

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
24/00787/WTTPPO	Bob Melling	19 th September 2024

Address: 1A Oxford Avenue, Bamford, Rochdale, OL11 4DP

Proposal: Application to carry out works (crowning and thinning by 20%) to 4 Sycamore Trees identified as T1 and G1 subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 57

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/A

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N/A
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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: RC

DATE: 24/09/2024

SITE

The application relates to four Sycamore trees located on the front boundary of the residential property at 1A Oxford Avenue in Bamford.

The trees are all visible from the highway of Oxford Avenue and are protected by TPO 057 which when originally made in 1980 covered a total of six trees within this front garden area. Three of the trees were individually protected (T1 – Sycamore, T2 – Sycamore and T3 - Cherry), and the other three Sycamore trees were grouped within G1. The Cherry tree (T3) no longer exists at this site.

The current application specifically relates to T1 and the four Sycamore trees within G1, as labelled on the submitted Location Plan.

PROPOSAL

Consent is sought for the thinning of the crowns of the above identified trees by 20% on the basis that the large size of the trees significantly reduces light to the application property and the facing dwellings.

The application initially proposed crown thinning of 50% but through agreement with the applicant this was reduced to 20%

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

20/00122/WTTPO - Application for works to 4 Sycamore trees (20% crown thinning) in the front garden (G1 and T1) subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 57 (Land adjacent to 1 Oxford Avenue). **Granted STC March 2020**

14/00701/WTTPO - Proposed removal of branches and new growth up to 5m (16.5 ft) to the following trees within Tree Preservation Order TPO057: G1 - 1 Sycamore tree; T1 - Sycamore tree; and T2 - Sycamore tree. **Granted STC July 2014**

11/T0123 - Works To Trees Application To Remove 4 Sycamore Trees Subject To Tree Preservation Order No. 57. **Refused June 2011**

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (Trees) - The mature Sycamore trees are in a small front garden situated on a residential suburban street close to a number of houses. I can understand that there is a need to manage the spread of the trees in the interests of residential amenity and mitigation of safety risks, but it would be better to prune the trees little and often. 50% reduction is in my view too drastic an operation, particularly when it seems that these trees have been pruned in the past.

I would advise that a 20% crown reduction is permitted.

Works must be carried out by a suitably qualified Arborist and to appropriate industry standards, in accordance with BS3998:2010.

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 proposed works are justified in light of the assessment of the amenity value of the trees and whether the reasons for works are of sufficient standing to warrant the granting of consent.

Consent is sought for the thinning of the crowns of the above identified trees by 20% on the basis that the large size of the trees significantly reduces light to the application property and the facing dwellings. In assessing the proposals, consultation was carried out with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) which has raised no objections to the proposals, noting that the 4 mature Sycamore trees are in a small front garden situated on a residential suburban street close to a number of houses.

Whilst there is no clear arboricultural need for the works, it is considered that the proposed works would not unduly affect the amenity value of the trees given the limited reduction of the canopies.

Conditions are recommended to limit the scope of the works applied for to protect the health of the trees and to ensure their amenity value is not diminished.

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 subject to conditions.

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, and the following additional condition:

3. Not more than 20% of the crown of any individual tree shall be removed.

Notes for Applicant:

INFORMATIVES

1. For the avoidance of doubt, this Decision Notice relates to the following drawings / document(s):-
 - Location Plan
 - Details of proposed works within the application form
 - Submitted Photography

Report Author Bob Melling