

Planning Officer: Kernohan

Planning Application Ref: AL/107/16/RES

Location: Land west of Westergate Street & east of Hook Lane, Westergate

Description of works: Application for Reserved Matters following Outline Approval being granted at Appeal.

Comments On Application:

- There are some significant highly valued specimen Oak trees at the entrance (Oakdene) to the development and alongside the southern boundary line which will require to be respected and protected during the demolition and construction works.
- Barratt Homes have employed ACD Environmental to prepare both a Tree Report with Constraints Plan and a follow up Arb Impact Assessment Report with Tree Protection Plan.
- The reports highlight the importance of the four Oaks within the garden of Oakdene which has been recognised by the fact that they are all TPO'd trees.
- The supporting reports are very detailed but I have concerns that these four key oaks are not being afforded adequate protection and respect. In accepting that this is the only way that they can access the site I also wish to see this done in such a manner that it causes the minimum of disturbance to these trees. For example:-
 - a) they are specifying ground protection beneath trees 4, 5 & 6 and 'No Dig' Cellweb surfacing detail for the access road and footpath which is fine but the 'No Dig' Cellweb needs to be shown to come all the way westwards up to the building line of Oakdene.
 - b) there will need to be Arb. Expert monitored 'hand digging' of slit trenches to the south of Trees 1 & 4 and 5 at the back edge of the new footpath to sever roots of 25mm diameter and under with bypass secateurs.
 - c) I do not automatically accept that just because a tree has fungal brackets on it, it is dangerous and must be removed – they will need to prove this with a combined **PICUS & Resistograph investigation** and then submit the findings for scrutiny before we can agree to any TPO'd Oaks being removed.
 - d) There is a contradiction in that whilst we are having 'No Dig' surfacing laid to the south of trees 4,5 & 6 they then specify that all utility service trenches will go straight through this zone – this is a 'NO Dig' zone that goes very close to the trunk of and directly through the RPA of the best tree on the site **T6 which is an A graded tree** and would be severely undermined and compromised if these excavation works are approved – I would want to see an alternative offered of 'Thrust Boring' through the RPA of this tree under the main root system at a depth of minimum 1m below the surface.

Conclusions:

- The supporting report skims over certain subjects and does not provide enough detail at the present time to draw the conclusions that have been applied.
- More work will need to be done on this and in liaison with the Arun Tree Officer to ensure that the TPO'd Oaks are afforded due respect and adequate levels of protection.

Recommendations:

EXAMPLE CONDITION

No development, groundworks or demolition processes shall be undertaken until an agreed scheme of supervision for the arboricultural protection measures has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The supervision and monitoring shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the approved details. The scheme shall include details of:

- a) A Pre-Commencement meeting between the retained arboricultural consultant and the local authority Tree Officer and personnel responsible for the implementation of the approved development – primarily to inspect the erected Protective Fencing to verify that it is as shown on the submitted Tree Protection Plan and is also of the desired quality and 'fit for purpose' in accordance with BS5837:2012 recommendations and ;
- b) Timings, frequency & methods of site visiting and an agreed reporting process to the Local Planning Authority.

Reasons

To adequately protect all trees worthy of retention from development harm and to provide for their amenity contribution thereafter in accordance with Policies of the Arun District Council Local Plan dated

All works shall be undertaken exactly as specified in the agreed reports and approved plans as prepared by ACD Environmental in support of this scheme – **list these reports and plan references here please.**

Bernie Harverson - Consultant Arboriculturist