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Established 1994



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Our Ref: KB/119HursleyRoad,Eastleigh/Report/4167 29th March 2016

Mrs Sarah Freckleton
Corner House
119 Hursley Road
Chandlers Ford
Eastleigh
SO53 1JE

Dear Mrs Freckleton,

APPLICATION FOR REMOVAL OF 1 LAWSON CYPRESS AT: CORNER HOUSE, 119 HURSLEY ROAD, CHANDLERS FORD, EASTLEIGH, SO53 1JE

Brief:

To inspect the mature Lawson Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) .This tree is situated on the boundary of Corner House adjacent to the footpath of Hursley Road. The main concern of our client is the safety and future of the tree as a result of historical topping and pruning by utility contractors for the management of the low voltage power line which cuts through a considerable portion of the canopy.

Assessment of the tree:

The tree was visually assessed from ground level as far as access allowed. No climbing inspections or invasive examination techniques were carried out. At the time of assessment we could see that the tree outwardly appeared to be exhibiting reasonable health. However, historical topping and pruning from utility contractors has influenced the canopy's growth to form a considerable bias towards the property 119 Hursley Road .Closer inspection of the main stem revealed historical topping, substantial deadwood, especially, where poor pruning had been undertaken, and several failed limbs adjacent to the poor pruning points. We visually inspected what we could see of the rooting environment, which at the time of assessment gave us little cause for concern. (See appendix 1).

Comments on the future of the tree:

In our view, given the nature of this species in the southern British Isles climate, it is reasonable to assume that it will continue to increase in mass for as long as the requirements for growth are present. However, as this species has no dormant buds and cannot adventitious growth, there is very little that can be done in terms of reasonable remedial tree management to right past wrongs. The close proximity of the tree and the power line is a completely unreasonable relationship which will not improve and pressure to prune around the line will continue to adversely affect the trees form. We do not feel that it is reasonable to expect our client to have to periodically re-top this tree to counteract it unsustainable growth form resultant of poor management practices of utility companies.

We do not feel that the grounds for removing this tree are outweighed by its amenity contribution. Whilst we appreciate that this is a prominent tree in the street scene, we also understand that if it is removed all that will be revealed are other prominent trees in the street scene. Consequently there is no significant loss of visual amenity for the public. Further, the revealed trees have not suffered atrocious pruning and historical topping. In our opinion, retaining this living totem to poor arboricultural practice when it could be removed with little loss of immediate public amenity (and through replacement no loss of long term public amenity) is not a reasonable act of arboricultural management. Consequently, the application tree in question does not warrant enforced retention under the tree preservation order; its removal does however warrant conditioned replacement. In our view, given this tree's maturity and the poor arboricultural practice imposed on it, its removal and a mitigated native replant would offer a far greater amenity and bio-diversity contribution.

Comments on historical topping, poor pruning and biased form:

As previously mentioned, visual inspection of the tree revealed historical topping and atrocious pruning. The adverse impact of this is a tree with competing leaders which have poor attachment to the main stem, thus increasing the likelihood of failure. Poor pruning has resulted in exposure of the internal canopy which has consequently resulted in limb failure. Continued one-sided pruning has created a biased canopy in favour of the property. We find the following extract from the "Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management" by David Lonsdale to be appropriate in this circumstance.

Page 333 Chamaecyparis – "False" Cypresses

Chart 2 Shows medium frequency of failure rates of cypresses with "weak forks" this further supported by the following information presented by Lonsdale.

- ***Fungi causing decay.*** *Amylostereum laevigatum (T), Armillaria spp. (B), Heterobasidion annosum (B)*

- ***Diseases leading to decay or other weakening.*** *Wounds especially from topping, may allow infection by the canker rot fungus A. laevigatum. Phytophthora root disease is often the cause of death or serious dieback.*

- ***Mechanical characteristics.*** *There are many cultivars of Lawson cypress, C lawsoniana, some columnar forms of which are prone to the splaying out of long thin branches. This species also tends to form weak forks if topped or broken when young. Windthrow tends to be a with old specimens of Nootka cypress, C. nootkatensis*

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Comments on the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) attached to the tree in question:

It is our understanding that this locality is subject to a 1954 Area TPO. Given the application tree's current size and the species characteristic of be fast growing, we do not believe this tree was planted on site at the time the Area Order was implemented and is therefore not a subject of it.

