

Eastleigh Borough Council Tree Preservation Order and Conservation Area Assessment Form

Application Number	T/25/99191
Surveyor	AM
Address	88 HILTINGBURY ROAD, CHANDLER'S FORD, EASTLEIGH, SO53 5NZ
Proposed work	1no. Oak (T1) – Fell. The oak tree in question is affected by Foaming Oak Disease, with significant bark loss at its base. The tree is heavily weighted over the road junction, given the condition of the tree & its proximity to this busy junction, there is a high risk of failure, which could pose a significant safety hazard. The proposed removal of the tree is intended to mitigate this risk & ensure the safety of the public.
Assessment Date	14 th May 2025
Officer comments	The application oak is protected within G5 of TPO ref: 265-E, confirmed 5th May 1994. The tree is sited in a private front garden, adjacent to Hiltingbury Road. It is clearly visible to the public. There are many large trees of similar species and maturity along this road and this gives the area a pleasant, leafy character. On the face of it, the subject oak offers a high level of public, visual amenity.  Fig 1. 14th May 2025, looking north from Oakwood Road junction The tree measures approx. 16m tall and has a stem diameter of approx. 65cm dbh (both dimensions estimated by eye). The crown leans slightly

towards the road. It shows signs of reduced vitality as it is becoming stag-headed and many of the leaves chlorotic. There is dysfunction evident around much of the root collar and black bark bleeds on the lower stem.

The application is to fell the tree on the basis that it has been diagnosed with “Foaming Oak Disease” and because bark is lifting from the base. There is no formal diagnosis or assessment of the condition of the tree. ‘Foaming Oak Disease’ is not a disease I am aware of. The description of the bark loss is also vague. The Agent ticked the box to state that they do not have concerns as to the condition of the tree (therefore triggering an expert report) yet states in the proposal that “there is a high risk of failure”. Given that there is no advice beyond this, this level of detail cannot be given much weight. Despite this, the application has been validated and must be determined.

I’ve tapped around the base with a mallet and used a probe to assess the condition. There is loose, necrotic bark from the east – north – west aspects of the root collar. The northern buttress is decayed. This buttress is subject to tension as it is on the opposite side of the lean. The below image shows the extent of bark necrosis as an orange band and the position of the decayed tension root marked with a red arrow. Black bleeds visible on left side of stem:



Fig 2. 14th May 2025, facing south

There is a large patch of bark bleeds on the east side to 1.2m above ground level. There can be multiple causes for these, including *Phytophthora*, bacterial wetwood, honey fungus and drought. No formal

	diagnosis has been provided but regardless it is indicative of vascular dysfunction in the affected area. This can occur due to attack by root pathogens such as honey fungus and/or due to water stress. The extent of dysfunction broadly matches with the alignment of the driveway. It seems likely that historic root damage is now having a noticeable impact on the tree; water stress caused by root damage/dysfunction and/or colonisation of damaged/dysfunctional roots by honey fungus (although no toadstools or rhizomes were observed). Unfortunately, the death of the tension buttress, widespread dysfunction around the root collar and signs of stress in the crown do not give me confidence in its stability. Had the root collar dysfunction only affected a discrete area and/or there had been signs of significant woundwood formation, this would have led to be believe that recovery could be expected. Similarly, if the vitality of the tree had been normal, this might imply that the root system was still functioning as it should. Unfortunately, this is not the case. There seems to be a material risk of the tree failing at the base due to deterioration of buttressing and connected structural roots. The tree leans towards a residential road junction and the consequences of whole tree failure could be severe. The risk of tree failure could be reduced in the short term by reducing the crown. This would reduce loading on the presumed compromised root structure. However, the tree is clearly in poor physiological health and this work would only increase the amount of dysfunction and accelerate decline. For these reasons, the proposal to fell the tree is reasonable. This can be conditional on replacement planting.					
Decision	Consent	Refuse	Part consent/ Part refuse	Withdrawn / Invalid	Conservation Area	
					Raise no objection	TPO
	X					
Decision notice	Grant: 1no. Oak (T1) – Fell					
Conditions	Replace with elm, maidenhair or Acer x freemanii.					
Notes to applicant						
Parish comments						
Public objection/ support	Support		Objection		Observation	
	0		1		0	
Objection/ support consideration	<i>I would like to comment on the application regarding the proposed removal of the oak tree with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) near the junction of Hiltingbury Road and Oakwood Road.</i>					

	<i>I fully appreciate the importance of public safety, particularly in high-traffic areas used by schoolchildren. However, given the protected status of this tree and its significant visual and environmental contribution to the area, I respectfully request that the Council ensures that a full and independent arboricultural assessment is carried out before any decision is made.</i> <i>I understand the applicant has cited Foaming Oak Disease and bark loss as reasons for removal. While these are serious concerns, I believe it is important that the diagnosis and risk level are confirmed by an independent professional. If remedial work is possible instead of complete removal, I hope that option is considered carefully.</i> <i>Additionally, I'd like to raise a practical concern: a key overhead cable runs very close to this tree, supplying broadband and phone services to our property. This connection is essential for our home and also supports my small business, which relies heavily on uninterrupted internet access. If any work is approved, I ask that care is taken to avoid damage to this infrastructure.</i> <i>Should removal be deemed absolutely necessary, I would ask that a suitable replacement tree is planted nearby to maintain the character and biodiversity of the area.</i> AM comments – The above has been taken into consideration during the decision-making process.
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