

CONSULTEE RESPONSE (Arun District Council - Arboriculturist)

Date of report: 8th October 2024

Reference: AL/89/24/OUT

Proposal: Outline planning with all matters reserved (except access) for the demolition of existing redundant nursery buildings and other structures and erection of a residential development of with up to 130 No. dwellings, informal and formal public open space, landscaping, drainage, and other associated works. This application may be a Departure from the Development Plan.

Location: Land at Woodgate Nurseries, Lidsey Road, Woodgate

Case Officer: Leanne Richardson

Comments on application:

I have considered this application by means of a desktop review, using the information and plans submitted as well as online resources. Recent /PAA consideration from site and familiarity with surrounding areas provide further insight to the proposal.

TREE SURVEY NOTES

It is important to note there are concentrated linear formations of higher value (retention category A/B ((BS5837:2010)) native oak trees on the south, east and west boundaries of the proposed residential compartment, a large majority of which are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). Native hedgerows and understorey vegetation within and around the site are important wildlife corridors. Both features have significant landscape value and are strategically important for the accrual of ecological and environmental benefits for this site and its environs as well as providing high levels of visual amenity. They must be afforded sufficient room to allow future growth (above and below ground level) without constraint if they are to flourish post-development. Such trees should not be obscured, rather they ought to be made focal points from within the site, adding maturity to the sense of place.

The applicants have employed Barrell Tree Consultancy (BTC) Ltd. to prepare an Arboricultural Assessment & Method Statement along with a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) for this project. Although we are only considering access and the principle of development at this stage, it is useful to have an Illustrative Block Plan and complementary TPP from which to identify early any obvious areas for improvement.

HIGHER VALUE TREES ON SITE – RELATIONSHIP WITH LAYOUT (Conceptual)

For ease of reference, those trees listed in the BTC report are given the following (TPO) reference and should be afforded special consideration:

T23 (T5), T26 (T1), T30&31 (G1), T33 (T2).

There are numerous incursions into the RPAs of higher value trees which is avoidable and therefore unacceptable. Only three trees of note are wholly within the site (close linear group, T21-T23 incl.), the remainder growing on/near boundary. As such, all mature trees of good health and form should complement any development of this site.

FACTORS INFLUENCING EVOLUTION OF LAYOUT PROPOSALS

Sites of this size and generally open nature but with established landscape features (trees and hedgerow), should be subject to the higher-level development principles, as promoted in our Supplementary Planning Documents. Those give instruction for avoiding Root Protection Area (RPA) incursion and providing further insurance with the use of buffer zones (a minimum of 2metres to be effective). **Arun District Public Open Space, Playing Pitches and Built Facilities** (Appendix 9) and **Arun Design Guide** (E.02 Landscape Structures & Trees, p48) - [Supplementary Planning Documents \(SPDs\) and other guidance | Arun District Council](#).

It is undesirable for plots to abut established boundary vegetation, as this will increase risk of harmful impacts upon them following a change of land use. Soft landscaping, lawn treatments and certain permitted development all have potential to affect ongoing health and vitality.

Furthermore, excessive shade could be cast over dwellings and strongly influence ground conditions within gardens, potentially blighting those properties and limiting horticultural scope for occupiers.

I would like to see landscape buffers of sufficient width to comfortably accommodate the future spread of boundary trees. Those features could provide some informal utility for residents as well as enhancing green infrastructure connectivity through and around the site. Furthermore, incorporating them into public realm should provide a safeguard against unsympathetic management or removal.

SURFACE WATER AND FOUL WATER DRAINAGE

These fundamental elements of any design ought to be approved in association with future layout proposals, so that we are not subsequently held hostage to flood mitigation measures which could then impact heavily on retained trees/landscape plans/open space provision.

I draw attention to the nominal root protection areas (RPA) of retained trees and their growth potential as obvious constraints to the siting of any SUDS feature, soakaway or introduction of subterranean utility apparatus. The provision of appropriate buffer/easement around such features must also take into account that growth potential (roots), to limit the risk of damage occurring during future maintenance of the same, from compaction/contamination of the soil structure.

Any improvements to existing or creation of new watercourses within the RPA of preserved trees to be fully considered, details provided in advance and to our satisfaction. Where there is a significant risk of damage to those trees arising from such operations, then an alternative strategy should be proposed.

ACCESS ROUTES

Broadly I see no issue with the proposed main access route, although where it bisects the hedgerow group H47 there may be a conflict with RPAs (not shown on the TPP, 1 of 6) of high value preserved trees in G19.

Conclusions

The general 'principle of development' as illustrated on the parameter plan is achievable without undue detriment to retained trees but is going to require a more sympathetic and less intrusive layout at Reserved Matters stage.

Further clarity is required around the extent of any RPA incursion from main access being routed alongside/through tree group G19. Given there are no similar tree types immediately south of the proposed road gap, it ought to be possible to move outside of the RPA+ buffer zone.

There must be overriding justification for RPA incursion, not a presumption (often mistakenly) that BS5837:2012 – Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction promotes activity in the RPA. It does not. It presents a range of options to consider, where such incursion is unavoidable or where no reasonable alternative exists. A layout that does not follow this principle should be resisted.

Recommendation

I see no reason to object to these outline proposals on arboricultural grounds, provided we are reassured no impact on the RPA+ of G19 will occur.

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer

Environment and Climate Change

From: Nicola Oktay on behalf of Planning.Responses
Sent: 16 October 2024 09:54
To: Planning Scanning
Subject: FW: AL/89/24/OUT
Attachments: AL.89.24.OUT.pdf

Tree Officers response

Nikki Oktay
Planning Receptionist, Planning Department

T: 01903 737965
E: Nicola.Oktay@arun.gov.uk

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd
Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF
www.arun.gov.uk

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From: Mark Warwick <Mark.Warwick@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 October 2024 11:40
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Leanne Richardson <Leanne.Richardson@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: AL/89/24/OUT

Please find attached my report for your consideration.

Regards,

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer, Environment and Climate Change

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd
Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF
www.arun.gov.uk