

# LYNSTED with KINGSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL



To: The Occupier

17 August 2021

Dear Resident

As you may be aware, an application has been submitted to Swale Borough Council to fell four poplar trees in The Vallance to ground level. The application states that the trees are very large and continue to increase in size. They are affecting light to a neighbour's property and there is a general fear of dominance.

You can view the application on the Planning Public Access portal at <https://swale.gov.uk> Search for the reference number: 21/504185/TCA. If you are not already registered on the portal, you will need to do so before submitting your comments.

Feedback we have received from some residents is that small branches, leaf litter and large quantities of seed-tufts fall during a 6-8 week period between May and July each year. This has caused blocked drains, slippery road surfaces and footways. Some residents are unable to open windows and doors because the seeds float in and are difficult to remove. Work in the garden and general enjoyment of the outdoors are adversely affected.

All four trees appear to be a variety of Black poplar, a native species. They all exceed the girth to describe them as heritage class, which might argue in favour of their retention for their aesthetic interest, biodiversity value, carbon storage and visual/historical contribution to the Kent countryside. Their linear arrangement suggests deliberate planting as part of the original landscaping of Aymers estate.

We consider that clear felling is not the only option to consider. Alternatives include:

- Retention of the two most impressive and balanced examples #2 and #4 (listing North to South). Removal of the lesser examples #1 and #3 would improve the setting of the remaining two and reduce competition for ground water, open up the Southerly aspect for the Gate House and retain the important biodiversity value of the species locally

- Formal pollarding of all, or the remaining, poplars to improve light for the Gate House
- Reduction of major limbs extending over The Vallance. This may address concerns over seed-tufts on the road and in gardens/drains. Prevailing winds are from the South-West, away from the Vallance estate.

It is important to note that the Leylandii should be removed if the Poplars are reduced in any way. They will respond very quickly to lack of competition and will repeat the problems of over-shadowing.

Felled poplars may lead to heave 6-10 metres from the trunk and a low garden wall falls inside the 10 metre perimeter.

Regarding the concerns over future dominance, we are advised that all of these trees have achieved something close to their ultimate mature height and spread. Their estimated height is 34 metres and the canopy is not dense.

The important thing is to make your own views known to Swale Borough Council. The Parish Council is not the decision maker in this matter.

We have requested that SBC's Tree Officer visits the site to provide an expert view. We have asked for a copy of their report and recommendations.

The closing date for comments is Friday 20 August.

Yours sincerely

**JULIEN SPEED**  
Chairman

