

From: [Johnston, Christopher](#)
To: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: FW: SMD/2023/0132 The Orchard Springfield Drive Leek
Date: 10 May 2023 12:33:06

Comments from local resident

From: Jane Daly
Sent: 06 May 2023 22:16
To: Johnston, Christopher
Cc: Haywood, Ben
Subject: SMD/2023/0132 The Orchard Springfield Drive Leek

Hi Chris,

I write further to your replies of 12th and 21st April to my earlier enquiries specifically relating to trees at the site. Basically, I'm seeking some reassurance about tree protection and replanting on site in relation to the current and proposed developments:

1. The new "List of Trees for Retention or Removal FAO Chris Johnston and Steve Massey" sent by Megan Askham from the agents, seems to make significant changes to the Tree Survey recommendations (detailed below). Given that it is the Tree Survey recommendations that have been posted online for public consultation, I'm concerned that the agents changes need to be made public. I've seen in the first objection letter published online that a local resident was asking for details of the trees to be removed. Also, Steve Massey's report hasn't yet been published. Will that be published after the expiry of the consultation period now?
 - a) One striking change that I can see is in relation to the two Lime trees T9 and T11 at the proposed new access. According to the agent, these trees are to be removed. However, in the Tree Survey, T11 is listed with T10 as having an estimated remaining contribution of 20+ years and recommends only removal of major deadwood for both of these trees.
 - b) From the online planning history documentation, it appears that T9 and T11 Lime trees were previously part of a Group TPO with T10. It seems that T10 is a singularly protected tree after a downgrading of the two trees T9 and T11. This seems to have occurred around 2013 when reserved matters

approval was granted for a development scheme for 8/9(?) dwellings which combined garden land with the paddock at The Orchard. I haven't found anything in the documentation that explains why this change was made. Can you please explain from your records?

c) Another apparent difference in approaches to retention and removal of trees between the agent and the Tree Survey, is that the Tree Survey recommends the removal of 9 trees (T14, T15, T17, T19, T20, T22, T23, T24 and T30) categorised as U (Poor/Trees for removal) with less than 10 years estimated contribution, yet the agent advises that these trees are to be retained. Even more curiously, the agent states that trees T25 and T31 are to be retained yet the Tree Survey recommends that these trees are felled on grounds of safety.

d) Conversely, the agent identifies five individual trees (T6, T7, T8, T9 and T11) and a group of 10 trees (G1) all to be removed. Only two of these 15 trees are categorised as Poor/Trees for removal; two trees and the group of 10 trees are stated to have 10+ years estimated remaining contribution; and one tree is categorised as B1 having 20+ years contribution.

So, it seems that the proposed scheme is to retain poor grade and potentially dangerous trees yet remove better grade trees?

2. As I mentioned in an earlier email, I have alerted planning enforcement to the storage of building materials and equipment close to the protected T10 tree and also close to the protected group of trees near to the entrance at Springfield Drive. My review of the many reports and planning conditions imposed over the long planning history of this site, has raised my awareness of root protection areas and I'm concerned that condition 5 of the planning permission for the current 7 dwelling development may have been breached for a significant period. Megan Askham states "No longer storing materials by the protected tree – this was purely for access to Plot 7". Hopefully, planning enforcement has now inspected both protected tree zones and its findings will be published very soon? I will forward photographs taken on 5th and 11th April via a separate email for you to consider in the meantime.
3. The agent says that a new detached garage shown on the Tree Survey plan

- a. "placed a threat on trees T12 and T13. These were the only arb concerns Steve Massey had in November 2022 and which the amended/submitted scheme reflects. Could you liaise with Steve Massey to check he is happy with the report?"

4.

Hopefully, you can advise how soon Steve Massey will report. It does seem strange to me how a proposed garage could place a threat on trees T12 and T13 (both with an estimated remaining contribution of 20+ years) whilst the proposed access doesn't seem to place a threat on two previously protected Lime trees with an estimated remaining contribution of 20+ and 10+ years?

4. Finally, please can you clarify the full replanting scheme for the proposed development site? On the site plan, I can only see a total of 5 new trees:
 - 2 pear trees next to the eastern boundary of 12 Springfield Drive labelled 'proposed tree type B'. (I've seen in another objection letter that the location of these 2 trees so close to the boundary, is considered to be an issue).
 - A group of 3 cherry trees at the proposed new entrance labelled 'proposed tree type C'.

I have looked back at Steve Massey's email to you dated 29th April 2016 in relation to the ongoing development of Deebank Heights SMD/2016/0134. Steve Massey says:

"Proposed new landscaping is detailed on the layout plan. However, this appears somewhat watered down from that of the previously approved application, comprising just 6 new trees (of which the Hazel and Japanese Maple are more large shrubs, and "Cherry Blossom" is not particularly specific), together with a proposed native hedgerow along the boundary with existing open space off Mountside Gardens – this hedgerow is appropriate and sufficiently detailed on the layout plan.

In particular, the previous landscape scheme included some structural shrub bed areas to plot frontages which would help to visually break up the built development and potential dominance of roadway and parked vehicles.

Details of species, numbers/densities within identified planting areas, and planting sizes, should all be specified. It would also be appropriate to revise the proposed tree species, perhaps to include as appropriate Birch, Rowan varieties, maybe a Crab Apple variety and/or specific suitable Cherry."

The current scheme is, of course, still under construction. The only replanting that has so far occurred is several cherry trees and a close boarded fence at the entrance to the site (rather than the mixed hedge which Steve Massey refers to). I, and I'm sure many adjoining neighbours, will look forward to seeing Steve Massey's detailed requirements for replanting for this latest proposed combined scheme. The concern here is that scheme after scheme, the requirements get watered down time and time again.

It may help to visit the site to make better sense of what I'm saying.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Jane

PS. I have previously raised with you the difference in the site plan and the plan attached to the Tree Survey plans in relation to the garage for the existing house. I now see that the notes to the site plan are similarly erroneous:

"PROPOSAL SCHEME

It is proposed to redevelop 'The Orchard' by extending and altering the existing dwelling as detailed on drawing 2015-2095-73. The existing dwelling will be served off Deebank Heights private road accessed from Deebank Avenue.

The existing summer house in its garden is to be carefully repositioned to the location indicated.

A garage with an office over is to be formed in the location of the current position of the summer house as detailed on drawing 2015-2095-75.

A new bungalow, Plot 9 is proposed to be formed to the south of the existing property that will again be served from Deebank Heights, for details see drawing 2015-2095-62.

A double garage as detailed on drawing 2015-2095-77 is to be formed to service Plot 9.

PROPOSED ACCESS

The Orchard and new bungalow, Plot 9 are to be served from Deebank Heights accessed off Deebank Avenue.

A minimum of 3 no. parking spaces are to be provided for The Orchard and 2 no. spaces for the Plot 9.

Garages are to be provided to both properties, having clear internal dimensions of 3.0m wide x 6.0m long".

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