

DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00121/WTTPO	Bob Melling	14 th March 2023

Address: Middleton Campus, Hopwood Hall College, Rochdale Road, Middleton, M24 6XH

Proposal: Application for works to two Oak trees (T1 and T3) - crown lift to 3m and deadwood the crowns and to fell 1 Oak (T2), 1 Rowan (T4), 1 Maple (T5), 1 Sycamore (T7), 2 Beech (T10 and T16), 1 Ash (T13), 1 Horse Chestnut (T14), 2 Silver Birch (T15 and T17) subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 50 (Hopwood Hall Collage, Middleton)

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: SS

DATE: 15 March 2023

SITE

The application relates to 3 Oak trees (T1, T2 and T3), 1 Rowan (T4), 1 Maple (T5), 1 Sycamore (T7), 2 Beech (T10 and T16), 1 Ash (T13), 1 Horse Chestnut (T14) and 2 Silver Birch (T15 and T17) within the Middleton Campus, Hopwood Hall College.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks consent for the crown lifting and removal of deadwood to 2 Oak trees (T1 and T3) and the felling of 1 Oak (T2), 1 Rowan (T4), 1 Maple (T5), 1 Sycamore (T7), 2 Beech (T10 and T16), 1 Ash (T13), 1 Horse Chestnut (T14) and 2 Silver Birch (T15 and T17).

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – July 2021

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 would raise no overall objections to the planned tree works, justified in the interests of public safety and good arboricultural practice, but the works will involve the loss of ten trees (albeit that a number of them are already dead or in very poor health), and no re-planting proposals appear to form part of the planned works.

I would prefer it if the plans included proposals to re-plant trees elsewhere on the campus as compensation for the losses. Such proposals could be required by Condition placed on any approval which may be granted to the current application.

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;*

- 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 application on Arboriculture grounds. The works are justified in the interests of public safety and good arboricultural practice.

However, to compensate for the loss of amenity value afforded by the trees, it is recommended that replacement trees are planted. It is considered appropriate to apply the standard requirement for a 2:1 replacement ratio.

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 four standard conditions

5. Within the next planting season after the felling of the trees hereby approved, a minimum of twenty replacement trees shall be planted within the site in

accordance with details that have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. If the replacement trees are removed, die, become severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of planting, they shall be replaced by trees of similar size and species.

Reason: To mitigate for the loss of the existing tree and to protect the visual amenity of the area and in accordance with Policies G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Notes for Applicant:

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

- Photos of Tree Works
- Tree Works Report, dated 01/02/2023

Report Author Bob Melling