

Application to work on Trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order Assessment and Recommendation



Tree Preservation Order : 897

Site Address: 46 Barton Brake (Land off Leyford Close), Wembury PL9 0BJ

Application Register No : 2347/16/TPO

Proposed works: T2 – Sycamore - FELL

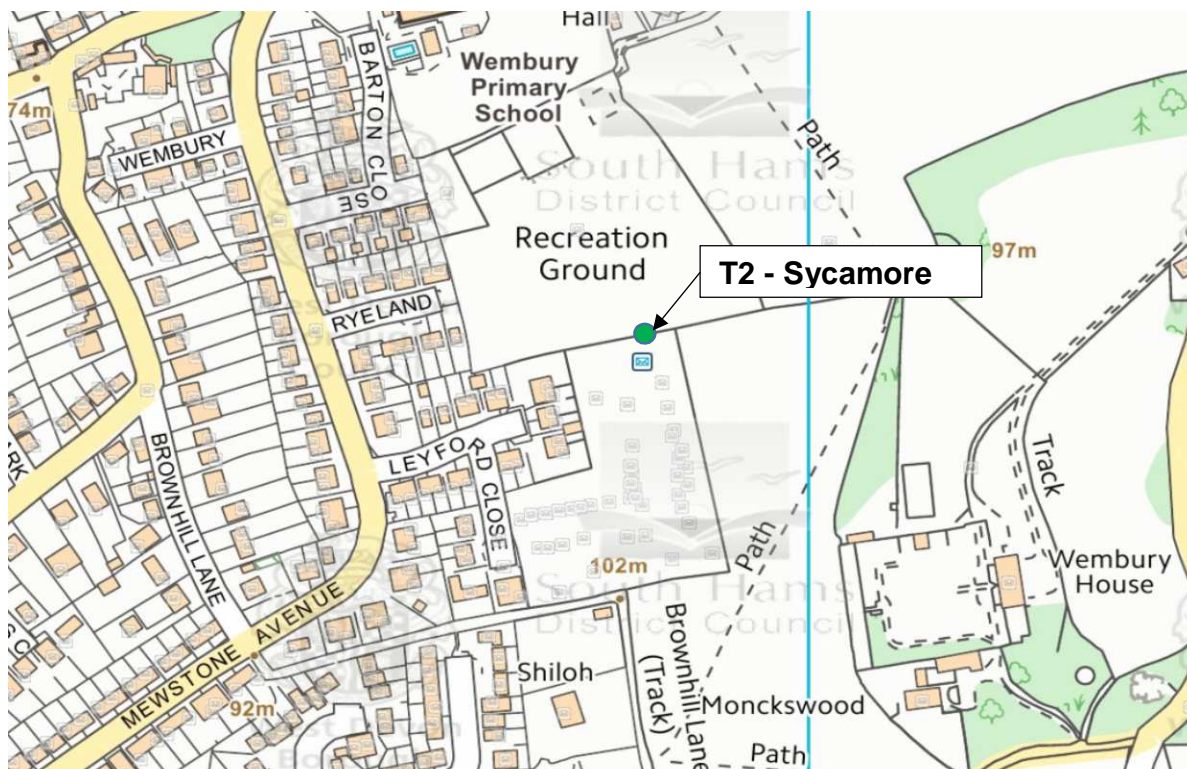
Date of Application : 22/07/2016

Target Decision Date : 16/09/2016

Reason item is being put before DM Committee: The Ward Member notes the objections from Wembury Parish Council and the local tree warden and requests that the application is considered by the Development Management Committee

Site assessed by : Alex Whish

Date : 03.06.2016/re-visited on 07.11.2016



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Recommendation: Conditional approval

Conditions:

1. Works to BS 3998:2010
2. Replacement planting – 1no. Field Maple

Key issues for consideration:

The impact on the local amenity and character of the area if T2 - sycamore (single tree) is felled and replaced with a Field maple.

The proposal:

The Tree Preservation Order application seeks to fell a single sycamore tree from within TPO 897. The tree is located on the boundary of No. 46 Barton Brake, within the recently completed development on land off Leyford Close, Wembury. It is within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To the immediate north of the boundary is the recreation ground.

The tree is impacting on the applicant's proposal to strengthen the hedgerow boundary and plant fruit trees within the garden. The applicant is required to replace the felled tree and has agreed to plant a Field maple. The applicant also intends to thicken up the existing hedgerow with native planting to improve its quality and security.

Consultations:

- Wembury Parish Council – Objection – this tree contributes significantly to the screening of the new development at Barton Brake and protecting the South Devon AONB.
- Wembury Tree Warden- Objection – the tree is located within one of the country's most highly designated landscapes, and is covered by the highest level of protection for arboricultural features, provide significant environmental functions including biodiversity, visual screening and green infrastructure and were granted this protection prior to the purchase of the property and thus with the full knowledge of the new owner

Relevant Planning History

- (58/0176/13/O) - Outline planning application for residential development comprising up to 48 dwellings, highway access and other incidental development – Conditional Approval
- (58/1267/14/RM) - Application for approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale – Conditional Approval
- (58/0793/16/TPO) - Removal of 4 Sycamores, as indicated on plan as A, B, C & D – Refusal
- Pre-application advise – applicant advised over reducing the number of trees being sought for removal in the context of the planning history and taking a phased approach to managing the trees in transition from the dominant sycamores to native hedgerow trees and a rejuvenated hedgerow.

