Development Management – Delegated Officer Report **Date; 15/03/24**

Application Number	**AWDM/0078/24**
Address	**14 Ambrose Place Worthing West Sussex BN11 1PZ**
Proposal	**Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.7 of 1977 to reduce crown height and radial spread by up to 5 metres Lime tree T2; reduce crown height and radial spread by up to 3 metres Prunus tree T1; reduce crown height by up to 4 metres Holly trees T2 and T5 of group G2; to reduce crown height by up to 5 metres Holly trees T3 and T4 of group G2; and to fell and replace one Cupressus T6 of G1.**

Date of site visit: 12/01/24

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

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application refers to a large mature Leyland Cypress located near the Southwest corner, a line of Holly trees on the Western boundary, a large Lime in the Northwest corner and a large Cherry in the Northeast corner of the separated front garden. The trees are part of the street scene and make a contribution to the character and visual amenities of the Chapel Road Conservation Area.

Consent is sought to reduce crown height and radial spread Lime tree T2; and Prunus tree T1; reduce crown height Holly trees T2 T3 T4 and T5 of group G2, and to fell and replace one Cupressus T6 of G1

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

Consultations: Letter sent to The Worthing Society, who did not respond.

Representations: One representation received from a nearby neighbour in support of the works, mentioning that the Cupressus tre T6 of G1, has limbs touching their property.

Relevant Planning History

1977: Worthing Tree Preservation order Number 77 of 1977 confirmed on 10/02/1978.

2000: The property is included within Conservation Area Chapel Road (XXIV) (formerly Seafront and Hinterland), designated by the Council on 14th March 2000.

2010: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No 7 of 1977 to crown reduce one Cherry by approximately one-third and restore shape and balance, to crown thin one Lime to reduce crown density, and to trim back branches to west side of row of Holly trees over Field Row footpath by approximately one metre, and restore shape.

2018: Section 211 Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to fell and replace one Conifer tree T6 and one Cordyline T8 in the Chapel Road Conservation Area.

Planning Assessment

The trees are tall mature Conifer Lime Cherry and Holly growing in the detached front garden to the Southside of Ambrose Place. Six of the trees: the Cupressus T6 of G1, the Lime T2 and the four Holly trees of group G2 are located along the Western Boundary, adjacent to the pedestrianised road of Field Row, with the single Cherry tree T1 being in the Northeast corner adjacent to the pavement of Ambrose Place. The trees are prominent to the area, and can be seen from many views.

The trees are:

Prunus tree T1
This tree has a single stem to 5 metres, where it then divides into 3 main stems that each divide several times to 10 metres, where the stems were previously reduced. The main crown is dense and wide spread with some slightly low hanging laterals.

The proposed works are to reduce crown height and radial spread by up to 3 metres to previous points. The works are to contain the size and spread of the tree.

Lime tree T2
The Lime tree T2 has a single stem to 3.5 metres, where it begins to divide with large upright secondary stems that emerge from 2.75 metres. The stems have all been pollarded at approximately 8 metres, where clusters of thin upright stems emerge. The main crown is dense and wide spread with some slightly over extended and lower hanging laterals.

The proposed works are to reduce crown height and radial spread back to previous points. The works are to contain the size and spread of the tree c allow access beneath and allow more light and air to pass around the crown.

Holly trees T2 T3 T4 and T5
Group G2 is a linear group of Holly trees that extends along the Western side of the garden close to the properties in Field Row. T2 is the furthest North, the closely growing T3 and T4 are centre with T5 being the furthest South. The trees have single slender stems, T2 to 2.25 metres, where it becomes a tightly forked twin, with T3 T4 and T5 having stems that mostly persist to within 2 to 3 metres of the top. T3 and T4 are growing in close proximity and have a combined crown. The main crowns are dense and moderately wide spread.

The proposed works are to reduce crown height by up to 4 metres Holly trees T2 and T5 and to reduce crown height by up to 5 metres Holly trees T3 and T4 of group G2. The works are to contain the size of the crowns and abate possible future nuisance to the adjacent properties. However there is no request to reduce the radial spread of the trees, which is where the branches are closest to the buildings. As the reductions would be damaging to the shape of the trees and have minimal effect I consider that this part of the proposal should be refused.

Cupressus T6 of G1
This is one of two large tall mature Cupressus trees growing in close proximity near the Southwest corner of the garden, adjacent to a small garden building. The TPO tree T6 of group G 1 Is the closest to the boundary, the other Cupressus tree is not part of the TPO and has been given consent for removal under application AWDM/0059/24.

The Cupressus T6 of G1 is multi stemmed from ground level, with the partially fused stems becoming separate from 1 metre. Most of the stems begin to divide from 2 metres, forming a tight array of slender upright stems to the centre of the crown, with several widely spread laterals emerging from 1 metre. The main crown is dense and wide spread with protruding over extended laterals.

The proposed works are to fell and replace the tree, as it has limbs extending onto the neighbouring properties in Field Row, which has also been mentioned in the one representation received. It is considered that with selective pruning and other standard works the tree could be retained.

Recommendation

Split Consent

APPROVE

Grant Consent, subject to the following Conditions:

1. Approved plans

2. The proposed works to the Prunus T1, hereby permitted, shall be restricted to;

   i Reduction in crown height and radial spread back to previous points (approximately 3 metres)

   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.*

3. The proposed works to the lime tree T2, hereby permitted, shall be restricted to;

   i Reduction in crown height and radial spread back to previous points (approximately 3 to 5 metres)

   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 for the reason(s):-

1. The reduction in crown height of the Holly trees of group G1, marked as T2 T3 T4 and T5 on the applicant's plan. These trees are a prominent and established feature, which contributes positively to the character and landscape of the Chapel Road Conservation Area. The proposed works would disfigure and damage the natural crown form, branch structure, integrity and appearance of the trees. Having regard to the maturity and stature of the trees and their prominence within the street scene, it is suggested that other works such as reduction in radial spread crown lifting and crown thinning should be considered.

2. The Cupressus tree of group G1 marked as T6 on the applicant's plan, is also a prominent and established feature, which contributes positively to the Chapel Road Conservation Area.

There is no arboricultural or other acceptable reason provided which would justify the loss of this tree. Having regard to the maturity and stature of the tree and its prominence within the street scene, it is considered that other works such as selective pruning reduction in radial spread and crown lifting could alleviate the neighbours concerns and retain the tree.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation?

No

Case Officer: JDS Date: 15/03/2024

Authorised by: LPrew Date: 20/03/2024