

**From:** Hannah Middleton  
**Sent:** 24 July 2023 16:39  
**To:** Statutory  
**Subject:** FW: Internal consultation has been completed for 2023/557

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**From:** noreply@salesforce.com <noreply@salesforce.com> **On Behalf Of** Alastair Durkin  
**Sent:** 24 July 2023 16:33  
**To:** Hannah Middleton <HMiddleton@tandridge.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Internal consultation has been completed for 2023/557

Please see internal consultation comments for 2023/557 regarding 2 Town End, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5UG.

Dear Hannah

Thank you for consulting me.

As you are aware there are several mature trees affected by this proposal, two of which are protected by Tree Preservation Order. Specifically T3 and T5 of the tree survey. These trees are very prominent and of high amenity value - which is amplified by the relative lack of mature trees in the vicinity, particularly street trees such as T5. Of immediate concern in this regard is the fact that the tree survey is now 2 years old, and for trees of this importance I would expect an up to date survey to have been submitted. Indeed, other than the stem diameter measurement there appears to have been no changes to the survey data since the pre app survey dated February 2020. Bearing in mind that if the stem diameter has increased then it is highly likely that both height and radial branch lengths have also increased. An up to date survey would be vital to assess impact, particularly where the proposed relationship between the trees and structures is so close, and the trees are integrated with the building.

The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment by Arbtech is a plan rather than a report, and merely identifies impacts rather than making an assessment of the identified impacts, as required by BS5837. This means that whilst specific areas of potential concern have been highlighted, there is no commentary as to whether the trees will be adversely affected.

The proposal requires a suspended deck to be constructed around T3, which is a very large, late mature sycamore. A further deck will then be constructed around the tree stem at first floor level. The entire structure will require the support of piles, which is identified as a potential harm within the impact assessment but merely states in the method statement that pile locations will need to be flexible, with trial holes dug to ascertain locations of roots to be avoided. It may be that this advice was not formed with the benefit of the Groundworks plan submitted, which shows pile locations right next to T3, and others within its root protection area. The bore of the piles will likely be substantial, and the superstructure design may provide little flexibility. As such I have little confidence that harm to roots could be avoided. Furthermore, the likely size of piling rig necessary to bore the piles would not fit underneath the crown of the tree, something that appears to have been missed within the submitted information. It may be that pile locations for the exterior walls near to trees could be supported on mini piles, but the main superstructure would require a far more robust methodology, which would be highly intensive for this site and very likely to harm the trees.

Of further concern is the proposal to build car park deck and first floor amenity deck around the stem of T3. This would mean that the multi stemmed crown break would erupt out of the floor with the stem being invisible to the outside world and substantially harming the visual amenity the tree provides. I concede that the structure itself might be technically possible in the unlikely event that pile locations could be positioned to avoid harm, but the relationship between the tree and the building would be unsustainable, with a high likelihood of post development pressure to drastically reduce the tree in order to reduce apprehension as regard damage or injury from falling branches and general detritus. As a consequence, refusal to allow these works would be difficult to sustain in response to a TPO application. The provision of a satisfactory relationship between buildings and trees should be established at the planning stage without having to rely on other powers to safeguard the amenity value of retained trees.

Turning to T5, I have similar concerns with regards to pile locations, and I am not at all convinced by the extent of the root protection area shown - extending into the main road. It is highly unlikely that significant roots extend into the road due to the inhospitableness of the underground

conditions and likely regular utility excavations. As such, in reality the RPA is likely to extend further into the site itself.

I also have concerns regarding the new crossover in relation to T5. This would need to be a crossover capable of taking heavy vehicles for construction purposes, but any new crossover will require deeper sub base excavation than is currently existing. It is clear from my observations on site that there are large roots within the pavement growing at a shallow depth and towards the proposed crossover, and as such it is likely that significant roots would be either severed or badly damaged during construction, resulting in direct harm to this very important amenity tree. I also have no information regarding visibility splays, which the presence of the tree may affect, and nor do we have any details of services or drainage, which may also adversely impact significant roots of T3 or T5.

In conclusion, as the proposal stands I would be raising a strong objection on the basis of potential harm to important protected trees, contrary to Policy DP7 and CSP 18.

Many thanks

Alastair

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