

**SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee                      **DATE:** 29<sup>TH</sup> November 2012

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**WARD(S):** Colnbrook and Poyle

**PART I**  
**FOR DECISION**

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO. 3 OF 2012 IN RESPECT OF LAND AT 87-121  
LABURNHAM GROVE, SLOUGH**

1.     **Purpose of Report**

To seek confirmation of Tree Preservation Order No. 3 of 2012.

2.     **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to resolve that Tree Preservation Order No. 3 of 2012 be confirmed.

3.     **Community Strategy Priorities**

- **A Cleaner, Greener place to live, Work and Play**

The protection of trees will help to maintain a green environment and encourage local ecology and diversity.

4.     **Other Implications**

(a) Financial There are no financial implications of proposed action.

(b) Risk Management There are no risk management implications of proposed action.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications There are no implications for the Human Rights Act.

5.     **Supporting Information**

- 5.1    It came to the attention of the planning department on 02/02/12 that there was an intension to remove a tree within the grounds of the flats in laburnum Grove in the near future. This was later confirmed by some of the members of the Laburnham Grove Residents Association.

- 5.2 The tree was inspected and assessed on 07/02/12 by the tree management officer. The tree, a horse chestnut, located at Laburnum Grove Slough is a maturing specimen sited at the end of the flats and adjacent to a public road. It is clearly visible from this road and some adjacent and opposite properties. This tree affords amenity as a prominent sizable individual tree. The tree has a wider impact in that it contributes to the tree cover of this area which is limited due the density of the residential properties.
- 5.3 In the absence of any protection the tree can be removed and this would to be detrimental to the visual amenity and character of the area.
- 5.4 Four letters of objection have been received. A summary of the objections and response are below.

*Objection - The tree could interfere with the drains and underground services.*

Tree Officers Response - Roots from any vegetation can grow into and block drains which are broken. The solution to blocked drains is to clear and then repair the drain which will prevent the roots from re-entering. It should be noted that water loss from a drain can cause damage to property giving further reason to keep the drains watertight. Roots rarely cause broken drains or disturb services; this would only happen if the services are entangled with those roots which are subject to thickening growth or movement, i.e. very close to the trees trunk. At this time no damage is reported and close proximity of any underground services has not been established, so this does not seem to be the case in this instance. However, if repairs to underground services were needed involving work to the tree, then permission would be granted for any work necessary to resolve the problem.

*Objection - The tree is showing signs of bleeding canker.*

Tree Officers Response - The Chestnut which is subject to the TPO does not display the symptoms of bleeding canker, there is a black mark on the trunk but this does not at present show the distinctive discharge indicative of bleeding canker. Further just because a tree is of a species that could eventually succumb to a disease, this does not make the tree unsuitable to be protected by a TPO.

*Objection - concerned that paving slabs of the adjacent path have been lifted making it necessary to remove the tree.*

Tree Officers Response - Light structures like paths are often lifted by the action of roots expanding in girth; this would not require the removal of the tree, other solutions are available such using a different path construction, rerouting the path or in some cases removing small secondary roots.

*Objection - The tree is too close to the flats and the tree might cause subsidence.*

Tree Officers Response - Trees cause subsidence when they dry and shrink the ground which supports the foundations of a building and when the buildings foundations are not of insufficient depth. This only happens when a soil is of a type that shrinks when dried, these are mainly clay soils.

The soil types in this area of the Borough do have a clay element, however the foundations of the flats are likely to be substantial and no damage is reported. For many years regulations have been in place as to the depth of foundations required to support buildings built on clay soils and this is checked during construction. Buildings do commonly exist without damage next to mature trees in clay soil areas. It is not considered desirable or necessary to remove all trees adjacent to buildings as a general measure. However if a tree subject to TPO was to be proven to be causing subsidence permission would be given for any works which were required to stabilize the affected building.

*Objection - The TPO will prevent maintaining the tree in a safe condition.*

Tree Officers Response – Work can be carried out to a tree subject to TPO with the permission of the Council. All applications for permission to carry out work to a tree subject to TPO are considered on their own merits. However work required for public safety would be granted permission.

*Objection - The tree will require constant and costly maintenance.*

The tree is in good health and is not likely to need excessive maintenance. All property needs some maintenance and this is true of trees, this fact alone would not make the tree unsuitable to be protected by a TPO.

5.5 Eight letters of support have been received.

5.6 Due to the time period for the original Tree Preservation Order No. 1 of 2012 lapsing, and the change in the Tree Preservation Order procedure, a new order was made on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012. Residents again were notified and the original objections and letters of support have been included within this report.

## 6. **Comments of Other Committees**

None.

## 7. **Conclusion**

In light of the above it is being recommended that Tree Preservation Order No. 1 of 2012 be confirmed.

## 8. **Background Papers**

None.