

From: Mark Warwick <Mark.Warwick@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 10 January 2020 16:18
To: Simon Davis <Simon.Davis@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: AW/246/19/PL

I write further to comments submitted by Lizard Landscape Design and from Mr I.Blumer / Project Architect, in response to my initial response to this application of 15th November 2019.

I will address each point of dispute in turn:

1. Disputed retention category rating (T05).

The exercise of applying such a rating will always have an element of subjectivity, but there are clear parameters set out in the British Standard. In this instance, the tree clearly has a life expectancy of >40years and so as a starting point it must be assigned a Category A rating. Due to having sustained such a large part failure, its form has been temporarily diminished and the large irregular deep wound on the main stem is a vulnerability to future colonisation by pathogens.

On that basis alone, I would agree with a downgrading from Category A to Category B. I do not believe Category B is a valid starting point from which to assess its suitability for retention.

We should also consider the following facts, when determining the relative value of this tree:

- It is an oak! These are usually long-lived and theoretically can survive several hundreds of years in urban environments.
- *Q.robur* typically has great structural integrity and coping strategies for dealing with pathogenic activity. They are also adept at recovering from rapid defoliation / partial crown loss events.
- The tree appears outwardly to be in a fine physiological state despite the reported weak formation of wound-wood around the stem wound and no obvious pathogens have been observed.
- This tree is an important constituent of the local tree population and it could continue to make a valuable contribution even should it have to be modified to remediate a significant deterioration in its condition.
- Occasional ditch clearance work may reveal/expose/superficially damage root material, as is frequently observed on bankside trees – but is usually of such minor significance to be easily tolerated.

In conclusion, I do not believe such a tree can be assigned a Category C (low value) retention rating.

2. Disputed root protection area (RPA).

I refer to para.4.6.3 of BS5837:2012.

'Any deviation in the RPA from the original circular plot should take account of the following factors whilst still providing adequate protection for the root system:

- a) the morphology and disposition of the roots, when influenced by past and existing site conditions (e.g. the presence of roads, structures and underground apparatus);*
- b) topography and drainage;*
- c) the soil type and structure;*
- d) the likely tolerance of the tree to root disturbance or damage, based on factors such as species, age, condition and past management.*

It seems unnecessary, potentially disruptive and probably inconclusive - to undertake ground investigations to determine the extent of such a tree's rooting zone.

In conclusion, I maintain the nominal circular RPA is a flawed interpretation of T05's likely rooting area and at the least would have expected to see a polygon RPA of area equivalent to the circle.

3. Change in intensity of land-use

I accept the proposed 'No-dig' has the potential to mitigate risk of damage from soil compaction, although if one accepts a revised polygon RPA as I suggest then there is potential for compaction over the rooting area at the side of the dwelling.

In conclusion, this is a minor 'negative impact' although it should be considered as part of a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of these proposals.

4. Canopy overhang – future residential pressure to prune

I maintain the tree will present as intensely shade-bearing for large parts of the day and so applications for crown reduction pruning are predictable and likely to be upheld on appeal if we allow this residential dwelling to be built. The tree has high growth potential if it remains healthy and can recover crown volume. Canopy enlargement will naturally increase its influence over adjacent property.

5. Screw pile / cantilever foundation

A recognised engineering method when working within RPAs of retained trees, where traditional strip excavation footings would be intolerable - although it remains intrusive and potentially damaging.

6. Request for site inspection

I see little if any value in a site meeting but am happy to correspond further on any specific points of contention or provide bespoke conditions if you are of a mind to approve the application.

7. Compliance with BS5837:2012

I acknowledge the Tree Survey Data; presentation and type of reports/plans submitted in support of this application – meets the requirements of the BS. That is very different from supporting the development.

8. RPA is capped at 15m by BS5837:2012 and is shown as such (T05).

According to our online resources, the submitted Tree Protection Plan shows an RPA of 11.5m for T05. BS5837:2012 only caps the radial spread of an RPA at 15m radial spread where it is circular. It can exceed 15m when the RPA is a polygon, as I believe it should be here. It is relevant to cap the RPA in any event at 707m².

In summary, I believe the tree retains enough existing and potential value to the locality to be given adequate room to flourish – free from interference with adjacent ground conditions. I fail to see how the addition of 1unit beyond the established building line is of sufficient benefit to the area to put the long-term health and vitality of such a tree in jeopardy.

I sustain my recommendation for refusal.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer

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