From: Planning Casework <planningcasework@woodlandtrust.org.uk>
Sent: 13 August 2024 16:10:57 UTC+01:00
To: "Planning" <planning@horsham.gov.uk>
Subject: FAO Shazia Penne - Woodland Trust comments on application DC/24/1036
Categories: Consultations

Dear Shazia Penne,

Please find below the Woodland Trust's comments on the following application:-

Reference: DC/24/1036
Proposal: Erection of a 2No. bay garage with workshop/storage above, as replacement of existing shed and store | Howick Barn The Haven Billingshurst West Sussex RH14 9BQ

As the UK's leading woodland conservation charity, the Woodland Trust aims to protect native woods, trees and their wildlife for the future. We are an evidence-led organisation, using existing policy and our conservation and planning expertise to assess the impacts of development on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees. Planning responses submitted by the Trust are based on a review of the information provided as part of the application to the local authority.

Impact on Ancient Woodland
We would like to register **a holding objection** to this application on the basis of potential deterioration of an area of woodland (grid ref: TQ 08391 31547), designated as an Ancient Semi Natural Woodland on Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI).

This application seeks to replace an existing shed and timber store with a 2-bay garage and workshop/storage space. We are concerned about the increased building footprint of the proposed development, and its extension towards the ancient woodland. The current shed and timber store sit approximately 10m from the woodland, and this proposal would reduce that distance to around 6m.

Where development takes place in close proximity to ancient woodland there is potential for encroachment on the rooting systems of ancient woodland boundary trees, in addition to indirect impacts such as noise, dust and light pollution, and increased disturbance to wildlife. When land use is further intensified, such as in this situation, exposure to this range of environmental impacts is increased for woodland plant and animal populations. In particular, the habitats become more vulnerable to the outside influences, or edge effects, that result from the adjacent land's change of use. These can impact cumulatively on ancient woodland - this is much more damaging than individual effects. The applicant should ensure that the proposed works will not result in any detrimental impact on the surrounding ancient woodland in line with paragraph 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

We note that it is not possible to provide a 15 metre buffer zone given the proximity of the existing shed and timber store to the woodland. Our main concerns therefore relate to potential root encroachment of ancient woodland boundary trees in addition to noise and dust pollution during construction. The applicant should ensure that the proposed works will not result in any detrimental impact on the surrounding ancient woodland in line with Natural England and Forestry Commission's standing advice.

There is no acknowledgement of the ancient woodland within any of the documents submitted for this application, and we are concerned that neither an arboricultural nor ecological report has been completed.

We request that a decision is delayed until such time as the applicant has provided an arboricultural impact assessment to demonstrate that appropriate mitigation is in place to protect the ancient woodland from deterioration. In particular, the assessment should identify any significant ancient woodland boundary tree roots and propose measures to ensure their protection during implementation of the plans. Where appropriate mitigation is not achievable the application should not be taken forward.
Additionally, we recommend that HERAS fencing, fitted with acoustic and dust screening measures is positioned to provide as large a buffer as possible, to reduce adverse impact from noise and dust pollution during construction.

I hope you find these comments helpful - if you would like clarification or further advice, please contact us at planningcasework@woodlandtrust.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,
Frankie Moughton-Small

Frankie Moughton-Small

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Cases involving woods and trees under threat can change and evolve during the planning process due to a wide variety of reasons. Where a development involving ancient woods or veteran trees no longer remains a threat due to changing circumstance surrounding said application and based upon professional judgement steered by our conservation research, the Woodland Trust withholds the right to withdraw or amend its objection and review its approach.

The Woodland Trust is not a statutory body ie a non-statutory consultee which means we can advise but are not able to take direct action. However we are alerted to many threats to ancient woodlands around the country, albeit with limited capacity to take on every case. As a charity, we provide all information in good faith, funded by public

donations. For more information about this please visit here: https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/support-us/give/donations/.



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