

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	3 NOVEMBER 2021		
TITLE:	PROPOSED FELLING OF ONE PINE TREE AT WEST FRYERNE, PARKSIDE ROAD, READING		
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1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report to Committee the proposed felling of one Council owned Pine tree (T1) at West Fryerne, Parkside Road, Reading, which is subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 6/07 (TPO plan attached - Appendix 1), and to seek delegated authority for officers to approve the felling.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That approval of the proposed felling be delegated to officers subject to no substantive objections being received.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 6 September 2021, an application was received from Reading Borough Council's Tree Officer in Parks seeking consent to fell one Pine tree within the car park of West Fryerne, Parkside Road, located on the boundary with the YMCA (application reference 211469/TPO).
- 3.2 Whilst West Fryerne itself (flats) are privately owned, the car park is Council land; the Pine tree in question being within the car park.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

- 4.1 As the Council owned and maintained tree is subject to a Tree Preservation Order, a formal application is required for the felling to be approved.
- 4.2 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires applications for works to Council owned or maintained trees to be decided by a Committee of the Council which is not responsible for managing the land to which the application relates.
- 4.3 The law also requires a public notice to be displayed for at least 21 days giving details of the proposed works and contact details for any comments to be sent. A site Notice was attached to the tree and to a lamppost outside West Fryerne on 19 October 2021 and will be left for the required period, ending 9 November 2021.
- 4.4 A report is not normally brought to Committee until after the end of the 21 day period, i.e. when confirmation can be provided of any comments or objections

received. In this case, it would mean consideration at Committee on 1 December 2021. However, there is some degree of urgency due to the risk that is currently presented (detailed below), hence bringing the matter to Committee earlier than normal and the seeking of delegated authority to consider comments received and approve the felling application if that is the conclusion reached.

5. PROPOSED WORKS

5.1 The application seeks approval for the following works:

- Felling of one Pine tree on the boundary with the YMCA (T1 of TPO 6/07).

5.2 The reason for felling is that the Pine is leaning and has been growing into the boundary wall with the YMCA for many years. The Parks department has carefully considered alternative options to felling but unfortunately, the damage to the wall is irreparable without causing significant damage to the roots of the tree such that its structural integrity would be compromised. Both the tree and wall present a potential hazard. Photographs are provided in Appendix 2.

5.3 The applicant advises the following to demonstrate the prudence of determining this application sooner rather than later:

‘Considering the poor condition of the wall, the target should failure occur and that we are entering a period of more unsettled weather, there is an increased likelihood of failure. The fact that the tree is tied into the top section of wall and this section of wall is not tied into the bottom which has already shifted considerably from its original location is concerning. The continued asymmetrical growth and form of the tree will have also undoubtedly increased the loading on the wall with unpredictable effects. Should the tree fail it will likely fall into the YMCA building causing considerable damage and risk to life in this high occupancy area. The route by the wall is also an access route to accommodation which is regularly used’.

5.4 If approved, a condition will be attached requiring a replacement Pine tree in the locality - it is not feasible to plant within the car park itself. Parks have already identified a potential location on the east side of the junction of Tilehurst Road and Parkside Road, to mirror the existing Pine on the west side.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Officers have inspected the tree and the works proposed are considered to be reasonable to manage the risk presented by the tree and to allow repair of the damaged wall; the current state of which also presents a risk to the users of the YMCA. It is therefore recommended that the works be approved subject to no substantive objections being received.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

7.1 The appropriate management of trees and the replacement of those felled contributes to the 2021-2022 Corporate Plan aim for Reading to be a ‘nicer, greener, more attractive place to live’.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 8.2 The replacement of any Council trees lost is fundamental in responding to the climate emergency declaration and meets with the aims of the Council's adopted Tree Strategy.

9. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 9.1 Public notices have been put in place for a 21-day period, as discussed above.

10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 Where appropriate the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to–
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 10.2 There are no direct implications arising from the proposals.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Preparing, serving confirmation and contravention of TPO's are services dealt with by the Council's Legal Section.
- 11.2 Applications for works to Council owned TPO trees are to be decided by a Committee and one which is not responsible for managing the land to which the application relates.

