Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Approve**
AWDM/0857/12

Site: **Rectory House West Street Sompting Lancing BN15 0DA**

Proposal: **Crown reduction by 5m from height to reduce weight on damaged main limbs, and 1.5m from lateral radial spread of Horse Chestnut T13 of Tree Preservation Order 5/76 (s)**

Date of site visit: 26.07.12

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a Tree Preservation Order which covers a number of trees at Rectory House, a large nursing home located on the north side of the road behind a tall flint wall, served by two vehicular accesses (on the east and west) and an in and out driveway.

Permission was granted earlier in the year for general maintenance of a number of trees (AWDM/0373/12).

Permission is now sought for significant crown reduction to T13 a horse chestnut, which had a crown lift to 6m performed as part of the original works.

The proposed works are for a 5m reduction in height and a 1.5m reduction of the crown from the lateral radial spread. The application is made on behalf of the nursing home by a tree surgeon who has been in discussions with the Council Parks Department.

They state that the tree is showing signs of dieback within the crown, and that it has been severely damaged in the past and is in a condition and location which causes concern for the residents of Rectory House and the public using the footpaths along West Street. The reduction would alleviate the stress on the trees overall structure in particular the decaying large branches.

The original TPO was confirmed in 1976, and whilst it pertained to 24 trees originally, a number are no longer present on the site as a result of felling due to disease or through storm damage. However the garden still has a mature wooded appearance as viewed from the south in West Street.

Consultations

Adur & Worthing Councils: The Councils Parks Officer states that although the tree is healthy there are several areas of damage to its framework. The crown has extended past these broken and damaged limbs. By reducing the weight of the new growth, there is less strain on what could become compromised unions. Recommend that the works are permitted.

Sompting Parish Council: No objection

Representations

Third parties: There have been no third party objections.

Relevant Planning Policies

The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation Order) (England) Regulations 2012
National Planning Policy Framework (CLG 2012)

Planning Assessment

Visual amenity

The gardens themselves have a very mature feel, the western of the two Chestnuts (T13) which overhang West Street is of significant size and age with a wide crown. The tree has two main limbs of considerable girth, which split at approximately 5m from ground level. The easternmost limb has a pronounced lean towards the NE and has large wounds within the stem, and the entire tree is showing lower levels of foliage that would be expected at this time of the year.

The reduction would lessen the weight above the damaged part of the limb which could cause significant damage, both to occupiers of the nursing home and members of the public were it to fail. The reduction in height of the second main limb would allow for the reshaping of the remainder of the crown in a sympathetic manner.

Whilst the proposed works are significant, it is considered that if the remedial works allow for the long term health of the tree to improve, it would be of benefit to the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason:-

1. The tree works to the protected tree T13, under the Adur Tree Preservation Order 5/76/S hereby permitted, shall be restricted to the following maximum works, only, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, and carried out in accordance with the British Standard BS 3998 (2010) Recommendations for Tree Works:-

   i) T13 Chestnut - Crown reduction by 5m in height and 1.5m lateral radial spread.

   Reason: *In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with 'saved' policy AB23 of the ADLP*

2. Works to be carried out within 1 year of date of permission.

Reason: *In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with 'saved' policy AB23 of the ADLP*

Informatives:-

- Informative 1 to include reference to both the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Informative 2 to advise the use of a professional tree surgeon.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: C. Hone Date: 12.09.12

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 12 September 2012