

**WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - PLANNING, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND GOVERNANCE**

DELEGATED APPLICATION

Application No: 6/2020/1716/EMT
Location: 19 Scholars Mews Welwyn Garden City AL8 7JQ
Proposal: Removal of oak tree
Officer: Mr Gregory Coppenhall

Recommendation: Refused

6/2020/1716/EMT

Context	
Site description	19 Scholars Mews Welwyn Garden City AL8 7JQ
Constraints	Estate Management Scheme, as defined within the Leasehold Reform Act 1967
Relevant Estate Management history	<p>Planning</p> <p>Application Number: W6/2014/1224/TE Decision: Granted Decision Date: 14 August 2014 Proposal: Removal of 3 Cherry trees and reduce hornbeam tree by 25%</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2018/1712/EM Decision: Refused Decision Date: 03 August 2018 Proposal: Fell 1 x Oak tree and replace with 1 x Oak tree somewhere else in the garden</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2018/2469/EM Decision: Granted Decision Date: 12 November 2018 Proposal: Reduce 2 x Oak trees by 30% - covered by TPO 252 and TPO 738</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2019/1944/EM Decision: Withdrawn Decision Date: 13 August 2019 Proposal: Fell 1x Oak tree</p> <p>Application Number: 6/2019/1981/EM Decision: Granted Decision Date: 18 September 2019 Proposal: Fell 1x Oak tree</p>
Consultations	

Neighbour representations	Support: 0	Object: 0	Other: 0
Summary of neighbour responses	None		
Consultees and responses	The Gardens Trust - - Thank you for consulting the Gardens Trust, of which HGT is a member. We commented under 6/2020/1701/TPO that no reason was given for the proposed works to this tree. We note that in the current application no advice has been sought from the council. We would suggest that arboricultural advice is sought, from the council or a commercial company, as pruning or other less drastic interventions would prevent the loss of a mature tree which contributes to the local character		
Relevant Policies	Policy EM3 – Soft Landscaping		
Main Issues			
Appropriateness of the works in relation to the tree(s)	<p>The work request to remove this tree is inappropriate. Applicant describes the tree to lack flare at the base as a reason to suggest the tree to be unstable. Given the location of the tree, with many trees located around this tree, it is unlikely to develop this flare or taper until a greater age as it will not be necessary to enhance the biomechanical integrity of the tree. Since trees are self-optimising in the way in which they grow (they will grow wood as required to support themselves), if the tree needed root flare to support itself, it would have grown in such a way. The applicant also mentioned the potential for limbs to fall, which can be said for any tree and is not a sufficient reason to remove a tree alone especially considering Welwyn Garden City is defined by its mature landscape.</p> <p>The Oak tree provides a high public amenity value to the surrounding area and given the climate emergency declared by this council, such trees are of great significant and should be retained wherever possible. Remedial pruning operations would be a more favourable solution to any nuisance caused by the tree.</p>		
Conclusion			
The work request is not appropriate and would result in the loss of landscaping that would harm the character and amenities of the area.			

Reasons for Refusal:

1. The work request to remove this tree is inappropriate. Applicant describes the tree to lack flare at the base as a reason to suggest the tree to be unstable. Given the location of the tree, with many trees located around this tree, it is unlikely to develop this flare or taper until a greater age as it will not be necessary to enhance the biomechanical integrity of the tree. Since trees are self-optimising in the way in which they grow (they will grow wood as required to support themselves), if the tree needed root flare to support itself, it would have grown in such a way. The applicant also mentioned the potential for limbs to fall, which can be said for any tree and is not a sufficient reason to remove a tree alone especially considering Welwyn Garden City is defined by its mature landscape.

REFUSED DRAWING NUMBERS

2.

Plan Number	Revision Number	Details	Received Date
Tree Sketch		Tree Sketch	14 July 2020
Location Plan		Location plan	25 August 2020

Determined By:

Ms Emma Griffin
21 October 2020