

CONSULTEE RESPONSE (Arun District Council - Arboriculturist)

Date of report: 28th August 2025

Reference: BE/16/25/RES

Proposal: Approval of reserved matters following outline consent BE/150/22/OUT comprising of 3no. units within Class B2 and/or B8 of the Use Classes Order (including ancillary office provision) with associated enabling works, parking, landscaping and sustainable drainage system with access off Newlands Road. This application is in CIL Zone 4 (Zero Rated) as other development.

Location: Land at Oldlands Farm, Newlands Road, Bognor Regis, PO22 9NN

Case Officer: Emma Sheppard

BACKGROUND

The aforementioned outline application was given permission on 05-Oct-2023. Condition 8 of the decision notice relates to the protection of existing trees/bushes and hedges on the site.

All trees are material consideration in the planning process, including those which grow off-site but might overlap in crown or root spread.

Condition 8 is to be discharged prior to commencement. It requires the protection of trees/bushes and hedges in accordance with a scheme approved by the local planning authority.

An application to discharge Condition 8, ref. BE/24/25/DOC, was refused on 28-Apr-2025 due to insufficient information submitted, so failing to meet the requirements of the condition. The applicant/agent had stated *'There is no existing vegetation within the red line boundary therefore no details are submitted pursuant to this condition.'*

TREE SURVEY INFORMATION

There are significant trees both on and off this site which could be adversely affected by the proposals. There is no supporting arboricultural information submitted with the application - a requirement of BS5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. As such, were this application to now proceed, we will not have sufficient information to guarantee such trees would be adequately respected and protected.

Notable mature trees upon and overlapping the development are found straddling the sites' southern boundary (north of Steyning Way). Recently planted and fast-establishing native tree types are found in verges and greensward towards the northern boundary (seen from Newlands Road), likely to have been secured as part of previous planning permissions. All either possess or have high potential to provide visual amenity and screening within an otherwise heavily industrialised area.

BS5837 recommends at minimum, submission of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement along with a dimensioned Tree Protection Plan at this stage. Those permit a comprehensive understanding of the implications for retained trees, how they would relate to new dwellings and infrastructure, and importantly how they could be protected during implementation.

SERVICES

Service-runs in and out of site have not been shown and so there is potential for tree/hedgerow removal and root protection area incursion, to satisfy those requirements. More detail is required around those elements of the proposal and how they might impact trees and hedgerow.

It is expected that utility (gas, electric, mains water) apparatus can be located and routed away from the RPA of retained trees to connect with those existing.

DRAINAGE – Influence on/from established vegetation

There does not appear to be an approved surface water drainage (and foul water sewer) 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.

The surface and foul water drainage layout reveals multiple areas of potential conflict between proposed utility apparatus and existing vegetation.

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.

CONCLUSION:

There is a complete absence of arboricultural information, such that we cannot adequately assess the impact of the proposal on existing trees and hedgerow.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend refusal of this application.

INFORMATIVE:

If intending to resubmit; the applicant should employ the services of an Arboricultural Consultant to carry out a tree survey exercise and then prepare an Arboricultural Report which must be inclusive of; a 'Tree Survey Schedule', a 'Root Protection Area (RPA) Schedule' and a 'Tree Constraints Plan' – with the trees accurately plotted on same.

If a RPA of any tree which is proposed for retention overlaps the development, then BS5837:2012 requires that the Detailed Planning Application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and also most importantly a Tree Protection Plan – to both describe and illustrate the mitigation measures which are to be employed to ensure that the trees survive without detriment to their vigour and vitality.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer
Environment and Climate Change

Report update: 15th October 2025

Further comments in response to the submission of new information from the applicant.

The applicant relies on a Tree Report from Beechdown Arboriculture Ltd. (BA Ltd.) dated November 2022, submitted with the outline application BE/150/22/OUT, to deliver baseline Tree Survey data (the Schedule) for our consideration. The survey data is more than 2 years old, generally regarded as a threshold beyond which any condition ratings and management recommendations may no longer be valid. I mention this as future reference, for the applicant/agent's benefit. That said, we are able to adequately consider the implications for affected trees on this occasion, given those impacted by any development are of low value

(retention category C) in a planning context and proposed removals are uncontroversial and easily mitigated by new tree planting within a detailed soft landscape proposal.

Again, whilst not wholly satisfactory as an arboricultural submission at the detailed application stage; the submitted Tree Retention, Protection & Removal Plan from BCA Design / Landscape Architects, appears to fully complement the unrelated BA Ltd. Tree Survey data and importantly contains enough written instruction to satisfy the method statement (AMS) element, required by the Standard (BS5837:2012).

CONCLUSIONS:

Although it is preferred to see all information at this stage submitted by a consultant arboriculturist, with the full suite of report and plans as described in my earlier comments (see INFORMATIVE), the relative arboricultural impact of this proposal is low and there is sufficient information now to meet the requirements of condition 8 imposed under the preceding outline application.

A discharge of condition (8) application should be approved if supported with the submission of Tree Retention, Protection & Removal Plan, BCA Design (Landscape Architects), dwg. no. 2380-24-04, Rev 02.

Notwithstanding my earlier stated concern for the absence of an approved surface water drainage strategy, I see no reason to object to this scheme directly on arboricultural grounds.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer
Environment and Climate Change

www.arun.gov.uk



Improving the wellbeing of Arun

Delivering the right homes in the right places

Supporting our environment to support us

Fulfilling Arun's economic potential

ARUN
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer, Environment and Climate Change

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