

CONSULTEE RESPONSE (Arun District Council - Arboriculturist)

Date of report: 20th March 2026

Reference: LU/193/25/PL

Proposal: Proposed residential development for 4 houses and associated landscaping. This application may affect the setting of a Listed Building and is in CIL Zone 2 (CIL liable as new dwellings).

Location: Court Wick Park, Courtwick Lane, Littlehampton, BN17 7PD

Case Officer: Harry Chalk

BACKGROUND

I have considered this application by means of a desktop review, using the information and plans submitted as well as online resources. Previous consideration from site and familiarity with surrounding area provide further insight to the proposal.

In arboricultural terms, the impact of this proposal is similar to a previous iteration of four detached dwelling layout, to which I registered an objection. That application, our ref. LU/157/23/PL, was refused for three reasons, including unacceptable harm to the protected trees on site.

This application proposes a greater extent of construction within the root protection areas of highest value (BS5837 retention category A) trees, the subjects of a tree preservation order – TPO/LU/22.

TREE SURVEY INFORMATION

The applicants have employed Lizard Landscape Design Ltd. to prepare an Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement along with a Tree Retention and Protection Plan (TRP) for this project.

Higher value trees on site

For ease of interpretation, those trees listed in the above report are given the following (TPO) reference and should be afforded special consideration:

T02 (T1), T09 (T2), T10 (T3), T11 (T8), T12 (T4), TG13 (T5 & T7), T16 (T6).

A majority of these are major constituents of local mature treescape and visible from Kingley Gate estate, surrounding footpaths and recreation ground.

LAYOUT

To visualise the arboricultural implications of this proposal, I have relied upon the following plan: Tree Retention and Protection Plan, dwg. no: LLD2799-ARB-DWG-020 Rev: 05.

The plan illustrates multiple root protection area (RPA) incursions with construction of driveways, carriageway and footways, patio, soakaways, surface water drainage and foul water apparatus. These potentially harmful impacts are pronounced at plots 3 & 4, especially the latter. Plots 1 & 2 have a low arboricultural impact and seemingly deliverable without causing harm to higher value trees (category A & B).

Construction that utilises a 'no-dig' method should only be employed where RPA incursion is unavoidable and fundamental to delivery of an acceptable scheme in the overall planning balance. It should be noted that such work carries a high risk of damage from root exposure/severance and localised compaction. It seems difficult to justify in respect of plot four (a single detached dwelling), as it affects two mature/late-mature trees which are especially vulnerable to harm from alterations in ground level and soil hydrology.

Furthermore, it is undesirable for plots 3 and 4 to capture so many large and important trees, as this will increase risk of harmful impacts upon them following a change of land use. Soft landscaping, ground compaction, lawn treatments and permitted development all have potential to affect ongoing health and vitality.

Proposed tree removals are uncontroversial from an amenity perspective.

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. It is assumed that other utility (gas, electric, mains water) apparatus could be located and routed away from the RPA of retained trees and connect with those existing to the east and west, utilising the proposed highway network. It is worth noting that statutory undertakers when repairing their apparatus are not required to replace any specialised construction (e.g. 'no-dig') during trench reinstatement.

DRAINAGE

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 and landscape plans.

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.

CONCLUSIONS

There must be overriding justification for RPA incursion, not a presumption (often mistakenly) that BS5837:2012 – Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction promotes activity in the RPA. It does not. It presents a range of options to consider, where such incursion is unavoidable or where no reasonable alternative exists. A layout that does not follow this principle should be resisted.

I am uncomfortable with this level of intrusion into the RPA of established trees. The combined extent of ground protection and no-dig construction areas, as shown on the TRP plan is considerable. Whilst they propose recognised engineering solutions for working near retained trees, it must be noted those elements are extremely ambitious and carry a high risk of accidental damage.

The development of this site similar to that which is described can be achieved without undue detriment to retained trees, but it requires a more sympathetic layout. I suggest removal of plot 4 and reorientation of plot 3 to reduce the extent of RPA overlap, exploiting the southern half of the site, would align with the requirements of local plan policy ENV DM4.

The cluster of higher value trees in the centre of the site should be left inviolate and remain an important area of ornamental woodland habitat, for future generations to enjoy and not be put at risk of harm for the sake of one additional unit.

RECOMMENDATION

As it stands, I am unable to lend this scheme my support and so register an **OBJECTION**, although expect this to be easily overcome if there is willingness to revise plot layout in accordance with my suggestion or similar.

If the application is to be approved despite my objection, please advise accordingly and I will forward a set of conditions to be included in the decision notice.

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer

Environment and Climate Change

From: Elaine Walby on behalf of Planning.Responses
Sent: 23 March 2026 10:22
To: Planning Scanning
Subject: FW: LU/193/25/PL
Attachments: LU.193.25.PL.pdf

PL- Consultation- Tree Officers response

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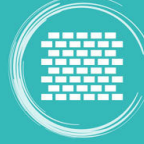
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From: Mark Warwick <Mark.Warwick@arun.gov.uk>
Sent: 20 March 2026 17:27
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Harry Chalk <Harry.Chalk@arun.gov.uk>; Daniel Vick <Daniel.Vick@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: LU/193/25/PL

Please find attached my report for your consideration.

Regards,

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer, Environment and Climate Change

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www.arun.gov.uk