

Tree warden notes on planning application (outline) for Japonica Cottage

The application for outline permission for a house with parking spaces and turning area has a number of problems.

Visibility splay

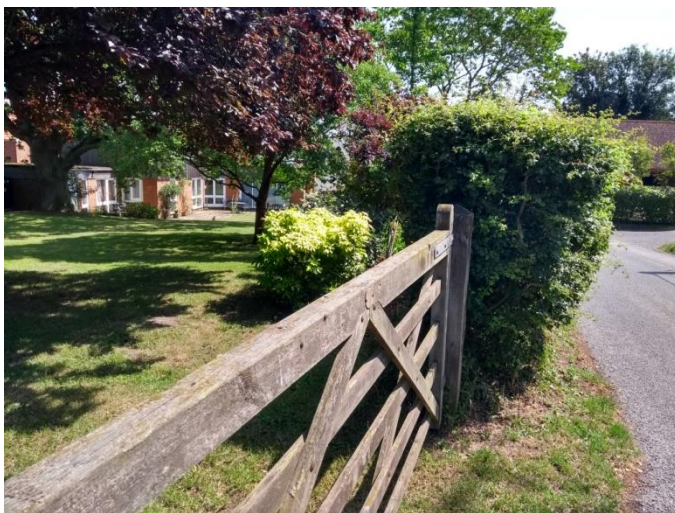
The visibility splay shown here involves the removal of all of the good hawthorn hedge fronting the road which is about a 12m length. Cliff Road leading to the river is part of the character of the village with hedges either side although unfortunately some have been replaced with fencing.

The arboricultural report does not appear to mention the loss of the hedge although it is shown on the plans.

As well as the long stretch of hedge down to where it meets a wall, a piece between the proposed entrance and Dormers next door would also be removed.

It is a difficult exit onto the road. However, many houses in the village have similar exits. We have to reverse into ours always.

If everyone had this sort of visibility splay there would be no hedges – or fences – in the village! There is a 20mph limit. Perhaps a mirror would be possible?



Present gateway with hawthorn hedge

Trees within the boundary

Although the tree report has identified what the arboriculturalist thinks are important trees there are several not named on the plan. In particular this garden is characterised by some impressive Irish Yew trees one near the gate close to the red leafed cherry.

It is unfortunate that both this and the yew to the left (west) of the entrance are to be removed along with several others.

The red leafed cherry although defective (C category) would be expected to be a feature for another 15 years probably as they are tough old things.

The yews are especially important in winter.



Yew tree from the gateway with cherry T3 in front of it (winter). Yew on left is close to laburnum tree T4.

Oak tree T1 is on the far right.

Altogether it is a pity that so many attractive trees are down for removal. I would ask if more care could be taken to arrange matters so that parking and house building are fitted between the trees as a priority.

The existing Japonica Cottage is cleverly designed to fit into the landform. Any future building could emulate the care with which it suits the site.

Oak tree T1

The presence of the large oak tree T1 presents its own problems. The report rightly states that the RPZ of the tree is likely modified by the presence of the existing extension and patio to Japonica cottage. This means that the RPZ will not be confined within the circle shown on the plan around the

tree but will extend into all the free (at present) areas where not obstructed. The arb report is deficient in not showing this whole area as hexagons which is usual.

This tree with a diameter of 94cm will have a root protection zone of 399.78 square metres according to my calculations.

The report says in para. 34.1.2 that no specialist non dig areas will be required, which is contradicted at 3.9.1.1. and 3.9. 1.2 and on the plan.

In fact the development as shown is likely to impact on the roots of the tree. References to continual pruning suggest that in future both owners of these houses are also likely to reduce the crown of the tree as and when they see fit and we do not know how sympathetic future owners are likely to be to the importance of this one of few remaining large oaks in the area.

Developments allowed close to large trees have in our experience sadly often been ill fated with subsequent owners making continual applications to remove or reduce TPO trees. In this case there is no TPO.

To summarise I would say that:

The entrance is problematic.

Nearly one third of the area becomes parking and/or turning space.

The removal of the proposed length of hedge is unfortunate although more hedge could be planted behind the line.

The likely effect on the oak tree is possibly detrimental.

The removal of so many trees is regrettable.

Both houses will end up with small gardens.

I would suggest that if it is passed, the parking and turning area should be reduced, and the house should be further back as otherwise their garden would be all in the shade. There could be a sunny garden between the house and the parking area retaining some of the existing trees as far as possible eg magnolia.

Any parking and driveway should be free draining. If it is for example in permeable resin bound gravel it would look less urban than blacktop. There should also be a drain across the entrance to catch water racing down the hard surfaces.

Christine Fisher Kay 28.7.2019