



HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	Land at The Crows Nest New Hall Lane Small Dole
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of a single chalet bungalow and detached garage
REFERENCE:	DC/26/1246
RECOMMENDATION:	Advice / Modification to Plot P7,1
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION: The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) prepared by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology. The submitted information advises that the proposed development has been designed to retain all Category A and Category B trees. Whilst the proposed removal of the identified Category C and Category U trees is not considered objectionable in arboricultural terms, clarification is required regarding T14, which appears to be located outside the application site boundary but is shown for removal. Concerns remain regarding the extent of development proposed within the Root Protection Area (RPA) of T29. Following site inspection and the collection of actual stem measurements, it is considered that the influence of T29 is greater than currently illustrated within the submitted documentation. Given that T29 is now protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO 1624 and having regard to the Greenfield nature of the site, it is not currently clear that the extent of development proposed within its RPA represents the minimum necessary to facilitate the development; further justification for the current layout and consideration of opportunities to reduce encroachment into the RPA of T29 would be welcomed. Accordingly, no objection is raised in principle to the proposed development. However, further justification regarding the extent of development proposed within the Root Protection Area of T29 would be welcomed, together with consideration of opportunities to reduce, or preferably eliminate, encroachment into the Root Protection Area of this protected tree.	

MAIN COMMENTS:

Trees Proposed for Removal

The proposed development does not require the removal of any Category A or Category B trees, which is positive. The report identifies the removal of the following trees and vegetation to facilitate the development: TG21, T22, T26 and H56 (Category C).

T12, T14, T23, T25, T27, T28, T36 and T55 (Category U).

From a purely arboricultural perspective, the loss of the identified Category C and U category specimens is generally acceptable, subject to confirmation that all of the trees proposed for removal are located within the applicant's control. However, it is noted that T14 is shown as requiring removal despite appearing, from the submitted plans, to be situated outside the application site boundary. This point should be clarified, as it is not apparent that the applicant can undertake the removal of this tree.

Root Protection area incursions

The AIA identifies several incursions into retained Root Protection Areas associated with operational access, translocation works and the proposed driveway construction.

Impacts are identified within the RPAs of T09, T16, T19, TG20, T24, T29 and T32, together with additional temporary incursions associated with the translocation of T33, T34 and T54. These impacts are proposed to be mitigated through ground protection and no-dig construction methodologies.

Whilst the report provides mitigation measures, it should be noted that incursions into the RPAs of retained trees, particularly Category A trees T19, T24 and T29, require clear and robust justification in accordance with BS5837 principles. In this instance, the proposed no-dig construction and temporary ground protection measures appear intended to provide that justification; however, the successful retention of these trees will be dependent upon the construction methodology being implemented in full and appropriately supervised throughout the development process.

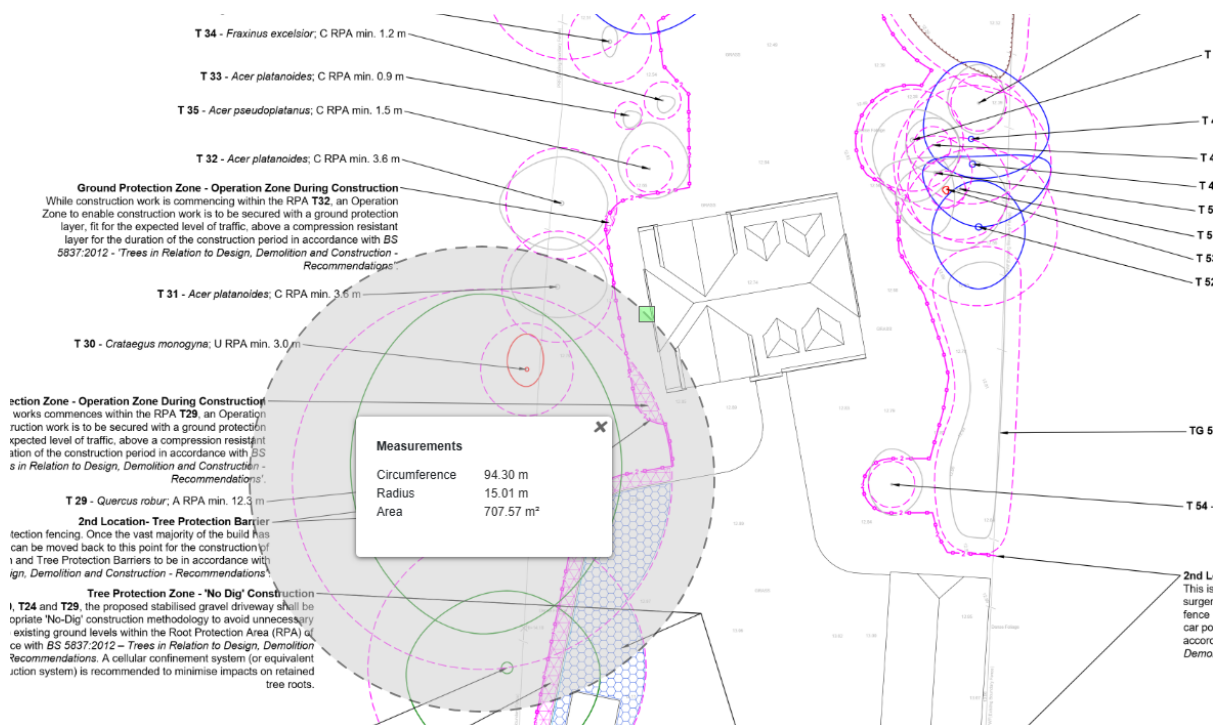
It is noted that the survey schedule records the stem diameters of T24 and T29 as estimated measurements due to access constraints associated with the trees being located outside the site. During my site visit, actual stem measurements were obtained. T24 was measured at 630mm DBH. Due to the pronounced buttressing exhibited by T29, it was not possible to obtain a measurement at 1.5m above ground level; however, a stem diameter of 1,870mm was recorded at 1.3m AGL. The submitted RPA calculations are based upon estimated measurements and therefore do not appear to accurately reflect the degree of influence exerted by T29 on the development proposals.



