

Planning Officer: Ms Myer

Planning Application Ref: R/203/21/PL

Location: Booker Hall, Station Road, Rustington, BN16 3AY

Description of works: Demolition of existing community hall and ancillary building and redevelopment of the site to provide a new community hall with supporting functions and office accommodation within a new 1.5 and 2 storey building with associated car parking area and landscaping

Comments on Application:

- The applicants have employed Ramsey & Co Landscape Architecture to prepare a Landscape Drawing Issue Sheet and Tree Schedule (Arboricultural Report) along with a Tree Protection Plan for this project.
- Although presentation of arboricultural information is not typical for detailed planning applications; the Tree Survey data is comprehensive and accords with the requirements of BS5837:2012. Method Statement for works in proximity to retained trees on or overlapping the site is included at the foot of the report and appropriate for the scheme. Note: this applies only to the Community Hall / Ancillary Building redevelopment proposal.

Community Hall / Ancillary Building – Redevelopment proposal

- Trees existing on the site are of relatively low public amenity value and several are probably no longer suitable for their location. No soft landscape proposal as mitigation has been submitted.

Land parcel rear of 5-7a Paddock Green – Provision of further parking

- There are established on and off-site trees which could be adversely affected by the proposal, including a fine young yew (SW corner) and mature 3rd party birch (NE corner) which is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. No arboricultural information has been submitted for this element of the scheme. As such, were this application to now proceed, we will not have sufficient information to guarantee such trees would be adequately considered and protected.
- If sufficient area of ground is recovered over those trees' root protection areas (RPAs), then it should be possible to adequately enhance parking capacity without being to their detriment, whilst enhancing that ground with a soft landscape scheme as both mitigation for planned tree losses elsewhere and to improve visual outlook for residents.

Conclusions:

- The Community Hall / Ancillary Building redevelopment proposal is supportable in arboricultural terms, although it is disappointing not to see a soft landscape proposal (as mitigation for established tree removal) when opportunity exists at the land parcel rear of 5-7a Paddock Green. A small area set aside in the NE corner, recovered to open ground (enhanced by planting) would be ideal and act as future root protection for the off-site birch tree (TPO/R/1/18) in rear garden of 7a.
- The land parcel has recently been cleared of all vegetation with Type 1 stone compacted over the whole area – presumably in anticipation of this development proposal. It is unclear whether the nominal root protection area of the birch tree has been adversely affected. It certainly will be if the proposed tarmac wearing course is applied within its RPA. This scheme should be revised; for an opportunity exists to reverse any harmful effects whilst enhancing visual amenity and with little impact on the overall parking capacity.

Recommendations:

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

- The above issues should be addressed within a revised layout, that is especially sympathetic to a 3rd party tree of high amenity value. It should be supported by a revised Arboricultural Report and additional Tree Protection Plan, as well as a soft landscape proposal for the land parcel rear of 5-7a Paddock Green.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team