Expiry Date - 27/04/2011

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT SHEET

Application No: 11/0180/TPO	Recommendation – Refuse Application
Site	Belsize House 2 Belsize Road Worthing West Sussex
Proposal:	Application for consent under Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 11 of 1989 to crown reduce by 2m two Lime trees (T3 and T4), to pollard to approximately 8 metres two Sycamores (T5 and T6) and to reduce by 2 metres one Flowering Cherry (T7) along southern perimeter of property.

Date of Site Visit: 7th April 2011

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified (List Addressess): N

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS & DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

No. 2 Belsize Road is a 2-storey detached property. It is situated on the east side of Belsize Road, to the south of Mill Road. It lies within the Heene Conservation Area. To the rear of the property is a recently completed 2-storey extension forming two cottages, for which planning permission was granted in April 2010 under application WB/10/0109/FULL.

The application relates to five protected trees under the Worthing Tree Preservation Order No. 11 of 1989 along the southern perimeter of the site. From west to east, these are: Two Lime trees, T3 and T4; two Sycamore trees, T5 and T6; and a Cherry T7.

Consent is sought to carry out the following works to these trees:

T3 - Lime: 2 metre reduction of crown and remove ivy.

Reason: To maintain size and health of the tree, improving its visual amenity value.

T4 - Lime: 2 metre reduction of crown using the drop crotching method.

Reason: To keep the tree's natural beauty but managing its size due to its close proximity to two residences.

T5 and T6 - Two Sycamores: Pollard to approximately 8 metres.

Reason: To create a new form which will have a high visual amenity to the neighbours whilst allowing the tree's size to be controlled in this very confined area.

T7 - Cherry : Reduction by 2 metres.

Reason: To re-shape in order to enhance its appearance.

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

The Borough Arboricuturist raises concerns over the application, and comments:

"Lime T3: Support reduction in radial spread by 2 metres to leave a new total diameter spread of 8 metres, and removeal of epicormic growth. The reduction in height is likely to be damaging to the form of the tree, where there is no particular need for the work, and cannot be supported.

Lime T4: Support reduction in spread to the north by 2 metres and on south side to give 1 metre clearance to the building (Greentrees). Ivy removal should be delayed if nesting birds are found during an inspection.

Sycamores T5 and T6: The pollarding of these mature Sycamores is not supported, as this would be damaging to their form, is physiologically disruptive and will introduce decay. Pollarding is only initiated on young trees.

Cherry T7: The reduction of the Cherry is supported but should be undertaken in summer so as to reduce risk of Silver Leaf infection."

HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 8 of the First Protocol (Protection or Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 is relevant to this application. It is accepted that this proposal, if approved, would have some impact on the neighbouring properties. However, it is considered that the level of development proposed would not cause undue harm in terms of additional noise, disturbance and loss of privacy and that, on balance, existing residential quality of life would not be adversely affected as a result of the proposal. Accordingly, it is considered that it is acceptable with regard to Article 8 and Article 1.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The two Lime trees and the two Sycamore trees are particularly prominent, established features of the Heene Conservation Area, having high public amenity value. The Cherry tree is a much smaller tree and has low public amenity value.

The proposed 2-metre reductions of the two Lime trees and the pollarding of the Sycamore trees would significantly reduce the height and spread of the upper crowns of the four trees, with no benefits to their visual amenity value or to the Conservation Area.

It is considered that these crown reduction works overall are excessive and would be disfiguring and damaging to the natural form, branch structure and appearance of the trees, which having regard to their stature, good condition and prominence within the street scene, would be detrimental to, and would not preserve or enhance, the character and appearance of the Heene Conservation Area in which the trees are situated.

The reduction in the Cherry tree by up to 2 metres, to suitable growth points, if carried during the summer only, on the advice of the Borough Arboriculturist, would not be damaging to the amenity value of this small tree, and can be supported. Notwithstanding this, in view of the objections on visual amenity grounds to the excessive works to the much more prominent pairs of Limes and Sycamores on this site, the application is not acceptable. Refusal is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse for the following reason:

1. The proposed 2-metre crown reductions of the Lime trees T3 and T4 and the pollarding of the Sycamore trees T5 and T6 would be damaging and disfiguring to the natural crown form, branch structure and appearance of the trees, which, having regard to the stature and the prominence of these trees within the street scene, would be detrimental to, and would not preserve or enhance, the character and visual amenities of the Heene Conservation Area in which the site is situated.

Is the recommendation contrary to letter (s) of representation?

(No) ~~Yes/NA~~

DELEGATED

Case Officer
Sign..... [redacted] .....Date 3rd May 2011

Authorising Officer
Sign..... [redacted] .....Date 5/5/11

JM