

**From:** [David Gower](#)  
**To:** [Erica Buchanan](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Coventry Stadium Rugby Road R18-0186  
**Date:** 27 February 2018 11:09:09

---

Hi Erica,

### **Arboricultural**

There is a high volume of protected tree cover surrounding the boundary of the application site.

Protected tree cover to the north and adjacent to Gossett Lane (including ancient Woodland at New Close Wood/Birchley Wood) is unaffected. A large green buffer zone has been incorporated to provide an adequate degree of separation as development is primarily in the centre of the site where the existing stadium is located at present.

However, in order to facilitate this development a new access is proposed through the south western boundary. There is a group of protected Oak trees located in this location protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) no.222. Collectively these trees serve as a highly prominent public visual amenity, screen and biodiversity feature. The proposal highlights the removal of 3 of these Oak trees (2 early mature and 1 Mature) to allow for the access.

The tree report states (4.9) that “the removal of this tree cover should not be considered as detrimental due to the retention of the vast majority of tree situated along this boundary” and “New planting along the proposed access road and within the green open space immediately behind G1 will provide mitigation for the required losses”.

I would disagree with this. It would appear that their significance and protected status has been dismissed. The existing TPO protects the Oaks because of their merit as a group i.e. a continuous line of approximately 115 metres of continuous tree cover. This is a significant arboricultural feature which is characteristic of the local wooded landscape character and the loss of these 3 trees would represent a significant loss of tree cover leaving a large 23 metre gap within the group. Therefore, the merit and associated continuity of this group of trees would be severely diminished. This would be particularly apparent as viewed from Rugby Road with views being opened up into the site. One of the trees especially is a mature specimen and is perhaps the largest and most prominent tree within that group in terms of its height and girth. “Mitigation” planting within the application site would generally be not visible from Rugby Road. Similarly newly planted trees would take many decades to replicate the existing positive impact that the Oaks provide.

The tree report also discusses the impact of the proposed access on Oaks which are proposed to be retained. Excavation to install new hard surfacing can have a negative impact upon tree roots possibly affecting physiological functioning and stability which puts the long term viability of the trees into doubt. The tree report discusses the installation of “no dig construction methods” to avoid root disturbance. However, this method is often dismissed by County Highways as being inappropriate especially at junctions to major highways.

Therefore, I would **object** based upon the partial loss of a significant arboricultural feature along

the south western boundary which will be to the detriment of the visual amenity of the local area and screening potential of the site to the rear. Similarly, there is potential for there to be a negative impact upon retained trees located adjacently.

I would recommend the use of existing accesses to preserve this important group of Oak trees.

## **Landscape**

The application site is previously developed land but does fall within green belt land. At a National Level the site is located within National Character Area (NCA) 96: Dunsmore and Feldon. At a local level the Landscape Assessment of the Borough of Rugby identifies the site as located in the Dunsmore Parklands Landscape Character Type;

*“A gently rolling estate landscape with a well wooded character, defined by woodland edges, parkland and belts of trees. Mature hedgerow and roadside trees reinforce this impression by creating a sequence of linked wooded spaces. Large blocks of woodland and smaller coverts help to create a sense of scale and enclosure in an otherwise intensively farmed landscape.”*

The existing site context setting displays no similarities with the surrounding landscape character due to its previous use as a stadium with large angular buildings and large expanses of concrete hard standing previously used for parking. However, the site is effectively screened by surrounding woodland which is in keeping with the local landscape character assessment particularly to the north/north west and south western boundaries where established groups of mature trees and woodland form an established attractive backdrop, screen, visual amenity and biodiversity feature.

The “Landscape commentary on the Green belt” (2.2.) places a high emphasis on the surrounding woodland cover “In terms of creating a robust boundary to the new Green Belt the site is well contained in views from the wider landscape as a result of substantial belts of mature vegetation and areas of well-established woodland around its boundaries New Close/ Birchley Wood along the northern boundary and mature vegetation along the eastern, western and southern boundaries provide robust, defensible and permeant boundaries to the new Green Belt”. The existing tree cover does provide good screening to the existing stadium. However, and as discussed above the established wooded boundary to the south west is under threat from the proposed new access where a large gap would appear which will compromise the “robust, defensible, boundaries”.

## **Conclusion**

I would **object** based upon the partial loss of a significant arboricultural feature along the south western boundary which will be to the detriment of the visual amenity of the local area and screening potential of the site to the rear. Similarly, there is potential for there to be a negative impact upon retained trees located adjacently.

Regards

Dave

---

**From:** Erica Buchanan [mailto:Erica.Buchanan@rugby.gov.uk]

**Sent:** 31 January 2018 14:50

**To:** David Gower <David.Gower@rugby.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Coventry Stadium Rugby Road

I enclose a consultation letter in relation to the above site.

Regards

Erica Buchanan

Principal Planning Officer

Email: [Erica.buchanan@rugby.gov.uk](mailto:Erica.buchanan@rugby.gov.uk)

Tel 01788 533 789