submit amended plans as discussed?

The previously agreed EOT is about to expire, please can we agree a further Extension of Time until 19 July 2024?

Kind regards,
Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

From:

Sent: Tuesday, April 30, 2024 2:44 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Hi Sarah, just like to say thanks for coming today and for your suggestions.

Quick questions that I forgot to ask. I'm looking to increase the height of the garden walls at the front – is there a maximum height and would it need planning permission.

Also, I'm thinking of replacing part or all of the wooden fencing at the side and rear with rendered brick wall

like the front – does that need planning permission as well.

Cheers

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Monday, April 22, 2024 11:28 AM

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Hi

RE:

Thanks for confirming our site visit date and EOT, I will see you and [REDACTED] next week. It would be very helpful if you could provide a set of drawings for our meeting, thank you.

I am happy with the proposed pitched roof above the existing flat roof. I am also open to the potential of this roofspace incorporating front and rear dormer windows if the design is appropriate, but please be aware new additions to the proposal would require further neighbour notification.

If you wish to amend the plans we need to reduce the scale and proximity of the extension to the south boundary, to significantly lessen the impact on the rear garden and windows of [REDACTED]. If the proposal was single-storey I think the proposal would likely be acceptable in close proximity, but I need to see amended plans before I can confirm this. This staggered appearance would also appear more acceptable when viewed from the streetscene, similar to the CGI image from [REDACTED] you included in your representation (pg. 26).

If you require additional first-floor space I would suggest exploring the potential for a 1.5 storey side extension which is set approximately 5m off the boundary to achieve the 14m separation distance, reducing to single-storey to the rear of the property. This would reduce the overbearing impact to the neighbouring garden, again I would need to see amended plans before I can confirm this is acceptable. Balconies are acceptable if you can demonstrate there is no additional overlooking to neighbours.

Alternatively a two-storey or three-storey extension to the rear of the existing property is another option you may wish to consider as there are good separation distances to the property to the rear.

You also have the option of appealing the current scheme as submitted whilst concurrently submitting a

second smaller proposal, we can discuss all this at our meeting next week.

Kind regards,
Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Monday, April 22, 2024 10:35 AM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: RE:

Hi Sarah,

I've shifted meetings around so I can confirm Tuesday 30th at 12.00 on site - [REDACTED] will also be present, and we agree to your request for an additional extension. We were hoping for building to commence this year, but realistically that won't happen now.

I may respond to the points in your email below each one

I would be useful to have your thoughts on a compromise before our meeting so that we can think about these before we meet.

Our main requirements for the extension are:

A first floor kitchen / dining / family room as the existing one is not large enough to support a property that has 6 bedrooms . First floor as it benefits from the views for a room where most of the time is spent. This isn't the only what I would call 'design flaw' in the existing property which I'm trying to address with the extension.

A 'balanced roof' as outlined in the proposal. The current roofline is positively 'ugly'

We look forward to seeing you.

Best regards,

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 4:08 PM

To:

Subject: RE:

Thanks I'll keep those dates and times free until I've heard back from you.

Kind regards,
Sarah

From:

Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 4:06 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>;

Subject: Re:

Hi Sarah, thanks for the response. I'll revert confirming one of your dates for an on site meeting once I've got a date from [REDACTED]

It'll be on your inbox by Monday when you return to work

Thanks and regard

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2024 11:46:47 AM

To:

Subject: RE:

Dear

Re:

Thank you for your email and your attached representation responding to my email.

I have now received a response from MEAS who confirmed the existing building is well sealed and on this occasion a Preliminary Roost Assessment is not required. Please be aware if any bats are found during construction, work must cease and advice be sought from a licensed specialist, but no further ecology information is required at this stage.

Planning applications are not refused on the basis of an objection being received for a neighbour. Planning applications are determined on adopted planning policies, in this instance policy HS11 House Extensions of the adopted Wirral Unitary Development Plan and SPG11 House Extensions. Issues regarding trees opposite your property are not relevant to determining the planning application.

Policy HS11 sets out the scale of the extension should be appropriate to the size of the plot not dominating the existing building and not so extensive as to be unneighbourly particular regard being had to the effect of light to and the outlook from neighbours' habitable rooms and not so arranged as to result in significant overlooking of neighbouring residential

property. SPG11 echoes this advice and sets out main habitable windows should be 14m away from a blank gable but if there are differences in land levels or ridge heights a greater separation distance should be provided and increases by 2m for every 1m difference in ridge/land levels. This measurement is taken from the nearest point.

You refer in your representation to another extension that was granted planning permission, but direct comparisons cannot be made as the plots are different and all applications are assessed on their own merits and against the relevant policy. In this instance consideration must be given to how the completed dwelling will appear within the streetscene, with regard to being sited adjacent to a much smaller bungalow, and the position of the extension adjacent to the rear garden of [REDACTED] which is orientated towards the proposal (rather than a gable wall on a linear streetscene, which has less impact).

I am happy to meet you on site to discuss amendments, I am available Tuesday 23rd April at 10am if that is convenient for you? Or Tuesday 30th April at 12pm.

If you are out of the country or it would be more convenient I would be happy to discuss on a Teams call, if you would like to invite me Tuesday 23rd morning, or I am available Tuesday 30th April until 2pm.

Because of the elections there is no Planning Committee in May, the next available Committee date is 6th June. Therefore please can I request an Extension of Time until 7th June 2024 to resolve the application, thank you.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:** www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 4:34 PM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc: ; Planning Applications <planningapplications@wirral.gov.uk>;

Subject: RE:

Dear Sarah,

Please find attached a document that responds in detail to the issues you sent to [REDACTED] and myself a few weeks ago. I trust this alleviates all of the points you raised in your email. It includes drawing / plans from the council's own web site to support our response to some of your

points. In one of the appendices, it also includes 2 letters of support which should you already have received directly from the supporters themselves as per your instructions.

I would like to propose an on-site meeting with [REDACTED] at a time to suit you over the next few weeks, before the extension date of 30th April that you requested.

I would appreciate also knowing, at the earliest opportunity, the date where we will get an opportunity to present this response (in its power point form) to the planning committee, so that we can start preparing for that. Also I am away , out of the country for lengths of time so I would like to work my schedule around that date. We will also have legal representation at that meeting, at the very least a property lawyer from the law firm [REDACTED] and possibly another specialist lawyer, as well as [REDACTED] and myself.

I look forward to meeting you on site at the earliest opportunity.

Enjoy your weekend and best regards,

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 4:32 PM

To:
Subject:

Good afternoon,

Re:

The neighbour consultation period has now closed, but as far as I am aware representations with a name and address sent to planningapplications@wirral.gov.uk can be included in the report. It would be helpful if the representation includes the application reference
, thank you.

Kind regards,
Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W
Working days Monday - Wednesday
Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate
t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:
Sent: Wednesday, March 20, 2024 11:02 AM
To:
Subject:

Thanks for letting me know.

Please advise where letters of support are sent into ?

Thanks and regards

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Sent: Wednesday, March 13, 2024 5:35:36 pm

To:

Cc:

Subject: RE:

You don't often get email from sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon,

Re:

Thank you for your email, I confirm I have sent the requested photographs onto MEAS and these have been received.

Kind regards,
Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing
Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | **e:** sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk | **w:**
www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

From:

Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2024 8:21 AM

To: Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk>

Cc:

Subject: Re:

Morning Sarah

Thanks for the email

We are happy with the extension of time so we can
provide the information you require

I've had a lengthy conversation with my client yesterday
and he has asked me to send you the following;

Hi Sarah, please find in the attached emails, photos of
the fascia areas as requested below re bats.

As you can see , there are no soffits as such – it is not a
traditional soffit and fascias 'box' style. As can be seen,

there are no bats and indeed I've never seen any bats in the area. I do have experiences of living in 'bat areas' which I'll write further to expand on. Indeed I've never seen bats in the Heswall or Wirral areas at all.

I spoke to [redacted] earlier – I will write up a detailed response to the points you raise below which will include whatsapp group messages that will show what can only be described as a a stirring up of a frenzied conspiracy to object to my wife [redacted]'s and my planning application and I'm very relaxed that when any reasonable person sees these, they will probably be as surprised as we are that there are only 15 objections.

It must also be said that my wife, [redacted] went round to see the neighbours to our south elevation to discuss, and if needed, compromise on the application, she had the door slammed in her face. The neighbours immediately in front mentioned that they had received a letter, rather anecdotally, and said they would pop on the following Saturday morning to discuss, and they never did. We've only relatively recently moved to Heswall from Horsham, West Sussex where over the last 26 years, I had 3 major planning applications / extensions, where in all cases the planning officer knocked on the door and the planning was discussed. My expectation was that the same would happen here when you visited.

No other of the 15 objectors have knocked on the door to discuss the application. However, its very easy to object from behind a keyboard and not have the

decency to go and talk the relevant party when you've had 6 weeks to do so, and passed them in the street regularly when out walking, as most of us do.

