

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. **The applicant has employed Phillip J. Ellis / Tree Care Consultant to provide an Arboricultural Report and Tree Protection Plan for this element of the scheme.**
- 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. **Soft landscaping is only an aspiration at this stage, no detailed proposals have come forward. Nominal RPA of the off-site birch tree has now been adequately respected, with recovery of compacted ground to greensward/plant border.**

Chestnut paling is promoted in para. 8.2a of the report from Phillip J Ellis, being 'fit for purpose' as protective fencing for birch (T1). That seems like an unnecessary risk to take when higher specification fencing is being employed elsewhere in the development. The latter is (in contradiction) promoted in para. 7.1 of the same report. To be clear, our expectation is for a minimum fencing specification as per Figure 3 of BS5837:2012, across the development site.

- 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. **Objection removed, subject to enhanced tree protection fencing (minimum specification as per Figure 3 of BS5837:2012) being installed around birch (rear garden of 7a Paddock Green).**
- 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. **Layout revised which adequately respects birch tree (rear garden of 7a Paddock Green).**

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- I recommend the above 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, written confirmation is required from the Arboricultural Expert representing the site owner(s), confirming that all protective fencing (minimum specification as per Figure 3 of BS5837:2012) and ground protection has been inspected and found to be 'Fit for Purpose' as required under British Standard 5837:2012 and been erected and positioned exactly as shown on the following Tree Protection Plans:

- **Tree Protection Drawing, Ramsay & Co Landscape Architecture, dwg. RCo350-02 Rev 01**

- **Tree Protection Plan, Phillip Ellis Tree Care Consultancy, ref. TPP/BH/196/21, 14/10/2021**

Reasons: To ensure the retention and maintenance of trees and vegetation which are an important feature of the area in accordance with Policy D DM1 of the Arun Local Plan. It is considered necessary for this to be a pre-commencement condition as the protection and retention of trees goes to the heart of the planning permission.

2. All activity at the site is to be carried out in strict accordance with the following arboricultural reports:

- **Landscape Issue Sheet and Tree Schedule (Report), Ramsay and Co Landscape Architecture, Job no. RCo350, 23/06/2021**

- **Arboricultural Report & Statement, Phillip Ellis, Tree Care Consultant, ref. BH/186/2021**

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.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team