

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on Wednesday, 10 August 2016 at 12.30pm in Meeting Room G2, Addenbrooke House, Telford TF3 4NT

Present: Councillors J C Minor (Chair), N A Dugmore, J Francis (as substitute for I T W Fletcher), J Loveridge N C Lowery, P Scott and C R Turley.

PC-021 Apologies for Absence

Councillor I T W Fletcher and L A Murray.

PC-022 Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 20 July 2016 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

PC-023 Declarations of Interest

None.

PC-024 Tree Preservation Order 2016 (Woodthorne House, 1 Sutherland Avenue, Wellington, Telford TF1 3BL)

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director: Governance, Procurement and Commissioning seeking confirmation of a provisional Tree Preservation Order (TPO) at Woodthorne House, 1 Sutherland Avenue, Wellington, Telford TF1 3BL. The report detailed an objection received from the owner of the property expressing concerns regarding safety and large branches that had recently fallen causing damage to a neighbour's car and had requested that permission be given for work to be undertaken on the tree. A further objection had been received from the neighbouring property, Kinsale regarding safety issues, especially during high winds, the overhang of the trees, the shading of the house, height of the trees and the sap from the trees. The Tree Officer confirmed to the owners that crown cleaning and removal of deadwood could take place without permission being required from the Council and that the two trees in question were not considered to be "unpredictable" as the sequoia species was known to "never blow down" (as stated in Alan Mitchell – A Field guide to Trees of Britain and Northern Europe, 1st edition). A further objection was received by the neighbour at Kinsale which, although work had been carried out to "thin out" the trees, it reiterated concerns regarding safety, especially in high winds, and tree sap and raised further issues of the trees not being indigenous to the area, the trees having been allowed to become overgrown and were a poor choice initially.

Following the work undertaken the owners of Woodthorne House withdrew their objection to the TPO.

The Legal Advisor outlined the process and the Tree and Woodland Officer explained the background to the making of the Provisional Order and considered that the trees sat well with the landscape, were of significant amenity value and should be retained and asked that Members confirm the TPO without modification.

The Legal Advisor advised Members that the focus in this case should be on amenity and confirmed that work had recently been undertaken regarding crown cleaning and removal of dead wood.

During the ensuing debate, some Members raised issues regarding safety and falling branches, legal responsibility and issues around insurance claims and damage to foundations caused by tree roots. Some Members raised further concerns regarding continual growth of the girth and height of the trees and enquired about management of the trees in the future

The Legal Officer explained to Members that if the TPO was confirmed that there was a due process for the owners to apply to the Council to enable works to be carried out, including crown thinning and felling and this provided good tree management.

Members noted the concerns of the objectors regarding safety and balanced this against the opinion of the Council's Tree and Woodlands Officer. Some members concluded that the trees were worth preserving for their visual amenity.

Following the discussion it was:-

RESOLVED – that the Borough of Telford & Wrekin (Woodthorne House, 1 Sutherland Avenue, Wellington, Telford TF1 3BL) Tree Preservation Order 2016 be confirmed without modification.

The meeting ended at 12.59 pm

Chairman:

Date: