Arun District Council

Date of inspection: 27th March 2020

Planning Officer: Mr S Davis

Planning Application Ref: **BE/137/19/RES**

Location: **The Cottage, Shripney Road, Bognor Regis, PO22 9PA**

Description of works: **Application for approval of phase 2 reserved matters following outline permission BE/63/17/OUT (as amended by BE/131/18/PL) for 20no. dwellings**

Comments on Application:

- The applicants had employed Arbortrack Systems Ltd. to prepare an Arboricultural Method Statement Report (AMSR) along with a Tree Protection Plan for this project. The original tree survey provided on behalf of the applicant is now more than 2years old, generally regarded as a threshold beyond which any condition ratings and management recommendations may no longer be valid. That said, it remains possible to consider the general implications for existing tree stock.

- I am mindful of previous comments and recommendations made by our appointed arboricultural consultant, in his report dated 21st September 2017 (BE/63/17/OUT) that remain relevant at this later time and which I endorse.

- The layout proposed here differs markedly from that which was approved at Outline stage and so the Tree Protection Plan no longer represents an effective scheme. The associated Arboricultural Method Statement Report will also need revising to take into account necessary changes. This renders condition 4 (BE/63/17/OUT) obsolete.

- It is apparent from the latest Proposed Site Plan (dwg.no. PL-003, Rev 4) that greater root protection area (RPA) incursion will occur at plots 01-06, 11 and 16. I find this unacceptable, especially given the progress which had been made to secure our arboriculturist's approval at Outline stage and as there is ample opportunity (no over-riding justification otherwise) to avoid RPAs. In respect of plot 16 again, T33 (TPO sycamore) will undoubtedly come under greater and hard-to-resist 'future residential pressure to prune', thus diminishing its position in the landscape.

- The outstanding concern in respect of the footway link across the front of the site, which cuts through the RPA of T35 (TPO sycamore), appears not to have been addressed entirely. We should seek clarity on their intentions here; whether they intend to: i) implement a 'No-dig' engineering solution if levels permit, ii) extend the interior footway south across the front of plots 17-20 to link up with the east-west public footpath as previously suggested or preferably, iii) to terminate at the edge of the RPA.

- The AMSR from Arbortrack Systems Ltd remains a comprehensive and broadly supportable document, although considering the revised layout some revisions are now necessary. It may also be a good time to write-in a specific methodology for both installation of garden/boundary fencing and any patio construction within RPAs.

- There does not appear to be an approved surface water drainage strategy for the site. This fundamental element of the design ought to be addressed to our satisfaction in association with 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.

- Foul water drains are proposed within the RPA of retained trees; to the rear of plots 01-06 and alongside plot 16, which I assume would involve damaging excavation work. Those trees to be affected are of significant screening value and/or a public amenity. This must be avoided and so the Foul Drainage Network needs revising at those locations.

Conclusions:

- This latest layout proposal is a retrograde step from Outline stage in terms of tree preservation and would impact heavily on significant trees, both above and below ground.

- Were this application to be approved in current form we would not have an effective plan or approved methodology of working to ensure retained trees, including those subject of an Order (TPO) would thrive post-development.

Recommendations:

- Once a more tree-sympathetic layout has been designed and which addresses all the above points of concern; the applicants should invite their project Arboricultural Consultant to prepare an up-to-date tree survey and then submit a revised Arboricultural Method Statement Report Assessment and Tree Protection Plan associated with an approved layout – with the trees accurately plotted on same.

- As it stands, I am unable to lend this scheme my support and so register an **OBJECTION**.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team