Woodside

Melrose Place

Storrington

RH20 3HH

Attn: Shazia Penne,

CC: Washington Ward Councillors Claudia Fisher, Joan Grech & Emma Beard

Dear Shazia Penne,

Thank you for your letter of the 10th October advising neighbours of planning application DC/24/1526 for a 2-bay car-port at High Larches. [redacted] we own Woodside, directly opposite to High Larches and hence the property that will be most affected by this further development, see figure-1. My wife and I strongly object to the building of the car-port at High Larches on the grounds I will outline below.

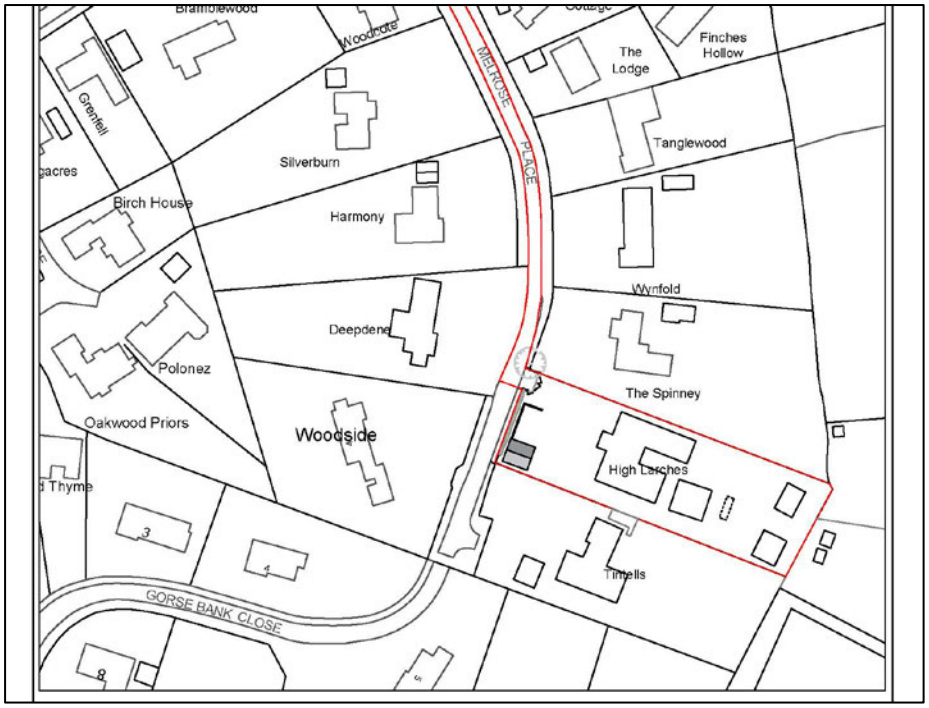

Figure 1 Street map showing Woodside in relation to High Larches

First let me give you a description of Melrose Place, it is a short private cul-de-sac comprising 16 properties, it is characterised as a single-track road with grass verges on either side. Each property, except High Larches, fronts onto the road with a cleft chestnut / sawn post and rail fence. All of the properties apart from High Larches have a well-maintained mature garden that adds a “borrowed landscape” to the road. Five of the properties have a gated drive, using a wooden universal wooden 5-bar gate. The remaining properties have gate-less drives with open access to Melrose Place. The road has a gentle slope from south to north which means that Woodside is up-dip of High Larches so we look down onto the car-port proposed in DC/24/1526

The planning application DC/24/1526 has a history based upon a number of previous planning applications, which I will elaborate upon:

DC/17/2676 - Proposed double garage with open car-port facility. Erection of front elevation, boundary wall/fencing. Alterations to existing drive and boundary to provide gated access."

Planning application DC/17/2676 was rejected unanimously by Horsham District Council Planning Committee as is documented in the Decision Notice dated 21/06/2018.

The reasons for the rejection were given as:

The proposed garage and car-port, by reason of its scale, massing and position, forms an inappropriate addition not sympathetic to its surrounds and the character and appearance of the street contrary to policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the Heath Common Design Statement.