Analysis

The tree has been assessed and considered in its context, and the planning history noted. Three trees within the TPO (T1, T2 and T3 – all sycamores) are located along the boundary of 46 Barton Brake and form part of the important mitigation measures that screen of the edge of the development from the adjacent public open space and wider views. The presence of the trees is however effecting the quality of the existing hedgerow which has been overshadowed by the trees and as a consequence is sparse and thin in places. It is the officer view that by allowing the phased removal with the initial felling of TPO Tree T1 (T2 in application), with better longer term management of the hedgerow, the quality of the screening will improve on the current position. This will allow a stronger boundary to be formed as a hedgerow with trees. This would fully address the concerns being raised by the Tree Warden and acknowledges that screening is important and can be retained in the longer term. A stronger and more diverse hedgerow would also increase its habitat value.

On this basis the officer considers that there will be an overall enhancement of the existing hedgerow with increased tree planting to mitigate the loss of the single sycamore, although it is acknowledged that this will take between 10 to 15 years to mature.

In assessing the application, consideration has also been given to the substantial new planting within the immediate vicinity of the tree, on the edge of the recreation ground. This is a new planting belt which runs along the length of the hedgerow as part of environmental improvements to the recreation ground. These establishing trees and understory plantings will contribute significantly to the screening of Barton Brake in the medium to longer term in combination with the existing boundary hedgerow.

Due consideration has been given to the South Devon AONB Management plan in terms of seeking to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB. Officers are satisfied that the impact of felling the single sycamore and subsequent management of the hedgerow, including a replacement tree, will achieve these key objectives of protecting the amenity and special qualities in the context of the location.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above and within the following site assessment, the application to fell the sycamore is considered acceptable. Officers are satisfied that a balance can be achieved between conserving the overall amenity, in consideration of the enhanced hedgerow and adjacent planting already establishing. The longer term outcome is a better, well managed hedgerow by the applicant and retained screening to ensure that the enjoyment by users of the open space is not adversely affected by the development. This application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to appropriate conditions to secure a replacement tree.

On Site Assessment

1.

Are the trees covered by a current TPO? **Yes**

Comments:

This Order was served in relation to development at land off Leyford Close. The Order was modified and confirmed with individual trees covered and a linear hedge line (A1). The trees were considered to have good amenity and contributed to screening the overall development.

2.

Are some, or all, of the works exempt from the need for formal consent? **No**

3.

Description of the tree(s) and location.

The single tree T2 – Sycamore is located close to the hedgebank. It is part of three trees located along this boundary with the adjacent recreation ground. Whilst contributing to some screening of the new dwelling, its overall condition is fair. It overshadows the adjacent hedgerow which is thin and sparse in places. The adjacent recreation ground has had significant planting carried out along the boundary to the north which establishing well. The applicant has planted a number of new fruit trees within the garden space.

4.

What is the amenity value of the tree(s)? **please circle**

None:	Can't be seen	Some:	i.e. Roadside trees and parks
Very Little:	Seen with difficulty	Considerable:	i.e. Town Centre
Little:	i.e. Enclosed rear garden	Great:	Significant feature tree

From which public locations can the tree(s) / hedge(s) be viewed? Adjacent public open space
Do the trees screen between properties **Yes**

Comments:

The trees currently screen the dwelling from the adjacent public open space. This screening will be substantially increased by the new planting within the recreation, with continuity also provided by the replacement tree.

5.

What impact will the works have on local amenity? **please circle**

None:	Can't be seen	Some:	Noticeable but limited
Negligible:	Very minor in appearance	Significant:	Major impact

Comments: The loss of the individual tree will have an immediate impact in the shorter term but through subsequent re-stocking of the hedgerow (improving its vitality and health) and the replacement field maple (which is more appropriate to a Devon hedge) this will be mitigated in the medium (5years) to longer term. The retention of the other trees will continue to screen the dwelling from other local views

6.

Do the proposed works accord with good arboricultural or silvicultural practice? **Yes**

7.

Is any damage likely to arise if consent is refused? **No**

Comments: The tree in combination with adjacent trees are overshadowing establishment of a robust hedgerow

8.

Assessment. Give a succinct assessment of the application and appraisal of the proposed works.

T2 – Sycamore – the applicant is seeking to fell a single sycamore close to the boundary hedge line with the adjacent public open space. The proposal is to coppice the tree and manage the regrowth, with the key objective of creating a more robust native hedgerow along the boundary.

Whilst the tree offers reasonable amenity, it does contribute at present to the screening of the new dwelling from views within the recreation ground. However, the applicant will be required to replace the tree with field maple (hedgerow species) and wishes to substantially add to the overall hedgerow with additional native planting to create a more secure and robust hedgerow. The applicant has also planted new apple trees within the garden space.

The new planting within the recreation ground will also substantially add to natural screening in the longer term.

9.

Recommendation (please tick)

Approval - YES

Works:

Conditions: Yes Works to BS 3998 Yes Replacement Planting Yes

No. & Species: Field Maple; Size: Feathered to 120cm; Location: Within hedge line close to stool

10.

Has the application been assessed in relation to Article 1, Protocol 1, Article 2 and Article 8 of the Human Rights Act. **Yes**

Tree Condition, assess and number accompanying plan or refer to submitted application report.

Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	Spread (m) Average	Age Class	Life Expectancy	Condition	Assessment of Stated Reasons for Works
T2	Acer pseudo-platanus	8m	7m	M	M	Fair	Fell – consider acceptable in context of other trees and hedge management

Age Class

Young First 1/3 life expectancy
Middle Age 1/3 to 2/3 life expectancy
Mature Final 1/3 life expectancy

Life Expectancy

S Short (<10 years)
M Medium (10-40 years)
L Long (40 + years)

Condition

Good Free from significant defects with a healthy crown
Fair Some defects, generally healthy crown
Poor Structural defects, poor general health and vigour