

a roost for bats so The Bat Conservation Trust should be consulted and there should be prior inspection by an expert.

5. Determining Issues:

- 5.1 One Oak (T.1) is very close to the rear of Plot 10. It is suppressed on one side with the majority of growth towards the house. The original application was to remove the tree completely but following a site meeting with the tree surgeons it was agreed that the tree could satisfactorily be retained with some surgery to cut back branches overhanging the house to gutter level and a general reshaping of the crown in order to give it a balanced appearance. The ivy will also be removed which is a large factor in creating a dense dark appearance to the garden and this action will of course improve the long term health and future of the tree.
- 5.2 The group of Oak trees (TG2) is closer to the properties located within The Ferns and simply require removals of their dead wood and some general tidying and crown lifting. The proposal to lift the crowns to a height of 5m is not excessive and will only involve removal of the very lowest branches. This will not affect their general amenity value and will also ensure that the trees still have a positive screening value for the residents of The Ferns.
- 5.3 I consider that both of these proposals are quite acceptable – although I consider that it would be prudent to be on hand during any surgery works in order that the precise extent of work on site can be agreed with the tree surgeons before they begin.
- 5.4 The Bat Conservation Group has been contacted and has advised that there should not be a problem with carrying out the work if just tree surgery is carried out or if trees are dismantled in pieces. Bats usually roost in dead, hollow branches and woodpecker holes usually present in very old trees. Bats can use ivy as a temporary roost. However the Council has no control over removal of ivy as this technically would not require consent from the Council.

6. Recommendation:

- 6.1 **Grant Consent for works to Protected Trees** subject to the following conditions:
1. All work shall be carried out to the standards set in BS 3998 (or EU equivalent).
Reason: In the interests of good forestry practice and the amenity of the locality.
 2. Prior to the implementation of the works hereby approved, the applicant shall give at least five working days notice in writing to the Local Planning Authority in order that the precise extent of the approved works can be agreed and identified on site before their commencement.

Reason: In order that the extent of the approved works is clearly identified in the interests of good forestry and amenity.

Informatives:

1. You are also advised that, in undertaking the works hereby approved, due regard should be had to the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 relating to the protection of species and habitats, in particular respect to bats. The applicant is recommended to seek further advice from the Kent Wildlife Trust, Tyland Barn, Sandling, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 3BD.

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