I have always said that we play by the rules, and I believe that the current proposals do indeed play by the rules as I understand them, otherwise we wouldn't have submitted it as is. I draw this conclusion because [REDACTED] who came highly recommended by personal friends would have advised otherwise and there are other approved buildings in the vicinity that are larger, closer / the same distance to boundaries and onto other properties, take up a larger % of their total, yet smaller plots (I estimate mine at around 33% of the total plot) and a whole host of other reasons, which again I will expand on. I think it's fair to say that thus far the opportunity to have a meaningful and reasonable dialogue with any objectors or other interested parties, including yourself, has so far been denied.

There has also been what can be diplomatically described as a 'neighbourly dispute' over a tree involving most of the neighbourhood (not my trees I would add, but when it falls, it will be on my property and my vehicles and the people who live in my house). I have a report from a tree surgeon saying they are dangerous, dying and need to be removed and could kill someone when the wind picks up, whereas a number of the neighbours ignore and dismiss this, yet still won't pay for their own tree expert to provide a view and take any responsibility. Surprising when there was relatively

recent case where a lady near Arrowe Park lost her baby when tree parts fell on her and Wirral Council as a result was fined £150k by the HSE. It defies belief that any sensible and reasonable person can put their heads in the sand , but it won't fall on them , it will fall on my family and my property. I will expand on this further in the follow up letter, along with the tree surgeon letter, though I trust the council would see through this - I'm merely responding to your point of 15 objections.

Lastly, in light of these issues and experiences, a few of my friends have now kindly said they would write a letter of support. I assume these should be emailed to yourself?

As discussed above, I very much look forward to any objectors coming forward, including yourself where we can have a meaningful discussion and compromise / reach a mutually acceptable solution. Please feel free to forward this to them.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and please let me know if you need any more photos or info re the bats asap.

Best regards

Sarah, as you will see there are not photos etc attached to this email because the file was too large, what is the best way for you to receive them, we transfer or a zip file ?, if you can please cc [REDACTED] in directly so he can respond as I'm in and out of jobs most of today

Thanks

Kindest Regards

On Tue, 5 Mar 2024 at 14:37, Lacey, Sarah C.

<sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:

Good afternoon,

Re: Planning application

Thank you for your planning application for a three-storey extension to front, side and rear with balconies and pitch roof above existing first floor extension at

, [REDACTED]

The neighbour consultation period has now closed and 15 objections have been received. The principle objections relate to the scale and design of the proposal,

and the harm to the character of the area and amenities of neighbouring properties.

The site is in the SSSI and Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) were consulted. MEAS contacted me today and have requested photos of all elevations including the pitched roof and fascia boards and also confirmation whether the current flat roof is flush with the building or has a parapet wall. This is to assess whether a bat survey (preliminary roost assessment) is required. I apologise I did not request this at validation, I noted the roofspace was habitable and assumed it would have low suitability for bats, but given the sensitivity of the site and as bats will roost under even slightly lifted roofing tiles, lifted lead flashing, behind fascia boards and soffits this is a requirement. Please could you request the applicant email me the photographs and I will forward them to MEAS, thank you.

I do however have concerns with the scale of the proposal. The proposed height and width create a much larger mass which is discordant within the streetscene and it's proximity to the boundary will have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the neighbouring properties. I consider the proposal is contrary to policy HS11 House Extensions in that it is not appropriate to the size of the plot, dominates the existing building and is unneighbourly with particular regard to light and outlook. It also does not achieve the separation distances set out in SPG11 - main habitable windows

should be 14m away from a blank gable but if there are differences in land levels or ridge heights a greater separation distance should be provided and increases by 2m for every 1m difference in ridge/land levels. As such I cannot support the application.

If you wish to withdraw the planning application please can you confirm in writing. I would recommend prior to resubmitting a new application you seek pre-app advice <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-permission/applying-planning-permission/pre-application-advice>. I would suggest considering a smaller rear extension that will achieve the required separation distances and retain the centrally positioned appearance of the building which allows it to integrate within the streetscene.

If you wish to continue with the application as submitted please can you submit the requested photographs by 11 March, thank you. During my site visit I also noted the proposal appears to affect trees on neighbouring land. I recommend you provide a drawing showing the position of trees within and adjacent to the site, identify any trees that will need to be removed and detail how the retained trees will be protected during construction. A full Tree Survey may be required which identifies the ages and condition of the trees in accordance with the British standard. If you wish to provide this additional information please can we agree to an appropriate Extension of Time, I would suggest until 30th April.

Please can you confirm how you would like to proceed with the application by 11th March, thank you.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Appendix B Applicant's response to Sarah Lacey's concerns to the original / first application

Response to Planning Concerns for Application

– 12th April
2024

The purpose of this document is to respond to the points raised by Sarah Lacey, Wirral Council Planning Officer re **Re:**
in her email below.

On Tue, 5 Mar 2024 at 14:37, Lacey, Sarah C. <sarahlacey@wirral.gov.uk> wrote:
Good afternoon,

Re: Planning application

Thank you for your planning application for a three-storey extension to front, side and rear with balconies and pitch roof above existing first floor extension at [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

The neighbour consultation period has now closed, and 15 objections have been received. The principal objections relate to the scale and design of the proposal, and the harm to the character of the area and amenities of neighbouring properties.

The site is in the SSSI and Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) were consulted. MEAS contacted me today and have requested photos of all elevations including the pitched roof and fascia boards and also confirmation whether the current flat roof is flush with the building or has a parapet wall. This is to assess whether a bat survey (preliminary roost assessment) is required. I apologise I did not request this at validation, I noted the roof space was habitable and assumed it would have low suitability for bats but given the sensitivity of the site and as bats will roost under even slightly lifted roofing tiles, lifted lead flashing, behind fascia boards and soffits this is a requirement. Please could you request the applicant email me the photographs and I will forward them to MEAS, thank you.

I do however have concerns with the scale of the proposal. The proposed height and width create a much larger mass which is discordant within the street scene and its proximity to the boundary will have a detrimental impact on the amenities of the neighbouring properties. I consider the proposal is contrary to policy HS11 House Extensions in that it is not appropriate to the size of the plot, dominates the existing building and is unneighbourly with particular regard to light and outlook. It also does not achieve the separation distances set out in SPG11 - main habitable windows should be 14m away from a blank gable but if there are differences in land levels or ridge heights a greater separation distance should be provided and increases by 2m for every 1m difference in ridge/land levels. As such I cannot support the application.

If you wish to withdraw the planning application, please can you confirm in writing. I would recommend prior to resubmitting a new application you seek pre-app advice <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-permission/applying-planning-permission/pre-application-advice>. I would suggest considering a smaller rear extension that will achieve the required separation distances and retain the centrally positioned appearance of the building which allows it to integrate within the street scene.

If you wish to continue with the application as submitted, please can you submit the requested photographs by 11 March, thank you. During my site visit I also noted the proposal appears to affect trees on neighbouring land. I recommend you provide a drawing showing the position of trees within and adjacent to the site, identify any trees that will need to be removed and detail how the retained trees will be protected during construction. A full Tree Survey may be required which identifies the ages and condition of the trees in accordance with the British standard. If you wish to provide this additional information, please can we agree to an appropriate Extension of Time, I suggest until 30th April.

Please can you confirm how you would like to proceed with the application by 11th March, thank you.

Kind regards,

Sarah

Sarah Lacey | Planning Officer W

Working days Monday - Wednesday

Development Management | Economic and Housing Growth Directorate

t: 0151 691 8300 | e: sarahlacev@wirral.gov.uk | w: www.wirral.gov.uk/planning

The concerns raised by the planning officer in the email above are as follows:

1. **Objections Received:** I acknowledge the receipt of 15 objections. However, specifics regarding the nature of these objections were not provided, merely the quantity. I have addressed this issue comprehensively below.
2. **Bat Presence:** It is my understanding that there are no bats in the vicinity of the proposed development site in Heswall, as I have never observed them personally. Nonetheless, I recognise their potential presence and have submitted photographs of the facias, among other details, as evidence of my due diligence.

3. **Street Scene Definition:** This was a phrase I'm unfamiliar with so google seems to indicate that its defined as 'A street scene is a view that depicts the buildings and layout of the street surrounding the property in question. They are normally required for works that will be visible from the road'. This is from Somerset's council website. I couldn't locate a definition from Wirral Councils website other than articles such as fly tipping, dog faeces, bin collections etc.
4. **Building Size Relative to Lot:** The proportion of the building in relation to the size of the lot has been thoroughly detailed and addressed below.
5. **Tree Preservation:** I assure that no trees will be removed for this project. Detailed descriptions of an incident concerning trees is described below, for comprehensive understanding of a recent 'neighbourly dispute'.

Additional considerations

It's noteworthy that on the 7th of March, I corresponded with the planning officer to acknowledge and agree to her proposed time extension. I highlighted our eagerness to engage with any objectors, including the planning officer herself, to facilitate a meaningful discussion towards a compromise or a mutually agreeable solution. I also mentioned that she is welcome to share this intention, and this response document with them.

Furthermore, I mentioned that my wife, _____, made efforts to engage with our neighbours to the south of our property to discuss and, if necessary, negotiate compromises concerning our application.

