

P/15/0625/TO

TITCHFIELD

MR KEITH BROOKS

AGENT: MR KEITH BROOKS

FELL ONE HORSE CHESTNUT PROTECTED BY TPO 23.

27A CATISFIELD ROAD FAREHAM HAMPSHIRE PO15 5LT

Report By

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Site Description

This application relates to one horse chestnut situated within the curtilage of a semi-detached property on the south side of Catisfield Road and north west of Larches Gardens.

Description of Proposal

Consent is sought to fell one horse chestnut protected by TPO 23.

Policies

The following policies apply to this application:

Approved Fareham Borough Core Strategy

CS4 - Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

Representations

Two representations have been received supporting the application on the following grounds:

- 1) The tree is suffering from a disease causing the leaves to turn brown;
- 2) The tree constantly sheds debris which could cause a danger to the road, pavement and block drainage;
- 3) The lean of the tree could cause a danger in ten years;
- 4) The tree is too big for the front garden;
- 5) There is too much shade and ground heave from the roots;
- 6) Children take the conkers which is a nuisance.

Three representations have been received objecting to the works on the following grounds:

- 1) The tree is affected by Leaf Miner and Bleeding Canker but horse chestnuts can recover;
- 2) Remedial works and routine maintenance should be expected if the owner had concerns over the safety of the tree;
- 3) A horse chestnut in Larches Gardens is in a similar state but has been maintained to keep it in a safe condition;
- 4) The older trees are a considerable asset to the area and provide ambience and character;
- 5) Visually the tree appears to be in good condition.

One representation provided the following advice:

- 1) If the tree is a danger to the public it should be felled;
- 2) If the tree is not dangerous the application should be refused to ensure that the amenity value is retained;

- 3) Maintenance of the tree should be carried out to extend its longevity;
- 4) A replacement should be planted if permission is granted.

One out of time representation was received objecting to the works unless the tree poses a danger to the public.

Planning Considerations - Key Issues

Government guidance suggests that in considering tree work applications the Local Planning Authority are advised:

(1) to assess the amenity value of the tree or woodland and the likely impact of the proposal on the amenity of the area, and

(2) in the light of their assessment at (1) above, to consider whether or not the proposal is justified, having regard to the reasons put forward in support of it.

They are advised also to consider whether any loss or damage is likely to arise if consent is refused or granted subject to conditions.

In general terms, it follows that the higher the amenity value of the tree or woodland and the greater the impact of the application on the amenity of the area, the stronger the reasons needed before consent is granted. On the other hand, if the amenity value of the tree or woodland is low, the impact of the application in amenity terms is likely to be negligible.

Tree preservation orders seek to protect trees in the interest of public amenity; therefore it follows that the removal of a protected tree should only be sanctioned where its public amenity value is outweighed by other considerations.

The horse chestnut was visually inspected from ground level on 6 July 2015 with the aid of a nylon sounding mallet and steel probe. The tree is a mature specimen situated in the front garden of 27a Catisfield Road approximately 1.5 metres from the front boundary with the highway. The trunk has a circa 10% lean to the north northeast and the lower crown is weighted over the highway to the northeast.

The tree was observed to be in good physical condition and exhibiting normal growth characteristics for a mature horse chestnut in terms of foliage size, density, colour and annual shoot extension growth. Some minor leaf damage caused by Horse Chestnut Leaf Miner (*Cameraria ohridella*) was evident within the lower crown. The tree was exhibiting minor symptoms of Bleeding Canker (*Pseudomonas syringae* pv *aesculi*) with several small patches < 25mm of stem bleeding visible on the main trunk and some historic stem lesions approximately 100 - 150mm long, which had healed completely with healthy wound wood.

Tapping round the lower 2 metres on the trunk revealed nothing unusual in terms of acoustic tomography and attempts to probe between the buttress roots revealed nothing abnormal. The ground around the stem base and root collar is raised within a 1 - 1.5 metre radius of the stem base. No soil cracks or roots were visible and the driveway construction was observed to be lifting at its nearest point to the tree approximately 500mm to the southwest of the stem base.

Several old pruning wounds were observed on the main stem between 3.5 and 5 metres above ground level, the majority of which appear to be the result of the removal of epicormic branches. However, there is one approximately 300mm diameter wound and cavity at 5

metres above ground level on the south southwest side of the trunk, which requires more detailed investigation. The wound is an uneven shape and the thickness of the callus tissue around the edge of the wound varies in quality and structure. Of concern would be the extent of any decay from this wound into the main stem and any coalescing of decay between this and any of the other smaller wounds beneath.

Trees are living organisms and their condition and vitality can alter quickly depending on environmental and physical factors. It is acknowledged that trees have a natural failure rate as a natural evolutionary process leading to the optimisation of structural strength verses efficient use of resources. Some species have adapted more effectively than others, and some are naturally more prone to failure than others. Therefore no tree can be considered completely safe.

