



# LIZARD

Landscape Design and Ecology

**Arun District Council** Date inspected: 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Planning Officer:** Mr S Davis

**Planning Application Ref:** AW/246/19/PL

**Location:** Land Adjacent to 34 Wakefield Way Aldwick PO21 3RS

**Description of works:** Erection of 1 No. 2 storey end of terrace house

**Comments on Application:**

- The applicants have employed Lizard Landscape and Design to prepare an Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement along with a Tree Retention and Protection (TRP) Plan for this project.
- The Tree Survey data is comprehensive and accords with the requirements of BS5837:2012. I am broadly in agreement with the retention category ratings for on and off-site trees, although there is insufficient evidence to support the Category C rating applied to oak T05. This may be a Category B tree – in any event, its long-term retention is highly desirable as based on the information provided and from my own limited ground level assessment, this tree could theoretically be viable for in excess of 100years.
- T05 is one of several large, mature/maturing English oak that are major landscape components defining the verdant character of the area. As if by chance, they are evenly spaced and on opposite sides of the road, such that they present both individually and as constituents of a disparate group. Their crowns are relatively unmodified so are visually attractive from many aspects. The loss of any one of these trees would no doubt be keenly felt by local residents and regular visitors alike.

*We agree with the comments regarding the value of the tree T05 within the wider landscape context and amenity historically, however due to severe damage to the main trunk with subsequent 40% loss of crown (as detailed in our Existing Tree Schedule and Schedule of Tree Works) the category has been reclassified from B to C based on its Arboricultural Condition. There is also evidence of exposure to structural roots following ditch clearance.*

*Between the June 2011 and May 2012 a large part of the tree canopy (approx. 40%) was lost due to a probable compression fork fracture of one of the main stems located to the northern aspect as illustrated by Google Earth photography below. Due to significant unoccluded wounding and exposure of the heartwood the extent of the damage is such that it is considered unreasonable to apply a viability in excess of 100 years.*

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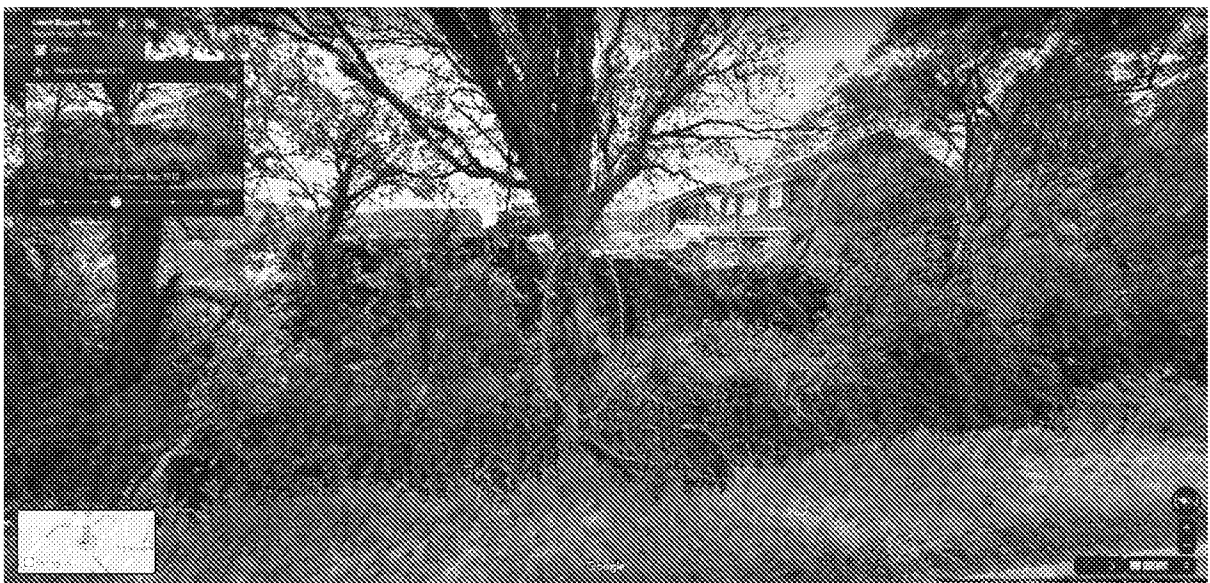


**April 2007 – Full canopy extent shown**



**June 2013 – Severe crown loss (40%) following loss of limb to lower trunk**

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**May 2012 – Google Street View**

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- Even by their own flawed (undervalued) representation of T05's root protection area, they have been compelled to propose a suite of engineering solutions and protection measures to mitigate the risk of damage to the tree.

