

Deputation by Havant Borough Tree Wardens regarding

Southleigh Park House, Havant application 20/00757

“ Heritage Assets and Designed Settings

Southleigh House is Grade II listed mid-Victorian in a landscaped setting appropriate to its historic context;

- Trees and other plants were chosen as objects of art, and
- Grouped to achieve open stretches of lawn with trees and shrubs planted either as single specimens, or
- Grouped to contrast with each other in colour, shape and texture.
- The boundaries were planted with masses of trees, arranged in informal flowing lines that disguised the boundary, and
- Emphasised features such as ponds or statues etc.

The site plan confirms this style of landscaping and inclusion of dark evergreens to set off the colours of beech and oak.

This planting is intrinsic to the setting of the house, and its importance lies in

- What it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset,
- The ability to appreciate that significance.

As the house has a setting designed to enhance its presence and visual interest, the designed setting may be regarded as heritage assets in its own right.

(Historic England; ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets’ second edition 2017)

“Aboretum Standard” Trees and TPOs

Of the more than 100 trees proposed for felling, many are exceptional and dramatic species – Monkey Puzzle, Irish Yew, Lawson Cypress and Giant Redwood. Also at least 10 oaks and 6 Yew.

The Application notes the trees are not diseased, nor damaging property structures.

This is simply a clearance for additional property development. In other words, short term profit at the cost of the loss of long-term historic, cultural, and biodiversity assets.

The loss of any TPO’d tree should usually require the replacement of another of the same species – clearly there is scant room for compliance in this case.

Failure to assess Heritage status of the trees

- There is no published assessment of the condition of the trees on this private site, and so
- There has been no survey of their status as potential Veteran, Ancient or Notable trees carried out.
- NPPF Nov 2018 describes Ancient and veteran trees as “*valuable*” and “*irreplaceable*”, and directs that “*You should make decisions on planning applications in line with paragraph 175C of the [NPPF](#).*”

- *You should refuse planning permission if development will result in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees unless: there are wholly exceptional reason, and there's a suitable compensation strategy in place"*

The application to mass fell cannot be approved prior to surveys of Ancient and Veteran status has been carried out, and that status verified using the Ancient Tree Forum/Woodland Trust recognized criteria."