



BRIEFING NOTE

Prepared for:	Matt Swanton of Re-Format Architects
Prepared by:	David Archer
CC:	Matt Rew
Re:	46 Warblington Rd, Emsworth – notes from the Tree Officer Re. planning application No APP/23/01078

Tuesday, 09 April 2024

This note is an addendum to the Arboricultural Implications Assessment (DAA AIA + APPS 01 Dated Jan 24) and relates to comments made on this application by the Tree Officer in her response to the Planning Case officer. My responses deal with the issues in the same order as presented in the consultation document.

- 1) *"T9 Poplar – a reduction on a poplar usually promotes a vigorous vegetative response so future pressure for pruning to maintain a 2.5 clearance is foreseeable. Being an offsite tree, the disturbance in the RPA may well promote vigorous suckering within the adjacent property which can be very aggravating and difficult to manage. An incursion of 2.6% into the RPA of this tree is highly unlikely to stimulate the response suggested i.e. suckering, as the level of incursion is so low. A vegetative response from pruning the crown may be possible but, as before, the level of pruning is so low that excessive re-growth is highly unlikely and easily manageable by any future residents who can exercise their common law right to prune any overhanging branches. From my experience most neighbours do amicably agree pruning levels to resolve the issues although there are a few notable exceptions.*
- 2) *"Pruning, such as that proposed to T25 pine, is very hard to do without leaving the tree in a poor form. Very specific work schedule is needed and evidence of the resultant form (photographs indicating cut points) to be supplied please". This issue has been resolved by moving the proposed dwelling further west outside the crown reach of T25 and adjacent trees.*
- 3) *"RPA's have been plotted as circles where known constraints will modify the actual rooting area. This will result in a greater percentage of the RPA being affected by the proposal. This must be updated to reflect the likely impact of features such as the drive, the sewer and Curlew Close to the west and existing buildings and hard surfacing. This will result in a far larger impact to trees T6 (TPO'd, Cat B- arguably A), T7 (TPO'd, Cat B.), 11 (TPO'd), 12 (TPO'd Cat A), 16 (Cat B) than indicated"* The RPAS have been largely left as circles as there are no features in the site that would constitute an effective root barrier to the retained trees with the possible exception of the house in Curlew Close impacting in a very minor way on the RPA of the Snow Gum, T16 (1% - 2%). The existing main drive on the site does not act as a barrier to the Monterey Pines, T6 & T7, as the construction of the drive, gravel, is not substantial enough to be a root barrier. The same applies to



the foundations of the garden shed. Any other hard surface is also built without substantial foundations likely to constitute a root barrier.

- 4) *“Incursion to the RPA of trees 6&7 represents a significant area being altered near aged trees – even will (sic) no-dig systems being used this is unacceptable”* As detailed in Para 2.3.1. Table 3 the incursions into the RPAs of trees T6 & T7, over and above the existing levels of gravel surfacing, total 19.5% & 12.6% respectively. Both these impacts fall below the 20% upper limit as set out in the British Standard (BS5837 2012 Para 7.4.2.3.) The ‘no-dig’ system, as proposed, will be bound gravel similar to the existing access drive and constructed over the existing soil surface, thus ensuring adequate water permeability to the root horizon. Both these trees are in good health and Monterey Pine are known to have a high tolerance to any construction disturbance (Matheny & Clark 1998); however, the soil within the RPAs after construction of the drive should be improved by use of compressed air injection with the addition of ‘Bio-char’ injected into the soil horizon to improve water retention and O₂ permeability. This may be specified in the Landscape Plan that should part of the Condition attached to any planning consent. Both trees are in very good health and the potential for any adverse effect on the long-term health of these trees will be minimal. However, this only applies if strict adherence is given to the construction methodology set out in the body of the text in the AIA. Any further details may be agreed at the pre-start meeting that will be held on the outcome of planning consent.
- 5) Through to Para 8. *“The key concern is that the drainage strategy has not been considered in conjunction with trees...”* These issues have been addressed in a revised drainage plan which has substantially improved the proposal from an arboricultural perspective. Surface water drains have now been removed and surface water will be dealt with by the permeable drive, filtering the water directly to the attenuation tank. The foul drain route has been substantially altered to minimise any incursion into the RPA of retained trees. This now only affects in a minor way T6 & T7, where the small incursions into the periphery of the RPAs may be reasonably dealt with by manual excavation under direct arboricultural supervision. There is now no direct connection to Curlew Drive.
- 6) *“The position of the southernmost property does not appear to have taken the tree constraints fully into consideration, and a different orientation or position could have a lesser impact”.* The footprint of this unit has been modified to reduce pressure on the adjacent trees.
- 7) *“No consideration has been given to protecting the public highway tree to the east of the drive on the frontage of Warblington Lane (sic), or the grass verge in which it grows. The pressure for construction vehicles to park on this verge is highly foreseeable and must be addressed so the tree can be retained safely.”* This is an issue that is easily resolved by constructing shuttering around the tree during the construction period – this is shown on the revised TPP.
- 8) *“According to the AIA plan, all of the vegetation across the frontage is being removed. This includes a TPO silver birch that (at least from the Streetview image of September 2023) seems to be in reasonable form and condition. The mass removal seems excessive and will have a moderate to high adverse and potentially permanent impact on the local street scene.”* The TPP has been amended to show retention of the Crab Apple (T2) and the Silver Birch (T1); however, if you read our comments in the Tree Schedule (TS) you will see that evidence of root plate instability from an historical storm event was recorded, this is why we showed it to be removed. The group of mature



Laurel (G1) is dead (clearly so when viewed from Street View) however, the lower level of Laurel & Rhododendron along the front boundary fence is being retained and will continue to provide screening of interior views from the public footpath. The disparity between our TPP and the planning docs submitted in relation to retained trees will be reconciled by further amendments to the plans.

- 9) *"At present, there is insufficient detail of G1 through G5 to be able to understand the impact that the removal of these groups will have. Some quantitative (e.g. no. of trees/square meterage affected) and qualitative data is needed to be able to assess this fully"* G4 is not being removed. Categorisation of trees/shrubs as Groups is acceptable as set out in BS5837 (2012) para 4.4.2.3.) *"The term "group" is intended to identify trees that form cohesive arboricultural features either aerodynamically (e.g. trees that provide companion shelter), visually (e.g. avenues or screens)"* The TS clearly identifies the constituent species making up the groups and makes comments of their quality/categorisation, dimensions etc. The TS clearly states that the Laurel making up the group, G1, is dead – what more information is needed? Groups G2, G3 and G5 are given height ranges (min 3m – Max 8m) and the canopy spread for these groups is clearly marked on the TPP. The components of these groups are clearly stated in the Tree Schedule. A site visit makes the impact of their removal perfectly clear, i.e. minimal. These groups are enclosed in dense brambles and undergrowth making identification of individual species within the group very difficult. If desired a large proportion of G5 could be retained in the garden of the dwelling and identified in the Landscape Plan. No further information is required to assess the impact of their removal.
- 10) *"...a schedule of trees to be planted that at least replicates the characteristics and biodiversity of those lost is submitted and agreed upon. This should include method of planting, stock type and species range, as well as a fully resources maintenance programme to ensure trees and plants establish successfully"*. Detail of replacement trees can be shown on a Landscape Plan which can be required by virtue of a reasonably worded Planning Condition attached to any Planning Consent. This site has ample space and opportunities for replacement planting, particularly in the undeveloped southern section of the site and other undeveloped areas of the site.

Yours sincerely

David Archer | Practice Principal
M.Arbor.A.