

From: Emma Rivett <Emma.Rivett@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 17 December 2024 07:38:10 UTC+00:00
To: "Andrew Clarke" <Andrew.Clarke@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: DM/24/1623 Hurstpierpoint College, College Lane, Hurstpierpoint

Dear Andy,

I have reviewed the Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement, Arboricultural Impact Plan and Arboricultural Method Plan for this retrospective application.

The retrospective nature of this application is regrettable, as the undeniable damage caused to these trees could have easily been prevented, should the applicant have submitted a pre application enquiry to the council to check whether planning permission was required.

The construction of the additional parking area within the root protection areas of category B trees, in addition to the compaction to the root protection area of a category A (Highway) tree, is contrary to policy DP37 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows. The damage to these trees will impact the amenity value of the street scene, as well as the loss of biodiversity, should these trees fail.

There is also a concern for the safety of these trees, which overhang the public highway, as the extent of root damage is unknown. Without details of the construction measures and how porous the surfacing is (or isn't), gaseous exchange may also be affected and could cause further decline in the health of these valuable trees.

I find that the proposed remedial work may alleviate some of the impact of the soil compaction around the trees, but my concern is that the damage has already been done.

I quote from the AIA:

"The extension to the car park has **likely** resulted in tree harm, this harm if left untreated would lead to a degree of stress and decline of the trees, therefore remediation should be undertaken to provide the trees with the best opportunity to react and adapt to this damage"

This statement proposes to carry out the remediation suggested from the report. However, what it doesn't do, is mitigate against the damage caused by the construction, excavation, and soil compaction within the root protection areas of the high and moderate quality trees.

I would like to see 4 replacement oak trees, replanted elsewhere on the site, in a suitable location, as mitigation for the inevitable damage to these trees. Further, should these trees die, or become dangerous, and require felling because of the damage caused to them, replacement, native trees should be planted in the same location of these trees. The species would need to be carefully considered given the reduced rooting area, caused by the increased parking area.

T4 is a category A oak tree and is also a highways tree. I would suggest that prior to undertaking any remedial works within the RPA of this tree, that West Sussex Highways Department would need to be consulted (and informed of the potential damage to their tree) as they may require additional measures to be taken in response to the damage.

Kind regards

Emma

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