

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:P06/0198

Type of approval sought	Tree Preservation Order
Ward	St. James's
Applicant	Mr & Mrs C G Owens
Location:	12, BOTANY DRIVE, DUDLEY, DY3 3XT
Proposal	FELL 4 SYCAMORE TREES
Recommendation Summary:	APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO: D007 (1963) –W2

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

1. The trees subject to this application, four sycamores, are located within the rear garden of 12 Botany Drive. The trees are all mature, and are all in a reasonable state of health. However as there are another four mature trees in this rear garden, the trees have grown in competition with others.
2. The trees in this garden form part of a belt of trees that runs along the rear of a number of properties in Botany Drive. As there are public rights of way on the open ground at the rear of the property the trees are highly visible to the public and the belt as whole provides a high amount of public amenity.

PROPOSAL

3. Summary of proposals for the works as written on application form is as follows:
 - Fell 4 Sycamore trees
4. The trees have been marked on the attached plan.

HISTORY

There has been one previous Tree Preservation Order application on this site.

<i>Site History</i>		
Application No	P03/1892 – 39 Leys Road	08/10/03
Proposal	Fell one Ash tree and 3 Sycamore trees	Refused

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

5. No representations have been received.

ASSESSMENT

Tree(s) Appraisal

Criteria	Tree 1	Tree 2	Tree 3	Tree 4
TPO No.	W2	W2	W2	W2
Species	Sycamore	Sycamore	Sycamore	Sycamore
Height	11m	12m	15m	12m
Spread	4m	4m	6m	4m
Diameter	250mm	250mm	450mm	250mm
Form	Poor – suppressed	Poor – suppressed	Moderate – lopsided	Poor – drawn up
Vigour	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Approx Age	Early Mature	Early Mature	Mature	Early Mature
Pests / Diseases	None evident.	None evident.	None evident.	None evident.
Canopy	Poor – suppressed	Poor – suppressed	Moderate	Poor - sparse
% Deadwood	1%	1%	1%	1%
Cavities	At old pruning wounds	At old pruning wounds	At old pruning wounds	At old pruning wounds
Bark	Good	Moderate	Good	Good
Roots	Good	Good	Good	Good
Overall Health	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Visibility	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Amenity Value	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / poor

Further Assessment

6. The trees subject to this application are three early mature sycamore trees and one mature sycamore tree. The trees are located within the rear garden of 12 Botany

Drive and form part of a larger belt of trees that run along the rear gardens of a number in Botany Drive.

7. The belt of trees is highly visible from the open space at the rear of the properties, and due to a number of public rights of way across the land the belt of trees has a high public amenity value.
8. On inspection the four trees were found to be in a reasonable health. However due to their close proximity to four other mature trees in the same garden they are now mainly suppressed. Trees 1, 2 and 4 have developed a drawn up habit as they have strived to reach the light that has been blocked by the surrounding trees. Tree 3, whilst having grown to correct proportions, is growing in close proximity to a larger beech and has developed a heavily one sided crown, at the same time suppressing the southern side of the beech's crown.
9. Due to the age of the sycamores it would appear that they are self set, with trees 1, 2 and 4 originating from tree 3. On inspection of the other parts of the belt of trees it would appear that in time sycamores will become the dominant species of the woodland as the 'original' beech and ash trees age into over maturity.
10. As such the applicant would like to remove the sycamores and replant with more appropriate species, such as beech, ash and field maple, that will be able to develop into mature trees that will naturally replace the existing mature beech and ash trees when their condition dictates their removal.
11. At present there are two main areas of public vantage where these trees can be seen. On Botany Drive, looking across the back garden and from the public footpaths on the open land at the back of the property. Whilst the removal of the trees will be noticeable, particularly from the Botany Drive vantage point, it is not considered that the amenity of the area will be significantly detracted from because of the remaining mature tree cover. From the land at the rear, the works will have a lesser impact as the trees are situated to the rear of the other trees on the site, and partially screened.

CONCLUSION

12. The trees subject to this application are three early mature sycamores and one mature sycamore. The trees are all in a reasonable state of health with no significant defects, however, due to competition from the surrounding trees all have poorly developed crowns. The trees are situated within a group of mature beech and ash trees that form part of a wider belt of trees.

13. The applicant would like to remove the trees to thin out the group to prevent the sycamores from impairing the forms of the other trees, and to ensure that the native dominance of the group of trees is retained.
14. The removal of the trees will only have a moderate impact on the amenity of the area due to the presence of the mature trees that are to remain.
15. The applicant proposes the planting of native trees that will in time grow up to replace the existing native trees once they have exceeded their safe and useful life expectancy.
16. Whilst the proposal involves the removal of a number 'big' trees, a decision need to be made about the future of the trees in this garden and the wooded belt in general. Should the sycamores remain and in time take over from the native trees as the dominant species in the belt or should the succession of native trees be encouraged and aided by the removal of the sycamore and the replanting of the native species.

RECOMMENDATION

17. It is recommended that application is approved subject to the conditions set out below.

Conditions and/or reasons:

1. The tree works subject of this consent shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 3998:1989 'Recommendations for Treework'.
2. The tree is to be inspected for bird nests and any crevices for bats. If any nests are present then disturbance to nesting or fledgling birds are present then works shall not be undertaken between 1st March and 30th August in any year. If bats are present then advice should be sought from English Nature or the local Wildlife Trust.
3. The works hereby approved shall be carried out within 12 months of the date of this decision.
4. Five replacement trees shall be planted between the beginning of November and the end of March, within 1 year of felling (and replanted if necessary) and maintained until satisfactorily established. The size, species and location of the replacement trees shall be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority prior to the felling of the trees to which the application relates.

