

CIRCULATION FOR 22nd February 2018 DRAFT PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

ITEM NO: 10

Application No.
17/00251/TRTP

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Site Address:

Ward:
Little Sandhurst And
Wellington

Date Registered:
23 October 2017

Target Decision Date:
18 December 2017

8 Dale Gardens Sandhurst Berkshire GU47 8LA

Proposal:

TPO 20/1966 - Application to fell 1 tree and prune 6 trees.

Applicant:

Mr Dale Birch

Agent:

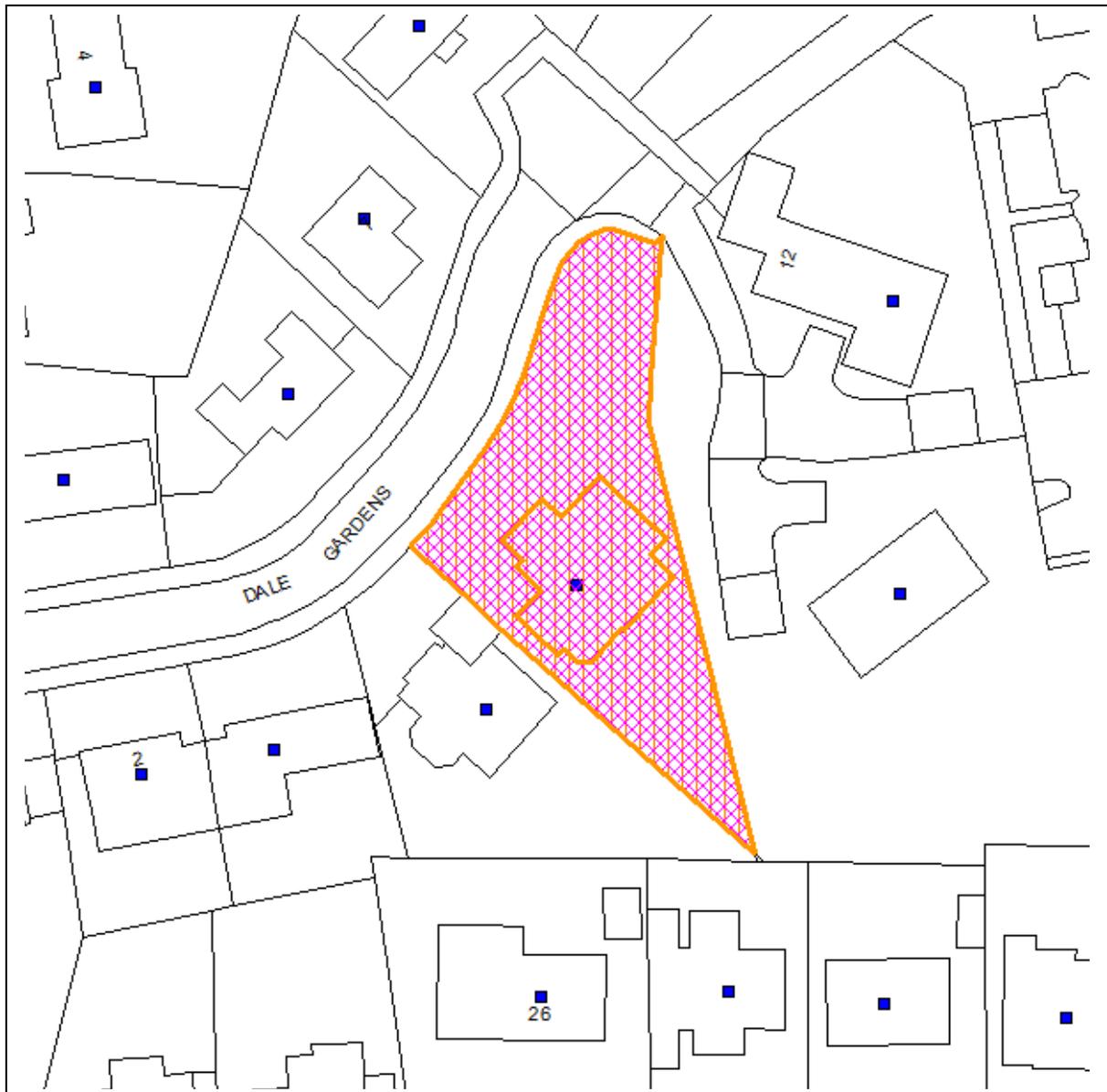
Mrs Abi St. Aubyn

Case Officer:

Shinobu Cooper, 01344 352000

development.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Site Location Plan (for identification purposes only, not to scale)



1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The application is to fell one tree and prune six others.
- 1.2 Of the subject trees, two are located within the front and rear garden of 8 Dale Gardens and five within the property of 10 Dale Gardens. Both properties and all trees are within designated Area A1 of TPO 20/1966. As they are all mature trees of more than 40cms in diameter, they are likely to have existed at the time this TPO was made in 1966, therefore they are protected trees.
- 1.3 The Tree Service recommends that some of the proposed work is consented, but that the remainder is refused as it is deemed inappropriate and contrary to 'British Standard 3998; Tree work - Recommendations'.

