

23 Offerton Road, Hazel Grove

Report of the Director for Place Management

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

1.1. To consider objections to a Tree Preservation Order at 23 Offerton Road, Hazel Grove

2. OBJECTORS COMMENTS

2.1. **Objection 1 – Amenity:** There are many mature trees; 20 Sycamores, 6 Hollies, 1 Oak and 1 Maple situated along the frontage of 21 & 23 Offerton Road that provide ample amenity. These Pines (T1 & T2) add no useful additional amenity.

2.2. **Objection 2 – Impact:** Far from having existing & future value, these trees compete for resources with those other trees in close proximity which provide ample contribution to the landscape and habitat for wildlife. These trees are naked below c. 15 feet and offer no impact on filtering noise, dust or light. The many other trees on the site have a far greater impact in this regard.

2.3. Objection 3 – Threat to person & property:

- a) There have been continuing problems caused by the roots of these trees damaging the sewage pipes serving numbers 23 & 21, causing sewage to back up, which poses a health hazard and necessitates costly repair
- b) The roots are causing damage to the driveway of number 23 necessitating costly repairs.
- c) These trees, which are more than 80 feet in height, are in poor condition, and in such proximity to the house that it is a credible risk that catastrophic damage to the property and threat to life could result were any of these trees to fall. It is quite alarming to watch these trees sway and the ground around the bases lift during strong winds. Most importantly my wife, who recently suffered a stroke, is extremely anxious about these trees which tower over the house and this is adversely affecting her physical and mental wellbeing.

3. COMMENTS OF THE ARBORICULTURAL OFFICER

3.1 **Counter to Objection 1:** Whilst the Pine trees are not so visible in the summer, when the other trees have lost their leaves they are quite visible

3.2 **Counter to Objection 2:** Whilst the Pine trees may compete with the other trees, they do not seem to have had a detrimental effect. The fact that the canopy is high up, which is natural for the species, does not mean they are any less of a benefit for the environment

3.3 Counter to Objection 3:

- a) If damage is being caused to the sewer pipes or can be shown to be likely to be caused to them, the Council would be happy to receive that evidence for consideration. It is generally accepted that the tree roots will not initiate drain damage in most circumstances, however, a leaking drain will attract tree roots and they would certainly exploit the leak and have the potential to make it worse. Making the drain water-tight by inserting a "sleeve" is the usual remedy.
- b) If damage is being caused to the driveway, please supply photo evidence for consideration.
- c) It is natural for trees of this age and species to sway significantly in high winds and in no way signifies they are unstable. If you have evidence to show that the trees are unsafe, can you please present it to the Council as our own assessment shows T1 and T2 to be free from significant structural defect and in good health. No cracks indicating ground movement were seen at the time of inspection.

4. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- 4.1 The making of the Tree Preservation Order was prompted by a visit to the site following a request by the owner for consent to fell the three large, mature Pine trees in the front garden area.
- 4.2 It transpired that the trees were not actually protected, but as there was an imminent threat to the trees an assessment was carried out and they fulfilled the criteria for protection. As a result of the assessment the process was set in motion for the protection of the trees.
- 4.3 The trees are located within the front curtilage of 23 Offerton Road, Hazel Grove and offer significant levels of benefit to the general public.
- 4.4 The trees are worthy of preservation for their contribution to the landscape by screening the existing property and vice versa as well as being significant landscape features therefore, having the future potential impact of filtering noise, dust and light.
- 4.5 Creating this tree preservation order would safeguard the future benefit of the trees to the area including the protection they offer as a wildlife habitat and the benefit of existing mature trees screen as stated above.
- 4.6 Upon inspection the two Pine trees have good canopy density for their age and shows no signs of instability or significant structural defects, so are categorised as a low-risk tree.
- 4.7 The trees are large sized specimens which are well suited to their location in the front garden area of 23 Offerton Road. I can confirm the location of the Pine trees are close to the property however the benefit of the trees as a wildlife habitat and the amenity levels they offer are much higher than the nuisance factor highlighted within the objector's comments.
- 4.8 Should the Order be confirmed any proposed future works will have to be granted by the Tree Section following receipt of an application form.

4.9 I believe that a tree preservation order for this site is expedient and justified. The retention of these trees preserved will serve to enhance the site and surrounding environment along this busy main road.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1. The Area Committee is recommended to confirm the Tree Preservation Order as made.

Background Papers

There are no background papers to this report.

Anyone wishing further information please contact Peter Pollard on telephone number Tel: 0161 474 5637 or by email on peter.pollard@stockport.gov.uk