

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER: P08/0384

Type of approval sought	Tree Preservation Order
Ward	NORTON
Applicant	A E Westwood
Location:	1, BELBROUGHTON ROAD, NORTON, STOURBRIDGE, DY8 3BE
Proposal	FELL 1 NO. CEDRUS DEODORA TREE
Recommendation Summary:	REFUSE

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO: D284 (1990) – T2

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1. The tree subject to this application is a mature cedar tree that is located in the front garden of 1 Belbroughton Road. The tree is a highly prominent feature of the road and provides a high amount of amenity to the area.

PROPOSAL

2. Summary of proposals for the works as written on application form is as follows:
 - Fell 1 Cedar tree.
3. The tree has been marked on the attached plan.

HISTORY

4. There has been one previous Tree Preservation Order application on this site.

<i>Site History</i>		
Application No	P04/0928	13/08/04
Proposal	Prune 1 Cedar Tree	Approved with conditions

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

5. At the time of writing no representations have been received

ASSESSMENT

Tree(s) Appraisal

Criteria	Tree 1
TPO No	T2
Species	Deodar Cedar
Height	14m
Spread	8m
Diameter	650mm
Form	Good
Vigour	Good / Moderate
Approx Age	Mature
Pests / Diseases	None evident.
Canopy	Moderate
% Deadwood	5%
Cavities	None evident
Bark	Good
Roots	Moderate – lifting hard surfaces, slight trip hazard
Overall Health	Good
Visibility	High
Amenity Value	High

Further Assessment

6. The cedar tree subject to this application is a mature specimen that is located in front of 1 Belbroughton Road, Norton. The trees provide a high amount of amenity to the surrounding area.
7. The applicant would like to fell the cedar tree as they have concerns about the safety of the tree following the loss of some branches from the tree; the damage that is being caused to the driveway; the affects of the trees roots on the foundations of the property; the blocking of the guttering; the dropping of sap on cars; and the branches overhanging the road causing problems with high sided vehicles
8. On inspection the tree was found to be in a good state of health with no major defects present within the trees. It was noted that the tree appears to have lost a few limbs, although the major limbs present all appear to be in a sound condition.

9. With regard to the safety of the tree, cedar trees can be prone to losing limb during windy weather or after a heavy snow fall. In order to combat this it is recommended that cedar trees, where appropriate, are crown thinned to reduce the wind resistance of the limbs and also the mechanic forces of the weight of the limbs. Also the installation of a bracing system should be considered in order to prevent any failed limbs falling to ground and causing any damage.
10. If the tree didn't provide such a high amount of amenity to the area, then the potential of future limb loss may have been sufficient justification for its removal. However as the tree provides a higher amount of amenity the required justification for its removal is equally increased. As such it is recommended that the felling of the tree is not approved on these grounds.
11. On inspection some damage to the driveway was noted. This damage was not considered significant in terms the use of the driveway and other options, rather than the felling of the tree, would be able to repair the damage. As such it is not considered that the damage to the drive is sufficient justification for the removal of the tree.
12. With regard to potential damage to the foundations of the property. This would only be possible on a clay based soil. After referring to soil-scape maps of the area this address sits firmly within an area of freely draining slightly acid sandy soils. As such unless the property is sitting on imported soil, or a small pocket of clay, then it is highly unlikely that the roots of the tree will ever cause any damage to the foundations. Therefore unless evidence can be provided to the contrary, the felling of the tree should not be approved on these grounds.
13. The applicant has cited the obstruction of the guttering as a reason for felling the tree. The treatments of such problems are considered to be part of reasonable property maintenance, and are not considered sufficient justification for the felling of the tree. There are various products available that can be used to help prevent the blocking of drains from tree debris, and consideration should be given to the use of these products, rather than the felling of the tree.
14. Similarly the cleaning of the sap, and other substances that drop form the tree onto cars parked below, is considered to be part of reasonable property maintenance and is not considered sufficient justification for the removal of the tree.
15. Any branches that overhang the adjacent highway can be pruned to provide a maximum clearance of 5.5metres above the road, without the need to submit a forma application, as this is a statutory requirement under section 154 of the Highways Act 1980. If such pruning was carried out then any problems with passing high sided vehicles would be removed.
16. Overall the tree is a prominent and makes a valuable contribution to the amenity of the surrounding area. It is accepted that the tree does and will continue to cause a number of problems and inconveniences; these do not outweigh the benefits that the tree provides to the area.

