

DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00307/WTTPO	Bob Melling	14 th July 2023

Address: 4 Westbrook Close, Rochdale, OL11 2XY

Proposal: Application for works to a Sycamore tree consisting - pollard by 50% subject to G5 of Tree Preservation Order No. TPO 016

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: RC

DATE: 26/07/2023

SITE

The application relates to a Sycamore Tree located in the rear garden of no. 4 Westbrook Close. The tree is positioned towards the rear boundary of the site and is protected under G5 of TPO 016.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks consent to pollard the Sycamore Tree by 50%.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – February 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

G7- Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

17/01475/WTTPO Works to trees subject to Tree Preservation Order TPO016 to include a 25% crown thin to Sycamore tree T1 and 10% crown thin to Sycamore tree T2 - **Grant subject to conditions**

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Tree Officer

This is a large, high forest tree close to properties. It is not yet fully mature, and has some growth remaining. The tree has been extensively pruned in the past, both to crown lift and to reduce the crown, in order to mitigate possible damage to property and in the interests of residential amenity. Partly as a result of the previous pruning, the crown is now dense.

I have considered a further crown reduction, but this would essentially be pollarding at this stage anyway, given the previous crown reductions. The tree species (Sycamore) will withstand the heavy pruning involved, providing that the work is carried out appropriately. Pollarding needs to be undertaken carefully, to appropriate standards following BS 3998:2010, and by an experienced and suitably qualified arborist, if the required lower growth is to be achieved without excessively harming the aesthetic value of the tree.

I would therefore advise that the application could be permitted, but the work must be carried out by a suitably qualified and insured arborist and in accord with British Standard 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 application on Arboriculture grounds. The works are justified on the grounds of residential amenity and public safety. However, in order to achieve the required lower growth and protect the aesthetic value of the tree, the Officer stated that the work must be carried out by a suitably qualified and insured arborist and in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010.

It is considered the proposed works to the tree by the proposed amount would not unduly harm the character and visual amenity of the area and is therefore acceptable.

The proposal to carry out works to the tree is therefore considered to be compliant with the guidance contained within the NPPG and the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT Subject to Standard Conditions

Notes for Applicant:

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

- Tree Photographs
- Location Plan
- Tree Report, dated 24/05/2023

Report Author Bob Melling