

Judith,

Herewith requested answers to the questions asked by Mrs Moyle. I trust these are helpful. Please don't not hesitate in coming back to me if anything is unclear.

“Why an Oak tree and why not a Horse chestnut?”

Firstly horse chestnut is not a viable replacement due to Bleeding Canker (*Pseudomonas syringae* pathovar *aescul*) which has taken two of the three mature trees on the Pound in the last 12 years and is terminally infecting all of the 1993 replacements. This pathogen has dramatically spread throughout England since 2000 and I know of no uninfected Horse chestnut tree on the Estate.

Oak was agreed for future replacements with the District and Parish Councils in 2006, as a long-term, traditional, native species solution for the Pound.

Since my earlier email we have received felling permission from the District Council which, sensibly, doesn't include monitoring requirements for felling works. I believe we are in a far less emotive place than the 1993 felling, largely due to the game changing spread of canker. The Council have however suggested replanting with either Oriental plane, Chestnut leaved oak, Small leaved lime or such other species as may be agreed by the Planning Authority. I view two of these as unsuitable species for planting adjacent to properties and the highway and am contacting the Council to remind them of the 2006 decision to replace Horse chestnut on the Pound with English oak.

Mrs Moyle expresses concern that oak is slow growing. I would disagree as once established oaks are not significantly slower growing at the sapling / young tree stage. They will slow down, relative to Horse chestnut, after about thirty years, which I see a positive advantage given the confined space of the Pound with proximity to neighbouring houses and public roads and desire to plant a number of trees. With 100+ years of hindsight the density of Horse chestnut planted by the Victorians on the Pound was a mistake; one single tree in the middle of the plot would have been a far better solution with sufficient space for a mature, open grown specimen of this large and relatively short lived species.

We have enjoyed and benefited from the plantings of the Victorians. We need to reflect and improve on these in the light of current knowledge and likely future trends; future generations will not thank us for not learning such lessons or selecting trees which are no longer suitable.

Trust the above helps

John

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