DELEGATED APPLICATIONS

ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO: **DC/24/1228: 20 Pines Ridge, Horsham.**

REPRESENTATION AND CONSULTATION RESPONSES:
Denne Neighbourhood Council has stated an Holding objection to this proposal, until the considerations of the HDC Arboricultural Officer have been submitted.
A single additional representation has been received in respect of this application.

ASSESSMENT:
1. The tree that is the subject of this application is a mature and prominent oak, retained when the area was developed for residential use in the late 1990s. Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 1187 was served on August 8, 2003, when the five-year tree retention condition attached to the planning permission expired.

2. The tree is readily visible within the local landscape context and makes a positive contribution to the character of the area by virtue of its size, age, and position.

3. The applicant seeks consent to fell the tree due to concerns about a cavity and fungal decay at its base.

4. Upon inspection, and from assessing Google Street View images dated June 2024, due to it being winter, and the absence of any live growth. It was apparent that there is a high percentage of standing deadwood and dieback throughout the crown. The foliage present in the June 2024 images is mostly chlorotic, with a yellow/light green colour. The extent of the dieback and discoloured foliage suggests an underlying issue, possibly a lack of nutrient absorption by the tree's roots.

5. On the southern side of the tree at its base are the remains of old fungal fruiting bodies, possibly Inonotus dryadeus or Fistulina hepatica. Due to their decayed state, it is not possible to correctly identify the fungi. Nestled between a significant buttress root on the southern side of the tree are the remains of Collybia/Gymnopus fusipes, commonly known as spindle shank. Research suggests that this fungus can act as a parasite on the roots and root collar of the host tree (even trees with high vitality), which leads to root mortality. Because of root mortality, this fungus can impact the physiological and structural condition of the host tree, wherein the crown may show symptoms of dieback consistent with the tree in question.

6. In the area where the remains of old fungal fruiting bodies were observed, there is a cavity. Probing revealed approximately 50 cm of lateral ingress, and it appears that the decay has spread downward, below ground level, which is concerning.

7. Notwithstanding, it is accepted that consideration could be given to taking an alternative approach and managing the tree's decline through substantial surgery works. However, the extent of surgery needed to manage the tree in a safe and reasonable manner would see the tree retained in some form, but at the same time this action would also considerably alter how it is viewed within the local landscape context, and result in harm to the visual character and amenities of the locality.

8. While it is acknowledged that the loss of this tree would harm the character and amenities of the locality, consideration must be given to the tree's location within a built-up residential area and the numerous targets nearby. Given the safety concerns associated with the sparsity of the tree's crown, the dieback in the standing deadwood, coupled with the fungal decay and cavity at its base, it does suggest that the tree is in terminal decline.

9. On balance, the reasons put forward for removing the tree are considered reasonable and justifiable given its declining condition and location. However, it is reasonable in the circumstances to secure the planting of a replacement tree of Heavy Standard size (circa. 3m tall with a trunk girth of 12-14cm at planting) shall be secured by condition. Recommended Aesculus × carnea - Red horse-chestnut Quercus canariensis - Algerian oak, Quercus suber - Cork oak or Liriodendron tulipifera - Tulip tree.

RECOMMENDATION:
Grant consent subject to the conditions below.

CONDITIONS TO BE APPLIED:

1. TR2	*Time limit, 2 years*
2. TR7	*Replacement (single tree)*
TINF1	*Note to applicant.*
TINF2	*Wildlife protection.*

DELEGATED

Authorising Officer sign…….ANBU…….***Arboricultural Officer (Development).***

Date……19 Feb 25……