Unfortunately, she was met with hostility, with the neighbour stating that 'she didn't want to talk about it' numerous times and ultimately closing the door in my wife's face. Neighbours positioned directly in front of _____ acknowledged receipt of a letter and expressed intentions to visit the following Saturday morning for discussions, which did not materialise. Since relocating to Heswall in August 2022 from Horsham, West Sussex, where I had successfully navigated three major planning applications/extensions over 26 years, I anticipated a similar proactive approach from the planning officer in Heswall. This expectation was based on past experiences where planning officers actively engaged in dialogue with their customers by visiting the property, knocking on the door and engaging.

Regrettably, none of the 15 objectors have approached us to discuss the application, but It's much simpler to object from the anonymity of a keyboard rather than engaging in direct conversations, especially when there has been ample opportunity over six weeks to do so, considering the frequent occasions we pass by each other while out walking in the neighbourhood.

I have always maintained that we adhere to the regulations, and our current proposals are in line with the same guidelines that allowed for the construction of No. [REDACTED] situated less than 50 metres away and just three properties down from ours. This comparison is elaborated on further below.

Had we not been following these guidelines; our proposal would have been significantly different. [REDACTED] our highly recommended architect, would have advised us accordingly. As detailed further below, we seek no more than what has been permitted for [REDACTED] which occupies a larger proportion of its plot and is closer to boundary lines and neighbouring buildings among various other considerations. This can be seen on the enclosed plans below.

To date, the opportunity for a reasonable and constructive dialogue with any objectors or interested parties, aiming for a compromise, has been unfortunately lacking. This stance was clearly communicated in my email on the 7th of March to the planning officer.

As of the submission of this response 12th April 2024, over 5 weeks after agreeing to the planning officer's request to extend the application date, and including an offer to enter dialogue and compromise, neither any of the objectors nor the planning officer has reached out to discuss potential compromises. Detailed responses to the planning officer's points are provided below, as this is the only feedback / comments we have so far received.

15 Objections and a Recent Dispute with Elderly Residents of The Akbar

The Uncomfortable Truth About Trees

There's a 90ft Poplar tree positioned directly in front of the right-hand side of our property, looking towards the River Dee. The tree's canopy extends above our property's third-story bedroom, and from the window/balcony, one can see the Welsh Hills beneath the canopy.

As we seldom spend time there during the day, we've never fully appreciated the view from the balcony. This Poplar is situated in the corner of the garden of the house directly in front of ours, clearly on their land, indicating unambiguous ownership. There was an identical Poplar tree, now mostly cut down, in the corner of the garden of the house diagonally opposite ours. A photograph of both trees, as viewed from [REDACTED] is provided below.

A picture of both trees, as seen from [REDACTED]



Since we've resided in [REDACTED] there has consistently been an issue with dead, dried branches from the poplar tree falling into [REDACTED] and our front garden, throughout the summer months, though it becomes markedly worse in winter. A verbal assessment from a tree surgeon in 2023 indicated that both the subject tree and a similar one nearby were dying and had reached their maximum height. A detailed written report from February 2024 follows below.

There are noticeable marks around the trunk, suggesting that heavy goods vehicles, including the weekly bin lorry, have frequently collided with the tree while manoeuvring into [REDACTED]. These trees are in a state of decline and poor health, posing a risk during medium and high winds by bending over and coming into contact with overhead cables, as can be seen in the photograph. Despite this, they lean over our garden and that of [REDACTED] (the neighbouring property), even in calm conditions as can be seen in the above photo.

This year, 2024, we have experienced at least seven heavy storms on the Wirral. The fact that we have just had storm Katherine, suggests 11. Neighbours who have lived here for over 20 years recall a time when storms were a rarity, occurring once every three or four years, as opposed to the current frequency of five to eight storms annually.

An agreement was reached with the owner in front of our house for the removal of their tree. Once the lower branches had been trimmed back to enable the tree

surgeon to climb the tree and access the higher branches, a neighbour named Roger from Moonshine, located in [REDACTED] instructed the tree surgeon to halt, claiming the trees were owned by a woman named Lorraine, who resides approximately 150 metres away in a house named [REDACTED]. I wasn't present at this interaction; hence, when I returned, accompanied by the tree surgeon, I attempted to discuss this with Lorraine, who was absent, and then with Roger, who distanced himself from the matter instantly. He did then mention that he had recently waved at my wife on our balcony when he passed the house (which anyone would find utterly bizarre) and had detailed knowledge of the plans for my extension, despite them only going on the council's web site the day before – I had not even seen them!. The proximity of his residence to the council's notification radius for our planning application is questionable, as he lives roughly 80 metres away on a different road. The irony that Roger also told me his father had built his house - Moonshine (I'm assuming around the 1960s / 70s) on land that was at that time completely 'Greenfield', and in doing so, removing anything that stood in its way of being built, including the removal or demolition of trees, vegetation, bird, animal and plant habitat and the 'historical' training ship [REDACTED] should not be lost on the reader.

Later, Lorraine contacted me via WhatsApp, asserting her ownership of the trees and claiming they were 150 years old, a statement contradicted by the tree surgeon's estimation (and / or research) that they were planted around 1950. Online historical photos from 1953 of the naval college once located in the [REDACTED] do not show these poplar trees. Her full message and my response, which also highlights the lack of responsible maintenance and the deteriorating condition of the trees, which she claimed to own (and now it would appear love) are attached in Appendix A. 3 photos of the naval college also in one of the appendices show no evidence of Poplar trees in 1910, 1935 and 1953.

Lorraine referenced the trees (in her message) as 'it's on a private road', when they are not. They are clearly located in the grounds of the two properties at the entrance to [REDACTED]. She also claimed to be a lawyer, yet her LinkedIn profile only shows a 2-year apprenticeship. It has been suggested to me that this was a veiled threat, though through owning and running a global business means I deal with lawyers all the time, so this didn't impress me at all, quite the opposite in fact.

The situation escalated later in the week when neither Lorraine nor Roger provided evidence of ownership, prompting work on the trees to resume. This led to a gathering of the elderly [REDACTED] residents around the tree surgeon and the tree's owner at No. 1 the Akbar, who then ceased work due to the pressure. It was getting serious as tea and biscuits had broken out, so I went out to support the tree surgeon against this opposition.

To state the obvious, Lorraine (who was not present at this gathering), for reasons, only known to her, had to resort to stating untruthful points and providing no

supporting evidence in her attempt to support her arguments of ownership and historical age of the trees, something we will come back to.

Two comments resonated with me during the discussion with the elderly residents of [REDACTED] 1. The tree surgeon told me that one lady had said to him 'if you'd have asked us (i.e. to cut it down), we'd have let you' and 2. another said to me 'you only want a better view', to which I replied that I already had great views and the tree being removed does very little to improve it (as per the pictures below) and that it was being removed due to the probability and likelihood of fatal consequences in the event of the tree falling. (see the tree surgeon's report below).

Councillor Andrew Hodson, having been contacted by one of [REDACTED] elderly residents, turned up and promised to clarify the trees' ownership and condition. He later confirmed their ownership lay with the respective gardens, but the work to make safe the tree in front of my property did not resume (see Whatsapp messages below), whereas the tree diagonally opposite began to be cut down the next working day – 6th Feb. The only thing raised when this work began was one of elderly [REDACTED] residents commented 'it'll be sad to see it go'. Some residents of the flats at the [REDACTED] (not the elderly ones referenced throughout), asked the owner of this tree why it was coming down and he pointed out it was dangerous, dying, had been condemned by the tree surgeon (see his report) and showed the wide gash in the bark about 6/7 metres up (picture of this is in Appendix A), and were fully satisfied by this answer. Its worth noting that the gash looks like a previous failed attempt to kill the tree. And I'm told by the current [REDACTED] house owners who were living in [REDACTED] at the time that a large trunk of this tree fell down into what is the driveway of this house approx. 20 years ago before the current owner moved in. They are trying to get hold of the previous owners, when that tree trunk fell, who still live in the area.

To be crystal clear, during this engagement with the elderly residents of the [REDACTED] they weren't interested in hearing about the danger of the trees from me and that my view wouldn't be that improved, nor the opinion of the tree surgeon who had actually spent considerable time up both trees, nor the dangerous gash in the tree that was plain to see, nor the statements from the [REDACTED] residents about the council condemning the tree in 2017. None of this was relevant to them and their narrative.

Note: Andrew (Hodson) did say I would receive a letter confirming such, but this has never arrived, nor have I ever received a letter from the Council re the condition of the tree.

It's also important to note the lack of objections when the previous owner of [REDACTED] cut down 30-35 large trees.

The events described here have broader implications, reminding me of a disturbing encounter in Camps Bay, Cape Town where my wife is from, and echoing many of the anecdotes and sentiments expressed by John Barnes (ex-Liverpool and England footballer and Wirral / Heswall resident) in his book, "The Uncomfortable Truth about

Racism". Our experiences, this being one of them, as a mixed-race family in the Wirral, encountering both overt and subtle racism, resonate with these narratives, highlighting a persisting issue that requires attention and action. I want to be clear about the Cape Town incident where an elderly Afrikaans woman owner was telling me (referring to her black domestic staff 'we let them have education and we let them have this and we let them have that, having no comprehension whatsoever about her racist attitudes.

