

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00212/WTTP0	Chelsea Petrillo	19th May 2023

Address: Crimble Hall Farm, Crimble Lane, Heywood Rochdale OL11 4AB

Proposal: Proposed felling of Sycamore tree (labelled T1 on submitted plan) due to poor health, under A1 of Tree Preservation Order TPO004

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	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	REFUSE
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: TH

DATE: 22.06.2023

SITE

The application relates to a Sycamore Tree, approx. 20m located on the parcel of land behind 36 Tyrone Drive and Crimble Lane in the Bamford ward of Rochdale and in designated Green Belt Land. The tree is within group Tree Preservation Order ref TPO Rochdale CB No2 Crimble Farm, Bury Road.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks consent for the removal of the Sycamore Tree due to being in close proximity to a residential property (36 Tyrone Drive) if it was to naturally fail due to a major basal cavity which significantly effects the tree's health.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

G6 – Enhancing Green Infrastructure

G7 – Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

None applicable.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Tree Officer

I am not convinced that this tree is in such a level of poor health/distress such that it would pose an imminent risk to life property. I would prefer to re-assess the tree when it is in full leaf in another few weeks, or the tree consultant could provide more information to better inform the application (e.g. Resistograph readings / more informative photographic evidence of die-back)

If the application needs to be determined immediately I would recommend that it is refused, pending a more comprehensive re-assessment.

This woodland has recently lost several mature trees in poor health close to properties on Tyrone Drive, it would be regrettable to lose another mature tree unnecessarily.

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.”

Policy G6 of the Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy requires new development proposals to “C - avoid the loss of existing urban greenspace or features e.g. trees unless suitable alternative provision is made, it has limited value, and its development or change of use will help to meet other sustainability or local regeneration objectives;” and “h - protect ancient woodlands and hedgerows, support new woodland and tree planting in new developments, and replace removed trees from a site at a ratio of 2:1”.

Further to this, Policy G7 of the Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy sets out the importance of increasing the values of biodiversity and geodiversity to which it states “5. Urban Areas - our priority is to protect and enhance existing urban biodiversity and to support opportunities for new urban biodiversity corridors, sites and features including sustainable urban drainage schemes, new public realm provision, street trees and urban woodlands, ponds and lodges, green roofs and natural play areas”.

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 Tree Officer could not justify the removal of this tree given they were not convinced the tree was in such poor health that it would pose imminent risk to life or property. The removal of the 20m tree was considered unnecessary given several mature trees have previously been lost from the woodland. It is considered the proposed felling of the tree would be contrary to policies G6 and G7 which aims to protect and preserve existing features of urban greenspace as it proposed no alternative provision. Further to this, a post-felling tree-planting plan was not included within the proposal elsewhere onsite in the woodland therefore failing to compensate for the loss of the tree.

The applicant’s agent was invited to submit more information about the condition of the tree in response to the Arboricultural Officer’s comments noted above, on 27th April 2023. No substantive response had been received at time of completing this report.

The application proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the guidance contained within the NPPG noted above, and the application is therefore recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE

- 1. The Sycamore tree has visual amenity value and insufficient information has been provided to demonstrate that its removal is justified and necessary. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies**

G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, and to national guidance contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance.

Notes for Applicant:

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

- Mini Tree Report (dated 01.03.2023)
- Location Plan

Report Author Chelsea Petrillo