

Planning Dept
St Albans City & District Council
Civic Centre
St Peters Street
AL1 3JB

24 December 2018

Application Reference TP/2018/0668
Verulam House Nursing Home
Verulam Road
St Albans AL3 4DH

As a correction to our letter of 10 December, in which we confused this application with the felling of three trees carried out under TP/2018/0480, APRA still wishes to object to the application, primarily because there is no explanation of the need for the new works.

It is necessary to view these two proposals in the light of Planning Application 5/2017/3383, which was refused in February this year on the grounds that *“The proposed removal of 5 trees of significant amenity value without sufficient justification, would significantly reduce the tree cover and screening in this part of the St Albans Conservation Area. The development as proposed would detrimentally affect the amenity of the locality”* (Case Officer’s Report). Only 9 months later, three of those trees have now been felled under TP/2018/0480 and the current application is to remove the remaining two together with another (T1, beech, described in the Tree Survey of October 2017 attached to the refused planning application as in “Good condition – existing management should ensure future healthy growth and existence”. We are also concerned at the drastic treatment suggested for T2 (Yew, noted as a previous specimen tree – reduction of 1-2 m and crown lift 2 m). The two tree applications together give the impression of a cynical response to the refusal of 5/2017/3383.

We are alarmed at the current rate of loss of mature trees from the city centre, including the Abbey orchard and Verulamium Park. Trees are more than a beautiful physical presence (the now depleted copse in the grounds of Verulam House Nursing Home has a significant visual effect on entering the city via Verulam Road): they are the lungs of our heavily polluted city and hence are important to our health as well. We urge an urgent change of policy whereby it would be a requirement to replace all fallen and felled trees in the Conservation Area, not just those with Tree Protection Orders as at present.

Yours faithfully
Robert Pankhurst
Secretary, APRA
13 College Street
St Albans
AL3 4PW