Through a mutual friend, Mr Barnes has been made aware of the above tree incident and said he 'wasn't surprised by it'.

The MP Dianne Abbot only recently (March 2024) said, when she was subject to an horrific racist attack from a Tory donor, that both the current Government and the Labour party had done little to address racism.

The tree surgeon's report detailing the current potentially fatally dangerous and unsafe state of the tree is included below, alongside my offer to pay to have it made safe. Photographs illustrating the tree's minimal impact on our views of the Welsh hills and the surrounding landscape also follow.

It should now be obvious that when the previous white owner of [REDACTED] cuts 30 – 35 trees down, no one objects. When the Poplar tree diagonally opposite me is cut down (by its white owner), opening up the view for the white people who live behind it , the best someone offers is that ' it'll be sad to see it go', but when a potentially fatal and dangerous tree is being made safe, and there is a misperception that it will improve the views of a mixed race couple with a mixed race child, then the work to make it safe is stopped.

Photographs of the naval college taken in 1910, 1935 and 1953 are in Appendix C do not show any Poplar trees.

It should also be stated that the owner of the adjacent tree, some weeks later opened a letter from the owner of the house of the tree in front of us. This is attached as Appendix D. the letter is dated 5th Feb, two days after the tree surgeons report that stated the tree was potentially fatally dangerous and after he had told the owners of [REDACTED] throughout the previous week and everyone at the 'tea and biscuits' gathering that the trees are dangerous.

In summary she makes out (her points in bold): -

she is representing the elderly residents that didn't want his tree cut down.
The owner of this tree was outside when the 'tea and biscuits' broke out, so they had ample opportunity to represent themselves directly to the owner, which they did not do.

references his tree as 'near [REDACTED]' when the fact is that it's in his garden and belongs to him! – its nothing to do with me!

Appears in photos of the nautical school in the early 1900s and that its historical. They don't. I've attached photos of the Akbar naval college in 1910, 1935 and 1953 where there is not a poplar tree in sight. I've been told the local library has more photos of the naval college so I'm planning to go and look.

The trees provide habitat to birds and animals - only the week before she and her partner agreed to have their tree cut down, along with her hedges trimmed back, which I paid for, so she didn't seem to care much about birds and animals, just a few days earlier. You really couldn't make this up!

The trees are not diseased as the owner of [REDACTED] claims. This isn't my claim. I have repeated what the owners of [REDACTED] who I believe when said that in 2017, the council condemned the trees. These owners were also in the street at 'Tea and Biscuit' time, and repeated this throughout, including to Andrew Hodson. I've spoken to them since this letter, and they have again reaffirmed this – the council condemned them in 2017.

She mentions my planning application and points out 'it will take the property up to 3 stories and it will impact their privacy, indicating / hinting that it is going to be higher than it is. The house is already at 3 stories, his tree (full size or cut down) has no impact on the view from [REDACTED] into his property, and the planned extension is at the complete opposite end of my plot from his house and will have no impact on his property at all in terms of the view or anything else. The height of the extension will match the height of the existing building.

She then repeats the point that she is representing the [REDACTED] residents and states that the trees are worth more than a good view from [REDACTED]. To repeat the earlier point, at the time of her writing this, the trees surgeon's report was written, and he spoke with her partner and everyone else in the [REDACTED] the previous week that both trees were dangerous. Lorraine was sent a picture of the large and wide gash on this tree over 6 days previously, so it either suited Lorraine's narrative not to share this on the [REDACTED] Whatsapp Group or, as she has, and along with with the trees surgeon's verbal and printed reports, ignored it, as it suited her own narrative which has changed substantially in a few days when she agreed to have her own trees trimmed and the poplar tree cut down, which I paid for. Once again, I get no significant increase of my views with this tree being cut down. The fact is that a number of houses behind this one benefit from an improved view, and here now actually have views which they didn't have before. But the most important thing, and the reason why it was cut down is that **we all benefit from not being killed when it falls down.** Outside of the point that she is representing all residents, (which may or may not be true), all the points she makes are untruthful.

In Appendix E, you will see a photo of horse riders taken on Sunday 7th April directly below her tree that she knows to be potentially fatal and does nothing about. The lane is also frequented by walkers who park higher up the lane and walk down, past the tree to access the Wirral Way. It defies belief that any responsible person would not make this tree safe, yet alone professional doctors. Their house insurance will not cover the damage it causes when and not if, it falls as they have knowingly failed to act on the tree surgeons report and they will have to pay personally for any damages.

It should now be clear that two people have to put in writing, untruths (without the slightest attempt at providing any supporting evidence) in order to impose their will / opinions and / or discriminations on others. You only have to google 'why do racists lie to justify their racism' to see that this is very common. Although this search will bring up are thousands of articles, including many from credible sources such as The United Nations, revered academia etc., one of the interesting articles is from The Guardian titled 'why I'm no longer talking to white people about race'. Two extracts from it are below.

The subtitle reads:

For years, racism has been defined by the violence of far-right extremists, but a more insidious kind of prejudice can be found where many least expect it – at the heart of respectable society.

, and the fourth paragraph which reads.

“They’ve never had to think about what it means, in power terms, to be white, so any time they’re vaguely reminded of this fact, they interpret it as an affront. Their eyes glaze over in boredom or widen in indignation. Their mouths start twitching as they get defensive. Their throats open up as they try to interrupt, itching to talk over you but not to really listen, because they need to let you know that you’ve got it wrong.

Any of this sound familiar?

Evidential fotos of views from [REDACTED]

Direct view from third floor of [REDACTED] showing little or no impact of the on the view from the dangerous Poplar tree.



The sweeping landscape views of Welsh mountains from the view from the dangerous Poplar tree.

shows that there is no impact on



Tree surgeon's report dated 3rd Feb 2024

Poplar tree on junction with The [REDACTED]
Lane in the boundary line of [REDACTED]
belonging to Aaron.



3rd February 2024

As an experienced Arborist and with my knowledge in this field and being the climber who has been up this tree the tree has definitely come to its end of life, they have been in since 1958, the limbs are brittle there has been numerous dead limbs and the height is in line with recommendations of the species maximum height, prior to any works being undertaken I noticed twigs/ branches on floor and in surrounding gardens which indicates weakness. As the tree stands today after I did some work on the tree with permission of owner (Aaron, who later retracted his permission to continue and finish the work that was started) it is very top heavy and canopy is acting like a sail due to height of tree the size of canopy and most of all where tree is positioned, its wide open to the elements.

My expert opinion is the tree needs to be reduced in height to where it's not a danger to life or to surrounding properties, telephone wires, cars etc I am very concerned with regards to this and would like to see height reduced, I have advised Aaron, local residents and even the local council official who attended site 2/2/2024 of this to cover myself.

It's easy for tree officials from council to attend, visually inspect and say "yes looks perfect healthy" but until you physically get into tree canopy the true extent cannot be seen.

While working on tree I noticed damage to trunk and I was informed by residents that it's not uncommon for vans, bin lorries, builders trucks etc to hit tree as they turn into The Akbar which again to me is concerning.

As an experienced Arborist with many years experience I stand by my opinion that the tree in its present state is a potential danger to life and needs to be addressed, I have again made my feelings very clear to all parties however I am not sure everybody is listening because it's not what they want to hear or see happen but it's a must,

I take no responsibility from this moment on the responsibility is with those who decided to stop anymore work to be carried out by myself.

I offered to make the tree safe but was told on numerous occasions "NO"

I have informed my solicitor and insurance company regarding situation and made it perfectly clear to local authority so I can't be accused of any wrongdoing or negligence

The responsibility now lies with the owner of the tree and needs to be addressed forthwith.

