

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS

ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO: **DC/26/1176: Dog & Bacon, North Parade, Horsham RH12 2Q.**

REPRESENTATION AND CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Horsham Town Council has stated no objection to the application and have advised the following:

Planning Committee considered the application and resolved to support the application with the comment that a replacement tree should be encouraged to be planted to ensure biodiversity is retained on the site.

2 x representations have been received in respect of this application, one from the Horsham Society, their comments are as follow:

We are very concerned at the proposed felling of this prominent local tree. We notice that at the time of writing there is no report from the Council's arboricultural officer. If in their opinion the tree needs to be felled we would ask that there be a requirement for a suitable semi-mature tree to be planted in its place.

The second representation has been submitted by member of the public; their comments are as follow:

Dog and Bacon pub is an attractive Horsham pub with ample seating already out the front of the pub. The tree contributes to its attractiveness and provides shade for customers as well as habitat for wildlife. I greatly object too to the felling of a beautiful mature tree that is enhancing the beauty of the pub in order to build hardstanding with no regards for the environment or depreciation of wildlife habitat. There seems to be room at the side of the pub that could instead be used for seating for its customers rather than fell this beautiful mature tree.

ASSESSMENT:

1. The tree subject to this application is a mature Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) situated prominently within the frontage of the Dog and Bacon Public House, North Parade, Horsham. The constraint is TPO/1487, served on 19/01/2026, and the subject tree is T2 of the Order.

2. Owing to its size, prominence and visibility from the public realm, the tree makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the locality and provides a high level of public amenity value to its setting.

3. The application seeks consent to remove the tree following the discovery of significant decay within the basal stem. The matter came to light during a site inspection undertaken by the Council's Tree Officer in connection with an unrelated matter, at which time a cavity was noted at the base of the tree.

4. Although the tree exhibits good vigour and vitality throughout the crown, probing identified the presence of extensive internal decay within the lower stem. The tree has a stem diameter of approximately 700mm at 1.5m AGL, with decay extending in excess of 500mm into the stem. The cavity was also found to extend vertically by approximately 400mm upwards and around 400mm downwards from the point of entry.

5. The extent of decay is such that the residual wall thickness appears likely to fall below the commonly cited 0.3 t/R ratio described by Claus Mattheck. Mattheck's work on tree biomechanics identified the relationship between residual wall thickness (t) and stem radius (R) as a useful indicator when considering the structural implications of internal decay, with values below 0.3 often associated with an increased likelihood of structural failure. Whilst this threshold should not be regarded as an absolute failure criterion and must be considered alongside other site-specific factors, it nonetheless suggests that a significant proportion of the stem's load-bearing tissues have been compromised and further reinforces concerns regarding the tree's structural integrity.

6. Whilst the application has not been supported by a detailed decay detection report, the extent of decay and associated dysfunction identified during site inspection, was considered sufficient to raise concern regarding the tree's structural condition.

7. It is acknowledged that the tree's crown condition remains good, physiological condition should not be confused with structural integrity. In this instance, the concern relates to the extent of decay present within the lower stem and the implications this has for the tree's structural stability.

8. The significance of the defect is heightened by the species involved. Whilst Horse Chestnut can often remain physiologically vigorous despite the presence of extensive internal dysfunction, arboricultural literature identifies *Aesculus* as a genus exhibiting a comparatively high incidence of decay-related failure when compared with many other broadleaved taxa. In his work *Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management*, David Lonsdale identifies *Aesculus* amongst the higher-ranking broadleaved genera for decay-related failure, whilst his paper *Decay and Mechanical Failure in Horse Chestnut* highlights the range of decay fungi commonly associated with the species and the frequency with which structural failures are encountered.

9. Consequently, where extensive decay is present within critical load-bearing tissues such as the basal stem, a precautionary approach is generally warranted, particularly where the tree occupies a location with a high level of target occupancy.

10. In this case the tree occupies a highly prominent roadside position immediately adjacent to a busy public highway, footway and public house frontage. Consequently, numerous potential targets exist within the foreseeable failure zone.

11. The tree's amenity value has been carefully considered. It is an attractive mature specimen which contributes positively to the wider streetscene, and its removal will result in a noticeable loss of visual amenity. However, having regard to the extent of decay identified within the basal stem, the species' comparatively poor tolerance of advanced decay and the high frequency of surrounding targets, it is considered that a genuine and foreseeable safety concern exists should the tree be retained.

12. Consideration has been given to whether extensive crown reduction could facilitate retention. Whilst this may allow the tree to remain in some form, the level of intervention likely required would substantially diminish its visual contribution and landscape value. In practical terms, the resultant tree would provide little additional amenity benefit when compared to replacement planting.

13. On balance, whilst the loss of such a prominent tree is unfortunate, it is considered that the structural concerns identified provide reasonable justification for its removal.

14. Replacement planting is considered necessary and appropriate. Given the well-documented issues affecting Horse Chestnut, including foliar diseases and bleeding canker, it would be reasonable to select an alternative *Aesculus* species. A standard nursery stock (minimally 8-10cm in girth and 2 – 2.5m in height) replacement is recommended. *Aesculus flava* (Yellow Buckeye) or *Aesculus × carnea*, red horse-chestnut would represent a suitable replacement, provide a similar floral display and landscape character whilst generally exhibiting greater resilience to many of the disorders commonly affecting Horse Chestnut.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant consent subject to the conditions below.

CONDITIONS TO BE APPLIED:

1. TR2 *Time limit, 2 years*
2. TR7 *Replanting (Single Tree)*

Following the removal of the tree to be felled under this consent, the specified standard nursery stock (minimally 8-10cm in girth and 2 – 2.5m in height) replacement of the following species: *Aesculus flava* (Yellow Buckeye) or *Aesculus × carnea*, red horse-chestnut; shall be planted in the specified position within 6 months of the date of this consent. In the event that this tree should die following planting, it shall be replaced with a similar tree in a similar position within six months of its death.

3. TR4 *Surgery standards*
- TINF1 *Note to applicant.*
- TINF2 *Wildlife protection.*

DELEGATED

Authorising Officer sign.....ANBU.....**Arboricultural Officer (Strategic Planning).**

Date.....25 Sep 26.....