

Planning Committee Report	
<b>Planning Ref:</b>	TP/2019/0068
<b>Site:</b>	10 Baxter Close
<b>Ward:</b>	Tile Hill
<b>Proposal:</b>	Pollard Common Ash – TPO/46
<b>Case Officer:</b>	Robert Penlington

## SUMMARY

Consent is sought for works to a protected Ash at the site of 10 Baxter Close. The tree is not within a Conservation Area. The tree to which the application relates is located within the confines of the front garden of the applicant's property.

## KEY FACTS

<b>Reason for report to committee:</b>	The applicant is related to a staff member within Planning and Regulatory Services.
<b>Current use of site:</b>	Residential.
<b>Proposed use of site:</b>	Residential. Application relates to works to a protected tree only.

## RECOMMENDATION

Planning committee are recommended to grant consent for the works subject to conditions.

## REASON FOR DECISION

- The proposed works are acceptable in principle.
- The proposed works will not have an adverse impact upon health of the tree.
- The proposed works will not have an adverse impact upon the amenity of neighbours or the visual amenity of the street scene.
- The proposal accords with Policies GE3 and GE4 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, together with the aims of the NPPF.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **APPLICATION PROPOSAL**

The application seeks consent to re-pollarding this previously pollarded Ash tree.

### **SITE DESCRIPTION**

The tree is identified as T5 Ash and forms part of the City of Coventry (Jobs Lane No.4) Tree Preservation Order 1964. The tree is located within the front garden of the applicant's detached bungalow. The area is predominantly residential, with Jobs Lane to the west. On either side of the site are residential dwellings and gardens.

### **PLANNING HISTORY**

There have been no recent planning applications on this site.

### **POLICY**

#### **National Policy Guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF published in February 2019 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF promotes sustainable development and good design is recognised as a key aspect of this.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 2014, adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents are read together.

#### **Local Policy Guidance**

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2016, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policies relating to this application are:

Policy GE3: Biodiversity, Geological, Landscape and Archaeological Conservation; and  
Policy GE4: Tree Protection.

### **CONSULTATION**

Immediate neighbours and local councillors have been notified and a site notice was posted on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019. At the time of writing the report, no comments have been received. If any comments are received they will be reported within the late representations document.

### **APPRAISAL**

The main issues in determining this application are the principle of how the proposed pruning will impact upon the visual form of the crown of the tree, the health and longevity of the tree and visual amenity within the street scene.

#### **Tree Specifications and Principle of works**

This native tree is a Common Ash of approximately 70 years of age which once formed part of a field boundary hedge. The hedge along with other trees under the same TPO have since mainly been legitimately removed. This tree stands at approximately 7m in height with a 5m crown spread supported upon a single trunk of 50cm in diameter. This species may establish to reach a height in excess of 30m with a 20m crown spread. The tree is located within the confines of the applicant's small front garden which measures approximately 15m

in length and 8m in width. The tree is located approximately 8m from the closest part of the applicant's detached bungalow.

The historic heavy crown reduction works (known as pollarding) would have occurred from earlier on when the tree formed part of a field boundary hedgerow as visibly evident from the three cycles of pollard management. The proposed tree works would trim the crown back to the pollard heads which are located within 0.5m from the main bole of the tree. The re-establishing crown should grow back at approximately 30-40-cm per year.

The form of the tree comprises of a single trunk which bifurcates into two pollard heads then again into multiple pollard heads which have led on to form the current crown. The pollard heads are the swollen areas of tissue which are located between the trunk and the crown of the tree which marks the location where the crown had historically been heavily pruned in the past. As associated with this type of management, there is a degree of decay evident to the older pollard heads, which is due to the prolonged exposure of the pruning wounds to fungal attack. The proposed heavy crown reduction works will reduce the weight and leverage of the limbs upon the structurally weakened fulcrum heads, thus acting to reducing the risk of future limb failure. Conditions are proposed to ensure that the works are carried out in accordance with British Standard BS3998 - Recommendations for Tree Work.

The reasons stated for the tree works include that the tree is close to the drive and bungalow and has telephone cables directly about it. The applicant states that they; sought advice from a registered tree surgeon who suggested it would be sensible to pollard the tree as it would solve the issues of lowering the crown from the overhead cables, allow water into the garden, help protect the newly laid drive and reduce the canopy which is quite extensive in proportion to the relatively small garden and small bungalow.

### **Impact on visual and neighbouring amenity**

The crown of this mature Ash is an attractive feature within the Cul-de-sac and street scene of Baxter Close, where it helps to visually soften the hard build lines of the neighbouring dwellings. The tree also provides forage and shelter for local wildlife.

The proposed works will help allow the tree to remain in a safe condition for the future due to the lightening in weight of its crown and lateral branches to provide for a more aerodynamic structure. As such, the proposed works are considered to be acceptable in accordance with Policies GE3 and GE4 of the Coventry Development Plan 2016.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed pruning is considered to be acceptable in principle and will assist in the self-preservation of the tree whilst improving its structural condition in proportion to the re-establishing crown. The works will not result in any significant impact upon the long term visual amenity of the local area, Therefore Planning Committee are recommended to grant consent for the works subject to conditions.

The reason for Coventry City Council granting planning permission is because the proposed pruning is in accordance with: Policies GE3 and GE4 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, together with the aims of the NPPF.

## CONDITIONS:/REASON

1. The works hereby permitted shall be carried out only in strict accordance with the details shown on the approved plans and in the application documentation.

**Reason:** *To ensure that any works are carried out only in accordance with the terms of this permission in the interests of visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.*

2. The works hereby permitted shall only be carried out in strict accordance with British Standard BS3998 - Tree Work Recommendations or any equivalent standard.

**Reason:** *To ensure that the work is undertaken to an acceptable level of competence in the interests of the vitality and viability of the tree(s) in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.*