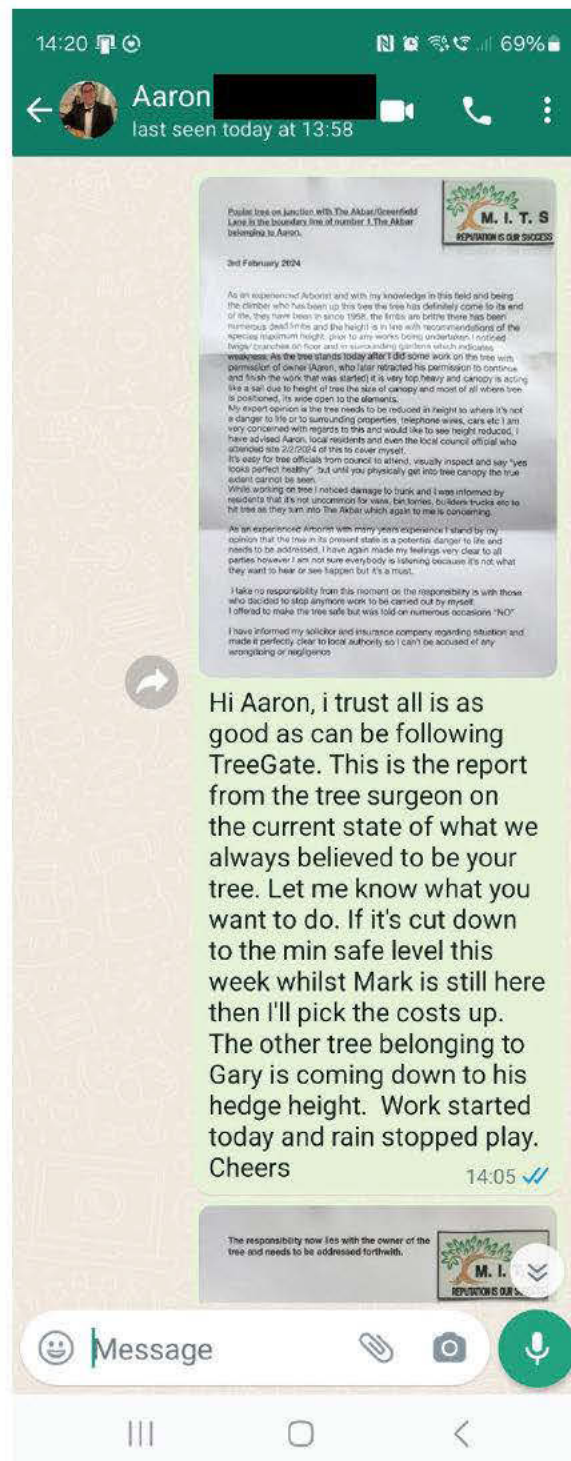


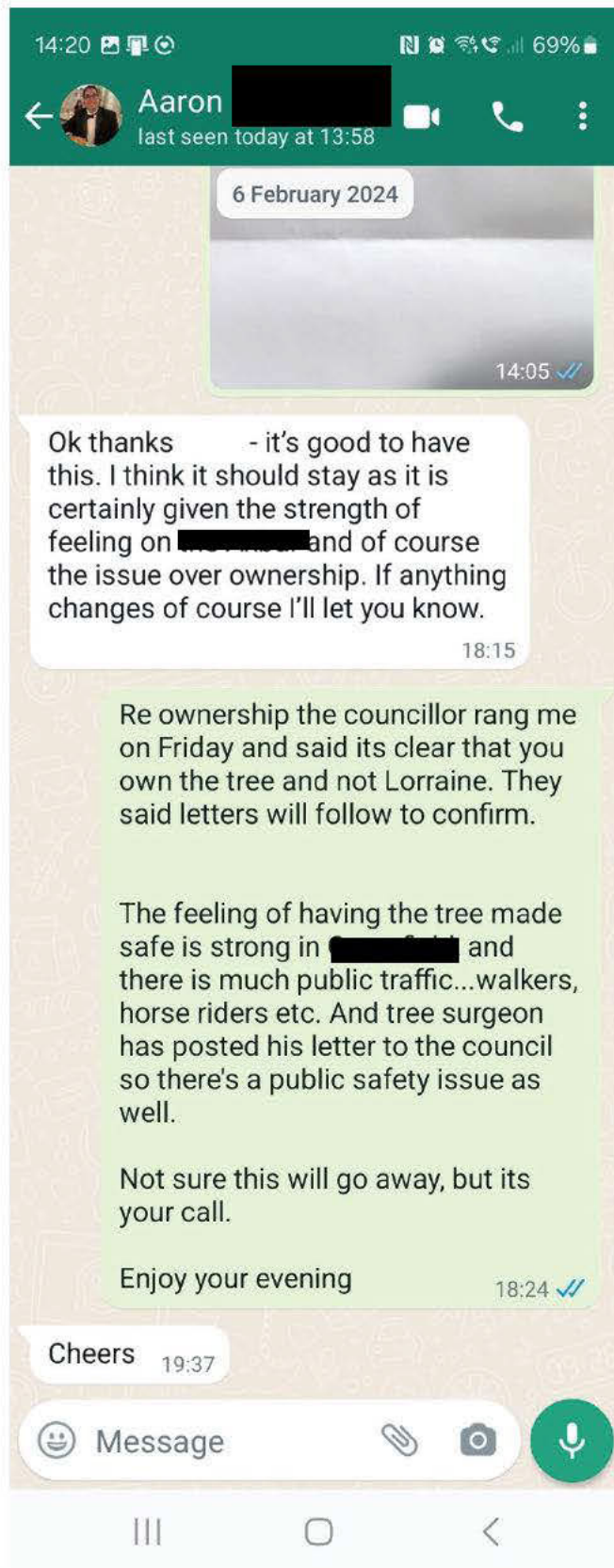
Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping, fluid strokes that form a cursive-style name.

Mark Robertson
(Owner, operator MITS)

This report was sent to the 'male' owner of the tree, Aaron as per below Whatsapp messages, along with my offer to pay to have the tree made safe. His response where he decided not to have the tree made safe is also below. Note the report is dated 3rd Feb 2024.





Dog Faeces

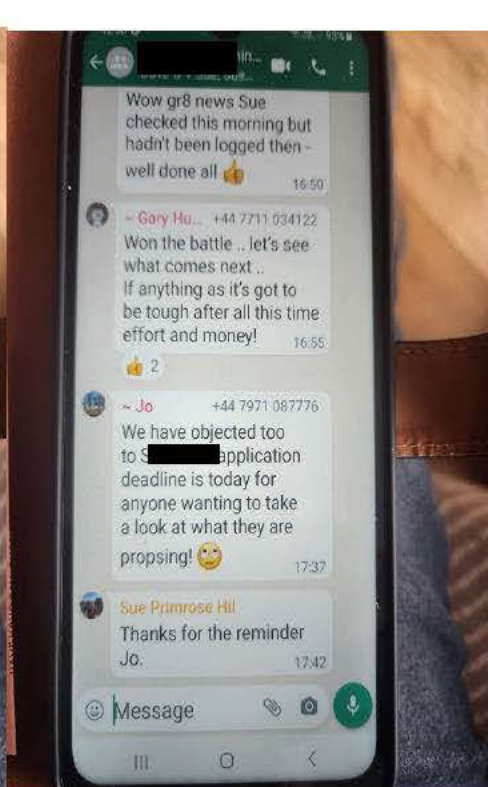
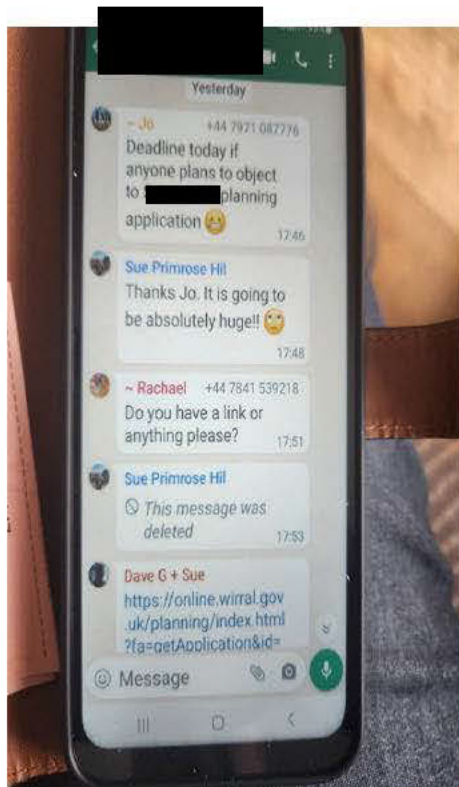
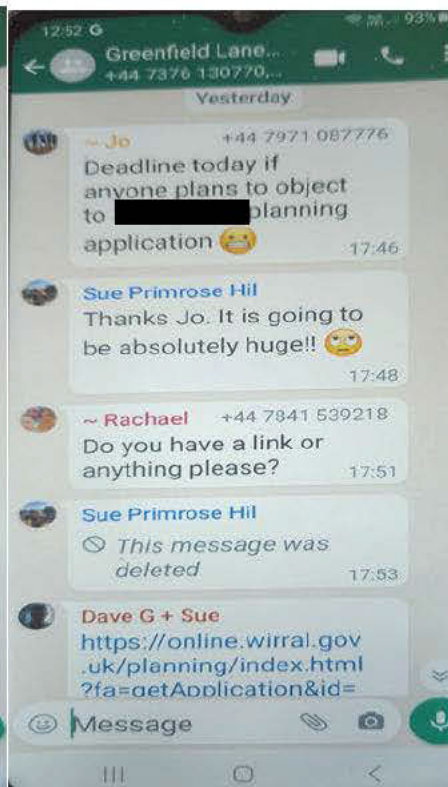
It's worth mentioning that on the 29th of January, at around 11:00, the tree surgeons informed me that two elderly ladies allowed their dog to defecate directly in front of my driveway and failed to clean it up.

Additionally, we often find dog faeces in bags discarded into our garden. Following the incident with the trees, my wife has taken to ensuring our electric gate is closed at night, a measure we hadn't felt necessary before. She also closes curtains and blinds that we used to leave open.

