

DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
24/01165/WTTPO	Bob Melling	27 March 2024

Address: Mayroyd, Norden Road, Rochdale, OL11 5PT

Proposal: Application for works to trees within Tree Preservation Order no. 098 Group G1 including Ta - Sycamore reduce branches and T2 - Sycamore fell due to ivy affecting the integrity of the tree.

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	N/A	Site notice expired?	N/A
	Neighbour letters expired?	N/A	Press Notice expired?	N/A

DELEGATION	Significant departure from local plan?	N	Contrary to national policy?	N
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	N	Contrary to previous decision?	N
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	N	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	N
	Neighbour comments received?	N

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	N
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

RECOMMENDATION	GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 28 March 2025

SITE

The application relates to two Sycamores (Ta and T2) which are located within the curtilage of Mayroyd on Norden Road in Rochdale.

PROPOSAL

The application proposes the felling of one Sycamore (T2) due to ivy affecting the integrity of the tree and the pruning of one Sycamore (Ta) to protect the overhead power lines. Both trees are situated within Tree Preservation Order No. 098.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – December 2023

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

G7- Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

22/01301/WTTPPO: Application for works to one Horse Chestnut (T1), one Sycamore (T2) and 2 Copper Beech (T3 and T4) to crown reduce by 2-3 metres, subject to Tree Preservation Order No.98 – Approved

22/00717/WTTPPO: Application to fell one Ash tree (T1) and one Sycamore (T2) subject to Tree Preservation Order No 98 – Approved

21/01768/WTTPPO: Application for works to one Sycamore tree (T6 of Tree Preservation Order no.98) consisting of minor pruning back of the tree by 2-3 metres – Approved

16/00950/WTTPPO: Application for works to trees within Tree Preservation Order no 098 Group G1 works Ta - Sycamore reduce branches, Tb - Birch Fell, T1 Sycamore - Fell, T2 - Sycamore crown lift and T3 Horse chestnut - crown lift no more than 25% – Approved

10/T0090: Proposed works to the crown of a Horse Chestnut (T3), Sycamore (T4) and reduce branches to a Sycamore and Copper Beach (G2) Subject to Tree Preservation Order TPO 098 – Approved

08/T0016: Proposed works to Ash Tree Subject to Tree Preservation Order TPO 098 – Approved

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Tree Officer

Ivy growth does not necessarily affect the integrity of trees and is not necessarily an issue on larger trees with established crowns growing in unrestrained locations. However on this tree the crown is not extensive or established and the Ivy is at risk of taking over the crown; in this case the Ivy could potentially lead to the decline of the tree. When Ivy takes over in this way it can sometimes be a sign of systemic weakness, and the Ivy growth can effectively hide cracks, fissures and hollows and signs of underlying disease. Dense Ivy growth also adds significant weight and greatly increases the 'sail effect', making the tree more vulnerable to damage in high winds.

In this case, given the proximity of the tree to residential property, and given that the tree is not currently making a significant contribution to the local treescape or to amenity value, I would advise that permission is granted to remove the tree in the interests of good arboricultural management and to mitigate possible damage to property.

I would agree with the applicant that the removal of this tree will benefit other, more desirable trees nearby – there is dense tree cover at this location. Requiring a replacement high-forest tree to be planted in this location would therefore not be appropriate, but an understorey shrub could be accommodated – for example, Holly.

The additional pruning works requested for the second tree are justifiable to protect power lines and would not cause any long-term harm to the tree.

Recommendation – Approve

Works must be carried out by a suitably qualified and insured Arborist, with regard to BS 3998:2010.

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:

- ② assess the amenity value of the tree or woodland and the likely impact of the proposal on the amenity of the area;*
- ② 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;*
- ② consider whether any loss or damage is likely to arise if consent is refused or granted subject to conditions;*
- ② consider whether any requirements apply in regard to protected species;*

- ② *consider other material considerations, including development plan policies where relevant; and*
- ② *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.

To assess the acceptability of the proposal against the above considerations, the Council's Tree Officer has been consulted. The Officer raised no objections to the proposals. While ivy growth does not necessarily affect the integrity of trees, it is noted that the ivy is at risk of taking over the crown of the tree which could lead to the decline of the tree. When ivy takes over in this way it can be a sign of systemic weakness and underlying disease. Further, dense ivy growth adds significant weight to a tree, making it more vulnerable to damage in high winds. Given the proximity of the tree to residential property, and given that the tree is not currently making a significant contribution to the local treescape or to amenity value, it is considered that the removal of the tree is justified in the interest of good arboricultural management and to mitigate possible damage to property.

While policy G7 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy requires replacement planting to be sought at a ratio of 2:1, it is noted that there is already dense tree cover in this location and the removal of the tree will benefit other, more desirable trees nearby. Requiring a replacement high-forest tree to be planted in this location would therefore not be appropriate, but an understorey shrub could be accommodated – for example, Holly. Therefore, a condition is attached requiring an understorey shrub to be planted in place of the removed Sycamore.

No concerns are had with the proposed pruning works to the other Sycamore tree (Ta) which are justified to protect power lines and would not cause any long-term harm to the tree.

Subject to the suggested conditions, the application proposal is therefore 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.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT subject to two standard condition and the following additional condition:

3. Within the next planting season after the felling of the tree hereby approved, a minimum of one replacement shrub shall be planted within the site. If the replacement shrub is removed, dies, becomes severely damaged or seriously diseased within three years of planting, it shall be replaced by a shrub of similar size and species within the first planting season following removal of that shrub.

Reason: To mitigate for the loss of the existing tree and to protect the visual amenity of the area.

Notes for Applicant:

For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision Notice relates to the following drawings / document(s):-

- Tree photographs
- Location plan
- Planning application form