

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS

ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO: **DC/26/0316: Belwethers Old Mill Place Pulborough.**

REPRESENTATION AND CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Pulborough Parish Council has stated no objection to this proposal.

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

ASSESSMENT:

1. The tree the subject is a mature Copper Beech tree (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpurea') protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO/1332. The tree is located along the western boundary of the residential property Belwethers, within a beech hedgerow, immediately adjacent to Old Mill Place, a narrow no-through road serving a number of residential properties.
2. The tree forms part of a roadside boundary feature and historically has contributed to the visual amenity of the area by reason of its size, species and prominence within the hedgerow. However, its current amenity value is materially reduced because of extensive crown decline and dieback in the upper crown.
3. The application seeks consent for the removal of all limbs down to a height of 2m where they separate from the main trunk. The application is supported by a detailed Tree Condition Report prepared by Gale Tree Consultancy (Ref: TCR/727/26, February 2026), following a visual tree assessment undertaken on 17 February 2026.
4. The report identifies the presence of the decay fungus *Meripilus giganteus* (Giant polypore), with fruiting bodies recorded on the east, south-west and north buttress roots. This species of fungus is generally associated with white rot and soft rot affecting the structural roots and root crown, resulting in a progressive loss of wood strength, increased brittleness and overall crown decline.
5. On site observations have confirmed that there is extensive deadwood and declining branches throughout the crown, with only limited sections exhibiting reasonable vitality. As such it is evident that the tree is in poor overall physiological condition, with further decline anticipated as the decay progresses should the tree be retained in its current form.
7. Although the supporting report highlights that the deadwood could be removed and pruning of declining branches could be undertaken as an interim measure, this option is clearly presented as short-term in nature and would not address the underlying cause of the tree's declining condition. The tree retention in full would require ongoing monitoring and reassessment even if such measures were considered future failure remains likely.
8. Having regard to the tree's proximity to the public highway and residential access, if no works are undertaken the consequences of root or basal failure would be potentially severe.
9. In amenity terms, while the tree is protected and historically has contributed to local character, this value has been significantly diminished by its current declining condition. The Tree Preservation Order does not seek to require the retention of trees that are demonstrably unsafe or beyond reasonable remedial management.
10. On balance, and having regard to the supporting arboricultural evidence, the trees confirmed poor condition, and the risk posed by its location adjacent to a public access route, it is considered that sufficient justification exists to justify the works proposed on safety grounds.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant consent subject to the conditions below.

CONDITIONS TO BE APPLIED:

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|--------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. TR2 | <i>Time limit, 2 years</i> |
| 2. TR7 | <i>Treeworks limit (standard)</i> |
| 3. TR4 | <i>Surgery standards</i> |
| TINF1 | <i>Note to applicant.</i> |
| TINF2 | <i>Wildlife protection.</i> |

DELEGATED

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

Date.....13 May 26...