The CCTV system was upgraded over the Easter weekend, so in addition to adding face recognition and AI, it connects to a CCTV Control Centre operating 24/7/365, so our property is now monitored around the clock and any future incidents will be reported appropriately.

██████████ Objectors and the ██████████ Whatsapp Group

Despite residing in ██████████ for nearly 20 months, we have yet to receive an invitation to join the '██████████' WhatsApp group. This group includes most, though not all, residents of Greenfield Lane. A number of the open-minded, egalitarian residents have shared with me the messages posted in this group about my proposed extensions and have kindly allowed me to take photographs of these conversations, as shown below. It has been suggested, somewhat disconcertingly, that this group could be more accurately named the "Whites Only ██████████ Whatsapp Group.



It must be noted that these individuals are the same that greet us during street walks, engage with our dog, and even pat our toddler's head—behaviours observed even in the period between the submission and the closing of our application—subsequently turn to WhatsApp to agitate and rally the neighbourhood against our proposed extension. A proposal, it's worth mentioning, they seem not to have researched, which in no way impacts them and is not visible from their properties. None have approached us to discuss the application.

Despite our time living on [REDACTED], regularly passing and greeting these same individuals, we have never been invited to join this WhatsApp group, a fact that speaks volumes.

The [REDACTED] community operates a similar WhatsApp group. I am left to ponder the discussions within that group that might have spurred the flurry of 15 objections, including whether those who influenced the cessation of work on the hazardous tree were among the objectors. This is, again, despite the fact they cannot view our property from theirs and had knowledge of the planning appearing on the council website before we did.

I believe the above robustly and comprehensively addresses the "15 objections" and sheds light on the underlying motivations, given that most, if not all, objectors cannot even see our property, along with the Whatsapp messages that clearly and unambiguously prove that their objections are driven by motives unrelated to any actual facts relating to the extension itself, nor the impact on them, as there isn't any.

2. Bats. Photos Have Been Provided.

3. Street Scene.

The term "street scene" is notably ambiguous. After consulting with several developers and architects in the Wirral, it's clear that its application in planning decisions can vary significantly. For instance, I'm told that there are examples where planning permission was granted for extensions that resulted in an unbalanced appearance of a house, as well as instances where applications were rejected on the grounds of "street scene" concerns, even when they improved the aesthetic balance of a property as is the case with our property.

This suggests a high degree of subjectivity in its interpretation and application.

In my view, the current house lacks aesthetic harmony and is visually unappealing, as illustrated below.



The proposed development aims to bring aesthetic balance and 'kerb appeal' to the property. This point is supported by the design choice to include a middle section of the roof that, is purely cosmetic, and significantly enhances the property's visual harmony and "kerb appeal." And will be expensive to add without any benefit other than visual.

I have sought the insights of several architects and property experts, who concur with this approach.

Illustrations of the proposed, more balanced property design are provided below.



The above proposed drawing of the property is a clear and significant improvement on the existing building.

It is worth mentioning that [REDACTED] is unadopted, significantly limiting its potential for any notable "street scene" appeal as long as the road remains unrestored. I plan to resurface the section of the road directly in front of my house. Neighbours who have resided here for over 20 years recall the road surface being generally good when they first moved in. I've observed a marked deterioration over the past 20 months since I moved in.

This decline is partly due to neighbours consistently parking their cars on the single-track road, which compels vehicles, including bin lorries to drive right over to the

verge on the other side, which is in fact part of and within the boundaries of gardens. It is also worth noting that a fire engine would not get past these parked vehicles in the event of a fire. The current make-up of the road is a patchwork of mud, tarmac, makeshift concrete pothole fillings, and sandstone rock, as the photographs below illustrate. While there's more to be said about the street scene, I believe the points raised here adequately convey the situation.

Pictures of the street are below.



It is also worth adding that the silver car in the picture below is that of the neighbour who slammed the door in my wife's face and who habitually parks the car everyday outside my house and has only done so since we moved in. According to other neighbours she never parked it there when the previous owner of [REDACTED] lived here.





I can submit more pictures of the [REDACTED] Street scene if required.

4. Size of Building to the Plot.

In addition to the points made earlier, this section includes a comparison between the proposed extension for our property and a development that has already received approval and is currently at the end of its construction at [REDACTED] which is located just 50 metres away and three properties down from [REDACTED]. Like us, Mr and Mrs Stanhope, the owners of No. [REDACTED] have a growing family. They have successfully navigated the planning process; building has been completed in March 2024 and they appear to have just moved in.

[REDACTED] itself underwent significant transformation following planning approval in April 2015. Designed by [REDACTED] it replaced an outdated, single-story cottage that was previously obscured by more than 30 – 35 large sycamore trees and an overgrown garden, with a modern three-storey residence. The plans and computer-generated images of this transformation can still be viewed [REDACTED]





The plans illustrate a three-storey 'block' featuring a pitched roof and balconies on the northern elevation, a two-storey 'block' with a flat roof and balcony forming the middle section, and a single-storey element topped with a flat roof and designed to support a roof terrace on the southern elevation. The latter, however, was never constructed. These plans confirm the building's height at three storeys and the approval for construction close to the southern boundary, despite the single-storey element with a planned balcony not being built.

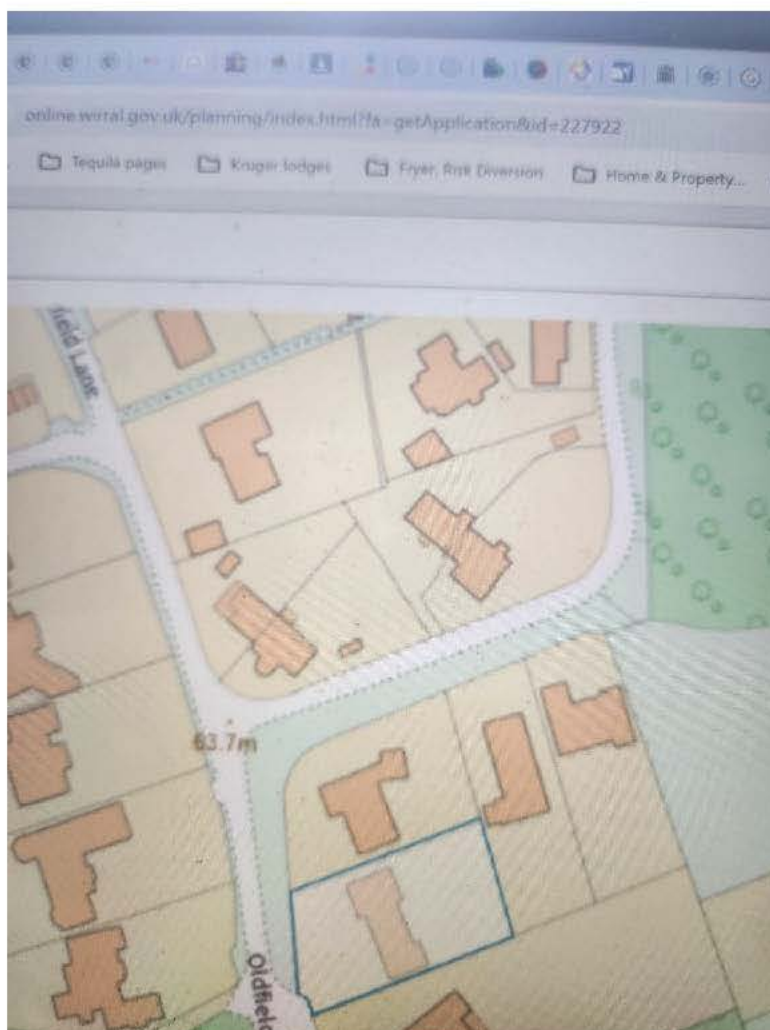
The image below depicts the garage's location at [REDACTED] and consequently the established building line. The actual property boundary extends approximately half to three-quarters of a metre beyond the fence, which drops down about 1 metre, or possibly more, behind the fence. This photo presents the existing building on the right-hand side and the space between it and the fence where the proposed extension is intended to be constructed.



A Comparison of [REDACTED] Proposed Extension to an Approved Extension, at [REDACTED] Located Just 50 Metres Away, and 2 Intermediate Residential Buildings.

Equally pertinent to this discussion is the recently approved development of a residence located less than 50 metres from [REDACTED], now nearing the completion of its construction phase. The new occupants moved in around the 20th of March 2020. Mirroring the transformation at [REDACTED] this project has replaced an older cottage with a significantly larger, modern residence at [REDACTED], which spans the entire width of its plot. Remarkably, there are only two properties separating [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] underscoring their proximity.

An illustrative plan, sourced from the approved documents for [REDACTED] on the Wirral Council's website, depicts the location of both properties. This plan also accurately represents the size of the residences in relation to their plots.



The boundary of [REDACTED] is delineated in green, illustrating its southern elevation's closeness to its own boundary and that of the neighbouring properties. [REDACTED] is located as the third property above [REDACTED]. A smaller structure, which is the garage, is situated adjacent to the fence; the actual boundary lies approximately half to three-quarters of a metre behind this, to the south.