However, the applicant had already made significant progress with the building of the garage and car-port hence planning application DC/18/1628

DC/18/1628 - Retrospective application for the erection of a double garage and front boundary wall/fence.

The application DC/18/1628 was permitted in the decision notice dated 8/10/2018. However, in that decision notice in the "Plans Condition Section" was the following:

Note to Applicant - The applicant is advised that the matter will be referred to the Planning Compliance Team upon decision, to secure the complete removal of any remaining unauthorised development (pre-existing car-port).

The removal of the pre-existing car-port never took place, this is evident as it appears in the plans for DC/24/1526, this regulatory condition was completely ignored by the applicant.

Having successfully gained planning permission for the double garage, the applicant then submitted planning application DC/19/2104, where planning applications DC/18/1628 and DC/19/2104 together were identical to the refused planning application DC/17/2676.

DC/19/2104 - Erection of 3 bay attached carport building and retention of timber fencing to front boundary wall.

Planning application DC/19/2104 was rejected, the reasons for rejection were given as:

The proposed garage and carport, by reason of its scale, massing and position, forms an inappropriate addition not sympathetic to its surrounds and the character and appearance of the street contrary to policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and the Heath Common Design Statement.

This rejection then led to planning application DC/24/1526

DC/24/1526 - Erection of a 2-bay carport.

The 2-bay car port in this application is 10% smaller with a differing design to the 3-bay car port in planning applications DC/17/2676 and DC/19/2104. Planning applications for a car-port at High Larches have been submitted twice before, and both previous applications were rejected based upon scale, massing and position.

As the exact dimensions of the 2-bay car port in DC/24/1526 are not specified, based upon the scale bar on the plans I believe it to be 8.3m wide and 6.5m deep, giving a total footprint of 54sqm, compared to the 60sqm footprint of the the 3-bay car port in

the previous applications. With such a small difference in footprint I believe this application should also be rejected based upon scale, massing and position.

Our first objection is based upon the over development of the site.

There are nine properties on the south end of Melrose Place with large plots. Listing those 9 in order of plot size going from largest to smallest we have: The Spinney, Silverburn, Wynfold, Tintells, Woodside, High Larches, Harmony, Deepdene and Tanglewood. Reviewing the street map associated with planning application (figure-1), Woodside and Deepdene have one building on their respective plots, all the remaining plots have two buildings, apart from High Larches which currently has five. So High Larches already has the highest building density to plot size compared with all other properties on Melrose Place

High Larches is already significantly overdeveloped when compared with all other properties on Melrose Place. Permitting planning application DC/24/1526 for an additional car-port will only increase the level of overdevelopment at High Larches, and may well set a precedent for the overdevelopment of other large plot properties in the future.

Our second objection is because the development is not sympathetic to its surroundings and the character and appearance of Melrose Place and it is not in keeping with the character and street scene of Melrose Place

When we moved into Woodside in 2013 the residence at High Larches was a bungalow that was in character and scale similar to all other properties on Melrose Place, the view from all windows in Woodside facing High Larches was a green and pleasant panorama of well-established gardens. The view today from the front garden of Woodside towards High Larches can be seen in figure-2. The beech hedge at High Larches shielding the proposed car-port site is deciduous, so at some point (usually in late winter for a beech hedge) the leaves are dropped. Leaving a clear view from Woodside of whatever structure is built.



Figure 2 The view today from the front garden of Woodside towards High Larches

Figure-3 Depicts the high wall and gate for High Larches, all other properties on Melrose Place have either no gate at all, or a 5-bar gate, an example of which can be seen in figure-4. Clearly High Larches is the anomaly is this regard and is not in keeping with the character of the remainder of the road.



Figure 3 The high wall and gate for High Larches



Figure 4 An example 5-bar gate used by most properties on Melrose Place

Figure-5 Depicts the wall and fence for High Larches, all other properties on Melrose Place have either no wall or fence at all, or just a post and rail fence, or a post and rail fence with hedging, an example if which can be seen in figure-6. Clearly High Larches is again the anomaly is this regard and again is not in keeping with the character of the remainder of the road.



