
Site Address:	34 Christopher Way, Emsworth, PO10 7QZ		
Proposal:	Fell 1No.Beech (T1) subject to TPO 0909.		
Application No:	APP/21/01342	Expiry Date:	19/01/2022
Applicant:	Mrs McCoy		
Agent:	Mr Fazackarley	Case Officer:	Maria Stewart
	Michael Reed & Co Tree Service Ltd		
Ward:	Emsworth		

Recommendation: **GRANT TPO CONSENT**

1 Site Description

34 Christopher Way, Emsworth, PO10 7QZ

2 Planning History

10/74298/000 - Crown reduce by 25% 1No. Beech tree and crown reduce by 30%
2No. Walnut trees subject to TPO 0909.

, PERM,24/03/2010

GEN/11/01552 - Request for property history., ,01/12/2011 12:02:34

APP/15/01304 - Crown reduce overall 1No. Beech (T1) and 1No. Walnut (T2) by 2.5m to previous pruning points and crown reduce 1No. Walnut (T3) overall by 1.5m to previous pruning points, subject to TPO 0909., PERM,05/01/2016

APP/20/00980 - Crown reduce 1No. Beech tree (T1 [T5 on TPO]) overall by 3m in height and 2m on laterals to previous pruning points. Crown reduce 1No. Walnut tree (T2 [T8 on TPO]) overall by 3m in height and 2m on south/east/west sectors to previous pruning points. Crown reduce height 1 No. Walnut tree (T3 [T9 on TPO]) by 1.5m and laterals by 1m to previous pruning points. All trees subject to TPO 0909., PERM,14/12/2020

3 Proposal

Fell 1No.Beech (T1) subject to TPO 0909.

4 Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) March 2011

DM8 (Conservation, Protection and Enhancement of Existing Natural Features)

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) July 2014

Listed Building Grade: Not applicable.

Conservation Area: Not applicable.

5 **Statutory and Non Statutory Consultations**

Councillor Julie Thain-Smith

Councillor Lulu Bowerman

Councillor R Kennett

6 **Community Involvement**

This application was publicised in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice for Publicity of Planning Applications approved at minute 207/6/92 (as amended), as a result of which the following publicity was undertaken:

Number of neighbour notification letters sent: 7

Number of site notices: 1

Statutory advertisement: Not applicable.

Number of representations received: 6

Comment	Officer Comment
The tree appears to be in good condition, and is an attractive, mature specimen. It provides decoration and an important wildlife habitat and is significantly older than the relatively newly built house looking to remove it. There is no justification provided for the request. Previous requests to trim the tree and another nearby back to pruning points have been granted, it is not clear why permission for this extreme action should be now requested or considered.	see report. Application and supporting documents were uploaded following an error and an extended consultation period was given.

Update to my earlier comment following review of further details notified by letter dated 7 January 2022. The additional information suggests the tree is damaged and thus 'needs' to be felled. The application form states that if the application relates to condition of the tree, 'you are required to provide written arboricultural advice or other diagnostic information from an appropriate expert'. The photo purporting to show structural stress fracture is not supportive of this diagnosis, and appears to be superficial and non-structural. The cavity photo is not supportive of any assessment. Beech cracks are not unusual or necessarily serious - e.g. https://arbtalk.co.uk/forums/topic/40425-beech-limb-cracks/, and https://arbtalk.co.uk/forums/topic/116952-beech-tree-bark-cracking/. Note the reference to damage at root level from digging etc., possibly causing cracks to appear in bark. Also note the professional suggestion that cable supports be considered if needed to give additional support. Has the applicant provided relevant, conclusive information from an appropriate expert? Is this still to be provided? Is an independent assessment being/to be sought? What options beside felling were considered? Based on the information provided, I cannot see any reason to grant this application. As others have said, the tree was there when the current occupants moved in, and is in apparently good condition with a TPO to preserve it. Every effort should be made to retain it and provide additional structural support if needed.	See report
There is no detail on the application as to why this mature tree needs to be felled? As such I think it should be questioned at the very least	Application and supporting documents were uploaded following an error and an extended consultation period was given.