The plot for [REDACTED] appears larger than that of [REDACTED]. Furthermore, the building at [REDACTED] occupies a greater proportion of its plot compared to the proposed structure at [REDACTED]. This difference is visually even more pronounced when looking at the real-life distances between the building and the road, as well as the space between the building and the rear hedging at the boundary. Despite the proposed extension, [REDACTED] building footprint remains less than one-third of the total plot size, as clearly demonstrated by these plans.

Pictures of [REDACTED]





The distance between the southerly elevation of the property and the boundary wall is less than 1 metre.



northern elevation which shows a distance of approx. 1.0 to 1.5 metres to its boundary.

Council Policies re size, separation distances and amenity space.

With regards to the design aspects of this scheme, the proposed height and width of the extension is in scale with the existing site. There is not a uniform building line to the adjacent properties, and they are all different styles. There will also still be a vast area of garden/amenity space to the property measuring just under 1300m².

If you compare all of the neighbouring properties, they all have significantly less of a garden amenity area to what [REDACTED] will be left with once the extension is built. At 1300 m², it's fair to say that just the front garden / driveway and parking area of [REDACTED] is larger than the entirety of the front and rear gardens of most properties on [REDACTED] and larger, if not similar in size to the entirety of many of the plots of [REDACTED] properties on its own. This is clear to see on the Council plans / map for [REDACTED]

It's more than fair to say that this building would not be dominant in comparison to its overall plot size and has more than ample amenity space.

Separation distances.

The closest property to this extension is the house called [REDACTED], so I've assumed that the planning officer is referring to the view from the rear first floor windows of the [REDACTED] property. Although there are trees in the way in the [REDACTED] garden that block much, if not all, of the view to the proposed extension, I may agree with what is being stated regarding distances if our new side elevation was square on to their rear elevation but it's not, it's actually on an angle to it.

From the Architect's measurements taken from the middle of the rear elevation of the [REDACTED] property, if taken on a 45-degree angle towards the new proposed gable it actually does measure 14m. This was measured multiple times to ensure accuracy of this measurement.

None of the other adjacent properties will be affected at all by this extension.

Therefore, this extension does comply with supplementary policy guidance 11 and also complies with HS11 House Extensions. If it didn't, then we would never have submitted the plans as they are - we would have submitted plans that do comply.

It's clear to see that looking at other extensions within Heswall that there are quite a few that do not appear to comply with these policies, but have been approved, and my guess is that The Wirral is awash with extensions that do not comply with these policies. This is not a criticism, but merely an observation that common sense has prevailed when these decisions have been made. As previously stated, an on-site meeting with the planning officer to discuss this with the architect would resolve this, where we can re-

measure and agree or disagree on the distances and (hopefully) agree a mutually acceptable way forward, but we assure you that the measurements we have taken are within these policies.

I recognise that a Freedom of Information request to the council asking for a list of properties across the Wirral that have been granted approval when they don't comply with these policies would provide a definitive list, but my guess is that such a request be directed to what is clearly an over-worked and under-resourced planning department, and that a meeting on site would be a much more productive use of everyone's time and resources. Such a freedom of Information request would also show that whether or not, we are being treated exactly the same as other approved extensions have been treated, though [REDACTED] already establishes that. I'm not an expert in this area, but [REDACTED] does not appear to comply with these rules that we are being asked to. Again this is not a criticism – I think [REDACTED] is a stunning property and a fantastic statement to the modernisation of the area, we are just asking to be treated the same, though I also repeat that we are complying with these policies.

Planning Approval for [REDACTED]

Extracts from the planning officers report, copied “ad verbatim” taken from The Wirral council planning portal is below.

REPRESENTATIONS Five of the neighbouring properties were notified of this application and invited to make any comments on it. At the time of writing this report, twelve responses have been received from various surrounding properties, all of which are objections to the proposed development.

The main concerns raised are as follows:

1. The site is under a covenant which limits the upward extension of the bungalow to 7metres
2. The proposal will block surrounding properties' views of Wales
3. The size of the build would cause adverse visual impacts and would be visible from a huge area
4. The proposal's scale, form and design make no attempt to respect the area's ambience and is out of character with its surroundings, with no worthy enhancement
5. The site is placed between two existing bungalows and would therefore look out of context with an increase ridge height
6. The pitch of the roof is too steep and high and makes the proposal out of character
7. The windows are too large and would overlook all neighbouring properties, along with the proposed balcony
8. The proposal will despoil the surrounding rural setting and impact the unique open vista of [REDACTED]
9. The site is already on a higher elevation. The proposal will therefore compromise the daylight and outlook of the neighbouring properties and be overbearing.
10. Any additional external lighting will cause light pollution
11. The proposal will impact the local wildlife and habitat, especially the increase in exterior lighting which would impact bats
12. The proposal will generate more traffic and damage the already poor road infrastructure. Measures must be put in place to minimise and rectify damage to the surfaces and grass verges.

The decision:

3.6 Principle of Development The development is acceptable in principle, contingent on its design and impacts on neighbour amenity.

I trust the above not only responds to the point about the size of the building to the plot, the amenity space and that it is inside the councils' current policy guidelines, but the overall size and proportions are less than those of [REDACTED] which has been approved. In simple terms, we are asking for a smaller development, taking up a smaller % of the plot than that of [REDACTED] which has been approved and one where the separation distances with adjacent properties are also less.

I would like to reiterate the fact that no trees will be removed as a result.

Though on this point, I would like to draw your attention to the CSR initiatives of the company that I own, having set it up over 20 years ago. This includes the replanting of trees and the saving indigenous species, amongst many other public-spirited initiatives that we sponsor and fund. <https://detegoglobal.com/our-csr-initiatives/>

Appendix A - Whatsapp Exchange over dying, dangerous trees with Lorraine, owner of Three Stacks who claimed ownership of the two poplar trees 150 metres from her house, along with my reponse.

Hello

Aaron passed your details to me.

I can confirm that [REDACTED] is a private road owned by my property, [REDACTED] since 1958. This is in the Deeds.

In old photos, the two trees mark the entrance to The [REDACTED] the old nautical school.

We have a close knit [REDACTED] residents WhatsApp group and it's clear from the strength of comments made today that residents feel the trees are of historical, aesthetic and environmental importance and agree with Aaron that they do not want them to be cut or damaged.

Regards

Lorraine, Three Stacks

Hi Lorraine, great to meet you. It's a shame that it's in these unfortunate circumstances with Aaron and myself unaware of the ownership that you state.

I rang your bell yesterday to try and resolve the situation, but there was no answer and spoke with Roger.

It would be good to meet and discuss, though the bottom line now is that we've rung the council today.

Both the trees were condemned in 2017. Aarons has 'black spot'. All 30 plus trees previously on my plot also had this. It's contagious and it easily spreads. I'd be surprised if other trees in the vicinity doesn't have it.

The cutting of the lower branches on Gary's tree has exposed a large gash around the bark that looks approx. 2 inches deep approx. 6/ 7 metres up clearly weakening its capability to carry the weight above it. This appears to be from previous attempts to kill or cut the tree. I'll send pics.

Re Aaron's tree, in addition to the aforementioned condemnation , the removal of the lower branches has taken away the ability of the weight in the lower part of the tree to counter balance the weight of the upper part of the tree, particularly when it's blowing around in relatively light winds as it was this afternoon and we are all familiar with the much stronger winds we get here.

The tree surgeon says that as he has removed the lower branches, he has a duty of care to make it safe, and therefore remove the remainder of the tree.

It must be stated that the current liability and duty of care rests with person(s) who halted the work yesterday. Let's just hope the tree doesn't snap / break before he can make it safe and cause any damage. It didn't look safe when we had relatively light winds this afternoon.

With all due respect to the tree society of the [REDACTED] the trees have not been responsibly maintained and the residents that live in [REDACTED] do not share their views. The mood on this side of the trees is positive and we see the danger they present in medium and high winds.

Once again, I'm sorry that our first exchange is in these circumstances and look forward to meeting you face to face at the earliest opportunity.

Best regards



(Note This picture was sent to Lorraine and shows a wide gash (from a previous attempt to kill the tree) around the bark that at approx. 6/7 metres height, clearly affecting its ability to support the weight above it.)

Thanks

I'm a lawyer and don't agree with your comment about liability.

Both Roger and I spoke to your contractor separately on Tuesday morning to explain the ownership and I asked him not to go ahead. Aaron has clearly asked you/him not to do any more to the tree and that view is shared by The [REDACTED] residents. It's on a private road.

Regards

Lorraine

The contractor did mention that someone had said they are a lawyer, so I rang the law firm we have on retainer... [REDACTED] yesterday and chatted with one of the partners. We didn't discuss this liability that's my thoughts since I was told the tree isn't safe. I'm not a lawyer, but someone has to be responsible until the tree can be made safe. It can't be us as we didn't put the work on hold.

There was no further response from Lorraine.