CONCLUSION

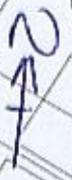
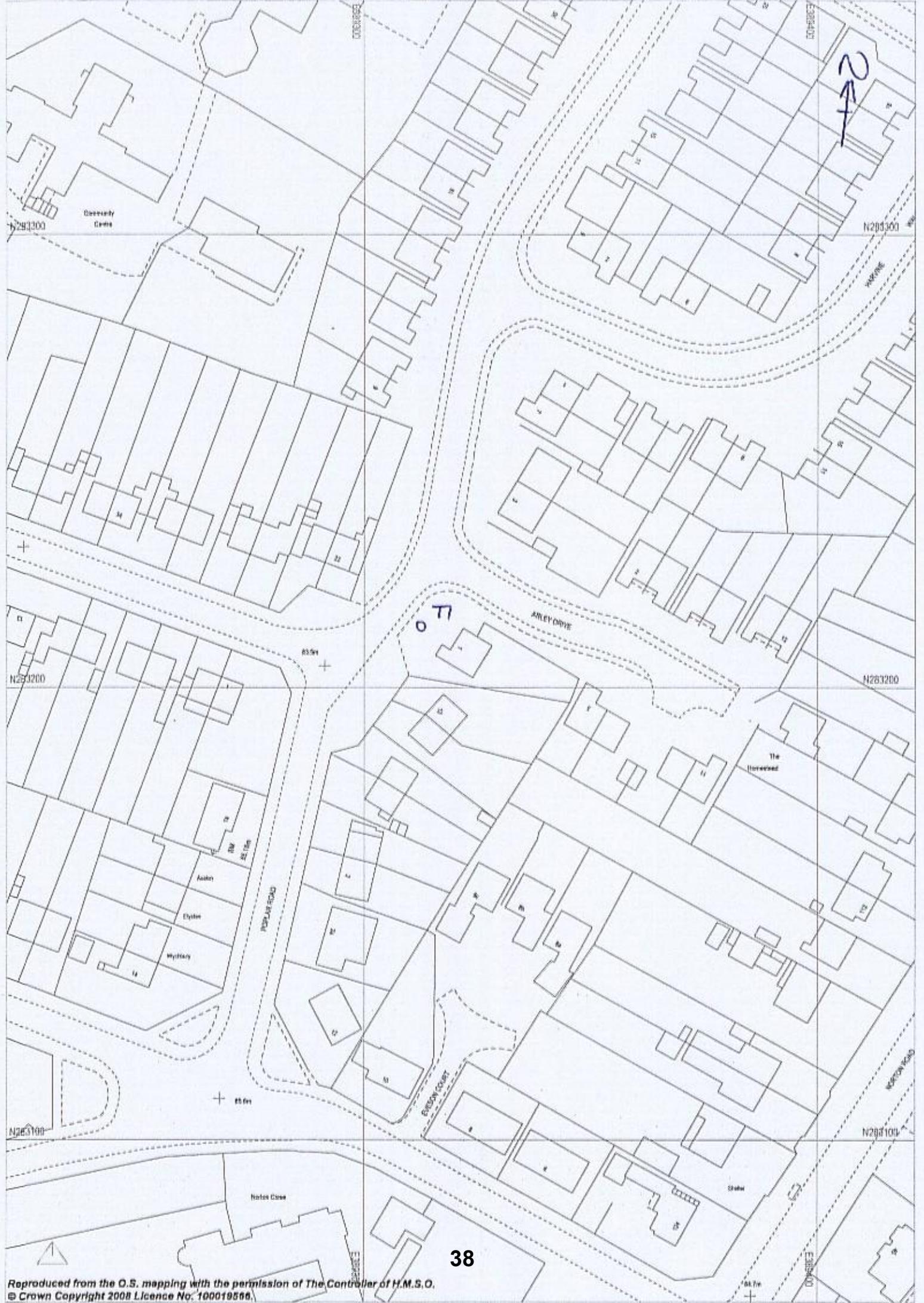
17. The Cedar tree subject to this application is a mature specimen that is situated in the front garden of 1 Belbroughton Road, Norton. The tree is prominent in the area and provides a high amount of amenity.
18. The applicant has provided a number of reasons for the removal of the tree, and whilst it is accepted that the tree does provide significant inconvenience to the applicant's it is not considered that there is sufficient reasoning for the removal of the tree. However an application for appropriate pruning works would be welcomed.

RECOMMENDATION

19. It is recommended that application is refused for the reason stated below.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The tree provides a moderate to high amount of amenity to the surrounding area and users of Belbroughton Road and Poplar Road. The reasons for the application and the supporting information do not sufficiently justify the detrimental affect on the local amenity that would result from the proposed felling.



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FIRST SCHEDULE

Description

Situation

Oak tree

12 Arley Drive,
Norton,
Stourbridge

Cedar tree

21 Belbroughton Road,
Norton,
Stourbridge

EMSALC