This group of TPO'd trees seem to have been maintained regularly and were pruned in 2020 when there was no mention of disease or danger relating to the beech tree or the walnuts. They are clearly a key part of the streetscape. This application gives no reason for the felling of a mature beech tree with a TPO. It would seem that perhaps the owner wishes more space to park a car, the boat or the caravan but surely this is no reason to fell a tree which has been there for many years, has justified a TPO and has been regularly maintained.	See report Application and supporting documents were uploaded following an error and an extended consultation period was given.
It is helpful to have more information on the redacted application form. Is it not natural for old wood to decay and form a hollow which could be filled in? There is no mention of threatening fungus etc. The stress fracture is below a removed limb so presumably could also be treated to protect from any disease. A tree such as this is something to protect and help, not destroy.	see report
I would like to object to this application to fell a mature beech tree, which is rightly the subject of a tree preservation order. There is no convincing argument to fell it apart from the personal wants of the house owners, who were well aware of its existence on buying the house. It is not diseased or likely to shed branches. Nor it is causing structural damage to nearby properties.. Previous pruning was approved for tree health & safety, implying awareness of its value. It is this value I would like to re-emphasise. Firstly the visual benefit of the tree to the street. It is an established fact that closeness to nature and seeing plants and wildlife is of benefit to a sense of well-being and mental health. Emsworth is a desirable town to live in because of the atmosphere and structure created by its many established trees and general greenery. The continued denuding of these needs to be considered both for	See report

the town as a whole and for each tree individually, and this adds particular character to this street in a popular residential area.

Secondly, a mature beech tree like this has tremendous value for wildlife. The fruit - beech nuts, or 'masts' - provide food for many birds such as tits, chaffinches, nuthatches, woodpeckers etc, and importantly the brambling, a regular overwintering bird in the area, relies largely upon them. The positioning of mature trees such as this to provide a "green bridge" from one large open space to another is important for the movement of birds across the area. This tree is visible from Emsworth Park and as such has an important position in the neighbourhood from a bird behaviour point of view.

Mammals supported by beech trees include squirrels and mice throughout the winter, hedgehogs which will feed and seek shelter among the fallen leaves, and notably beech trees are often important bat roosts. Emsworth park and the area around the river Ems are known important feeding areas for bats which will need to roost nearby. There are also over 64 insect species associated with the beech tree. And they in turn will support other species further up the food chain.

It is essential that the town retains a mix of trees of many ages, particularly mature and veteran trees to retain balance in the ecosystem.

It is also important to consider the environmental impact of the tree in making the air cleaner, reducing pollution and producing oxygen. A mature tree will be far more efficient at this due to its larger canopy. Although there might be an argument for replacing this large tree with smaller younger trees, it would be many years before they grew to the stage where they could provide an equivalent improvement in the air quality. It has been shown that for every 10% increase in tree canopies in urban areas there is a 3 to 7% decrease in the depletion of the ozone layer of the

atmosphere. One mature tree will over the course of the year produce enough oxygen for 10 people. Emsworth is immediately adjacent to the Chichester harbour area of natural beauty, and it is fundamental that the surrounding countryside and towns are well managed in order to maintain the harbour as a resource that we can all enjoy. The flora and fauna of the whole area are inextricably linked, and trees are integral to the management of water run-off and pollution, as well as air quality. This application names Michael Reed & co Tree services Ltd as the agent. This local company are very knowledgeable about maintaining tree health and have carried out work for us on our own veteran oak tree to keep it healthy, which has been noticeably successful, where our neighbours have gone down the other route of felling their tree in a similar condition - so very sad and unnecessary. In this case the tree is not even unhealthy, so I would encourage these applicants to consider all they can do to maintain the health of the tree and to value it as it should be valued rather than to get rid of it for their own personal wishes. There is so much more to be lost than gained.	
This beech tree has been TPO'd for a reason - it is important to the local community, not just to the owners of the property where it is situated. It has been rather brutally pruned in the past but that is no reason for it's removal as it appears healthy. It's amenity value to the wider community remains. The tree canopy in Emsworth is reducing every year and these mature trees have a significance, particularly in the time of climate change, if the Council agrees to its removal then it is vital that it is replaced (either by the Council or the current applicant) by a mature tree elsewhere in Emsworth.	see report
Thank you for making public the reasons for this application to fell – TPO Beech at 34 Christopher Way. (All my previous comments still stand, with the addition	See report

of the following).

However, the reasons provided do not necessarily mean a death sentence for this beech – it is a particularly significant Heritage tree within the local area. It stands on a generous curve of Christopher Way making it an attractive feature to be appreciated as one approaches from either direction, and visible well beyond the owner's property, (please refer to photos from 2009, 2011 and 2021 in my previous submitted comments).

Regrettably it has been over-pruned more than once, and this may have contributed to the stress this tree is coping with.

Vertical cracks in beech bark are not uncommon, and can be caused by several natural processes;

Frost with fluctuating with hotter day time temperatures (NB, the crack is on the sunny southeast side). Splitting bark can also be due to the tree wood growing faster than the bark because of wetter conditions following dry weather which slowed growth, or stress (e.g. compaction around roots), poor pruning or waterlogging

This crack is approx. 4ft long and very narrow (approx.10mm wide), but there is no information about the depth of the crack.

