Expiry Date - 25/01/2011

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0487/10 **Recommendation – Permit Application**

Site: **Longcroft Southdown Road Shoreham-by-Sea West Sussex**

Proposal: **Reduce Ash tree by 2m, fell Sycamore tree and reduce one Sycamore tree by 2m (subject to TPO 162/1/72/SU)**

The Application

The application relates to 3 trees growing on the eastern frontage of a three-storey block of flats on the west side of the road, within the built up area of Shoreham, and directly adjacent to the boundary of Shoreham Conservation Area.

The trees themselves, 1 ash and 2 sycamore, are part of a group of 7 trees made subject to a TPO in 1972 (162/1/72/SU) and as a result have had a number of applications for work permitted in the past.

In this case permission is sought for the reduction in size of the Ash (T1) by 2m to reduce encroaching branches; the felling of a sycamore (T2) due to a large basal cavity; and the reduction of another sycamore (T4) by 2m to reduce the encroaching branches, increase light to one of the flats, and to prevent damage to a nearby streetlight.

The TPO trees themselves line the frontage of the flats with four sycamore (T2, T3, T4 & T7) being the largest specimens approximately 60 years old and +10m in height, two sorbus (T5 & T6) having being pollarded in 2001 and 5m in height, and the ash (T1) 40 years old and 10m in height.

Southdown Road is seen as one of the northern entrances to Shoreham Conservation Area and has a number of trees lining the street which, for the majority of cases, are within the actual conservation area.

Consultations and Representations

Adur District Council: The Assistant Parks Manager reports that the ash (T1) is generally in good health with no obvious signs of decay or damage, the most northern of the two sycamores (T2) has a large cavity at the base and there are several areas of decayed bark and trunk, with the other sycamore (T4) showing areas of decay and damage but that it should have another 10-20 years of growth before needing to be felled. He feels that the works should be permitted.

Third Parties: No third party representations.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AB23
Shoreham-by-Sea Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy (ADC 2008)
Design Bulletin No.1 'Trees and Landscaping' (ADC 1996)
'Tree Preservation Orders: A Guide to the Law and Good Practice' (DETR 2000)

Planning Assessment

Policies
Policy AB23 of the Local Plan state that the Council will make tree Preservation Orders to safeguard existing trees where their loss would have an adverse effect on the existing and future environment and its enjoyment by the public, and all trees will be considered potentially for such Orders unless they are of poor health or appearance, but priority will be given to trees which appear to be under threat and which make a significant contribution to the visual quality and character of a locality.

The Shoreham-by-Sea Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy document states that, it is desirable that existing trees are retained as far as practicable and new trees are planted to ensure the area benefits from their amenity value. Southdown Road (along with Buckingham Road) represent the northern gateway to the Conservation Area. A document should be prepared which sets out a management and replacement plan in order to preserve the tree cover for future generations, and which identifies where it is appropriate to plant new trees.

TPO trees
It is clear from the Assistant Parks Manager report that the most northern of the two sycamore tree (T2) is of ill health, with the site inspection showing a large (0.75m high) cavity which extends deep within the trunk. Whilst the tree itself is an important part of the group and improves the overall setting, complementing the tree lined aesthetic of Southdown Road, it is considered in the interests of safety that it be felled. The applicant has agreed to plant a replacement species and it is considered that a condition is warranted requesting the specific species be agreed in advance.

It is not considered that the long term health of the two other trees (T1 ash and T4 sycamore) will be significantly affected by the crown reduction of 2m proposed.

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Recommendation

APPROVE subject to:

1. The works for which Consent is hereby granted must be completed not later than the expiration of one year beginning with the date of this consent.
   Reason: *To retain adequate control over the special amenity value of the trees.*
2. C11M
3. C11H
4. The following works are hereby approved:
   a. Reduction of Ash tree by 2m (T1),
   b. Felling of Sycamore tree (T2), and
   c. Reduction of Sycamore tree by 2m (T4)
   Reason: *In the interests of amenity and to comply with policy of AB23 of the Adur District Local Plan.*

Case Officer Carlos Hone Date