

## **Report to Area Plans Sub-Committee B**

**Report reference: PLN/003/2006-07.**

**Date of meeting: 15 November 2006.**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Subject: Confirmation of Tree Preservation Order EPF/12/06 – 23 High Street, Epping.**

**Officer contact for further information: Elizabeth Haines (01992 – 56 4452).**

**Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 – 56 4470).**

---

### **Recommendation:**

**That Tree Preservation Order EPF/12/06 be confirmed.**

### **Background:**

1. Tree Preservation Order EPF/12/06 was made to protect a semi-mature sycamore tree with purple backed leaves, in the rear garden of 23 High Street, Epping.
2. The Tree Preservation Order was made as a result of a planning application being submitted for this site, which indicates that this sycamore will be removed. As several large trees have already been removed from this area, it is considered necessary to protect this tree in order to ensure it is given proper consideration and protection during the planning and development process. This tree has high visual amenity value as it can be seen from all the surrounding gardens, adjacent road, footpaths and the nearby allotments. The very attractive foliage of this tree contributes greatly to its public amenity value. It also has a high wildlife value, especially since some of the surrounding trees have been felled.
3. There is a planning inquiry on this development, to be held on 5<sup>th</sup> December. One of the reasons for refusal was on tree grounds.

### **Objection to the Tree Preservation Order:**

4. An objection to the Order has been received from Ian Keen Limited on behalf of McCarthy & Stone (Developments) Ltd. The grounds of the objection are as follows:

*"The Local Planning Authority, in this instance, has failed to follow Government advice, as the tree is not a significant amenity to the general public. We consider the Sycamore tree in question does not meet the criteria set out in either paragraph 3.2 or 3.3 (i) of "Tree Preservation Orders A Guide to the Law and Good practice" published by the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions in March 2000, and as such its removal would not "...have a significant impact on the local environment and its enjoyment by the public"."*

### **Head of Planning Services Comments:**

5. The detailed response to the ground of objection is listed below:
  - (a) The tree has a high wildlife value, especially since some of the surrounding trees have been felled. It is a place where wild birds can perch; and
  - (b) When considering the amenity value of this tree, account was taken of the fact that this tree can be seen from surrounding gardens, from the adjacent road and public footpaths and from the nearby public allotments. It is already a skyline feature and as a semi mature tree its future potential for public amenity is even greater. Sycamores can live for up to two

hundred years. The attractive foliage of this tree contributes greatly to its public amenity value.

### **Conclusions:**

6. Landscaping policy requires that adequate provision be made for the retention of trees in these situations. This is an important and, from public representations, a much appreciated tree that, were it not for the TPO, would be felled in the course of the proposed redevelopment of the site. The TPO allows the council to ensure the presence of this publicly visible tree is given proper weight in the planning process. Confirmation of the Order is recommended.

7. Letters in support of the confirmation of this Order have been received from:

- Ann Street, 2 Beech Place, Epping – Visual focal point and wildlife value;
- Mr & Mrs Ingram, 1c Tower Road, Epping – Focal point on skyline, wildlife value;
- Mrs A Stoner, 9 Beech Place, Epping – Seasonal interest and wildlife value;
- Paul and Susan Savage, 11 High Street, Epping – Beauty and wildlife value;
- Colin West, 14 High Street, Epping – Beauty and wildlife value;
- Kathleen Belverstone, 8 High Road, Epping – Beauty, unusual species in this vicinity, complements local landscape, wildlife value; and
- Maxine Starling, 15 High Road, Epping – Focal point on skyline and wildlife value.