Figure 5 The wall and fence for High Larches



Figure 6 An example post & rail fence used universally by properties on Melrose Place

Various properties on Melrose Place have double free-standing garages, but no property on Melrose Place currently has a car-port or sees the need for a car-port. Hence the addition of a car-port is not in keeping with the character of other properties on Melrose Place.

Our Third objection is the potential loss of visual amenity from Woodside looking towards High Larches.

Woodside is the property directly opposite High Larches on the opposite side of the road. All of the East facing windows from Woodside look in the direction of the High Larches street scene. So, retaining a pleasant street scene is highly desirable. Figure-2 as shown earlier depicts the street scene from Woodside to High Larches as it is today.

Planning Application DC/18/1628 was a retrospective planning application for the building of a double garage and front boundary wall/fence. In figure-7 below I have copied “Figure 3 - Front boundary of site from opposite direction to figure 2” from the “Planning Statement” associated with that application. It shows that at the time of that application the beech hedge pre dating the building of the garage are already starting to die.

Regulatory Condition 5 from the permit for the development associated with this application states that, any plants or species within the hedge which subsequently die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased - within five years - shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing with a local planning authority.



Figure 3 – Front boundary of site from opposite direction to Figure 2

Figure 7 Image taken from Planning Statement associated with DC/18/1628

Given that in figure 7 the beech hedge was clearly dying during the building of the garage, they died within the specified five-year period. In contravention of Regulatory Condition 5, these were never replaced, as you can see from figure-8 taken a few days ago. Hence this regulatory condition was completely ignored by the applicant.

A major concern is that if this planning application for the car-port in DC/24/1526 is granted then:

- The additional building works may change the micro-climate in which the beech hedge currently thrives.
- The additional building works may add to soil compaction and/or damage the beech hedge roots.

Hence the beach hedge as it stands today may well begin to die as it did when the garage in DC/18/1628 was built.

As the applicant has previously ignoring planning approval regulatory conditions, I believe that if DC/24/1526 is permitted and a similar regulatory condition is inserted in the approval, stating that if any plants or species within the hedge which subsequently die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased - within five years - shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species. Then this will also be ignored by the applicant. Resulting in a serious degradation of the street scene and loss of visual amenity from Woodside looking towards High Larches



Figure 8 -Image today - Dead beech hedge never replaced

Our Fourth Objection to this planning application is based upon additional Traffic, Noise, and Disturbance.

Apart from the period during Covid, some development on this site has been almost continuous, starting with the demolition of the original bungalow, the building of the main residence, the building of the front wall, the building of the various additional buildings behind the main residence, the building of the garage, and the laying of block paving over almost all of the remaining plot. These previous building works have sometimes extended into the weekends and public holidays with little regard for the neighbours. Melrose Place is a single-track cul-de-sac and throughout these developments heavy lorries and machinery has been known block access to Melrose Place for the other residents, the post man and other delivery vehicles. Allowing the development of the car-port will again will bring unnecessary Traffic, Noise, and Disturbance that the residents will have to endure.

As an ancillary point, I would like to draw your attention to a recent modification to the pillars in the front wall at High Larches, figures 9 and 5, the decorative top to the wall pillars has been removed, does this indicate the applicant intends to raise the height of the wall / fence panels?



Figure 9 – Decorative top to wall pillars removed – For what purpose.

In summary, we would like to objects to planning application DC/24/1526 for the following reasons:

- The site is already over developed compared to all other properties on Melrose Place, adding another structure will only increase the overdevelopment and will set a precedent for future development of other Melrose Place properties.
- The propose 2-bay car port is only 10% smaller than the previously rejected car-ports, the development is not sympathetic to its surroundings and the character and appearance of Melrose Place and it is not in keeping with the character and street scene of Melrose Place.
- The potential loss of visual amenity from Woodside looking towards High Larches if sections of the beech hedge die as a consequence of the building works and are not replaced.
- The additional building traffic, noise, and disturbance.

Thank you and kind regards

[redacted]

Woodside

Melrose Place