

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Arboricultural Officer
TO: Planning Committee
WARD: New

4th March 2015

TREE WORKS APPLICATION 14/571/TTPO
APPLICATION TO PRUNE BEECH AT 19 CHAMPNEYS WALK

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An application has been received to crown reduce the Beech in the rear garden of 19 Champneys Walk by 3 to 4 metres and raise the crown to 4m.
- 1.2 The item is brought before Members as objections have been received to the proposed works.
- 1.3 The Local Planning Authority can deal with this Application in one of three ways:
(1) Refuse Consent
(2) Grant Consent
(3) Grant consent subject to condition

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Council grant consent subject to condition.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Concerned about the condition of the tree in their rear garden the owners of 19 Champneys Walk commissioned an assessment of its structural integrity. An assessment of decay in the trees stem using a tomograph revealed decay at an acceptable level. VTA (visual tree assessment) found a tight union between the tree's co-dominant stems at 2-3m and the likelihood of included bark. For this reason it was proposed to crown reduce the tree and install a non-invasive brace. In addition work was recommended to crown lift the tree to allow more light to filter to the garden under the tree's crown and to avoid harm to users of the adjacent footpath, over which the tree hangs.
- 3.2 The tree officer had concerns regarding the extent of works proposed and the impact this work would have tree health and amenity value.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Ward Councillors and residents of St Marks Court and Champney's Walk were consulted on all applications and a Site Notice was issued for display.
- 4.2 Objections to the works were received from residents of St Marks Court.

5.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1. Is the TPO still appropriate.

Amenity

Do the trees still make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the area.

Condition/Nuisance

Are the trees in sufficiently poor condition to make them or works to them exempt from the TPO or are the trees causing unreasonable nuisance.

Justification for Remedial works

Are there sound practical or arboricultural reasons to carry out tree works.

- What is the justification
- Is there a financial consideration
- Is there a health and safety consideration
- Does the nuisance out way the benefit of refusing works

5.2 The Arboricultural Officer's assessment of the tree.

Amenity

The tree is in a prominent position and contributes significantly to the character and appearance of the area.

Condition/Nuisance

The tree is showing normal vigour and there is no indication of any defect likely to cause structural failure imminently. The angle of bifurcation of the co-dominant stems is however acute and there is evidence of included bark. There is a number of additional trees in the garden, trees in the rear garden of 18 Champneys Walk and a 3 storey building to the south of the garden. Combined, these significantly reduce light to the garden. Low branches, when in leaf are beginning to impede use of the footpath.

Justification for Remedial Works

- What is the justification
Structural defects within the crown that can be alleviated by considered remedial works.
Improve light to the garden
Remove potential hazard
- Is there a financial consideration
No
- Is there a health and safety consideration
Potentially
- Does the risk/nuisance out way the benefit of not carrying out any works
For the reasons detailed above the Tree Officer considers the risk of failure to out way any negative impact, considered, tree works will have on overall health and amenity contribution. However at this time there is insufficient justification for the 3-4m reduction proposed.

5.3 Applicants reasons for wishing to carry out the works

Safety and to improve light to the garden.

5.4 Objections with Officer Comments

- The works proposed are excessive and unjustified.
- *It was agreed that the proposed crown reduction by 3-4m is excessive however a crown reduction back to previous reduction points is justified. The applicant has agreed to the reduced works but the objectors wished to maintain their objections.*

6.0. OPTIONS

6.1 Members may

- Refuse Consent
- Grant Consent
- Grant Consent subject to condition

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 While the originally proposed works are excessive, the risk associated with not carrying out remedial works is considered to out way any negative impact pruning back to previous reduction points could have on tree health and amenity contribution. A crown lift to 4m is reasonable to remove the conflict with the footpath and allow more light under the tree's canopy. This work will have no material impact on tree health or amenity contribution. It is recommended therefore that members vote to Grant Consent subject to condition limiting the extent of crown reduction.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS

(a) Financial Implications	None
(b) Staffing Implications	None
(c) Equal Opportunities Implications	None
(d) Environmental Implications	None
(e) Community Safety	Potential

BACKGROUND PAPERS: The following are the background papers that were used in the preparation of this report:

TWA 14/571/TTPO – Pollard

Tree Preservation Orders: a guide to the law and good practice

Comments received from residents

To inspect these documents please either view Public Access or contact Joanna Davies on extension 8522

The author and contact officer for queries on the report is Joanna Davies on extension 8522

Report file: March PC Champneys Walk
 Date originated: 18 February 2015
 Date of last revision: 18 February 2015

Appendix Image and Plan



Subject tree is the bottom centre.

BARTON ROAD

ST MARKS
COURT.

FOOTPATH

x

BEECH
TREE

19.

CHAMPNEYS
WALK.