

## **Northern Area Planning Committee 26<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Application to remove a protected Willow tree at 3 Brooklands Mews, Oxford Road SK11 8JY (App. 12/3317T)**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:**

To consider an application (App 12/3317T) to fell or pollard a protected Willow tree at 3 Brooklands Mews, Oxford Road, Macclesfield SK11 8JY which is subject to the Macclesfield Borough Council (Macclesfield – Brooklands, Oxford Road) Tree Preservation Order 1975, and to determine if the proposed works should be approved. The application is from an employee of Cheshire East Council at Tier 2 or above and is being presented to Committee in accordance with the scheme of delegation to ensure appropriate decision making and in the interests of openness and probity as determined by the Councils constitution

#### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that consent is granted to:

Fell the protected Willow tree identified as T1 within the submitted application, subject to a condition that a replacement tree comprising of either an Ash or Oak shall be planted close to the base of the felled tree in the first planting season following removal.

#### **WARD AFFECTED**

Macclesfield West and Ivy

#### **POLICIES**

Corporate Plan (Objective four)

To protect the natural and recreational environment, for the benefit of local communities.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council is the Local Planning Authority and has delegated to the Planning Committee the responsibility for determining applications for works to protected trees where the applicant is an employee of the Council at Tier 2 or above, or is an elected member of the Council.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Tree Preservation Orders are made to protect appropriate trees which are of public amenity, are normally visible from a public place and which may contribute to the street scene and local landscape. The declining condition of the Willow tree, loss of structural integrity and consequential reduction in the trees future life expectancy outweighs the tree's current modest contribution to the wider public amenity of the area.

A condition requiring replacement planting will be included as part of the decision in order to secure the long term continuation of amenity in the area.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

All Tree Preservation Order applications and Conservation Area notifications are made available to Ward Members, Town Councils and Parish Councils on the weekly planning list

## **VIEWS OF THE PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL**

No comments have been received.

## **OBJECTIONS/REPRESENTATIONS**

None

## **APPRAISAL AND CONSIDERATION OF THE NOTIFICATION**

The applicant has requested the felling or pollarding of the Willow tree identified as T1 located on the left hand side of the driveway to Brooklands Mews, stating that the tree is diseased and shedding branches and leaves. The tree is located on land that is partly owned by the Applicant and other residents of Brooklands Mews.

The Council's Senior Arboricultural Officer carried out a pre application site visit on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012 with a local Tree Surgeon. The inspection confirmed that the Willow tree has deadwood within the canopy, a characteristic of reduced vitality.

Examination of a significant cavity on the main trunk confirmed that decay extends approximately one third into the stem of the tree and that there is a high likelihood that this decay will continue to progress rendering the tree structurally unsound.

Advice has been provided to the applicant on the merits of retaining the tree by pollarding, rather than felling. Whilst this is a less expensive option it is considered that any subsequent re-growth may not be guaranteed and will be dependent on the trees stored energy reserves. As the long term viability of the tree cannot be guaranteed, felling of the tree is considered the most appropriate option in terms of

arboricultural management and will also allow replacement planting securing long term continuation of amenity in the locale.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that consent is granted to fell the protected Willow tree (referred to as T1) at 3 Brooklands Mews, Oxford Road, Macclesfield subject to a condition requiring the planting of a replacement Ash or Oak tree.