

Eastleigh Borough Council Tree Preservation Order and Conservation Area Assessment Form

Application Number	T/24/98141
Surveyor	SK
Address	1 TORRIDGE GARDENS, WEST END, SOUTHAMPTON, SO18 3NF
Proposed work	1no. Oak (T1) - Fell to ground Level. Tree is displaying symptoms of Acute Oak Decline (AOD), including bore hole from potential <i>Agrilus biguttatus</i> .
Assessment Date	09/10/24
Officer comments	The oak tree has very high amenity, being close to the boundary and visible from all perspectives, particularly when descending Townhill Way. The canopy is in generally good condition and is a typical open form. There is some central decay evident at the pruning wounds on the south side of the stem at the crown break c 2m above ground level. Heartwood decay is common and not necessarily an issue. This is not stated as a cause of concern. The application cites Acute Oak Decline (AOD) as the reason for wanting to fell the tree. AOD is a complex syndrome, usually presenting as rapid and progressive decline in the canopy and often exhibiting stem bleeding. The stem bleeding is evidenced in the photographs supplied but not of itself is not demonstration of AOD. The canopy is in good condition, with only very minor dieback in the canopy which is typical for the species. There are bore holes in the images supplied, cited as evidence of the presence of <i>Agrilus biguttatus</i> – the two spotted oak buprestid beetle (TSOBB). The holes appear to be round in the photos, where the TSOBB beetle usually leaves a D-shaped hole. This is not possible to determine with any accuracy without being able to access the tree or having sighted the actual beetles, which is very hard to do given their habit of being either high in the canopy or under the bark. Forest Research state that <i>“two-spotted oak buprestid beetles are not considered to be a cause of acute oak decline, but they are thought to be ‘opportunistic’ on the weakened trees. That is, they take advantage of the tree’s weakened state and infest it, which further weakens the tree, and might even hasten its death.”</i>

	This means the only symptom is the stem bleeding, which may be indicative of AOD but is also symptomatic of many other, less terminal conditions such as bacterial canker which are rarely fatal on their own. In the absence of any positive evidence that AOD is in fact present and is causing the decline after which it is named. At the present time, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the tree is suffering from AOD so the applications to fell will be refused until such time as substantive evidence is available.					
Decision	Consent	Refuse	Part consent/ Part refuse	Withdrawn / Invalid	Conservation Area	
					Raise no objection	TPO
		X				
Decision notice	REFUSE: 1no. Oak (T1) - Fell to ground Level. Insufficient evidence to support the presence of AOD at this time.					
Conditions	N/A					
Notes to applicant	The Forest Research website has useful information on many tree conditions including stem bleeding					
Parish comments	None					
Public objection/ support	Support		Objection		Observation	
	0		0		0	
Objection/ support consideration						