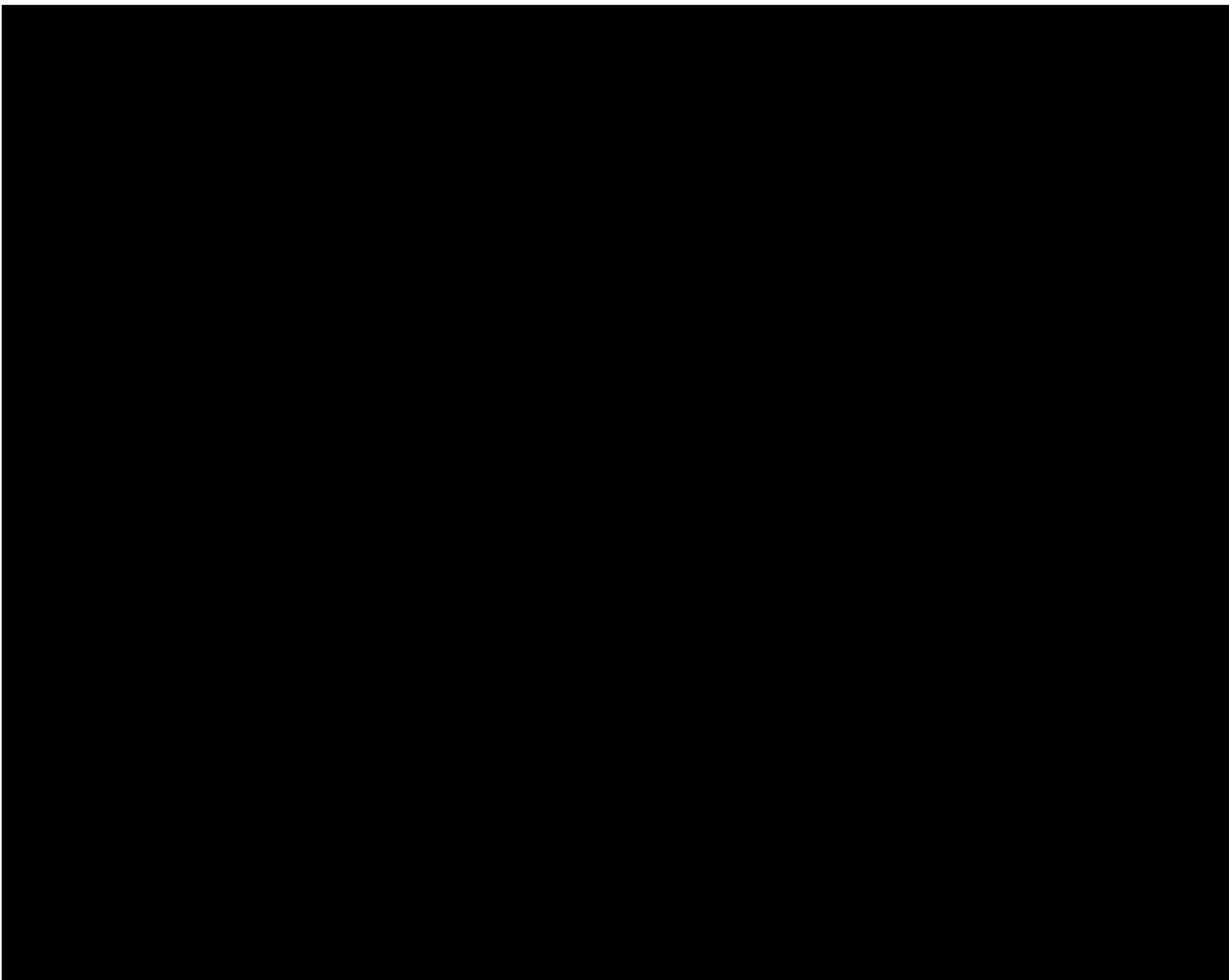




From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 19 April 2022 11:22
To: 'planning@arun.gov.uk' <planning@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning Application BN/16/22/PL - Trees

For the attention of Case Office Amber Willard

I refer to my objection letter dated 5 April 2022 (08/04/2022 on the planning website) regarding misleading information submitted by the applicant in respect of trees on the proposed development site.

Here are some “before and after” photographs which will serve to illustrate the discrepancy between the information submitted by the applicant, and the actual facts.



