

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00449/WTTPO	Chelsea Petrillo	21 st February 2024

Address: 447 Edenfield Road Rochdale OL11 5YR

Proposal: Removal of T1 - Sycamore Tree subject to Tree Preservation Order TPO284

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:** 26.02.24

SITE

The application relates to a mature protected Sycamore Tree (approx.19m) located in the amenity space at 447 Edenfield Road in the Bamford ward of Rochdale.

PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks consent for the removal of the tree due to a major basal cavity approx 1.8m high. Replanting of three trees is also recommended following removal.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

G7 – Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

None applicable.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Tree Officer

An over-mature Sycamore, subject to pruning works in the past and within the risk zone of both the property and the main road. The adjacent boundary wall has been subject to some damage, but the wall is not in a good general state of repair. This is a mature tree with limited growth potential, so I would consider that if the wall were to be repaired appropriately the tree would not cause substantive further damage to the structure.

Of greater concern is the significant basal cavity and the incipient rot at the base of the main stem. My view from a limited visual inspection is that this cavity will not cause the main stem to fail in the short-to-medium term **but further investigation is required to confirm this.**

This is a mature, well-shaped tree in a very prominent position and it makes a significant contribution to the local trees cape. I am reluctant to agree to its removal without being very sure that removal is entirely justified.

My advice is to seek a further, more involved assessment of the tree before deciding the application. I am happy to meet the applicant and their tree consultant on site to discuss further.

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.”

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 was not entirely satisfied removal was justified prior to further investigation via a site visit accompanied by the applicant and tree consultant given the tree is mature, well-shaped and is sited in a prominent position within the street scene therefore contributes to the overall tree scape along this portion of Edenfield Road.

The Council has attempted to engage further with the applicant to understand the justification for removal of the tree, but at time of report preparation a request for a site visit to facilitate further discussion has not received a positive response from the applicant. As such, at the time of writing this report the removal of the tree is therefore not wholly justified.

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 mature Sycamore tree holds visual amenity value for the local tree-scape. Where supporting information has been provided, this is not considered to wholly justify the removal of the tree and would therefore require further assessment. 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):-

- Location Plan
- Mini Tree Report (Dated 2nd May 2023)

Report Author Chelsea Petrillo