

Officer Report

Application No.	20/1657/FH
Site Address	The Folkestone School For Girls, Coolinge Lane, Folkestone, CT20 3RB
Officer Name	Jo Daniels
Proposal	Crown reduction of one Horse Chestnut subject of Tree Preservation Order No 20 of 2002

Recommendation

Report Number	RD-423735
Recommended Decision	Recommended to be Approve with Conditions
Recommendation Date	23 December 2020

Report

Date application valid: 27/10/20

Applicable 8 week target date: 22/12/20

SITE VISIT

A site visit has been carried out. The site and proposals were assessed from the adjacent public footpath and highway and key features are noted in the assessment.

SITE

The site is the lower (southern) section of the Folkestone School for Girls situated on the west side of Coolinge Lane and to the north east of the Saga Offices at Enbrook Park. The site is on the western outskirts of the coastal town of Folkestone within a Local Landscape Area and just outside the designated conservation area.

The large mature Horse Chestnut is located to the south east of the main building. Individually it is not prominent in the street scene, but together with surrounding trees, it is considered to make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of this attractive sylvan location.

RELEVANT HISTORY

None

PROPOSAL

In carrying out their duty of care in keeping the trees in a safe condition, an inspection of the Horse Chestnut has identified a number of issues. These include signs of Horse Chestnut bleeding canker, die back on the western side of the upper crown and a column of decay in the trunk of the tree which extends from ground level up to around 2 metres. As a result of these issues, the tree appears to be in decline and is considered to be structurally compromised, posing an increased risk to students using this area and therefore it is proposed to reduce the tree to 6 metres in height with a proportional lateral reduction.

It is further proposed to remove dead wood from a Tree of Heaven and a Sycamore but under the Exceptions of the TPO legislation, consent is not required for these works.

CONSULTATIONS

Sandgate Parish Council: No objection subject to the views of the Tree Officer

REPRESENTATIONS

None received

PUBLICITY

Neighbour Letter expiry 29/11/20

POLICIES

Places and Policies Local Plan (2020) Policies: NE3

Shepway Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 Policies: DSD

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) Natural Environment

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and Town Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012.

APPRAISAL

The trees form an important feature in this location, and as such should be preserved as far as possible.

However a structural issue with the Chestnut has been identified which requires attention.

The proposed works appear reasonable and acceptable, in line with good arboricultural practice, and deemed necessary to address the above issues to prevent the tree from becoming structurally compromised and posing a danger.

It is not considered that the proposed works will compromise the long term health of the tree or have a detrimental effect on its visual amenity or that of the TPO.

HUMAN RIGHTS

I have also taken into account the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the Assessment section above and the Recommendation represents an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy his land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls by a public authority) [and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties)] and the wider public interest.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In determining this application, regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in particular with regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

It is considered that the application proposals would not conflict with objectives of the Duty.

RECOMMENDATION

In light of the above, it is considered the proposal complies with the above policies and the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Jo Daniels

Report and draft decision notice completed and passed to senior officer.

Name: Position: Date:

File passed to admin to issue decision. Falls within the scheme of delegation (no requirement to pass to senior officer).

Name: Jo Daniels Position: Planning Technician Date: 23/12/20

Recommended Conditions (2)

1

The work hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of two years from the date of this consent.

Reason:

To enable the Council to consider the position again should the work not be carried out within the prescribed period.

2

The agreed works shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998: 2010 (Tree Work - Recommendations) and comprise of a reduction of the tree to 6 metres in height with a proportional lateral reduction.

Reason:

To ensure that the works are carried out in accordance with good practice in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and Town Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012.

Suggested Informatives (1)

1

Consent is not required for the removal of dead wood from the Tree of Heaven and the Sycamore.