

Application Number & Location:22-0828 Land to the west of church road.docx

Proposal: Erection of 6 x 1- bedroom affordable Almshouse bungalows and gardens, including a new access from Church Road, parking areas and bin store.

Date: 05/01/22

Terminology:

Tree preservation order (TPO), root protection radius (RPR), root protection area (RPA), tree protection fencing (TPF), ground protection (GP), construction exclusion zone (CEZ), arboricultural impact assessment (AIA), tree constraints plan (TCP), arboricultural method statement (AMS), tree protection plan (TPP). National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG). British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations (BS5837:2012). Cellular Confinement System (CCS).

The proposal is for 6 bungalows and gardens along with associated car parking.

The area of land is under greenbelt

There are a number of trees that abound the site enclosing the field and adding to the verdant nature of the area. The trees are growing on a bund around the drainage ditches and are an old remnant of a managed hedgerow. None of the trees appeared to be of particular poor quality.

The AIA/AMS from Merewood does not conform to the requirements of the BS5837 and I raise the following comments.

1. Both documents are considered a heads of terms document only and provide no specific details regarding the working within the RPA of retained trees.
2. The RPA of the trees have not been offset for the existing site constraints e.g. the presence of the highway and the ditch outside the site which would limit the likely root spread, resulting in an RPA that would be more likely located within the confines of the site, any future submission should be amended to reflect the requirements of the BS5837. Even in its current format plot 6 would remove a significant proportion of the RPA of the adjacent trees and as no foundation details have been provided which might mitigate for this it is assumed a standard strip foundation is to be used. No overriding justification has been provided nor any reasons as to the deviation away from the British Standard and I conclude that this would lead to the loss or deterioration of these important boundary trees.
3. The proposed layout sits within the current RPA of a number of trees, this is defined within 5.3.1 of the British standard which states that structures, including hard standing are located out the RPA of retained trees, once the RPA's are amended it is likely that there will be a more significant incursion than shown, so I am unable to accurately assess the likely impacts.
4. The applicants haven't provided any information relating to the likely impacts of shade and dominance on future occupiers (see note 1 of 5.2.1 of BS5837), due to the spatial relationship between the retained trees and the gardens of the properties the trees are likely to be considered overbearing or cast significant shade across the rear elevations, the gardens are shown on a southern aspect and so there would be an expectation that the properties would receive a reasonable level of daylight. Plot 1 and 2 are likely to be directly affected as is 6 by the presence of the early mature trees. Oaks tend to cast a heavy oppressive shade which is

rarely alleviated by pruning, but still leads to requests for pruning or removal to increase light levels.

5. the ultimate height and spread of the Oaks (see 5.2.1. of BS 5837) which are still relatively squat and young for the species are likely to develop a significant canopy over future years creating an unreasonable stand between trees and the occupiers of plot 6 and 1 & 2 raising concerns over the height, spread and dominance of the these trees

It is advised (outside of any other planning constraints) that should this scheme be amended that the houses are placed on the northern boundary with a southern garden and the car parking spaces are located where the current houses are, this would reduce the secondary issues of light, shade and over dominance and the car parking designed in such a way to limit the incursion into the (amended) RPA, its likely a reduction in the number of units would reduce the pressures of the site on the retained trees, but in its current format I cannot support the proposal as is and so given the above, the scheme fails to adequately secure the protection of important protected trees which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area. I therefore recommend refusal of the application under policies DM9.

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