

Forest Heath District Council

**DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL
COMMITTEE**

7 OCTOBER 2015

DEV/FH/15/040

Report of the Head of Planning and Growth

**PLANNING APPLICATION DC/15/1610/TPO (TREE PRESERVATION ORDER) –
PLAYGROUND WOODCOCK RISE, BRANDON**

Synopsis:

Application under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and associated matters.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee determine the attached application and associated matters.

CONTACT OFFICER

Case Officer: Jonny Rankin
Tel. No: 01284 757621

Committee Report

Date**Registered:** 05/08/2015**Expiry Date:**

30/09/2015

Case**Officer:**

Jonny Rankin

Recommendation:

Approve with Conditions

Parish:Brandon Town
Council**Ward:**

Brandon East

Proposal:

TPO/1999/01 - Tree Preservation Order - Oak-1318 on plan - Crown reduction by 1 metre and removal of lower branches over driveway to 5.4 metres where suitable to stop potential damage to building & vehicles. Raising of crown over play equipment to 3 metres. Oak -1319 on plan - Crown reduction by 1 metre and reduction in length by 2 metres of overextended branches over play equipment. Oak - 1323 on plan - Raise or prune back to give clearance over driveway of 4m Group of 40 Beech trees - 2095 on plan- Crown raise to 3m, reduction in height by 2m and 1m reduction in lateral growth, Fell 1 no. Beech tree in group, Beech Coppice in group - pruning to improve stability.

Site:

Playground, Woodcock Rise, Brandon

Applicant:

Mr Michael Rutterford, Forest Heath District Council

Background:

This application is referred to the Development Control Committee because it has been submitted by Forest Heath District Council.

Proposal:

1. Permission is sought for works to 3 no. Oak trees involving crown reduction and removal of lower branches to maintain access and use of a driveway and play equipment.
2. Permission is also sought for works to 40 no. Beech trees in order to reduce height and lateral growth to improve stability and form a hedge. One of the group of Beech trees is to be felled.

Application Supporting Material:

3. Information submitted with the application as follows:
 - TPO Plan

- Application Form

Site Details:

4. The site is public open space off the Woodcock Rise residential area. The play ground is fenced amenity space including play equipment for young children and there is an area of green space around the playground.
5. The group of 40 Beech trees runs from the eastern extent of the play ground to the south behind the rear gardens of a number of properties in Woodcock Rise. The Beech trees form a deciduous buffer between the residential area and extensive evergreen plantations to the east.

Planning History:

6. None relevant.

Consultations:

7. Ecology and Landscape Officer: The proposals have been submitted by the Councils Arboricultural Officer and relate to the trees on the playground but also to a strip of trees to the east which forms the edge of the adjacent forest plantation. The two elements are dealt with separately below:
8. Within the playground the proposals are to reduce two mature oak trees located to the south of 11 Woodcock Rise. These two trees have a common crown and any work to one tree would impact on the other tree by changing the wind dynamics around the trees. Tree T1318 has a significant cavity in the main stem. The tree is of high amenity value so the retention of the tree is highly desirable particularly given that the loss of this tree could also impact on the adjacent tree. The proposals are therefore aimed at reducing the risks associated with failure of tree T1318 but also ensuring that tree T1319 is also retained in a safe condition. The proposals are considered to be an acceptable response to the condition of tree T1318 given the sensitive location within a playground and adjacent to residential property.
9. The crown raising works amount to routine maintenance to allow clearance beneath the trees for vehicles, where they overhang driveways, and over the play equipment. This work is considered to be acceptable. Crown raising for clearance of the shared driveway to 15-19 Woodcock Rise is also proposed for tree T1323.
10. The line of beech trees which forms the boundary to the forest plantation is a mature beech hedge which has been left unmanaged for a number of years. Many of the trees have more than one stem as a result of its previous management. Concern about the trees is compounded by the presence of barbed wire which has been incorporated into the trees as they have grown, and the presence of a tree disease (ustulina) which has been noted in some adjacent trees. If this feature is left it will eventually begin to fail and this would be a risk to the adjacent properties. The

proposal is to gradually reduce the height and width of the trees such that the semblance of a hedge is restored. This course of action has been designed to maintain the green backdrop to the development but also because in time the adjacent forest plantation will need to be felled. The beech at the southern end is leaning with decay at the base and its retention is not considered desirable. The proposals are considered acceptable.

Representations:

11. Town Council: Awaited at time of preparation of the report. To be updated verbally at the meeting.

Policy: The following have been taken into account in the consideration of this application:

12. Forest Heath Core Strategy (2010):
- Policy CS3 Landscape Character and the Historic Environment

Other Planning Policy:

13. National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Officer Comment:

14. The site in question is enriched by the presence of the mature oak trees and back-drop of beech trees.
15. The proposed works to the oaks are considered to be appropriate and would resolve issues that have been identified concerning the trees overhanging the vehicular access and playground equipment. The works proposed to the Beech trees will reinstate the intended hedge line effect of these trees and also avoid potential safety issues to the nearby properties. The proposals have been considered in detail by the council's Ecology and Landscape officer and are considered acceptable.

Conclusion:

16. In conclusion, the principle and detail of the proposed works is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with relevant development plan policies.

Recommendation:

17. It is recommended that the works proposed to the protected trees be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:
1. The works which are the subject of this consent shall be carried out within two years; and
 2. The authorised works shall be carried out to the latest arboricultural standards.

Documents:

All background documents including application forms, drawings and other supporting documentation relating to this application can be viewed online:

<https://planning.westsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=NSPSCMPD05Z00>

Alternatively, hard copies are also available to view at Planning, Planning and Regulatory Services, Forest Heath District Council, District Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk IP28 7EY