

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 21 MAY 2008

Report of the Development Manager (to be read in conjunction with the original report submitted to the planning committee of 16 April 2008)

Countryside Items

**Objection to Taunton Deane Borough (Wellington No.1) Tree Preservation Order 2008 at 11 High Path, Wellington
TD1044, T1 Beech**

Additional information and comments received from the objectors Mr Trueman and Mr Payne at the planning committee of 16 April and by letter since

- a) There is a manhole cover at the base of the tree, under which there is a void which may destabilise the tree. Some roots have been found growing into the void and may damage the sewer in the future.
- b) The boundary wall is in fact listed along with the house.
- c) The tree is nearer to the adjacent houses than was recorded in the officer's report.
- d) The beech tree that stood in the garden of 9 High Path was blown down in high winds, not felled for health and safety reasons.

Officer's Further Comments

In response to the above points:-

- i) The size of the void beneath the manhole cover is not known, but it is unlikely to be significant compared to the extent of the tree's roots that will have grown beyond the canopy edge, anchoring the tree. Roots may enter cracks in a sewer or drain that is already damaged but they seldom initiate the damage.
- ii) The conservation officer has confirmed that the boundary wall is in fact listed as it forms part of the curtilage of the listed building. However, she is of the opinion that the wall and any damage being caused to it is not significant enough to support removal of the tree.
- iii) More accurate measurement has revealed that the edge of the tree trunk is 6.3 metres from 11 High Path and 6 metres from 12 High Path. When using current guidelines for assessing trees for TPO, this is far enough away for the tree to be considered for TPO.
- iv) The health of the beech tree that blew over at 9 High Path is not known.

A full aerial inspection of the tree has now been carried out by Colin Inder of Arboricare Ltd, and a copy of his report is attached. The conclusion of Colin's report is that the tree is healthy and of normal vigour, but that some crown reduction work should be considered, to include the removal of a wounded branch on the east side.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Tree Preservation Order be confirmed. An application to carry out the management works recommended in Colin Inder's report would be favourably received.