

Eastleigh Borough Council Tree Preservation Order and Conservation Area Assessment Form

Application Number	T/26/101766
Surveyor	AM
Address	52 CHALK HILL, WEST END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO18 3DB
Proposed work	1 no. Common Beech (T1) - Fell to ground level. <i>Meripilus giganteus</i> has fruited annually at the base of the tree, indicating an established fungal colonisation of the structural root system. Recent inspections have identified a noticeable decline in physiological condition when compared with previous years. Significant reduction in canopy density. Progressive thinning throughout the crown. Increased areas of sparse foliage. Premature leaf discolouration. Reduced vitality compared with adjacent healthy Beech specimens growing under identical site conditions. Replacement planting can be undertaken in accordance with the Council's requirements.
Assessment Date	19 th August 2026
Officer comments	The application beech is a large, mature specimen sited in the rear garden. The tree is twin-stemmed with a bark inclusion from just above ground level. There is evidence of historic damage on the property side, potentially very old fire damage since partially occluded. The crown shows signs of reduced vitality in respect of it being sparse, with small leaves and dieback at the periphery. The tree is at the end of a wider group of broadleaved trees which spans several gardens. The beech is large enough that it is clearly visible over the top of the Chalk Hill properties. As such, it contributes to the overall leafy character of the area and offers benefit in terms of public, visual amenity. The tree has previously been identified as having been colonised by <i>Meripilus giganteus</i>. This a significant species of wood decay fungus which has beech as its most common host. It primarily decays the root system of affected trees and is capable of colonising and degrading live tissues. It was not seen at the time of my site visit but only fruits for a month or so before degrading into soil. Photographs supplied by the agent show fruiting bodies at and around the root collar. The absence of fruiting bodies does not in any way imply that decay has ceased. The impact of decay caused by <i>Meripilus</i> is an increasing risk of windthrow, especially when there is an absence of adaptive growth. The crown of the tree is clearly in poor health; as the Agent describes, its poor condition can be contrasted with the healthier looking beech in the

	adjacent gardens. The subject tree has a thinning crown with small leaves and dieback in the upper parts. This implies that the tree is not making a favourable response to the Meripilus. There is no evidence which would confirm the extent of decay. However, this is difficult to obtain as the decay is frequently confined to the underside of the roots. The combination of the <i>Meripilus</i> and the weak crown imply that colonisation is advanced, with little realistic hope of recovery. The fact that it stands in a private garden, within falling distance of several, means that it would be unwise to give the tree the benefit of the doubt. As such, felling is reasonable and should be consented.					
Decision	Consent	Refuse	Part consent/ Part refuse	Withdrawn / Invalid	Conservation Area	
					Raise no objection	TPO
	X					
Decision notice	GRANT CONSENT: 1 no. Common Beech (T1) - Fell to ground level.					
Conditions	Replacement Planting Condition One replacement tree is required to replace T1 (beech). Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Council, the replacement tree shall be either field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>), wild service tree (<i>Aria torminalis</i>) or silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>). The replacement tree shall be supplied in accordance with BS 3936-1:1992 as a "selected standard" (i.e. 10-12cm girth measured at 1m above ground and an overall height of 300-350cm). The replacement tree shall be planted within the rear garden of 52 Chalk Hill. The replacement tree shall be planted within the first planting season (1st October to 28th February) following the tree removal. Tree planting shall be in accordance with the relevant prescriptions of BS:8545. If within a period of five years after planting the replacement tree is removed, dies or in the opinion of the Council becomes seriously defective, it shall be replaced in the next planting season. Reason: To conserve the character of the locality.					
Notes to applicant						
Parish comments	None.					
Public objection/ support	Support		Objection		Observation	
	0		0		0	
Objection/ support consideration	None received.					



Showing low bark inclusion. Historic bark damage on left-hand stem



Showing daylight percolating through sparse crown