

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS

ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO: **DC/26/0871: 14 Fletchers, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9BE**

REPRESENTATION AND CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

South water Parish Council has stated No objection to surgery to 2x Oak. In respect of fell 1 x Oak, we support the Planning Officer's decision.

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

ASSESSMENT:

1. The trees subject to this application are Oak trees protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO/0598 and located to the rear of 14 Fletchers. The proposals comprise crown lifting works to T2 and T3 and the felling of T1. The trees appear to be in good physiological condition, with no significant defects noted, and collectively provide a positive and attractive landscape feature with good public amenity value.

2. The proposed crown lifting works to T2 and T3 principally involve the removal of lower epicormic and minor shoots to provide increased clearance beneath the canopy. These works are limited in extent and are not considered likely to adversely affect the health, appearance or long-term condition of the trees. Furthermore, the proposed removals would not materially alter how the trees are perceived within the wider landscape and would therefore have a negligible impact on their amenity value.

3. In respect of the proposed felling of T1, site observations indicate that the three Oaks have developed as a closely associated group. Whilst individually the trees exhibit relatively slender stem diameters for their height, their close proximity has resulted in the crowns becoming largely coalescent, creating the appearance of a single mature, wooded feature.

4. Views of T1 from within Fletchers are relatively limited due to the tree being partially obscured by the adjacent Oaks. However, when viewed from Allendale, the relationship between the three trees becomes more apparent, with the crowns forming a broadly symmetrical and cohesive canopy structure.

5. The removal of T1 would create a noticeable gap within the canopy and diminish the contribution currently made by the group as a whole. Whilst some canopy expansion by the retained Oaks may occur over time, this would take many years to re-establish the existing visual continuity. The trees also contribute to the wider canopy network associated with Smith's Copse and the adjacent area of ancient woodland, helping to maintain landscape character and ecological connectivity.

6. The applicant advises that the tree contributes to nuisance through the shedding of leaves, acorns, dead twigs and other seasonal debris. Whilst this is acknowledged, the shedding of leaves, fruit, seed and associated material is a normal function of a tree and an inevitable characteristic of living adjacent to mature trees and woodland.

7. Although much of this material is likely to affect neighbouring land due to the tree's proximity to the boundary, the periodic clearance of such debris is generally regarded as routine property maintenance and, in itself, does not provide sufficient arboricultural justification for the removal of a protected tree.

8. Having regard to the trees' good health, visibility, and positive contribution to local amenity, together with the contribution T1 makes as part of this prominent coalescent group and the wider canopy network associated with Smith's Copse, the adjacent ancient woodland, the proposed felling is not considered justified. Its removal would result in a noticeable loss of amenity and harm the character and appearance of the protected tree group and should be resisted for the reasons provided.

RECOMMENDATION:

Grant consent by way of a split decision where the surgery works to Trees T2 and T3 are permitted. The felling of tree T1 is refused for the following grounds - The removal of T1 would result in the loss of a healthy protected tree that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area as such the proposed felling is not considered justified by the reasons put forward in support of the application.

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 lift trees T2 and T3 as per the specification stated on the submitted application form.

3. TR4	Reason: for the avoidance of doubt
TINF1	<i>Surgery standards</i>
TINF2	<i>Note to applicant.</i>
	<i>Wildlife protection.</i>

DELEGATED

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

Date...25 Sep 26.....