

Planning Officer: Mrs A Gardner

Planning Application Ref: M/80/19/PL

Location: Former Poultry Farm, Land West of Yapton Road, Middleton on Sea, PO22 6DY

Description of works: Demolition of the existing structures & redevelopment to provide a new 66-bedroom care home (Use Class C2) arranged over two storeys together with associated access, car and cycle parking, structural landscaping and amenity space provision

Comments on Application:

- The applicants have employed PJC Consultancy to prepare an Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement along with a Tree Protection Plan for this project.
- The Tree Survey data is comprehensive and accords with the requirements of BS5837:2012. I am broadly in agreement with the retention category ratings for on and off-site trees.
- The quantity of tree removal across the site is relatively high and that cumulative loss should be compensated for by way of an ambitious and well-thought out replacement tree planting scheme.
- The new tree planting proposed (*Planting Details, plan dwg. LVIA7*) is broadly supportable, although I see a missed opportunity along the site's northern boundary to achieve enhanced landscape value. Presently there is an intended over-reliance on small, short-lived tree types (crab apple, rowan and silver birch) where there is ample room to increase the quantity of pedunculate oak and field maple. Growing along the north aspect of residential dwellings they would be of limited seasonal nuisance and have a negligible impact on natural light levels. The aforementioned smaller tree types will make an attractive and visually interesting understorey as they approach maturity and increase biodiversity, so should form part of the mix - but as a smaller proportion of the overall number.
- Complex engineering solutions are proposed around the main site access to achieve adequate protection of retained trees either side and enhance the culvert/drainage infrastructure beneath. I support the principle of this element of the scheme although we have yet to see adequate detail in the form of an *engineers construction method*, which will need to be submitted for our consideration and approval.
- The site layout tries hard to be sympathetic to those trees retained and has the potential to be harmonious, but only realistically achievable if subject to adequate instruction and monitoring of activities in their vicinity by the project arboriculturist - throughout and until completion of the development.
- Notwithstanding T04 ash is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order, its condition and long-term prospects are such that it ought not to be a complicating factor in the consideration of a quality development which adequately compensates for tree removal within a detailed landscape plan for the site.

Conclusions:

- I would like to see the opportunity for more ambitious tree planting on the sites northern boundary be exploited and shown on a revised Planting Details plan, to improve the local landscape post-development.
- If considered absolutely necessary from an engineering perspective (to be determined on receipt and approval of an *engineers construction method*), I would support the removal of ash tree T04 to facilitate a more standard form of construction across the culvert and on approach to the main site access), so long as parking bays 28 & 29 were left as unmade ground and there was replacement planting of a semi-mature pedunculate oak (minimum 30cm girth, containerised stock, UK homegrown) in undisturbed open ground immediately to the north of T04 and made subject of a new Tree Preservation Order. Furthermore, the no-dig footway proposed within nominal RPA of T10 field maple would have to remain part of the overall scheme.

- Retention of expert arboricultural services throughout the project (to include an auditable trail of their site inspections and monitoring) will be essential to avoid damage to retained trees of amenity and landscape value.

Recommendations

- As it stands, I see no reason to object to these proposals on arboricultural grounds, although there several items which will need to be addressed before I can lend the scheme my full support.
- If you are of a mind to approve this scheme as it stands, then I would recommend the following conditions be 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 and ground protection measures will be inspected to verify they are 'Fit for Purpose' as required under British Standard 5837:2012 and have been erected and positioned exactly as shown on the **Tree Protection Plan, PJC/5256/19/C (sheets 1 to 4), 28/08/2019.**
 - A schedule of Site Monitoring/Supervision visits and Reporting Procedures prepared by an Arboricultural Expert will be required and their extent will be agreed on at the site meeting to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority's Tree Officer.

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, PJC ref: 5256/19-02 Rev – and Arboricultural Method Statement, PJC ref: 5256/19-03 Rev - .**

- 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