2. REASON FOR REPORTING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The applicant is a Borough Councillor, accordingly under due process this application is required to be presented to the Planning Committee for consideration and determination.

3. THE PROPOSAL

3.1 Within 8 Dale Gardens:-

T1 Beech – Crown-lift to 3m (maximum diameter of pruning wound would be 70mm)

T2 Holly – Fell.

3.2 Within 10 Dale Gardens:-

T3 Sweet Chestnut – Remove 2 lower limbs (of 120mm in diameter) extending over roof at 5.5m. Crown-lift to 6.5m above the level of the raised planting-bed (where the tree is located)

T4 Sycamore – Crown-lift to 7.5m above ground level where the house stands (i.e. Crown-lift to 6.5m high above ground level where the tree stands). Crown-thin by 30%.

T5 Sycamore – Crown-lift to 9m above ground level. Crown-thin by 30%

T6 Oak – Crown-lift to 9m by removing 4 lower limbs extending across the garden of no. 8 Dale Gardens. (1 x 120mm at 6.5m high, 1 x 120mm at 7m high, 1 x 90mm at 7.5m high and 1 x 90mm at 8.5m)

T7 Oak – Reduce one over-extended lower limb on South-east side to boundary line (assumed to be located on the South-west rather than South-east; based on a conversation with the applicant).

4. REASON FOR THE WORK

T1 - To allow access for the lawn mower and increase the amount of daylight reaching the lawn.

T2 – To allow space for the adjacent trees to develop. To allow space for a new sustainable rainwater collection system.

T3 & T4 – General maintenance to provide adequate clearance over roof.

T5, T6 & T7 – To allow better access for light into the garden whilst retaining the height of the tree to minimise any impact on public amenity.

5. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

No representation was received in respect of this application.

5. CONSIDERATION

T1 Beech – is located within the front garden of no. 8 Dale Gardens. The lowest branches are approximately 2.5m high. The Tree Service considers that the proposed work is appropriate maintenance to enable passage underneath the tree and that will not harm the tree's condition.

T2 Holly – is a mature tree which bifurcates into two principal stems from near ground level. The attachment point of these two stems forms a tight union with the potential for structural weakness; although currently there is no evidence of incremental growth around the attachment point that would indicate imminent collapse. This Holly is being suppressed by adjoining larger mature trees in close proximity and will continue to be suppressed to its detriment. Considering its location and environment, it is not sustainable in the long term and should TPO 20/1966 be reviewed, it would not merit protection. In this particular case, the Tree Service has no objection to the removal of the Holly due to its unsustainable location and unremarkable amenity impact.

T3 Sweet Chestnut – has two lowest branches on its West side which are nearly in contact with the roof of the applicant's house, therefore the proposed work is considered to be appropriate maintenance. Removing those two branches would create at least 2m clearance between the house and the tree, so there is no requirement or justification for the additional Crown-lift to 6.5m.

T4 Sycamore – has some of its lower branches on the West side which are nearly in contact with the roof and gutter of the applicant's house, therefore pruning to provide clearance between the house and tree is considered to be appropriate maintenance. However the proposed additional Crown-lift to 7.5m would then create a very high and unbalanced canopy structure which would alter its intrinsic form and amenity appearance. No justification has been provided for Crown-lift and that extent of pruning is contrary to arboricultural best practice. However, taking into consideration the reason given, the Tree Service has no objection to a Crown-lift up to a maximum of 4m (equivalent to twice the height of the adjoining boundary fence) and to pruning the remaining western branches to a suitable growth-point in order to establish a maximum 2m clearance between the canopy of the tree and the house structure. For the proposed Crown-thinning work, no evidence was found nor has any reason been provided to support that work.

