

Planning Officer: Ms M Tomalova

Planning Application Ref: BN/66/19/PL

Location: Land off Canal Mews, Barnham, PO22 0DP

Description of works: Erection of 3 No dwellings

Comments on Application:

- The applicants have employed Lizard Landscape Design Limited to prepare an Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement along with a Tree Retention Protection Plan for this project.
- The Tree Survey data is comprehensive and accords with the requirements of BS5837:2012. I am in agreement with the retention category ratings for trees and hedgerow recorded therein.
- The current proposed layout is going to impact heavily on the only significant tree (T04 – oak), both above and below ground. Although achievable in principle by adopting the tree protection measures proposed; there is nonetheless a risk that attaches during such incursion of root protection areas (RPAs). This is especially significant where the tree in question is so prominent, of current high public amenity value, long-term potential and has endured recent ground disturbance/amelioration on remaining aspects.
- The applicant has submitted a revised site layout plan, dwg. no. 1705-12. This illustrates avoidance of RPA incursion which is a welcome advance on the previous layout. That said, construction in the form of vehicle parking bays is proposed on two aspects and tight against the RPA perimeter. The practicality of working so close means that were we to approve that layout, some RPA incursion would have to occur. Of greater significance, is the effective containment of the tree by inhibiting future root growth. Both these important areas of conflict have been resolved with the submission of an improved Site Layout plan, dwg. no. 1705-12H
- Plot 1 is going to experience a high level of seasonal nuisance from the presence of (T04 – oak), which will increase if the tree remains healthy and achieves its current potential. Branches will overhang those parking bays and represent a significant nuisance to vehicles (faecal deposits from roosting birds, falling leaves/acorns, dead twigs and small branches) which it can be anticipated will give rise to tree work applications that would be difficult to refuse. Resolved with improved site layout proposal.

Conclusions:

- The principle of development here is acceptable in arboricultural terms, although there is insufficient appreciation for and consideration of T04's long-term amenity potential and impact on the occupiers of plot 1.
- It seems to me that a determination to provide 3 units will put this tree under excessive pressure and compromise its long-term health and vitality. If the plot layout can be reconfigured or unit quantity reduced so as to leave the nominal root protection area of T04 inviolate – only then would I be able to lend the scheme my support. I am pleased to see that the RPA has been better respected within the revised layout. That said, 'future residential pressure to prune' remains a likely outcome if we approve this layout. Resolved.
- We appear close to achieving an acceptable layout in terms of allowing this tree to be retained for the long-term, free to exploit the surrounding area both above and below ground. I look forward to reviewing a revised site layout that achieves harmony between built form and green infrastructure. Resolved.

Recommendations:

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

- I recommend the making of a Tree Preservation Order in respect of **T04** to preserve its place in the landscape and hopefully better inform a revised layout. I attach a TEMPO form and GIS plan for this purpose.
 - I recommend this scheme for **APPROVAL**, subject to the following conditions being applied:
1. Before the site is occupied or any machinery is introduced to the site or demolition work or construction work or alterations to existing ground levels takes place a **PRE-COMMENCEMENT Site Meeting** is to take place between the Planning Authority's Tree Officer and the Arboricultural Expert representing the site owner(s) – at this meeting all protective fencing will be inspected to verify it is 'Fit for Purpose' as required under British Standard 5837:2012 and have been erected and positioned exactly as shown on the **Tree Retention Protection Plan, dwg.LLD1345-ARB-DWG-002, Rev 02**.

Reasons: To comply with BS5837 and to ensure that retained trees are afforded due respect and appropriate levels of protection such that their ongoing health and vitality is not compromised, and they can continue to enhance the landscape and amenity of the area.

2. All activity at the site is to be carried out in strict accordance with: - **Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement, LLD1345-ARB-REP-001, Rev. 02, 17 February 2020**

- If there is deemed to be a need for any Utility Service Route connections to bisect retained tree Root Protection Areas/Zones, then prior to their installation a Method Statement prepared by an Arboricultural Expert must be submitted that stipulates how this can be achieved without adverse impact on tree roots. Written approval and confirmation of acceptance of this Methodology must be issued before any works are commenced out on site.

Reasons: To comply with BS5837 and to ensure that retained trees are afforded due respect and appropriate levels of protection such that their ongoing health and vitality is not compromised, and they can continue to enhance the landscape and amenity of the area.

3. Any tree pruning considered essential to enable the agreed development must meet the requirements of BS3998:2010 Tree work – Recommendations:
- Where whole branches are to be removed and final cuts made close to the trunk or branch union they are to be made as shown in Figure 2 of BS3998:2010
 - Where branches are to be shortened back the final cuts are to be made at the correct angle shown in BS3998:2010 and adjacent to a live bud or lateral.

Reasons: In the interest of continued health and vitality of trees and to accord with current industry guidelines and sound arboricultural practice.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team