

Planning Officer: Mr S Davis

Planning Application Ref: Y/18/20/PL

Location: Land east of North End Road & West of Church Lane Nursery, Yapton

Description of works: 6no. residential dwellings & associated infrastructure. This application is a Departure from the Development Plan

Comments on Application:

- The applicants have employed Barrell Tree Consultancy to prepare an Arboricultural Assessment & Method Statement along with a Tree Protection Plan for this project.
- The original tree survey and supporting arboricultural report/plan submitted in support of this application are now more than 2 years old, generally regarded as a threshold beyond which any condition ratings and management recommendations may no longer be valid. That said, for this scheme those reports and plans remain valid for us to be able to consider the general implications for retained tree stock and offers an effective set of protection measures.
- The Tree Survey data is comprehensive and accords with the requirements of BS5837:2012. I am in agreement with the retention category ratings for on and off-site trees.
- A vast majority of the existing tree population is proposed for removal, although most are of low quality. The most significant trees to be retained for the long-term are a linear group of crown-modified hornbeam (G22) and an individual maturing off-site beech (T3), the latter which sadly has been the subject of heavy crown reduction and so would not qualify for the making of an Order. All that considered, one would therefore expect a detailed landscape plan would include an ambitious scheme of tree planting to provide immediate and long-term impact.
- Subsequent to the above arboricultural submissions, a surface water drainage strategy for the site has been proposed. 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/landscape plans.
- I note with great concern, the proposal to install a linear soakaway (Aquacell – is this a ‘crated’ system?) bisecting the **rear garden of plot 6**. This will presumably involve a deep (>600mm) and damaging excavation far into the root protection area of T3. The location of domestic gravel-filled soakaways at the **rear of plots 1 and 2, and west of plot 3** is problematic for the same reasons. I find the extent of these intrusions both unacceptable and avoidable, so expect the applicant’s engineer to revisit those elements of the strategy. Furthermore, were those soakaways to be installed at the current proposed locations - future tree growth (roots) could rapidly infiltrate and reduce their effectiveness.

Conclusions:

- The principle of development as described is certainly achievable without undue detriment to retained on and off-site trees and I am satisfied with the arboricultural information submitted.
- The surface water drainage strategy (location of soakaways) appears to be compromised by future growth potential of retained trees and if executed as per the plan could cause extensive root damage to the same, such that they would not thrive post-development. As soon as we have sight of a more sympathetic and durable strategy, it will be a straightforward exercise for me to recommend a bespoke set of conditions and lend the scheme my support. The latest drawing ‘Engineering details drainage layout 01 Rev C’ shows all soakaways located outside of nominal root protection areas, such that I can now lend the scheme my support. Important to note however, that there remains significant growth potential in those trees at the areas mentioned/highlighted above and so the design of those systems will need to account for that, long-term integrity of apparatus against root intrusion – and to the satisfaction of our drainage engineer.

Recommendations:

- As it stands, I am unable to lend this scheme my support and so register an OBJECTION. I see no obvious reason to sustain an objection on arboricultural grounds and so recommend the 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) or other competent person – 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 Protection Plan, ref. 18063-BT1**.

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 Assessment and Method Statement, ref. 18063-AA-AN, Barrell Tree Consultancy**.
 - 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