

[REDACTED]
15 Lewes Road
Haywards Heath
Sussex, RH17 7SP

18 January 2026

Application DM/25/3277 for Works to Tree at 15/17 Lewes Road – Formal Objection

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to the proposed works submitted by my neighbour concerning the mature tree located fully within my property at 15 Lewes Road. I wish to clarify several inaccuracies in the application and provide relevant background that the West Sussex Council planning department may not be aware of. I have outlined my points below and would be happy to answer any questions.

I have been in regular contact with Emma Rivett from the Tree department of the West Sussex County Council about the trees in my garden, that is in a conservation area. I am aware of legal responsibilities and rights for the trees in my garden and am a responsible land owner.

1. Long-standing Stability and History of the Tree

This tree is over 100 years old and was already a large, established specimen when both houses were built in 1936. There has been no construction, excavation, or ground disturbance near the tree in the decades since. It has remained stable through all major weather events during my 40 years of residence, including after the great hurricane in the 1980's.

2. Regular Professional Inspections

I have consistently arranged for qualified arborists to inspect the tree over the years. At no point has any professional identified instability, root-plate movement, or structural defects requiring significant intervention. Emma Rivett from the tree department at West Sussex County Council has also inspected the tree recently. Emma said she would send me her assessment which should be considered alongside this application.

3. Incorrect Claims Regarding Mammal Activity

The application refers to "badger excavation" and voiding around the root plate. This is incorrect. Any badger activity on my property is limited to surface disturbance on the lawn, not at the base of the tree. There is no mammal excavation beneath or around the root system. Emma confirmed this on her visit.

4. Natural Lean and Wind Direction

The applicant states that the tree leans toward his property. I discussed this with Emma from the Council who said this isn't an issue and that mature trees often have a natural lean. From my observations in 40 years whilst living in my house I have not observed any change in the lean of this tree. In addition the prevailing south-westerly winds is not in the direction of my neighbour's house so should not contribute to any risks to instability in that direction.

5. No Evidence of Damage

There is no subsidence, cracking, heave, or structural impact to either property. The tree has not caused any damage and continues to stand on stable ground. This was confirmed by Emma from the council.

6. Contribution to the Conservation Area

This tree is a significant landscape feature and contributes positively to the character and amenity of the conservation area. Any unnecessary or excessive reduction would diminish that value. It is my role as a custodian of the land to protect and adhere to the duties of living in the conservation area, that I take very seriously.

My neighbour purchased his property in 2020 and, since then, I have felt pressured and intimidated by him regarding trees on my property. He says that my beech shades his swimming pool, and the sequoia casts shade over his patio area. He has also complained about the natural needle drop from the sequoia. These concerns appear to be the motivation behind the application rather than any genuine safety issue.

7. Willingness to Follow Council Guidance

I am fully willing to undertake any works that the council considers necessary and appropriate for the health and safety of the tree. My objection is to the scale and justification of the works proposed by the applicant, which I believe are disproportionate, based on incorrect assumptions, and unsupported by evidence.

Some years ago, my neighbour applied to reduce the canopy of my beech tree, as mentioned above. I did not object, and the council approved a reduction of approximately 2.5 metres. I allowed my neighbour to carry out this work on my tree in my garden in good faith. Despite this, the applicant carried out a much larger reduction than permitted, which caused stress to the tree and took two years for it to recover. Emma from the Council has seen this and agrees that the works breached the application that he made. Given this history, I would not permit my neighbour or his contractors to carry out any further works on my trees.

8. Administrative Error and Late Notification

The applicant incorrectly listed my address as the applicant's address. As a result, the council understandably assumed the application had been made by me and did not send me the statutory notification or a copy of the proposal.

I only became aware of the application when my neighbour received his acknowledgement letter. After contacting the planning department, I was then

provided with the full application, leaving me with very limited time to respond before the consultation deadline of 25 January.

Conclusion

For the reasons above, I respectfully request that the council reject the proposed works as submitted. I trust the council's professional judgement and will comply with any recommendations arising from your inspection. I would be willing to discuss with you next steps.

I have attached two photos of the tree (my neighbour's house is the white house and my house is the mock Tudor house) and two photos of the surface badger activity.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.







