
From: Steve Massey
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2024 5:06 PM
To: Lisa Jackson
Subject: RE: Consultation for SMD/2023/0609

Lisa

The following comments are made by reference to the case officer site visit photos on the application file, Statmap air photos and Google air photos/streetview images – but without the benefit of a site visit.

There are/were no protected trees on/adjacent to the site. It appears that previously present tree cover on the application site (as apparent on Statmap air photos 2018-2021, but not apparent on Google streetview images from September 2023) has since been removed, probably pre-application. The only relevant trees of any maturity/stature are located perhaps a few metres beyond (west of) the western-most corner of the application site (although there appears to be no physical boundary demarcation here) at the top of a steep bank rising up from the site towards the access roadway leading into the Severn Trent borehole pumping station. As best I can make out, these appear to be self-set multi-stemmed Sycamore of unremarkable quality, although in combination with other trees further to the north they contribute to a tree-clad skyline along the ridge above Cheadle town centre.

There is no tree report submitted with the application. Stem diameter sizes are difficult to quantify from the various photos available and therefore Root Protection Area (RPA) is in turn difficult to estimate (the more so given the multi-stemmed form) but I would suspect that the north-west corner of the proposed new dwelling and its constructed/retained supporting platform are likely to slightly encroach into the outer edge of the Sycamore's RPA. However, given the tree stem base level at around 3.5m higher than ground level at the closest part of the site, impact on roots is anticipated to be relatively minor in terms of extent and consequence.

There may also be a need to carry out a minor amount of lower/lateral crown pruning on the eastern side of the tree in order to accommodate the proposed dwelling and its construction; subject to adjacent landowner/treeowner permission this may be most appropriately achieved by removal, back to their base, of 2 or 3 of the outer secondary stems which lean towards/over the application site boundary, but this would not have any significant adverse impact on the overall contribution of the tree to the wooded skyline.

Based on information available, I have no objection to this application. Given the proximity of the proposed dwelling to the western boundary of the application site, there would in practice be no space, and no real benefit, to implement temporary tree protection barriers etc. No tree protection conditions are reasonably required.

New hedging is indicated on the layout plan, annotated as conifer hedging to subdivide the existing rear garden of 4 Friars Close; however, mixed native hedging would be more appropriate for the Monkhouse boundary to secure some biodiversity gain. There is little if any sensible room to accommodate new trees. Nevertheless hedging details should be secured by a development landscaping scheme, and I would request that the following condition be imposed in the event that planning permission is granted:

1. Within 2 months after the commencement of development (including any site clearance, site stripping, site establishment, and formation or improvement of site access) a comprehensive landscaping scheme shall be submitted to the LPA for approval. Such a scheme shall in particular make provision for the planting of new mixed native species hedge planting along the western boundary of the application site. The submitted landscaping scheme shall include full details of all proposed new trees, shrubs and other planting, giving specification for species, positions, planting sizes and numbers/densities of all new planting. The landscaping scheme once approved shall be fully implemented before the end of the first available dormant season (November to February inclusive) following completion of the development hereby approved. The trees and shrubs etc planted in accordance with this landscaping scheme shall be properly maintained for a period of 5 years following planting. Any plants which within this period are damaged, become diseased, die, are removed or otherwise fail to establish shall be replaced during the next suitable season.

Steve Massey Arboricultural Officer

Development Services

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