T5 Sycamore – is located on the East side of the rear garden and its impact in restricting light into the garden is limited to only a particular time of day. The level of light onto a property is not a material consideration as part of the TPO application process and this same principle also applies to T6 and T7 of this application. The proposed Crown-lift to 9m would (as well as altering its intrinsic form and amenity appearance) create a very high and top-heavy canopy structure which will promote conditions for future mechanical defects and may subsequently pre-dispose the tree to potential instability in extreme weather conditions. Accordingly, the Crown-lift and the Crown-thin are considered unjustified and contrary to arboricultural best practice.

T6 Oak – causes the applicant inconvenience by overhanging the patio (frequently used by family members) and so a sticky residue (by-product from aphids feeding) falls from the Oak onto the patio area. As inconvenient a nuisance as it is the proposed Crown-lift by removing the four lowest branches, is unlikely to provide an effective solution to this problem as the

higher, remaining canopy would still overhang the patio area. The lower branches on the West side of the canopy have already been pruned in the past to provide height clearance over the rear garden. The lowest branch on the West side is very short (about 1m long) with some re-growth and the second lowest branch is hanging down to approximately 3.5m (which will hang even lower when the tree will be in full leaf) over the patio area; therefore the Tree Service has no objection to the removal of these two lowest branches. However, removing another two branches after that would create a very high canopy. Neither of those two branches show any structural defect nor has any evidence has been presented to justify the removal of these two further branches.

T7 Oak - the lowest stem on its South-west side overhangs the applicant's property and is a small branch of no more than 4cms in diameter. Pruning this branch will not adversely impact on the tree's health or structural condition or appearance.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The majority of proposed pruning and felling will not have a detrimental and adverse effect on the health & condition of the trees, or their intrinsic form and amenity impact in the landscape.
- 6.2 However, in respect of trees T3, T4, T5 & T6 the exceptional and additional Crown-lifting and Crown-thinning will have a future adverse impact on the trees' health & condition as well as effecting their intrinsic form and appearance.

7. RECOMMENDATION

That the Planning Committee grants consent for the following work:

T1 Beech – Crown-lift to 3m.

T2 Holly – Fell.

T3 Sweet Chestnut – Remove the two lowest branches on the West side.

T4 Sycamore – (Consent with modification) – Crown-lift to maximum 4 metres (equivalent to twice the height of the adjoining boundary fence) and to prune the remaining western branches back to a suitable growth-point in order to create a maximum of 2 metres clearance between the house and the remaining tree canopy.

T6 Oak - Remove the two lowest branches on its West side.

T7 Oak – Prune the lowest branch on the South-west back to a suitable growth-point close to the line of the boundary fence.

That the Planning Committee refuses consent to the following work:

T3 Sweet Chestnut – Crown-lift to 6.5m high.

Reason: The consented work to remove two lowest western branches would create 2m clearance which is considered sufficient distance from the house structure. There is no justification to carry out the additional Crown-lift to 6.5m.

T4 Sycamore – Crown-lift to 7.5m and Crown-thin by 30%.

Reason: The proposed Crown lift to 7.5m is not justified and is contrary to arboricultural best practice, creating a very high and unbalanced canopy. However, taking into consideration the reason for the proposed work, the Council has no objection to lift a Crown-lift up to a maximum of 4m (which would be twice the height of the adjoining boundary fence) and to pruning the remaining western branches to a suitable growth-point in order to establish a maximum of 2m clearance from the house structure. There is no justification for the proposed Crown-thinning.

T5 Sycamore - Crown-lift to 9m and Crown-thin by 30%

Reason: Restriction of light into a garden is not a material consideration during the TPO application process (this principle also applies to T6 and T7 Oak of this application) A Crown-lift to 9m would create a very high and top-heavy canopy leading to future structural defects and potential instability. There is no justification for the proposed Crown-thinning.

T6 Oak – Remove the third and fourth lowest branch on its West side (after permitted removal of the two lowest branches on its West side).

Reason: The permitted removal of the two lowest branches will provide adequate height clearance over the patio area; however the additional removal of the next two lowest branches will not reduce the instance of sticky residue falling from the remaining tree canopy onto the patio area.

8. INFORMATIVES

- 8.1 In respect of T1 Beech - It is recommended that an internal inspection is conducted at the base of its main stem to determine the extent of any decay on its North side (using Resistograph or Picus technology) as visual indicators suggest the potential presence of decay below ground level (on structural support roots) which is currently not visible.
- 8.2 In respect of the intention to install a sustainable rainwater collection system, the applicant is advised to check with the Planning Authority whether planning permission is required for such an installation as such an installation may be regarded as an engineering operation.

End of Report

Contact for further information: -

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APPENDIX
Plan showing location of trees

