

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P07/0080

Type of approval sought	Tree Preservation Order
Ward	Hayley Green & Cradley South
Applicant	Mrs Tomkins
Location:	4, HODGETTS DRIVE, HALESOWEN, B63 1ET
Proposal	FELL 2 SILVER BIRCH TREES
Recommendation Summary:	APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO: D488 (1996) – A1

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1. The trees subject to this application are two early mature birch trees that are situated in the rear garden of 4 Hodgetts Drive. The property backs onto an adjacent main road, and the crown of the trees can be seen from the road above the boundary wall. Also the tops of the trees are visible over the top of the garage from Hodgetts Drive.
2. As well as these two trees there is also another three early mature birch trees, a young pine tree, an early mature pine tree and a mature lime tree. Due to the presence of these other trees in the area the two birch trees subject to the application only have a moderate to low amenity value.

PROPOSAL

3. Summary of proposals for the works as written on application form is as follows:
 - Fell two birch trees.
4. The trees have been marked on the attached plan.

HISTORY

5. There have been three previous Tree Preservation Order applications on this site.

<i>Site history</i>		
Application no	P00/51792	26/10/00
Proposal	Remove deadwood and branches from 1 lime tree	Approved with conditions
Application no	97/51772	08/12/97
Proposal	Raise crown of 1 beech tree and thin crown of 1 ash tree	Approved with conditions
Application no	P06/2188	30/11/06
Proposal	Reduce crown of one lime tree.	Approved with conditions

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

6. No representations have been received.

ASSESSMENT

Tree(s) Appraisal

Criteria	Tree 1	Tree 2
TPO No	A1	A1
Species	Birch	Birch
Height	9m	9m
Spread	3m	4m
Diameter	150mm	175mm
Form	Poor – Drawn up	Poor – Drawn up
Vigour	Good	Good
Approx Age	Early Mature	Early Mature
Pests / Diseases	None evident.	None Evident
Canopy	Poor	Poor
% Deadwood	1%	1%
Cavities	Wound on main stem near base.	Wound on stem near base.
Bark	Moderate	Moderate
Roots	Poor – close to garage	Good
Overall Health	Moderate	Moderate
Visibility	Moderate / poor	Moderate / poor
Amenity Value	Moderate / Low	Moderate / Low

Further Assessment

7. The trees subject to this application are two early mature birch trees that are located in the rear garden of 4 Hodgetts Drive. The trees are in a moderate state of health and provide a moderate amount of amenity to the surrounding area.
8. The applicant would like to fell the tree because they form part of a group of five similar birch trees that are located in a small area within the garden, and the proximity of the trees is having a detrimental impact on the health of the trees.
9. On inspection the planting proximity of the five birch trees was considered to be too close, and this was resulting in the trees growing high to get to available light sources. As the trees are putting all of their energy into growing tall, there is little side growth on the trees. This has resulted in five trees with tall and thin stems with all of the foliage weight at the top of the stem rather than along its length as it should be.

10. If no works are carried out then the trees will keep growing in this fashion until the weight load becomes too much for the relatively thin stems and stem failure is highly probable.
11. In order to prevent this it is recommended that the group is thinned out to allow the trees to develop a more spreading form which will encourage stem thickening and prevent future failure.
12. When looking at the group to decide which trees are most suitable for removal as part of the process the two trees subject to this application are the obvious candidates, as their stem wounds are likely to warrant their removal in the future anyway. As such the thinning of this group by the removal of these trees is considered to be best for the future health of this group.
13. the removal of these two trees will not be detrimental to the amenity of the areas as the other three birch trees will soon fill the gaps left and there are also a number of other trees in the location that still provide amenity to the area.

CONCLUSION

14. The two birch trees subject to this application form part of a closely planted group of five birch trees in the rear garden of 4 Hodgetts Drive. The trees are partially visible from the adjacent main road and from Hodgetts drive. There are also a number of other trees in the garden.
15. The applicant would like to remove the two trees to thin the group out, as the trees are currently being drawn up in competition for the light. If their current growth is continued stem failure is a highly likely outcome in time.
16. On inspection the rationale behind the application is evident and the two trees that are proposed to be removed are trees that have existing defects that are likely to warrant their removal in the future.
17. The proposed works will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the area, as they will serve to improve the form of the adjacent trees, and the other trees in the garden will still provide amenity to the area.

RECOMMENDATION

18. It is recommended that application is approved subject to the conditions set out below.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The tree works subject of this consent shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 3998:1989 'Recommendations for Treework'.
2. The tree is to be inspected for bird nests and any crevices for bats. If any nests are present and disturbance to nesting or fledgling birds are present then works shall not be undertaken between 1st March and 30th August in any year. If bats are present then advice should be sought from English Nature or the local Wildlife Trust.
3. The works hereby approved shall be carried out within 12 months of the date of this decision.