28 Fitzalan Road
Arundel
West Sussex
BN18 9JS
17/10/2022

19 OCT 2022

Planning Officer c/o Hannah Riddle
Arun District Council

Reference Planning Application AB/121/22/T

Dear Ms Riddle,
In response to the above application, as a resident immediately adjacent to the trees I wish to support this application. I invite either an Officer from the Planning Office or the Member for Planning to visit my property and the strip of land affected, to inspect for themselves the impact of the willow trees subject to this application on my own and adjacent properties. This will also allow the Planning Officer to see personally the effects that remote planning decisions may have on residents.

The presence of the trees adjacent to the properties, including mine, dominate entirely our rear aspects which significantly affect our right to light, produce excessive leaf litter and consequent clogging of our gutter systems, have over time removed our visual amenity of sight of the town creating an artificial isolation from the town in which we live and most importantly create risk and damage to our properties, contrary to the application tick box.

This damage is ongoing. I should mention that there is already a stated liability history to both the Environment Agency and Arun District Council together in respect to damage caused to the properties on this road by the presence of the willow trees. This is especially relevant to the lower numbered properties on the road where the trees are less than 10 metres from the structures. There is also the main Southern Water Sewerage infrastructure that is within 5 metres of the trunks to also consider.

The ongoing damage is significant, costly and presents current and future risk investment to property owners in addition to the increased insurance premiums and high claim excess. In my case, I am unable to invest in my shared drive way, along with my neighbour, due to the ground supporting our driveway around the house dropping by no less than 6 inches in the past 12 months. This has resulted in the concrete rafts fracturing and breaking dangerously and our subsequent loss of use of the driveways and garage for vehicles. This has been caused by the excessive water extraction in the ground made by the willow trees, especially during the recent hot summers and ongoing accelerating climate change. If there is any future rehydration of the ground it will rise and likely cause further damage to any remediation we establish today.

I enclose current photographs in support of these assertions in an effort to emphasise these points. The web portal does not allow photo attachments to support comment.

The tree preservation orders (TPO) appear to have been created to solely preserve a visual amenity for town residents remotely across the river. However, the TPOs have over the past few years removed the visual amenity of sight of the town for the road residents and have prevented more applicable maintenance of the trees in respect of para 0.2 of BS3998.2010 to prevent damage to property and risk to owners; there is already a history of limb failure on several of these ageing trees. The TPOs have never been reviewed for their relevance or value to either the town or the residents who are directly affected.

A couple of points the Council may wish to clarify with the applicant, please.
The first is that there is a damage component to this application. This should not prevent the application being approved but the Council and the Environment Agency will need to be aware from this point forwards due the history their own liabilities in respect of decision and planned maintenance schedules.
Secondly, the tree surgeon has mentioned tree 11 as being behind number 32; this is incorrect as it is behind number 28 according to his own diagram. Both trees 11 and 12 behind number 28 have suffered limb failure in addition to any failure that has already occurred to any tree behind number 32. This may need clarification.

I am enclosing photographs to support these comments. I would very much like to have and Officer or even the Member responsible for planning visit to see for themselves the impact that their decisions have on their residents. I will of course supply tea/coffee and biscuits.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Mark Gawley.

[redacted]

AB/121/22/T

View of driveway and height of trees immediately behind the property

AB/121/22/T

Close up of gap between the granite and concrete raft.

AB/121/22/T

Types + fractures concrete raft.

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Concrete roof collapse

AB/121/22/T

Cracks shrinkage/on concrete roof