

Officer Report

Case Reference: OTH/2025/1248
Location: Rochdale Walton Angling Association, Dell Road, Rochdale, OL12 6AZ
Proposal: Application for works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 256 comprising of the removal of 2 Sycamore, 3 Elm, 2 sorbus and crown lift 1 Sycamore, 1 Willow and 1 Elm, including replacement planting in a ratio of 2 for one across the site
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Majid Mir

SITE

The application relates to one Hornbeam tree subject to a Tree Preservation Order TPO256, located within the grounds of Rochdale Walton Angling Association and adjacent to the pond.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission to remove 2 Sycamore trees, 3 Elm trees, 2 sorbus trees, and crown lift 1 Sycamore tree, 1 Willow tree and 1 Elm tree. The application also proposes to replace the trees removed at a 2 for 1 across the site. No details of the planting plan have been provided.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – December 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Places for Everyone Joint DPD:

Policy JP-G7 - Trees and Woodlands

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

G7- Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Tree Officer

I have no overall objections to the proposals, justified because the trees are causing damage to the retaining wall. However, it would be useful to have some plans about the proposed new tree planting, so that the Council can monitor the replacement tree planting. Useful details would include the species of tree to be planted, sizes of trees and locations of the new planting.

REPRESENTATIONS

In accordance with Council policy on neighbour notification for this type of application, no letters of notification were sent to neighbouring properties.

ANALYSIS

In considering applications for works to protected trees, Government advice in paragraph 90 of the NPPG states:

“When considering an application the authority is advised to:

- assess the amenity value of the tree or woodland and the likely impact of the proposal on the amenity of the area;
- consider, in the light of this assessment, whether or not the proposal is justified, having regard to the reasons and additional information put forward in support of it;
- consider whether any loss or damage is likely to arise if consent is refused or granted subject to conditions;
- consider whether any requirements apply in regard to protected species;
- consider other material considerations, including development plan policies where relevant; and
- ensure that appropriate expertise informs its decision.”

In considering whether there has to be an arboricultural need for proposed works to a TPO, paragraph 91 of the NPPG states:

“In general terms, it follows that the higher the amenity value of the tree or woodland and the greater any negative impact of proposed works on amenity, the stronger the reasons needed before consent is granted. However, if the amenity value is lower and the impact is likely to be negligible, it may be appropriate to grant consent even if the authority believes there is no particular arboricultural need for the work.”

With regard to the above, the main considerations in respect of this application are whether the proposal for works to the tree is justified in light of the assessment of the amenity value of the tree and whether the reasons for works are of sufficient standing to warrant the granting of consent.

The Tree Officer was consulted on the proposed plans and has raised no objection to the proposed works, noting that the works are justified because the trees are causing damage to the retaining wall. The Tree Officer however has requested plans of the proposed new tree planting to be provided. This can be conditioned accordingly if required.

Owing to the damage being caused by the trees, it is considered that the proposed works are justified in the interest of residential amenity and good arboricultural practice.

Subject to the standard conditions, and a replacement tree planting, the proposal is considered to be compliant with the guidance contained within the NPPG noted above, and the application is recommended for approval.

GMEU standing advice on tree works and protected species will be attached to the decision notice and therefore the obligations in respect of protected species will have been met.

GRANT subject to conditions

1. The consent hereby granted is valid for a period of two years from the date of this decision.
2. All tree works must comply with British Standard 3998 (2010 – British Standard for Tree Work) and the relevant industry codes for safe practice produced by the Forestry & Arboriculture Safety & Training Council (FASTCo).
3. Within the next planting season after the felling of the tree hereby approved, fourteen replacement trees shall be planted within the grounds of the site. If any replacement tree is removed, dies, becomes severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of planting, it shall be replaced by a tree of similar maturity size and species.

Reason: To mitigate for the loss of the existing tree and to protect the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policy G6 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and Policy JP-G7 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (3)

- 1 The consent hereby granted is valid for a period of two years from the date of this decision.
- 2 All tree works must comply with British Standard 3998 (2010 – British Standard for Tree Work) and the relevant industry codes for safe practice produced by the Forestry & Arboriculture Safety & Training Council (FASTCo).
- 3 Within the next planting season after the felling of the tree hereby approved, fourteen replacement trees shall be planted within the grounds of the site. If any replacement tree is removed, dies, becomes severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of planting, it shall be replaced by a tree of similar maturity size and species.

Reason: To mitigate for the loss of the existing tree and to protect the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policy G6 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and Policy JP-G7 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.

- 4 For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision Notice relates to the following drawings / document(s): -
 - Location Plan
 - Photos of trees
 - Schedule of works
 - Application form