

DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
24/00051/WTTPO	Hamish Rigg	14/03/2024

Address: Land Adjacent To The Fishing Lake, Dell Road, Healey Dell, Rochdale, OL12 6BG

Proposal: Application to fell 9 trees - 7 Ash (Group 3, 5 and 7), 1 Willow (4A) and 1 Hawthorne (6) and works to 1 Birch tree (4) -crown lift to even height to clear BT wires, subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 256

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: RK

DATE: 18/03/2024

SITE

The application relates a number of trees within the extensive woodland at Healey Dell Nature Reserve. The subject trees lie east of Dell Road, elevated on an embankment behind a high brick wall, and west of 'Fishing Lake' pond. Trees along this section of Dell Road overhang the highway and Healey Dell Cottages, which sit approx. 15m to the west of the subject trees.

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought to fell 7 Ash trees, 1 Hawthorn, and 1 Willow, as well as works to 1 Birch Tree including a crown lift the clear BT wires running along Dell Road. The Ash trees are suffering from Ash Dieback.

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

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Tree Officer

The trees are part of extensive woodland at the Healey Dell Nature Reserve. Unfortunately Ash die back disease is endemic in the area, and the Ash tree removals are justified because of poor tree health. The Hawthorn is dead.

Pruning of the Birch is justified in the interests of good arboricultural management and responsible tree ownership.

Recommendation – Approve the application.

I would recommend re-planting with understorey species e.g. Hazel or Holly.

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.”

To assess the acceptability of the proposal against the above considerations, the Council’s Tree Officer has been consulted. The Officer confirmed the presence of Ash Die Back and raised no objections to the application on Arboriculture grounds. In relation to the Hawthorne and Willow tree, the officer raised no objections, recognising that the works were justified in the interests of good woodland management. Furthermore, the pruning of the Birch is justified in the interests of responsible tree ownership and protecting existing infrastructure within the site.

In addition, several of the trees pose a risk to public safety as they overhang the road and adjacent bungalows, thus their removal is justified.

The Tree Officer suggested replacing the trees with understorey species close to the site such as Holly or Hazel, which will be required by condition.

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 two standard conditions

3. Prior to any works taking place, details of a replacement tree planting scheme shall be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority. The replanting scheme shall be comprised of native species.

The replanting scheme shall be carried out in accordance with an approved scheme for timing / phasing of implementation or within the next planting season following final occupation of the development hereby permitted, whichever is the sooner.

If any of the replacement trees are removed, die, become severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of planting, they shall be replaced by a tree of similar at maturity size and species.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with policies P3, DM1 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):-

- Location Plan
- Supporting report: 'Annotated photo of trees'
- Application photos
- Further location plan

Report Author Hamish Rigg