Platt Borough Green And Long Mill	562101 157326	27 September 2006	TM/06/03146/TPOC
Proposal:	Trim back one Oak tree (T1) level with gutters of house and prune remaining crown to leave tree in balanced shape, and remove dead wood and ivy and lift crown to 5 metres of remaining Oaks (TG2) covered by Tree Preservation Order Platt No. 2 1989 (Ref. 12-15-20)		
Location:	Former Brickmak Kent TN15 8JJ	ers Arms Maidstone Ro	ad Platt Sevenoaks
Applicant:	Monro Homes		

1. Description:

1.1 This application proposes tree surgery works to some oak trees that are located within a site that is currently being developed with new residential properties. The application originally proposed removal of one of the trees but has been amended to now only propose pruning works to deadwood the trees and to reduce and lift their crowns.

2. The Site:

2.1 The site lies within Platt on the southern side of Maidstone Road and is the site of a former Public House and restaurant which is currently being redeveloped with fourteen dwellinghouses. The protected oak trees are situated towards the western side of the site close to the boundary with The Ferns. To the south of the site are a number of residential properties and the Platt School playing fields. To the east and west are the residential areas of Grange Road and The Ferns respectively.

3. Planning History (selected):

TM/00/02259/TPOC Grant With Conditions 22 November 2000

Reduction in height of 3 Oak Trees by 25% (T.P.O. 12-15-20).

TM/03/01185/FL Refuse 16 December 2003

Demolition of existing pub/restaurant and redevelopment to provide 14 no. 2, 3 and 5 bed dwellings, associated roads, parking and drainage.

TM/05/02383/FL Approved

Demolition of former public house and construction of 14 dwellings with associated parking and access.

TM/06/00575/RD Grant

Details of materials pursuant to condition 2 of planning permission ref. TM/05/02383/FL (demolition of former public house and construction of 14 dwellings with associated parking and access).

25 May 2006

TM/06/00669/RD Undetermined

Details of parking, landscaping, slab levels, refuse storage and boundary treatment pursuant to planning permission ref. TM/05/02383/FL (demolition of former public house and construction of 14 dwellings with associated parking and access).

TM/06/00861/RD Undetermined

Details of scheme to safeguard amenities of residents of 'The Ferns' pursuant to condition 18 of planning permission ref. TM/05/02383/FL (demolition of former public house and construction of 14 dwellings with associated parking and access).

TM/06/00862/RD Grant 25 May 2006

Details of acoustic protection pursuant to condition 17 of planning permission TM/05/02383/FL: Demolition of former public house and construction of 14 dwellings with associated parking and access.

TM/06/01985/ORM ORM approved 10 July 2006

Minor amendments to elevations - widened entrances and deletion of bin stores - pursuant to planning permission ref. TM/05/02383/FL (demolition of former public house and construction of 14 dwellings with associated parking and access)

4. Consultees:

- 4.1 PC: Welcome the retention of the Oak that was previously going to be removed. Consider that the works should however be done under supervision and only after an expert has examined them for bat roost. Crown lifting should be kept to a minimum as the trees form an important protection for the amenities of the residents of The Ferns.
- 4.2 Private Reps: Several objections were received to the original application details that included proposals to remove an oak tree T1. The objections were based upon the grounds that the developers/landowners were fully aware of the protected trees on the site and that the trees would overshadow the house. As such the existence of the trees should have been adequately taken into account at the time the development was planned. Additionally, the trees provide an important screen and privacy defence against the development for existing properties within The Ferns. The tidying of trees and removal of dead wood is accepted but it is considered a 5m crown lift is excessive. Planning permission was granted without taking important factors into consideration. Ivy often provides

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.

Contact: Liz Guthrie