Appendix B – Letters of Support

To whom it may concern

Support of planning application

I write in support of the above planning application submitted to Wirral Borough Council by [REDACTED]. I have known [REDACTED] over 7 years and know him to be an honest, considerate and reasonable individual.

My wife and I first moved to Heswall in 1990 and have since lived at three different properties in the town. In 2003, I submitted and had planning permission granted for a large house in Dawstone Road that was completed in 2005. As a consequence, I am familiar with the types of concerns addressed by those living in proximity to any property under development and what is fair and reasonable to all concerned.

I have had the opportunity to look at the plans for the development of [REDACTED] and the extent of its plot; I am aware of objections having been raised by a number of individuals.

I have observed that there is a significant development currently taking place within 50 metres of [REDACTED] that has recently been approved by the WBC Planning Committee. This involves the extension of a single storey bungalow into a substantial sized residence.

I have further noted that this development ([REDACTED]) takes up a significantly larger percentage of the plot it sits on when compared to [REDACTED]. The development extends very close to its boundary leaving a gap of approximately one metre, thereby, taking up the complete width of the plot.

Whilst the proposed extension of [REDACTED] will take up more of its plot, it is a larger plot than [REDACTED] and will still leave around 7 metres to the boundary adjacent to its proposed extension. Overall, it will still only cover approximately one third of the plot. It is my understanding that the original approved plans for the development of [REDACTED] were for a considerably larger house, although the developer went ahead with the current smaller property.

plot is surrounded by an eclectic group of houses sitting on the side of a relatively steep hill, some of these houses are large and modern, others are of a considerable age. I am of the opinion that the proposed development of [REDACTED] will only serve to enhance the aesthetic beauty of what is a unique location in Heswall. Consequently, I am lending my support to the [REDACTED] family's application for planning permission.



The Rt Hon
House Of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Support of planning application

24 Mar 2024

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of planning application [redacted]
[redacted] and his wife

submitted by [redacted]

I have known [redacted] for approx. 15 years and his wife [redacted] for around 7 years. As a mixed-race couple, I am aware of the discrimination that they sometimes encounter and it saddens me to see that some of it occurs in modern Britain, a nation that promotes and stands proud of its multi-cultural society.

I have looked at the plans for [redacted] and plot, also compared them to [redacted] which is an extension of a small single storey bungalow to a significantly sized residence that is currently being constructed and lies just 3 properties to the south of [redacted] approx. 50 metres away.

Although I cannot claim to be a planning expert, I have many years of personal experiences of properties, and I have sat in the House of Lords and been involved with debates and laws that affect planning regulations for a number of years. In this case, it is clear to me that.

1. [redacted] will take up approximately 1/3, possibly, slightly less of its total plot. Interestingly [redacted] appears to take up half of the plot size (which would be in breach of some Council's planning rules, though it was approved). It also extends very close to its southern boundary (it appears to be less than a metre away from the boundary wall and would just about enable a wheelbarrow to pass. The northern part of the house appears to be about 1 metre from its boundary. Therefore, the property takes up the entire width of the plot. [redacted] will not take up its entire width, leaving around 7 meters on its northern side, on a larger plot.
2. I have seen the original approved drawings / plans from when [redacted] was built in approx. 2018, and they show a ground floor extension with a 1st floor balcony where the current planned extension is proposed. This would seem to indicate



that there was no intrinsic objection to this type of extension. It should be noted that the proposed extension will not overlook its neighbours.

3. The location of the garage at [redacted] was approved by the council and establishes the building line on the south side of the plot.
4. The nature of the geology of [redacted] and [redacted] and indeed, most of Heswall and the Wirral area to the East of the River Dee means that the majority of properties are overlooked or overlook other properties. [redacted] itself is overlooked by a number of residences and the proposed extension will only overlook where that the existing building already does.
5. It is also worth noting that the sheer size of the [redacted] plot size was specifically mentioned in the planner's report in relation to the appeal of [redacted] appeal no. [redacted].
6. I believe that the proposed extension to a modern property is aesthetically pleasing, it does justice to the [redacted] plot, and provides 'kerb appeal' by balancing the property, particularly the roof. The existing property, and its roof is not balanced does not have kerb appeal and indeed is ugly. The proposed property, when complete, will undoubtedly compliment a modernising Heswall and The Wirral.

Yours Aye

PS f a o Sarah Hacey

Appendix C Photographs of the Akbar Naval College - 1910, 1935 and 1953, none of which show Poplar trees.



epr000578 ENGLAND (1935). The Akbar Nautical School for Boys, Heswall, 1935. This image was marked by Aero Pictorial Ltd for photo editing.

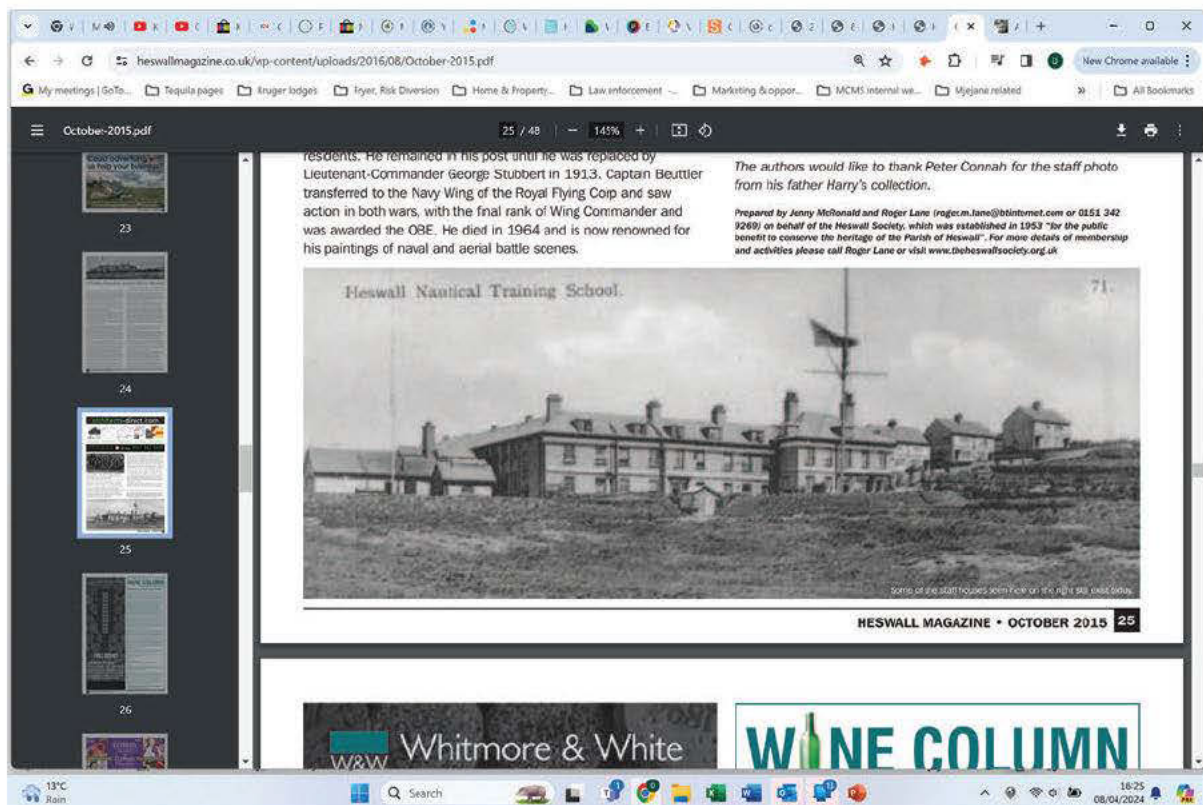


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Accept and close

Note the date in the below article of 1953, showing there are no poplar trees which would be located on the right-hand side of the photograph.



Appendix D – letter dated 5th Feb from No. 1 The Akbar

1 THE AKBAR
07719991323
drcllelliott@gmail.com
05/02/2024

Dear neighbours at Rawan House,

I am writing to you on behalf of the residents of The Akbar to ask you to please stop the cutting down of the poplar tree by St Minver. The residents feel strongly that the trees should remain as they are of historical significance, appear on photos marking the entrance to the nautical school in the early 1900's.

Further, the trees provide a habitat for many animals as well as providing some privacy for home owners. The trees are not diseased and were not condemned in 2017, as the owner of St Minver states. This has been confirmed by a tree

officer.

You may not be aware of a planning application submitted by St Minver, to take their property up to 3 stores. With the tree gone this may have an impact on your privacy and enjoyment of the area, should it go ahead.

Of course, the tree sits on your land so will understand if you decide the trees are a burden to you.

I felt that you should know the thoughts of the other residents before coming to an informed decision. The tree opposite, on your property will not be cut down. I feel the trees are worth more than a good view for St Minver.

I wish shifts so may not be immediately available should you wish to discuss further. But my partner, Alan, maybe available if I am not ([redacted]). Kind regards,
Lottie Elliott

Appendix E –Horse riders below the dangerous and potentially fatal tree, ignorant of the danger they are in.

