Development Management – Delegated Officer Report **Date; 16/11/23**

Application Number	**AWDM/1394/23**
Address	**Wicker House High Street Worthing West Sussex BN11 1DJ**
Proposal	**Section 211 Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to fell without replacement group of mixed trees and shrubs within 2 to 3 metres of the southern boundary wall including Sycamore saplings in the Little High Street Conservation Area.**

Date of site visit: 25/10/23

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

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application refers to a line of young, small mostly immature trees located between the tall southern boundary wall, and the line of protected Sycamore trees. The trees are a part of the street scene and make a contribution to the character and visual amenities of the Little High Street Conservation Area.

Consent is sought to fell without replacement Sycamore saplings and mixed species of trees and shrubs within 2 to 3 metres of the southern boundary wall.

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

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

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning History

1997: Designation by Worthing Borough Council of the Little High Street Conservation Area.

1997: The Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 40 of 1997 Wicker House confirmed on 25th November 1997

2003: Conditional consent granted to crown lift to 4.5 metres group of Sycamore trees (G2) and remove damaged, broken and dead branches overhanging neighbouring properties (WB/03/00099/TPO).

2008: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 40 of 1997 to fell 3 Sycamore trees (identified as trees 3, 4 and 6), and to carry out selective remedial pruning to five further Sycamores (trees 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8) forming Group G2.

2012: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 40 of 1997 to reduce height by 2-3 metres and reduce south side spread by 2 metres on five Sycamore trees (Part of Group G2).

2013: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 40 of 1997 to crown lift up to 7 metres and reduce radial spread by up to 1.5 to 2 metres three Sycamore trees (T1, 2 & 3 of group G2), fell one Sycamore adjacent to footpath (T4 of group G2) and to lift up to 7 metres and reduce radial spread on southside on one Sycamore (T5 of group G2)

2016: Section 211 Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to reduce height and radial spread by 1 to 2 metres one Cherry tree in the Little High Street Conservation Area.

2016: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.40 of 1997 to reduce height and radial spread by 1 to 2 metres three Whitebeam trees of group G1.

2017: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.40 of 1997 to reduce height and radial spread by 1 to 2 metres three Whitebeam trees of group G1.

2017: Section 211 Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to reduce height and spread by 20% one Wild Cherry in the Little High Street Conservation Area.

2022: Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No.40 of 1997 to reduce crown height and radial spread by up to 3 metres five Sycamore trees of group G2.

2022: Section 211 Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to reduce crown height and radial spread by up to 3 metres one Beech tree in the Little High Street Conservation Area.

Planning Assessment

The trees are a small immature Sycamore Cherry Laurel and other species of tree and shrubs growing in a wide border between the Southern Boundary wall and the front car park. The trees are part of the area, with limited public views.

The tallest of the trees are the several groups of self seeded Sycamores that are also the closest to the boundary wall. These trees are up to 8 metres tall on slender stems, and have shed several limbs, possibly due to damage by squirrels. The Laurel and other shrubs are not as tall being less than 4 metres, and therefore having a very minimal impact on the area.

The proposed works are to remove the trees and shrubs leaving a clear area from the base of the large mature tall protected Sycamore trees to the southern boundary wall. The works are proposed to reduce overhang and leaf and branch drop to the adjacent Beer Garden of the Jack Warner Public House.

Although other works could be considered to alleviate these concerns it is also acknowledged that the understory trees and shrubs would not be considered worthy of a Tree Preservation Order, therefore consent is recommended.

These works in my opinion will be large in relation to the overall number of trees and a significant amount of change will take place. However the effect on the area will be to highlight the existing TPO trees, making them more prominent to the Conservation Area.

Recommendation

Grant Consent, Not subject to Conditions:

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation?

No

Case Officer: JDS Date: 16/11/2023

Authorised by: PB Date: 16/11/23