

Section 6: TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

Application No : 17/01775/TPO

Ward:
Copers Cope

Address : 156 Bromley Road Beckenham BR3 6PG

OS Grid Ref: E: 538403 N: 169363

Applicant : Subsidence Management Services

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

T2 Oak - Remove.
SUBJECT TO TPO 1501 (T1)

Consultations

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and representations were received which can be summarised as follows:

- The oak tree has a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) dating back to 1988. The evidence submitted relate to a dwelling 100 feet away from the tree. There is no evidence that the subsidence is a result of roots. The houses 156 and 158 are at a higher level than the main road. There is subsidence on the external steps, driveway and front boundary wall showing that subsidence is due to geological conditions. The objector disagrees with the proposal.

Considerations

The application site is comprised of a detached dwelling located on the south side of Bromley Road. The property is typical of this part of Beckenham and appears to be of a similar age and design to other properties in the vicinity.

The garden tapers to a point measured approximately 37m from the rear of the dwelling. Due to the position of the plot, the garden is smaller than the neighbouring plots.

This application has been made in respect of a large oak tree (T2) located towards the end of the rear garden, approximately 25m from the rear of the dwelling. The tree is referenced as T2 on the supplied plan, however, is referenced as T1 on the TPO. This application has been made by the insured neighbouring resident, as a result of a subsidence claim. A number of supporting documents have been supplied which include the following:

- Level Monitoring
- Foundation diagrams
- Root Identification
- Soil Analysis
- Claim Assessment Report
- Arboricultural Report
- Crack Monitoring

The data supplied indicates a seasonal movement resulting in damage to the kitchen extension and rear portion of the dwelling. The report details the dimensions of the tree within the survey data.

The details supplied are sufficient to enable consideration of the application.

Conclusion

The information supplied indicates movement affecting the dwelling and extension. The extension was underpinned in 1995 and was aimed at stabilising previously noted movement. Given the depth of the foundations noted in Trail Pit 2, which relates to the original dwelling's foundation depth, reveals foundations are 0.5m deep. Trail Pit 1 reveals the depth of the foundations associated with the extension to be 1.9m.

Based on the tree species, zone of influence and soil type, foundations would need to be a minimum of 1.2m deep. The foundation depth of the extension is therefore sufficient to take account of the oak tree's influence. The foundations of the dwelling are too shallow and the majority of the damage noted internally, is believed to be a result of movement across the whole dwelling. The damage noted around the junction of the dwelling and extension show separation has occurred between the two. The movement is more likely to be associated with the main dwelling and this is further indicated by the damage noted internally around the door frames, ceiling and plaster finish. Other cosmetic damage is believed to be general aging of the internal décor.

A heave assessment has not been included in the investigation. As T2 existed prior to the construction of the claimant's property, soil conditions are likely to have already been influenced by the tree. Further movement caused by the removal of the tree should not be overlooked.

The subject oak tree is awarded high amenity value primarily on the basis of age/maturity. This is reflected by the making of the TPO in 1998.

The value of the tree outweighs the cost of repairs with the retention of the tree. It is therefore recommend that the application be refused.

The objection makes a valid point with regard to displacement around external hard surfacing. The underpinning of neighbouring No. 154 Bromley Road in 1991 suggests that subsidence has already occurred in the vicinity of the tree. The claimant's property is confirmed to be sited within the zone of influence of the oak tree.

Due to the potential financial implications, a committee decision is required. It is recommended that the application be refused.

DECISION

Refusal for: T2 Oak - Remove.

Reason:

The application has failed to acknowledge the adequacy of the main dwelling's foundations. It is calculated that the original foundations recorded at a depth of 0.5m are insufficient to take account of the subject tree's influence on the soil. No consideration has been given to potential heave. The proposals would negate the objectives of the TPO and therefore conflict with Policy NE7 of the Bromley Unitary Development Plan (adopted July 2006).

INFORMATIVES

1. You are advised that formal consent is not required for the removal of deadwood, dangerous branches and Ivy from protected trees.

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2. A heave assessment should be included in any further application proposing to remove the tree.