

21/10938

Former Police Station, Southampton Road, Lymington SO41 9GH

There are 2x group tree preservation orders, 1x on the eastern boundary and 1x on the northern boundary of this site. These trees contribute to the amenity of the area and are considered a constraint to development.

In support for this application a Barrell Tree Consultancy Arboricultural Assessment and Method Statement dated 28th May 2021 ref 18327-AA-JB. I am broadly in agreement with the assessment of the trees using BS5837:2012 categorization, 3 out of the 5 protected trees in the eastern group are graded 'B' trees, and all the protected trees (2x Silver Maple trees and 1x Cedar) are graded 'B' trees.

A total of 4 trees have been shown to be removed in order to accommodate this proposal, it is suggested within the submitted tree report that "Loss can be mitigated by new planting". Given the intensity of the development proposed there is very little opportunity for further tree planting. The submitted Landscape strategy drawing JBA 21-183-SK02 only appears to show 2x trees 'Boundary Courtyard trees' given the constraints of the layout these trees would have to be of relatively small stature and are unlikely to contribute to the amenity of the area.

The proposed retirement apartments are shown to be within 6m of the eastern group of trees. This layout is currently outside the crown spread and root protection areas of these trees although specialist precautionary measures have been specified in the submitted tree report. However, these trees are all 'maturing' they are young trees and will grow significantly more than their current dimensions. Silver Maple trees (*Acer saccharinum*) is very vigorous deciduous tree and grows to an ultimate height of greater than 12m with an ultimate crown spread greater than 8m. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/279/acer-saccharinum/details>. These trees will need future management to prevent encroachment/interference with the building. Routinely pruning these trees will reduce the amenity of the trees and may have a detrimental impact on the health of the tree.

Shading from the eastern group of trees is going to be a problem. These trees will block the natural light to the living rooms of the units on the eastern wing. It is likely to cause a future pressure from occupants to with remove or significantly prune the trees fronting along Southampton Road. Given that the proposed building is for retirement accommodation it is not unreasonable to assume that the residents are likely to spend more day time hours within the living spaces of the apartments and the impact of natural light obstruction will significantly affect the enjoyment the resident has in their home. The internal layout of the apartments show that the windows of the living rooms and bedrooms will be immediately adjacent to these trees, that will not only be blocking morning light but also will be continually encroaching the building. The counter argument is often that local authorities can resist applications to fell or prune where there are important protected tree/s. However, this is not the case where the applicant can demonstrate that enjoyment of their home is significantly affected by a tree/s.

There is a similar relationship between the group of trees on the northern boundary, adjacent to Queen Elizabeth Avenue although there is a slightly larger separation. A limb from the Cedar tree will need to be removed in order to facilitate the construction of the building. Again the Cedar trees have wide spreading canopies and this tree is likely to have to be continually pruned in order to be contained within a confined space.

Therefore, I object to this proposal on tree grounds as the proximity of the apartments is too close to the maturing protected trees on site and does not allow for these trees to grow into their natural size and form. This is likely to result in the future loss/unsympathetic pruning of these trees and would be detrimental to the amenity of the area. Recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework has highlighted the importance of trees in the street scene:

“131. Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, as can also help mitigate and adapt to climate changes. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are take to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, **and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.**”

H Chalmers

Senior Tree Officer