

WSCC TREE OFFICER response to planning consultation

Application reference number: WSCC/019/20 – further information

Location: Knepp Castle, West Grinstead, Horsham, RH13 8LJ

Proposal: Proposed construction of landscape enhancement features using imported inert material, together with the provision of public access and amenity; comprising revised landform and details to WSCC/029/18/SP

District: Horsham

Date: 3rd September 2020

Summary response: no objection

Response: The additional information provided in the further addendum planning statement is welcome, since it addresses the points I raised in previous comments regarding landscape detail.

With regard to appendix 5 and the soft landscape management prescriptions, paragraph 4.2.6 refers to manual excavation. Excavation within the root protection areas (RPAs) of trees should be avoided, but if this is not possible, it should be carried out by hand. Roots <25mm diameter can be cut cleanly if necessary, not 'all roots', which is the implication here, even if unintended. Roots >25mm diameter or large groups of fibrous roots should be left intact and undamaged.

Paragraph 4.2.9 P1: dead and dying branches may well be habitat in their own right, e.g. bat roosts, so their potential retention should be assessed before deciding to remove them, rather than a wholesale prescription for removal regardless of species, location, assessed risk etc. Wood strength properties vary from species to species so it is possible to retain dead / dying branches depending on other factors.

8.0 programme of management operations: this may have to be adjusted according to conditions, e.g. dry spring periods are more frequent so watering may be needed then. Replacing dead / failing trees and shrubs would usually be done between November and March. Remedial pruning for trees should be in late summer or mid-winter, not during vigorous spring growth. Timing of pruning can be species-specific.

[Julie Bolton](#) | County Arboriculturist, Environment & Heritage Team, Planning Services,
[West Sussex County Council](#)
Location: Ground Floor, Northleigh, County Hall, Chichester PO19 1RG
Internal: 26446 | External: 033022 26446 | E-mail: julie.bolton@westsussex.gov.uk