

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS

ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO: **DC/26/0281: Timberdown, Harborough Drive, West Chiltington.**

SITE & SURROUNDINGS: See Tree Inspection Sheet.

CONSTRAINT:

TPO 1115 Confirmed 03/05/06 (*Application refers to tree T7 and those in Group G1*)

RELEVANT PREVIOUS HISTORY:

DC/04/2750	Surgery to holly tree hedging	Application permitted
DC/09/0320	Surgery to Holly tree hedge	Application permitted
DC/13/1963	Surgery to group of Holly trees	Application permitted
DC/15/2782	Surgery to 4 Oak Trees (T3, T4, T6 and T7)	Application permitted
DC/18/2140	Surgery 1 x Holly Hedge.	Application permitted
DC/21/2449	Surgery to x1 Large Holly Hedge	Application permitted
DC/23/1424	Surgery to 1x Holly Hedge	Application permitted
DC/23/1982	Fell x2 x Oak	Application permitted

REPRESENTATION AND CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

No formal representations have been received in respect of this application.

ASSESSMENT:

1. The application relates to trees protected under Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 1115 and comprises proposed works to Oak T7 and the holly group G1, located along the northern boundary of the applicant's property adjacent to a grazing field. The holly group forms a linear feature visible from the public right of way to the north and contributes to the rural character and visual amenity of the wider area from this aspect, albeit in a localised manner.

2. Although the applicant refers to G1 as a "holly hedge", its designation within the TPO is that of a group of trees rather than a formally managed hedge. Notwithstanding past management, the group currently functions as a line of trees with collective amenity value. However, it is also noted that the group is, in places, relatively sparse in structure as a consequence of historical management, with most live lateral growth extending northwards.

3. It is further acknowledged that the trees within G1 are set against a backdrop of mature, established oak trees located within the adjacent field outside the applicant's ownership. These oaks provide, in places, a strong degree of screening and make a substantial contribution to the wider landscape setting and visual containment of the area.

4. Oak T7 is a mature oak located within the applicant's garden. It is a prominent landscape feature but is well contained within its setting. The tree has been subject to previous surgery works, from which it has recovered well. In this application, consent is sought to reduce the crown by approximately 2.5 metres all round, with works to be undertaken by a qualified arboricultural contractor in accordance with BS 3998.

5. It is considered that the proposed works to Oak T7 are proportionate and would not adversely affect the tree's health, structural integrity, or long-term contribution to amenity. The reduction would retain the tree's overall form and prominence and would not result in a significant loss of visual amenity. As such, the proposed works to Oak T7 are considered acceptable but should be undertaken at the end of the growing season.

6. In respect of holly group G1, the applicant proposes:

- the felling of one holly tree (identified as a spindly specimen) to ground level; and
- the reduction in height of the remaining trees.

7. It is noted that seven holly trees within G1 were felled to ground level in March 2025 without formal consent. While enforcement matters are not for consideration under this application, the condition and response of the trees following those works are noted. It has been observed that the affected stems are now exhibiting regenerative growth from their bases, with new shoots currently establishing to approximately 1 metre in height. Nevertheless, the removal of the seven trees has resulted in a loss of amenity when viewed

from the public right of way to the north, by opening up views from the countryside into the applicant's property.

8. The proposed removal of the identified spindly holly to ground level would, in isolation, result in some loss of continuity within the group. However, given the limited individual amenity contribution of this specimen and the screening provided by the mature oaks to the north, it is not considered that the loss of this single tree would result in significant wider harm to visual amenity, subject to replacement planting.

9. The applicant seeks to reduce the height of the remaining trees in G1 to approximately 3 metres above ground level, measured from the base of the trees. It is acknowledged that, when viewed from within the applicant's property, the trees are largely devoid of substantial foliage. However, the north-facing sides exhibit a more established branch structure, albeit elongated, likely as a consequence of repeated historical management from within the applicant's property combined with the absence of lateral pruning on the northern side. The current length of these north-facing branches is not considered to be negatively impacting the overall condition of the parent trees.

10. The proposed reduction is considered to represent a proportionate management response to the current condition of the trees. Given their sparse structure in places and elongated growth resulting from repeated historical works, a reduction to approximately 3 metres would help to restore a more balanced and manageable form without introducing undue risk to their physiological condition or structural integrity.

11. A reduction in height to approximately 3 metres above ground level would bring the trees back within a consistent and controlled framework, reflecting previous management patterns evident on site. Whilst this would involve the removal of some canopy and leaf-bearing material, this must be considered in the context of the trees' existing form.

12. Due to the species characteristics of the subject trees, such a reduction in height is unlikely to result in significant long-term harm. Instead, it is likely to stimulate more compact and vigorous basal and lateral regrowth, improving foliage density and structural coherence over time.

13. Whilst it is acknowledged that neighbouring properties have undertaken management works, these have been subject to separate assessment and do not set a precedent. The proposed works in this instance are considered on their own merits and align with the established pattern of management on site, without conflicting with the objectives of the TPO, including the long-term retention and appropriate management of the tree group.

14. As with any application under a Tree Preservation Order, a balanced assessment has been undertaken between the justification for the works and the contribution the trees make to public amenity. In this case, the proposed reduction, when combined with the retention of the group as a continuous boundary feature, would not result in a significant adverse impact on the immediate or wider landscape as the trees recover from the initial height reduction works.

15. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed works to Oak T7, the removal of the identified spindly holly, and the reduction of the remaining trees within group G1 to no less than 3 metres above ground level are acceptable in this instance.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant consent subject to the conditions below.

CONDITIONS TO BE APPLIED:

1. TR2 *Time limit, 2 years*

2. TR3a *Treeworks limit (bespoke)*

The tree work to which this consent relates shall be limited to:

- Crown reduce the oak tree T7 all-round by trimming branches to suitable growth points by up to 2.5 metres in accordance with BS 3998 (Tree Work – Recommendations);
- Fell the identified spindly holly within Group G1 to ground level; and
- Reduce the remaining holly trees within Group G1 to maintain a managed line of trees at a height of no less than 3 metres above ground level, with all cuts made to appropriate growth points in accordance with good arboricultural practice.

Reason: for the avoidance of doubt

3. TR4 *Surgery standards*

4. TR7 *Replacement (Single tree)*

TINF1 *Note to applicant.*

TINF2 *Wildlife protection.*

DELEGATED

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

Date.....28 May 26.....