Exhibit A - "Before" – taken on 13 July 2019



Exhibit B - "After" - taken on 13 April 2022 from the same position

These photographs show the front of our house and the border with Clare Court, taken from the pavement on the opposite side of Barnham Road. To the left of Exhibit A you can see the two conifers referred to in my earlier letter. These trees were present on the day of the tree survey but were destroyed by the applicant/developer before the planning application was submitted. On the left is the Scots Pine, and to its right, the Yew which we understand to have been around 400 years old.

The difference between the two photographs is clear enough. On the day of the tree survey, 20 July 2021, the Scots Pine and the Yew to the left of Exhibit A were present. But the surveyor included no mention of them in his report, and the applicant submitted this report representing, by their omission, that these trees were not there.

Incidentally, the group of trees in the background in the Exhibit A, above our garage, were wild poplars which the applicant had negligently allowed to grow to around 75 feet tall and which were causing serious damage to our garden. We had to ask the applicant to deal with them, and they were removed later in July 2019, not long after this photo was taken.

The Yew and the Scots Pine are two of the trees which stood in the way of the development going ahead; as shown in my earlier letter, it would not be possible to construct the access road without first destroying these trees. Given the importance of these two trees in relation to the planning process, I suggest that Arun should enquire as to what discussions took place between the applicant and the tree surveyor between the date of the survey (20 July 2021) when these trees were present and the date of publication of the report (December 2021), and which led to the omission of these trees from the report following their undeclared destruction on 28 September 2021.

You can readily see from the photograph how these two trees formed a vital part of the Barnham Road street scene. They were an important part of what constituted our Area of Special Character. They were massive, majestic and

beautiful, and were certainly within the categories of trees requiring to be protected and retained, whether or not they were covered by a TPO. The applicant, instead of demonstrating how these trees would be retained and protected as required by Policy ENV DM4 (ALP) and Policy ES10 of the Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan, destroyed them on 28 September 2021 before submitting the planning application, and appears to have attempted to conceal this by submitting a misleading tree report. Even if the applicant were to argue the exception to ENV DM4, that the benefit of the development outweighs the loss of trees (and assuming that the trees were then removed legitimately after due process), we and others have already demonstrated the huge amount of harm and damage that the development would cause to nearby residents and to the community at large. This harm and damage outweighs by far any perceived benefits the proposed development may have, whether such benefits be profits for the developer or the relief of pressures on Arun District Council to develop ad infinitum.

Exhibit B shows the damage already done to the Barnham street scene – and incidentally blows a hole in the ridiculous claims in the Pre-Application Advice and in the Planning Statement that the proposed new houses would not be visible. The whole row of semis will be manifestly visible as a misplaced oddity, out of alignment and totally incompatible with the other houses along this stretch of Barnham Road.

Here are two more “before” and “after” photographs taken from the rear of No 71 and Clare Court:



Exhibit C – “Before” – taken on 14 September 2019

Exhibit C shows the Yew, filling the space between our house and Clare Court, with the Scots Pine in the background - right where the access road to the new development is proposed to run! How could these valuable mature trees possibly have been left out of account for planning purposes? This will be something for the applicant to explain. The two mature apple trees mentioned in my earlier letter, also in the way of building the access road, can also be seen in this photograph, alongside our garage.



Exhibit D – “After” – taken on 13 April 2022 from the same position

This photograph again illustrates the loss of these trees.

Conclusion

I have to say that the Planning Statement and its supporting documents together comprise the most remarkable work of fiction that I have read in decades, with their invisible trees, invisible houses, and non-existent issues with noise, disturbance, overlooking, overcrowding and a garden that is a field just waiting to be built on etc, etc.

By coincidence, we have just received a copy Issue No 51 of Arun Times, which announces that the Council is to plant thousands of new trees as part of a new strategy. Let us hope that Arun can, with this tree planting project, keep up with the destruction of trees by would-be developers like this one.

What the community in our lovely village of Barnham needs and expects from Arun in determining the outcome of this planning application is integrity – and where straightforward conduct seems to have been lacking, Arun should know how to deal with it. This applicant/developer has already caused enough environmental damage in pursuit of their application. To prevent even more devastating damage, this planning application should be **refused**.

Regards,

Christopher Smith

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