T29 bears the hallmarks of a former hedgerow tree that has historically been managed within a long-gone hedgerow corridor. The tree exhibits a short, stout form, with pronounced buttressing extending to approximately 1.3-1.5m above ground level before dividing into three substantial stems. This growth pattern is likely attributable to historic

cyclical management and subsequent abandonment of that regime. Whilst this management has undoubtedly influenced the tree's form and dimensions, the tree is clearly of considerable age. Notwithstanding this, the crown displays exceptional vigour, with only limited minor deadwood present and no evident signs of significant dieback, stag-heading or canopy retrenchment. Based on the observations made, the tree appears to lack many of the characteristics typically associated with a veteran tree as defined by the NPPF, with no obvious evidence of extensive decay, significant cavities, hollowing, fungal fruiting bodies or other veteran-related habitat features.

T29 is of considerable arboricultural and landscape value. However, its RPA should be capped at the maximum 15m radius as prescribed by BS5837:2012.



It should also be noted that T29 is now protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO 1624. As such, regard should be had to any proposed works or activity within its RPA, and any resulting encroachment should be clearly and robustly justified.

Drainage

Regarding drainage and services, the AIA advises that detailed drainage and utility information was not available at the time the report was prepared. However, the subsequently submitted Proposed Drainage Strategy indicates that most of the drainage infrastructure can be accommodated outside the RPAs of retained trees. Subject to confirmation of final service routes and construction methodologies, there do not appear to be any immediate arboricultural concerns arising from the drainage proposals, which is positive.

Site Layout and Future Resident Pressure observations

The current arrangement places parts of the proposed dwelling and its associated parking area within the RPA of T29. Whilst development within the RPA of a retained tree can, in certain circumstances, be justified, the significance of this case is heightened by the fact that T29 is the principal tree influencing the site and is now protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO 1624. Furthermore, the actual stem measurements obtained during my site visit indicate that the extent of the RPA affecting the site is greater than that currently presented within the submitted documentation.

Given the Greenfield nature of the site, there appears to be greater scope to adjust the layout and achieve a more sustainable relationship between the proposed development and T29. Consideration should be given to repositioning the dwelling approximately 3 to 4 metres further to the north-east, which would remove the dwelling from the RPA of T29 entirely, thereby reducing reliance on mitigation measures and providing a more sustainable tree to build relationship. Such an arrangement may also negate the need for the parking area to extend into the RPA of T29.

Whilst it is acknowledged that repositioning the dwelling may necessitate the removal of additional vegetation adjacent to the eastern boundary, this is considered a reasonable compromise in seeking to achieve a more sustainable long-term relationship between the development and T29. Greater separation from the proposed dwelling and parking area would reduce the likelihood of future pressure for pruning works and other management interventions arising from the close proximity of the tree to residential development. Similarly, the parking area should be revisited where it presently extends into the RPA, with a view to minimising the extent of the encroachment as far as reasonably practicable.

On balance, whilst mitigation measures have been proposed, it is not currently clear that the extent of development proposed within the RPA of T29 represents the minimum necessary to facilitate the development. Given the apparent opportunity to refine the site layout, further justification for the current arrangement would be beneficial, and consideration should be given to reducing the extent of encroachment into the RPA of this retained tree.

Tree Protection Measures

The submitted AMS, and TPP include details relating to tree protection fencing, construction exclusion zones, ground protection, arboricultural supervision and low-dig construction techniques. The proposed protection measures generally accord with the key principles of BS5837:2012.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: None at this stage

NAME:	Andy Bush Arboricultural officer (Planning)
DEPARTMENT:	STRATEGIC PLANNING - SPECIALISTS
DATE:	02/10/26

