

Planning Officer: Simon Davis

Planning Application Ref: AW/28/19/PL

Location: Rear of 276 Aldwick Road, Aldwick, PO21 3QH

Description of works: Erection of 1 No. dwelling & associated works.

Comments on Application:

- The applicant has employed **Lizard Landscape Design Ltd** to prepare an Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement, ref.LLD1612-ARB-REP-001, 18th January 2019, along with a supporting Existing Tree Schedule and Tree Retention and Protection (TRP) Plan for this project.
- The Tree Survey data submitted accords with the requirements of BS5837:2012 and I am broadly in agreement with the Suitability for Retention category ratings applied.
- The relationship between ground levels at the proposed vehicle access and driveway with both adjacent areas of 'no-dig construction' has not been described in detail or shown on any cross-section drawing. The viability of this critical element of the development proposal must be revealed via civil engineering exercise, so we can be sure those trees retained will not suffer damage and that finished ground levels in a broader context will be acceptable.
- Drainage and service-runs in and out of site have not been shown and so there remains a high probability of further root protection area incursion.

Conclusions:

- The proposals as submitted should be achievable in arboricultural terms, although there is important information lacking (as described above), such that I could not lend this scheme my support as it stands.
- Furthermore, and notwithstanding a satisfactory submission of the above information, I would like to note for the record that I am uncomfortable with this level of intrusion into the nominal root protection area of established trees. The combined extent of ground protection and no-dig construction areas, as shown on the TRP plan is symptomatic of that intrusion. Whilst they propose recognised engineering solutions for working in close proximity to retained trees, it must be noted that that element is very ambitious and carries a high risk of accidental damage. It remains to be seen whether or not satisfactory ground levels can be achieved to implement the required level of tree protection.
- There is also the proposed change to intensity of land-use around the new dwelling to consider if we are to appreciate the long-term as well as potential short-term impact on the ongoing health and vitality of retained trees.
- I believe the vulnerability of trees and hedges to damage during the construction phase (however well-intentioned the scheme of tree protection) and the potential for longer-term pressures from increased ground compaction over tree root systems and a 'pressure to prune' - collectively present a risk to the enduring character of the area, in part defined by the presence of hedges and mature trees, most notably along the sites western boundary.

Recommendations:

- I register an **OBJECTION** to this scheme for the reasons stated above.

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team