*While distortion of the RPA maybe assumed, we have no empirical evidence defining the extent of root development, therefore the representation of the RPA is justified in accordance with the method and guidance of BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations.*

*Irrespective of condition we have recommended micro piling for the proposed foundation, which would be a justifiable method (for good quality trees Category A or B) in accordance with (BS 5837:2012 / 7.5 Special engineering for foundations within the RPA par. 7.5.1). These are recognised measures of mitigation based upon the guidance of the British Standard.*

- The use of circular Root Protection Areas is typical and usually adequate but in truth is rarely an informative representation in the built environment. In this case it clearly does not reflect the likely area which contains sufficient roots and rooting volume to maintain the tree's viability. A revised polygon which abandons the inclusion of carriageway/footway and captures much more of the existing garden and verges would be a realistic representation. It follows that the actual extent of root protection area intrusion proposed by this scheme is far more extensive than that which has been illustrated on the TRP plan.

*Through the reference to the historic maps of the surroundings and the development site, the area appears to be utilised as agricultural / farmland until the late 60's/early 70's when the housing estate was built, therefore the true extent of the Root Protection Area of the tree T05 within the property can only be established through ground investigation such as excavation trial pits. We would recommend non-invasive root investigation within the area of the proposed foundation undertaken by professional Air Spade Investigation service to ascertain root distribution.*

- Were this development to proceed, the proposed change in intensity of land-use around the new dwelling will eventually lead to damaging compaction over the rooting area of T05.

*The land-use around the proposed dwelling will retain its current function as a garden with paving areas constructed above the existing ground level with No-Dig Construction Method (in accordance with method set out within the recommended guidance of BS 5837:2012).*

Furthermore, due to the canopy overhang dominating the rear garden, there will inevitably be a 'future residential pressure to prune' which would be difficult to refuse – further spoiling the visual amenity currently provided by this tree.

*The overwhelming extent of the canopy is held to the southerly aspect away from the proposed development area. The canopy overhang predominantly is held to the upper crown, limiting any requirement to prune.*

- I note from the Design and Access Statement that cellular soakaways are proposed (ideally to be 5m from built structures) and that should be situated outside of the anticipated rooting area of established trees. I have not seen where this is going to be located but clearly to the rear of the dwelling is going to be problematic, especially when you revise the RPA.

*The proposed cellular soakaways will be located within the proposed front garden and outside of RPA's*

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### Conclusions:

- The RPA of T05, a potentially high value tree (of landscape and public amenity value, which contributes greatly to the verdant character of the area) has not been accurately represented. As such, the extent of RPA intrusion has not been satisfactorily demonstrated.
- I find the likely extent of RPA intrusion problematic and the associated high risk of short and long-term damage to T05 is unlikely to be adequately mitigated by engineering solutions at this site.

*In the first instance the proposals seek to retain and protect the tree.*

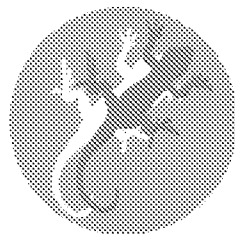
*While recognising the landscape amenity value of the tree we are concerned about its arboricultural condition: following the major damage to the main trunk with exposure of the heartwood leading to loss of approx. 40% of the canopy, the tree longevity is considered to be significantly reduced.*

*The mitigation methods recommended are in accordance with guidance of BS 5837:2012. Further trial / investigation may be specified within the Method Statement to determine RPA extent.*

*Cantilever foundation was also suggested by architect to minimise impact onto the potential RPA of T05, which should be a subject to potential investigation.*

*We would welcome your comments in regards to this approach.*

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