

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Arboricultural Comments (TCA & TPO)

Application Received: 12 December 2022
Target Date: 8 February 2023
Report Date: 4 February 2023
Case Officer: Jonathan Emanuel (Arboricultural Officer)

Applicant

Miss Debra Whitford
The Bungalow
White Post Road
Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4BN

Agent

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The Bungalow
White Post Road
Bodicote
Banbury
OX15 4BN

Site: The Bungalow, White Post Road, Bodicote, Oxfordshire, OX15 4BN

Parish Council comments: X1 comment
Neighbour comments: No comments
Statutory Protection: TPO 36/2017
T.E.M.P.O guidance notes completed: No

Trees / Proposal (Brief Description)

T1/T2 Lime - Fell, repair all damaged drains, replacement of felled Lime trees with new tree having a smaller root system - subject to TPO 36/2017

Appraisal

Proposal - T1/T2 Lime - Fell, repair all damaged drains, replacement of felled Lime trees with new tree having a smaller root system - subject to TPO 36/2017

T1 & T2 Mature Limes are part of a group of 3 trees standing within the frontage of the property, protected by an existing Tree Preservation Order reference TPO 36/2017. The trees appeared to be in good overall physiological condition and their crowns merge to form a common canopy mass, collectively, the trees are a particularly prominent landscape feature & consider that the loss of 2 of the 3 Mature Lime trees would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Consequently, the reasons put forward needs to demonstrate an overriding justification for the removal of the trees.

The proposed removal of the x2 Lime trees is with the reason of damage to existing drains, supporting information provided with the application is a series of photos x5, x1 Drainage Report for repairs- The Bungalow White Post Road Bodicote OX15 4BN - Post Repair (21/11/2022).

The submitted report provides information relevant to the now repaired drainage within the property boundary. The damaged drainage pipe material is suggested to be Pitch Fibre, made from wood cellulose and coal tar. Such drainage system pipes were fitted from 1950-1970. Pitch fibre pipe

presents issues such as blockages, overflows and leaks. Pitch fibre pipes are thought to have a limited lifespan of 40 years; they can easily collapse and become misshapen. The internal wall of a Pitch fibre pipe becomes deformed when they are continuously exposed to water.

Generally, to restore pitch fibre pipework, a re-rounding tool is inserted into the drainage system and pulled through the pipe. This restores its previously round shape. After this is done, a resin lining is inserted into the inside of the pipe to restore its strength and integrity.

However, the report summary informed that a small specific section of drainage could not be re rounded, and during excavations roots of 75mm – 100mm were identified in proximity to the deformed pitch fibre drain, the report states that the root caused the deformation, a not to common occurrence found to be with the poor shell structure of Pitch Fibre pipes.

The report then states '*on inspection of the drain off boundary to the village hall ic cover root intrusion and cracked clay pipe have been observed. The roots have been removed but the drain remains damaged. This may cause future issues*'. It has been established that this drainage system is located on the adjacent property, not the responsibility of The Bungalow.

Tree root ingress is not uncommon; however, usually it is more common that roots penetrate an insecure system; well laid drainage systems are more than likely to be immune too root ingress. Roots can only interfere with a damaged system.

Furthermore, the application form clearly sets out that if there is alleged damage to property, detailed reports or written technical evidence from an appropriate expert is required.

There is no substantive evidence to demonstrate that the remaining drainage system within the boundary of The Bungalow are especially vulnerable to damage by root ingress in the future.

Similarly, there is little evidence to demonstrate that either the applicant's house or neighbouring dwelling are at risk of structural damage resulting from the influence of the trees.

To remove healthy mature established amenity trees and replant with new trees does not form justification for removal.

Officers note that the plans previously submitted show a proposed extension to the front corner of the dwelling in the vicinity of the trees in question. Officers note that no planning application has yet been received for this proposed extension.

Conclusion

With any application to remove protected trees, a balancing exercise needs to be undertaken. The essential need for the works applied for must be weighed against the resultant loss to the amenity of the area. In this case, the removal of the trees would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area and the significance of the Bodicote Conservation Area, and insufficient justification has been demonstrated for their removal. Permission should therefore be refused.

Case officer decision: Refused

Case officer signature: **Jonathan Emanuel**

Checked by: **Nathanael Stock**

Date checked: **09.02.2023**