Development Management – Delegated Officer Report **Date; 08/08/2025**

Application Number	**AWDM/0637/25**
Address	**21 Vicarage Fields Worthing West Sussex BN12 3SF**
Proposal	**Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.20 of 2001 to reduce radial spread by up to 2 metres, Holm Oak trees of group G3.**

Date of site visit: 07/08/25

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

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application refers to three mature Holm Oak trees on the Western boundary of the rear garden. The trees are part of a long established feature of the area, and provide a screen between properties of Vicarage Fields, a comparatively recent development and houses in Bramble Lane, including the original Vicarage. The trees can be seen from the public road.

Consent is sought to reduce radial spread by up to 2 metres, Holm Oak trees of group G3.

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

The reasons for the works are primarily in the interests of abating nuisance, light issues and amenity value.

Consultations: None.

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning History

2001: Worthing Tree Preservation order Number 20 of 2001 confirmed on 12/06/2001.

2004: Application to crown lift Holm Oak and Holly trees by 5 metres and reduce the upper crowns by 3 metres away from the property (Group G3).

2006: Application to reduce spread by between 1.5 metres and 2.7 metres of 3 Holm Oaks in rear garden of No. 21 Vicarage Fields; reduce spread of Holm Oak in the grounds of No. 22 Vicarage Fields overhanging No. 21; and reduce height of all 4 Holm Oaks (all in Group 3). Split Decision – REFUSED = Application to reduce spread by up to 5 metres of Holm Oak in the grounds of No. 22 Vicarage Fields overhanging No. 21; and reduce height of all 4 Holm Oaks by 3 metres (all in Group 3).

2008: Application to prune back branches of one Holm Oak in side garden by up to two metres (part of Group G3). Split Decision - Approved with Conditions, REFUSED = Application to fell six Holly trees in rear garden (part of Group G3).

2009: Application to prune back by approximately 1 metre Holm Oak (No.5), remove one low limb on Holm Oak (No. 6) towards house and prune back low branches on Holm Oak (No. 9) towards house by up to 2 metres, all adjacent to northern boundary. (within Group G3). **Split Decision Approved with Conditions Split Decision – REFUSED = Application to reduce height by 3-4 metres and spread by 2-3 metres to 5 Holm Oaks (Numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 and 9), and to fell one Holm Oak (Numbered 8) on northern boundary (within Group G3).

2009: Application to fell one Holm Oak tree and two Holly trees, and to selectively crown reduce six Holm Oak and six Holly trees (Part of Group G3)

2009 Application to fell one twin-stemmed Holm Oak tree (numbered 3 - part of Group G3) in north-western corner of rear garden.

2012: Application to crown lift to 5 metres and crown reduce by 2 metres three Holm Oak trees in rear garden; and to crown lift to 5 metres and crown reduce by 2 metres one Holm Oak in south-western corner of rear garden of 22 Vicarage Fields (Part of Group G3).

2012: Application to crown reduce by approximately 2 metres and crown lift to 5 metres five Holm oak trees (Part of Group G3) along northern side of rear garden application refused.

2014: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 20 of 2001 to crown thin by up to 10 – 15% one Holm Oak tree T1 of group G3, and to reduce radial spread by up to 2 metres on east side of crown to balance / re-shape one Holm Oak tree T2 of group G3.

2016: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 20 of 2001 to remove dead wood from one Corsican Pine T17 south-western part of grounds and pollard by approx 4 metre height and 4 metre radial spread 3 no. Holm Oak trees of group G3 to the west boundary of 21 Vicarage Fields. Conditioned to 1 to 3 metre Holm Oak x3

Planning Assessment

The trees are three medium to large sized mature Holm Oaks that are visible as part of a linear group from many views around Vicarage Fields, Bramble Lane and Bramble Close, and are part of group G3 of TPO 20 of 2001 which consists of 43 Holm Oak. The property No.21 Vicarage Fields is part of an 80s cul-de-sac of 22 detached houses, of which nos.15 to 22 run parallel to the linear group of mature trees group G3.

The trees are:

<u>Holm Oak T1 of group G3</u>
T1 is one of the smaller trees of the group and is close to the northwest corner. The tree has a single stem that persists to 7 metres, where it then breaks into a sprawling crown. There is epicormic growth from near ground level with the first limbs emerging from 4 metres . The tree is slightly suppressed by the larger neighbours tree in the garden of No.21 Vicarage Fields, with which the crown is intertwined. The main crown is dense and wide spread mostly to the west.

<u>Holm Oak T2 of group G3</u>
The tree T2 is in the centre of the three and is close to the west boundary. The tree is single stemmed to 3 metres, where the central stem continues angled to the west and smaller secondary stems emerge. The main crown is dense and wide spread especially to the west.

Holm Oak T3 of group G3
This tree is in the southwest corner of the rear garden, The tree has a large diameter single stem to 10 metres, where it then divides into multiple stems that each arch away from the centre of the tree. The tree has a lean and an overall imbalance to the west. The main crown is dense and wide spread with some over extended low hanging laterals.

The proposed works to all three Holm Oak trees of group G3 are to reduce radial spread by up to 2 metres. The works are to contain the spread of the tree and by reducing spread the works will effectively lift the crowns to allow access and allow more light and air to pass beneath the crowns.

These works in my opinion would be relatively minor in relation to the overall size, spread and crown form of the trees and would not significantly or adversely affect their appearance, amenity value, or contribution to the character of the area.

Recommendation

Grant Consent, Not subject to Conditions:

Recommendation

APPROVE

Grant Consent, subject to the following Conditions:

1. Approved plans

2. The proposed works, hereby permitted, shall be restricted to those specified in the application only unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority and carried out within two years from the date of consent and in accordance with the British Standard BS 3998: 2010 Tree Work.

   Reason: *In the interest of visual amenity.*

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation?

No

Case Officer: JDS Date: 08/08/2025

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 11.08.2025