Development Management – Delegated Officer Report **Date; 30/06/23**

Application Number	**AWDM/0590/23**
Address	**Speedwell Bost Hill Worthing West Sussex BN13 3DA**
Proposal	**Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.6 of 1991 to fell and replace one Beech tree T1 of group G2.**

Date of site visit: 14/06/23

Neighbours checked: Y
Additional neighbour notifications: N
Site notice: (wider publicity / conservation area): N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application refers to a Beech tree that is part of a group of three large mature Beech trees growing on the Southern boundary of Speedwell Bost Hill. The trees are part of the boundary line which runs east to west along a steep incline. The trees are a prominent part of the sylvan nature of the landscape around Mill Lane and Bost Hill and make a significant contribution to the character and visual amenities of the area.

Consent is sought to fell and replace the tree.

The reasons for the works are primarily in the interests of safety and amenity value.

Consultations: None.

Representations: Two representations received from nearby neighbours both in support of the works.

Relevant Planning History

1991: Worthing Tree Preservation order Number 6 of 1991 confirmed on 18/06/1991.

1998: Application to Crown Lift Three Beech Trees (Group G2) to 3.5 metres above ground level, remove from western most Beech crossing and abrading branches and western most branch to the main limbs - Speedwell Bost Hill

2005: Application to crown reduce and crown lift by 40% one Beech tree (westernmost tree part G2), to crown reduce and crown lift by 25% to two Beech trees (part of G2) – Refused.

2007: Application to crown lift three Beech trees (Group G2) to 3.5 metres above ground level and the removal of crossing and abrading branches from the western most Beech tree.

2013: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.6 of 1991 to reduce radial spread of crown by up to 1.5 metres on two Beech trees of group G2.

2021: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 6 of 1991 to raise canopies to 6m, thin by 15%, reduce radial spread to north and west by 2m and remove dead wood three Beech trees of Group G2.

Planning Assessment

The tree is a large mature Beech growing on a steep incline at the southern end of the rear garden of Speedwell, along the boundary line with the neighbouring property of Southease Bost Hill. The tree is included within group G2, which is a part of a large number of protected trees in the area of Bost Hill and Mill Lane that merge with the trees of the public open space of The Gallops, to the East. The tree is prominent to the area, and can be seen from many views.

The Beech tree T1 is at the western end of group G2 nearer the top of the incline, and closest to the neighbouring building. The tree has a single stem to 2 metres, where it then divides into two stems, that each divide again at 4 metres, with three main larger stems, two of which are upright and mostly persist, and a third, to the west that divides again at 5 metres. The main crown is dense and wide spread with some over extended laterals mainly to the west. The west stem has two concave lines that begin at 0.5 metres and extend to the separation point at 2 metres. This suggests that the union has a large amount of included bark, meaning that the two stems are separate (not fused) from 0.5 metres.

The proposed works are to fell and replace the tree due to concerns regarding the safety of the tree.

These works in my opinion will be large in relation to the overall number of trees and a significant amount of change will take place. However the effect on the area will be compensated with the provision of a replacement tree.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Grant Consent, subject to the following Conditions:

1. Approved plans

2. The proposed felling of the Beech tree of group G2, identified on the applicants plan as T1, and its replacement shall be carried out in full within two years from the date of this consent and in accordance with details of the size species and position of the replacement tree planting to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

   Reason: *In the interest of visual amenity.*

3. If within five years following replanting, the replacement tree dies or becomes seriously diseased, another tree of the same size and species shall be planted in a similar position during the next planting season following the removal of the replacement tree, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written approval to any variation.

   Reason: *In the interest of visual amenity.*

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation?

No

Case Officer: JDS Date: 30/06/2023

Authorised by: PB Date: 30/6/23