

I L E X

Landscape Architects

Shepherd Neame Ltd
c/o Mr Simon Milliken
Chartered Surveyor and Town Planner
Stone Mill, Dewlands Hill,
Rotherfield, East Sussex TN6 3RU

23rd January 2018

Dear Mr Milliken,

Re. Proposed development at The Wheel Inn, Westwell Lane, Ashford, Kent TN25 4LQ - Tree survey and recommendations in relation to proposed development - Additional comments in relation to amendment of scheme proposal

Further to my tree survey and report report of 30th August 2017, the proposals have now been amended to a three dwelling layout which has involved slightly pushing the proposed houses and carparking further into the Root Protection Area of a TPO protected Sycamore tree.

The trees in question are identified as No. 39 and No. 25 on my earlier plan (copy attached). The first is a multi-stemmed Sycamore and the second a single trunk Sycamore. My survey data reports the condition of No. 39 as "Average health, average vigour, average condition. Heavily clad with Ivy growth on trunks. BS 5837 Category; B". The condition of No. 25 is "Average health, average vigour, average condition. Also has strong Ivy growth on trunk. Semi-mature tree; has grown in competition with neighbouring trees and is tall and spindly with a high canopy. Size and form poor. Not suitable within the context of the proposed site development. BS 5837 Category; C"

It would not be possible to retain tree No. 25 with the proposed car-parking space as currently proposed as the trunk falls within the car-parking bay.

I initially explored the possible damage which may be caused to tree No.39 by the proposed works and also the methods of construction which may be used to mitigate the damage. It is possible to use a 'no-dig' construction method for the car parking at ground level to protect the tree roots, but the canopy of the tree will be very close to the houses. However, I concluded that the future owners of the adjacent house will find the shading and lack of light to habitable windows a problem, and pressure may be brought to bear to request the removal of the tree at that point. Sycamore trees are fast growing and regarded by some as a 'weed'. They are not native trees but introduced from central and south east Europe.

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Given the species of tree and the average condition of this particular specimen, I consider it may be prudent to consider the removal of No. 39 at this early stage to avoid problems in the future.

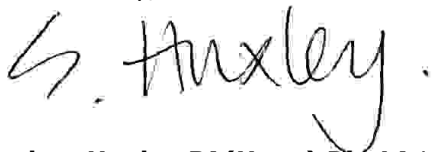
I understand the requirement for screening and privacy on this site and suggest additional planting of more suitable native trees may be the best course of action in place of both these Sycamore trees. An obvious choice is the Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) which is the same family as the Sycamore but is a native tree to the UK and has a lower eventual height and spread than the Sycamore.

In any case, the removal of these two trees would have very little impact on the existing screening effect, as the remaining trees form an unbroken line/screen along the boundary between the application site and The Old Vicarage next door. Both are high canopied trees with little or no vegetation down at the lower level; younger and smaller Field Maple trees would be more effective in this setting.

I have attached a copy of my earlier tree identification drawing showing the trees in question (No. 39 and No. 25) and also a copy of the current proposals to indicate the areas of conflict; the heavy red circle around each of these two trees indicates the Root Protection Area and where this is breached by the current proposals.

Should you have any queries or comments concerning the above, please contact me at the address/telephone number on this letterhead.

Yours sincerely,



Stephen Huxley BA(Hons) Dip LA Landscape Architect