Considerations of visual amenity impact:

In the event that permission was granted for the removal of this tree we would consider the loss of amenity value to be low. Our reasons for this are:

a) There are well-established adjacent mature deciduous and coniferous trees, with good form and vigour.

b) Its prominence in relation to the well-established adjacent mature deciduous and coniferous trees is low.

c) The area that remains after a mature tree removal would create a great opportunity to establish a new planting. Given that there are so many mature specimens adjacent to our site, this could be the start of the introduction of younger trees to the area for future amenity benefit. In this instance we would recommend a fastigate native replacement for example a Dawyck Beech (*Fagus sylvatica "Dawyck").* This planting could be sensibly situated in a more sustainable position away from the power line reducing the likelihood for future pressure to prune or fell.

Our Conclusion:

In our view, the works that have been undertaken on this tree are not works that Eastleigh Borough Council would normally approve to be carried out on an amenity tree, the subject of a tree preservation order. Their reasons for not allowing such works would be disfigurement, structural damage and dramatically reduced prospects for continued retention due to the ingress of disease and decay. We entirely agree with that position. Therefore we propose removal of this tree and its loss conditioned with a new planting. We ask that the Local Authority give due consideration to the future benefit and amenity value that a new planting will present.

If you have any further questions at this stage, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Kym Brooks

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Appendix 1



T1 Lawson Cypress



T1 Lawson Cypress, Poor pruning to clear power line, exposed centre where limb failure has occurred.

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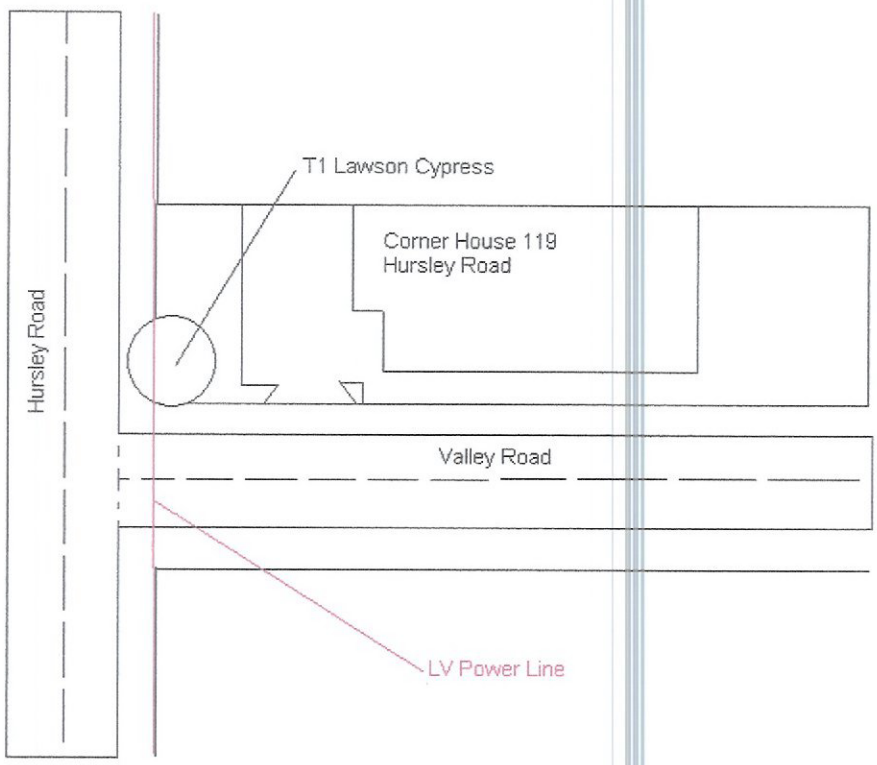
Appendix 2



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