In this instance it is considered that the tree is not currently in a dangerous condition and officers conclude that the evidence available is not sufficient to demonstrate that it poses a hazard sufficient to outweigh its public amenity value and thereby justify its removal.

Furthermore the proposed removal of the horse chestnut will have a significant negative impact on the public amenity and the character of the area.

Recommendation

REFUSE:

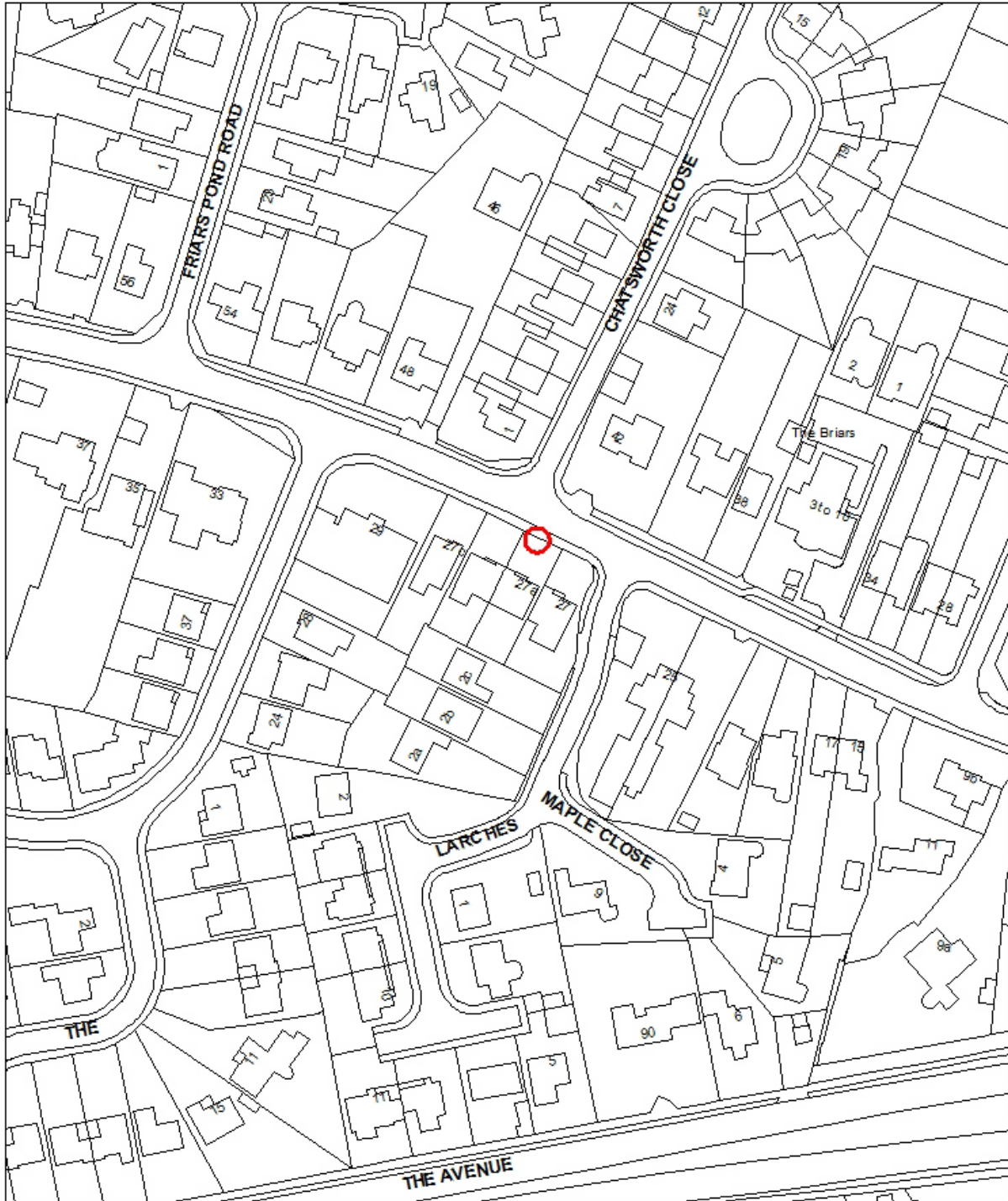
The proposed felling of the horse chestnut tree is considered to be contrary to Policy CS4 of the adopted Fareham Borough Core Strategy in that its felling would represent poor arboricultural practice for which there is insufficient justification. Furthermore the suggested felling of the tree would be harmful to the visual amenities and the character of the area.

Note for information:

It is recommended that a further investigation of the old pruning wounds on the main stem by way of a detailed inspection is undertaken by an arboriculturist within the next 3 months. The results of any further investigation may supersede the current assessment of the trees condition.

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL



27A Catisfield Road
Scale 1:1250

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