As long as the heartwood, the dense inner part of a tree's trunk, is not showing through, there is nothing to worry about and the tree will be fine. If the heartwood is showing, then an easy access for wood decaying organisms has developed, which could lead to problems later on in the life of the tree.

Vertical cracks are usually shored up by the tree to protect itself.

A qualified independent arborist should be asked determine the potential for failure by measuring the bark thickness in a few locations around the tree's circumference, determining the width of the crack opening, and looking for the

presence of any other type of defect. Only then can felling the tree be justified. If this is the outcome, the tree must be replaced by a standard beech, either on site or within Emsworth. This replacement notice must be presented as part of consent.	
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7 Planning Considerations

7.1 Having regard to the relevant policies of the development plan it is considered that the main issues arising from this application are:

- Whether the degree of pruning works requested would undermine the amenity value of these trees and whether this could also be harmful to their ongoing health and vitality.

7.2 My inspection related specifically to assessing the proposed works rather than generally inspecting the tree's health and condition in any great detail. I visually inspected the tree from ground level and the following report deals with the relevant issues that have been raised on site, in the application form and from my site observations.

7.3 This application to undertake work to a tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order relates to the proposed felling of one Beech tree located in the front lawn of 34 Christopher Way.

The application to fell the tree is based on the structural condition of the tree and has been submitted by a Tree Surgeon as the applicant's agent. The information provided by the agent was sufficient to validate the application. The reason for felling is due to a stress fracture on the main trunk and a deep cavity at the base of the tree. During the application process further information was requested by the Arboricultural Officer to ascertain the depth of the cavity and further information on the stress fracture was provided also.

The Arboricultural Officer comments that a site visit was undertaken to assess the tree. No further Arboricultural expert input is required as the Council's qualified Arboricultural Officer makes the final recommendation for decision. It is agreed that as the tree is within the front garden of the property it has public amenity value. The tree has clearly been reduced to the extent it has over the years in order to manage this large tree in its urban location in close proximity to two dwellings. If it hadn't, it wouldn't have been able to remain in this location as long as it has.

Upon inspection, the stress fracture is clearly significant and is not a superficial crack. It is most certainly one of concern. The tree surgeon has confirmed that whilst this crack has been present for a number of years, following one of the most recent storms the crack has grown by around 40%. This may have happened from the stem twisting slightly in the high winds. There is no remedial work or bracing that could be done to alleviate this potential hazard.

There is also a 2ft decay cavity at the base of the tree, from a second stem having been removed. This alone is significant enough to warrant the felling of the tree but with the fracture of the stem also, the Arboricultural Officer is in agreement that there is a foreseeable possibility of this tree failing in the future.

Every TPO application is based on its own merits, regardless of previous applications which may have been received. Applications cannot be refused when there is a highly foreseeable risk of failure, or damage occurring. If this tree were in a field it could be left, but in the urban environment, this is not an option. The wildlife implications of TPO trees being felled is not a reason for applications to be refused, particularly when the application is based on safety grounds.

8 Conclusion

Felling of this tree is considered to be appropriate and necessary for the reasons given, therefore permission should be granted and a replacement tree planted. The replacement tree cannot be planted elsewhere in the Borough, it must relate to the existing Tree Preservation Order.

9 RECOMMENDATION:

That the Head of Neighbourhood Support be authorised to **GRANT TPO CONSENT** for application APP/21/01342

(A)

(B) for the following reasons/subject to the following conditions

- 1 The tree works for which consent is hereby granted shall not be carried out otherwise than in full accordance with all relevant content of BS 3998 (2010).
Reason: In the interests of tree health and safety.
- 2 The tree works for which consent is hereby granted shall be carried out and completed no later than one year from the date of this decision notice.
Reason: To control the timing of the works
- 3 In the first planting season following the date of felling; 1 replacement tree is planted. The tree should be a minimum 1.2 metres tall at the time of planting and should comply with BS3936:Part 1:1992. It should be planted at or near the site of the existing tree. The tree species should be *Liquidambar styraciflua* (Sweer gum) or such other size, species, location or period of time as may be agreed in writing with the Council.

If within a period of three years any tree planted as a replacement is cut down, felled, uprooted, removed, or die, or becomes in the opinion of the Council seriously damaged or defective:

- a) the Council shall be notified as soon as is reasonably practicable; and
- b) another tree of the same species and size shall be planted in the same

location at a time agreed in writing with the Council unless the Council agrees to dispense with or vary the requirement.

Reason: To conserve and safeguard the visual amenities of the locality.