Development Management – Delegated Officer Report **Date; 10/07/2024**

Application Number	**AWDM/0517/24**
Address	**5 Springfield Gardens Worthing West Sussex BN13 2DF**
Proposal	**Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.17 of 2004 to reduce crown height by up to 2 metres, reduce radial spread by up to 2 to 3 metres, and crown thin 15% one Holm Oak tree, and to fell and replace one Corsican Pine both of group G2.**

Date of site visit: 13/06/24

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

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application refers to two large mature trees in the rear garden of 5 Springfield Gardens, one Holm Oak tree, adjacent to the footpath and carriage way of Ashacre Road, and one Corsican Pine, located slightly further North. The trees are a prominent part of the street scene and make a significant contribution to the character and visual amenities of the area.

Consent is sought to reduce the crown height and radial spread and to crown thin 15% the Holm Oak tree, and to fell and replace the Corsican Pine.

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

Consultations: None.

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning History

2004: Worthing Tree Preservation order Number 17 of 2004 confirmed on 12/01/2005.

2006: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 17/2004 to prune back branches to growth points over hanging Flat 6 and remove dead wood - one Holm Oak within Group G1.

2009: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 17 of 2004 to reduce crown spread of one Holm Oak tree (part of Group G1) overhanging roof and gutter of 5 and 6 Springfield Gardens.

2016: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.17 of 2004 to crown lift up to 5.5 metres one Holm Oak tree of group G2.

Planning Assessment

The trees are two large tall matures growing to the Southern end of the rear garden, with the Holm Oak being adjacent to the Southern boundary wall. The trees are prominent to the area, and can both be seen from many views.

The trees are:

Holm Oak T1 of group G2
This tree has a large diameter single stem to 4 metres where it then divides into several stems, with one significantly larger stem that extends toward the south. The largest stem divides again at 8 metres, the other stems dividing from 7 to 9 metres. The main crown is denser to the south, the northern side being more open and higher. The widest spreading and lowest sections of the crown are formed mostly of smaller secondary laterals.

The proposed works are to reduce crown height by up to 2 metres, reduce radial spread by up to 2 to 3 metres, and crown thin 15%. The works are to contain the size and spread of the tree and allow more light and air to pass through the crown.

Corsican Pine T2 of group G2
The Corsican Pine tree T2 of group G2 is located 1 to 1.5 metres North of the Holm Oak T1, within the lawn area of the rear garden. The tree has a slender single stem that is clear to 17 metres, where the first laterals emerge, with the main stem dividing from 18 metres. There is some deadwood on the lower limbs, with the main crown and leading stems being fully foliated. The main crown is moderately dense, and mostly compact with the lower branches being slightly sparse and wider spread.

The proposed works are to fell and replace the tree, the reasons given on the application are that the trees sheds deadwood and drops cones, additional concerns were also provided by the tree owners which also expressed concern about cones falling from the tree as well as issues of light being blocked, bird droppings, encouragement of wildlife and concerns of damage should the tree fall.

The works in my opinion, to the Holm Oak T1 of group G2, would be relatively minor in relation to the overall size, spread and crown form of the tree and would not significantly or adversely affect its appearance, amenity value, or its contribution to the character of the area.

The felling of the Corsican Pine tree T2 of group G2, would be detrimental to the amenity of the area. The tree has some deadwood which can be removed without the need for an application, and the dropping of cones is an unavoidable part of tree ownership. These two concerns and the problems with birds could be alleviated by crown lifting and crown thinning which would make the crown more open, remove deadwood which is limited to the lower limbs and reduce the amount of cones that can be developed. Crown lifting and crown thinning would also allow more light to pass through the crown although this concern only applies to the Holm Oak, as the branches of the Pine tree are too high to cast significant shade in the rear garden.

Recommendation Split Decision:

APPROVE

Grant Consent, subject to the following Conditions:

1. Approved plans

2. The proposed works to the Holm oak T1 of group G2, hereby permitted, shall be restricted to those specified in the description 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.*

REFUSE; The felling of the Corsican Pine tree T2 of group G2.

Refuse for the reason(s):-

1. The Corsican Pine tree T2 of group G2 is a prominent and established feature, which contributes positively to local character and landscape of the area, and its removal would be detrimental. Having regard to the maturity and stature of the tree and its prominence within the street scene there is no arboricultural or other acceptable reason provided which would justify the loss of this tree. Alternative works could be considered, such as crown lifting crown thinning which would require a new application.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation?

No

Case Officer: JDS Date: 10/07/2024

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 11.07.2024