

Eastleigh Borough Council Tree Preservation Order and Conservation Area Assessment Form

Application Number	T/24/96964
Surveyor	SK/IF
Address	3 CHERRYWOOD, UPPER NORTHAM ROAD, HEDGE END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO30 4LA
Proposed work	2no. Oak (T2 & T3) - Crown reduction by up to 4 metres. The aim here is to make the group of trees balanced and of a similar height to tree T4. Trees are close to the house and are now leaning towards it. This application is intended to enable the trees to live in harmony with each other as well as with the houses nearby. It is proposed that this issue is dealt with in several stages over a number of years.
Assessment Date	25/03/24
Officer comments	Trees grow in the extended rear garden of the applicant address. Access to the rear garden was granted by the applicant and the trees were fully accessible. The trees are one section of a cohesive backdrop to the properties that have been built in a woodland clearance. The trees have high visibility: they have been retained through the development and are showing no signs of poor health or structural compromise. The applicant has consulted with arborists (tree surgeons) rather than with arboricultural consultants: there is the potential for a conflict of interest in the advice given in these circumstances, and the level of discussion provided in the application does not meet the standard required to support works to the trees. The works are proposed as precautionary: the closest tree (T1) has been appropriately managed in the past to maintain clearance to the dwelling. Most of the branches of T2 and T3 are growing on one side as they are in a close grown group: they are sharing canopy mass, and this is normal for trees that have grown close to each other and are not out of balance. The trees are not showing signs of having moved: the growth pattern is normal for species. The applicant has stated that they have concerns that the tree is diseased or that it may break or fall. Nothing found on site substantiates this concern: the trees are early mature with a long potential lifespan ahead of them and appear to be in good health and structural condition.

	If the applicant does have concerns over the condition and likelihood of failure of the tree, Regulation 16(1) of The Town, and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 states that “<i>appropriate evidence describing any structural damage to property or in relation to tree health or safety, as applicable</i>”, is to be supplied with the application. Therefore, written arboricultural advice or other diagnostic information from an appropriate expert should be submitted with the application where the applicant believes work is required on safety grounds. The trees have not been previously reduced. Regrowth from reduction points is less well attached and usually denser than the original canopy, so any effect is temporary and detrimental to the long-term health and amenity of the tree. Usually, crown reductions also need to be repeated on a 3-5 yearly cycle, depending on the vigour of the response, and opens pathways for pathogens to ingress. The proposed reduction of 4m would encourage new growth from the reduction points, and usually more buds are activated by pruning so the result will be a denser, heavier canopy, still offset and less well attached (though this is less of a concern with oak). Nothing in a reduction operation will change the arrangement of branches - most likely they will grow back in a similar format and as a cohesive group as at present. Self-optimising structure. Given time, trees are self-optimising structures, and to remove live canopy mass from healthy trees will introduce multiple pruning wounds will reduce the tree’s ability to respond. The likelihood of failure is increased with unnecessary pruning operations. Carrying out works to only 2 trees risks exposing others in the area to new wind forces.					
Decision	Consent	Refuse	Part consent/ Part refuse	Withdrawn / Invalid	Conservation Area	
		X			Raise no objection	TPO
Decision notice	REFUSE: 2no. Oak (T2 & T3) - Crown reduction by up to 4 metres.					
Conditions	N/A					
Notes to applicant	None					
Parish comments	Object to 4m reduction – excessive with insufficient supporting evidence. No objection to a lesser reduction of up to 2.5m.					
Public objection/ support	Support		Objection		Observation	
	0		0		0	
Objection/ support consideration	The Parish comment has been considered as part of the decision-making process.					