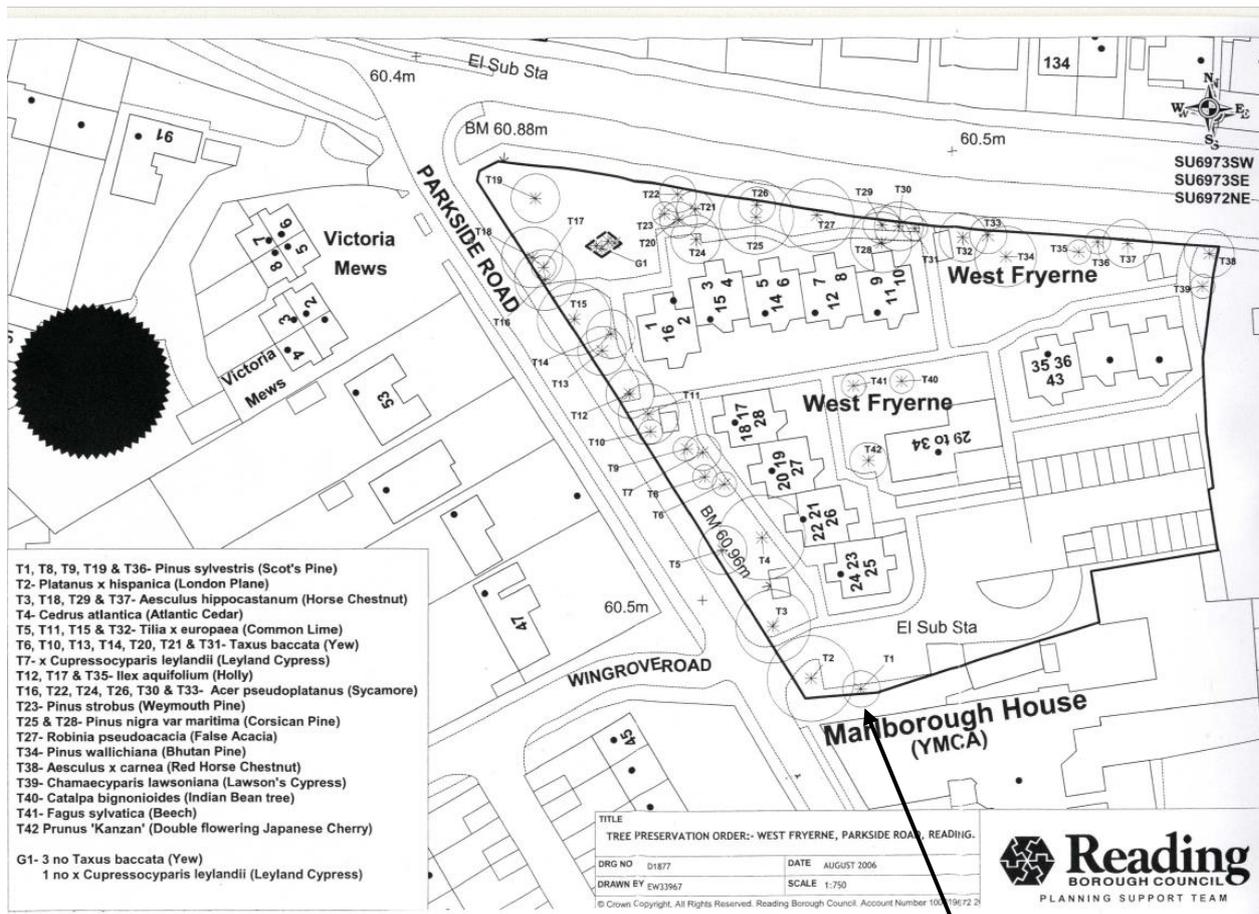
12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 Administrative

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Planning Sections street index of TPO's
- 13.2 Register of Tree Preservation Orders
- 13.3 Plan for TPO 6/07 relating to West Fryerne, Parkside Road, Reading (Appendix 1)
- 13.4 Photographs (Appendix 2)

Appendix 1 - Plan for TPO 6/07



Location of T1 Pine

Appendix 2 - Photographs

