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Briefing Note Regarding Tree Officer Response to application reference DM/26/1560

I am writing in response to the consultation response from Ms Irene Fletcher, the Mid Sussex District Council Tree Officer, who commented on application reference DM/26/1560 on 10th September 2026.

In summary, Ms Fletcher has concerns regarding the impacts of the proposals, (car parking, garage & access road) on the root protection area (RPA) of tree 3, a mature oak. Ms Fletcher is also concerned regarding the impact of plot 5 proposals on a protected tree (tree 28) and has requested clarification regarding the extent of the plot 5 garden.

Regarding Plot 5 I can confirm that the extent of the garden curtilage will be located outside the RPA of tree 28 and be fully fenced off during construction and future occupation. It is important that the RPA of this tree is protected through the course of development and thereafter.

Regarding the impacts of proposals on tree 3, I advised at section 1.4.3 of my report ref jwmb/rpt1/byredaltons/AIAAMS dated 20th May 2026, that the tree stands on the eastern bank of a culvert (running north/south) and maintained that the bulk of the assimilative root mass of this tree is therefore likely to be present to the east, in the garden of the adjoining site. On this basis, I maintained the impacts of the current proposals on this important oak (T3) are likely to be less than 20% of the overall RPA. I believe that the mitigation offered for the current proposals is fit for purpose and readily achievable, assuming that due care is taken in its construction.

The likely impacts from the current proposals on the *circular* RPA of tree 3 only marginally exceed guidelines at 22%. I can only surmise regarding the possible impacts on the RPA of tree 3, if it is morphed to the east as I suggest – to reflect likely root distribution. I maintain that it is very likely to reduce these impacts to well below 20% and that, on this basis, the proposals - with mitigation - are acceptable.

I can also advise that the existing driveway hardstanding (shown in dark blue on the plan at Appendix A) will be retained and upgraded/dressed for a final finish, whilst not exceeding the depth of the existing sub base and therefore would not result in any additional encroachment into the RPA of tree 3.



However, our client, Shire Barns Ltd. are also willing to shift the plot 1 proposals to the west to reduce the impact on tree 3, should MSDC deem this necessary. On this basis, we can advise that the revised impacts on this tree would then be in the region of 18.5% of the notional circular RPA and that mitigation provided would be within accepted parameters. Updated drawings can be provided once MSDC advise how they would like to proceed with these layout changes.

James W M Bell
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