



SLRA response to Tree Application number 17/00003/TP

Sandyhurst Lane Residents' Association (SLRA) has been active for over thirty years representing the collective interests of the residents of Sandyhurst Lane and all adjacent roads which constitute its neighbourhood of 340 dwellings.

The mission statement of the Association is

“Protecting the rural character of Sandyhurst Lane and the adjoining area”.

With this priority in mind the SLRA objects strongly to the proposed felling of these nine birch trees, which are subject to Tree Preservation Order TPO/00/00007.

These trees form an important part of a landscaped ‘buffer zone’ which was established behind dwellings in Sandyhurst Lane to ensure that they continued to enjoy a relatively rural setting when the development of Goat Lees was subsequently completed. Nothing has changed to make the buffer zone any less important than it was when it was first established.

On the contrary, Ashford Borough Council has continued to recognise the importance of this type of buffer zone in the draft Ashford Local Plan to 2030. The proposed development of Eureka Park (S20) includes the following statement:

Development proposals for the site shall include the following elements:-

b) A generous landscaped buffer to residential properties along Sandyhurst Lane

The SLRA strongly supported this principle in its submission to the Draft Local Plan Consultation making the following comments to specify the incorporation of the existing ‘green maintenance strip’ and tree line into the proposed ‘generous landscaped buffer’:

In detail, we proposed Policy S20(b) be amended to:

S20 (b) A generous landscaped buffer to residential properties along Sandyhurst Lane shall preserve the tree line and foliage behind Nos: 86 to 154 (inclusive) and 250 to 300 (inclusive) Sandyhurst Lane. (Policies ENV4 and ENV5)

The landscaping buffer between any S20 development and the nearest boundary to any existing premises in Sandyhurst Lane shall be not less in width than the width of the existing “green maintenance strip” plus the width of the tree line parallel to this strip behind Nos: 86 to 154 Sandyhurst Lane. (Policies ENV3 and ENV5)

The SLRA considers that maintaining the tree line is a very important and integral part of the buffer zone, both for the new Eureka Park development and for the area which includes the present application.

In the maintenance of this position we propose that the nine birch trees which are the subject of this application should be subject to inspection by a qualified professional. Only if any of them should then be deemed to be “dead or dangerous” should felling of that specific tree or trees be permitted and only then on the strict condition that it, or they, should be replaced with a tree or trees of the same species, of a size as near as practically possible to the original, at the next planting period

Unless these conditions can be agreed by the applicant, the SLRA believes the Council has a duty of care to reject the application.

Sandyhurst Lane Residents' Association
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