

PART I - DELEGATED

6. **Consideration of Tree Works Application 16/2302/TPO (DCES)**

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 To consider Tree Works Application 16/2302/TPO made by Hertfordshire Highways to remove two Lime trees. This report sets out the officer's recommendations to grant consent.

2. **Details**

- 2.1 On 28 September 2015 the Three Rivers (Old Mill Road, Hunton Bridge) Tree Preservation Order 2015 (TPO829) was made protecting two Lime trees on Old Mill Road. The order was made in response to a proposal by Hertfordshire Highways to remove the two trees in order to facilitate a new pedestrian footway.

TPO829 was confirmed at Planning Committee on 14 December 2015. Since then Hertfordshire Highways have explored alternative options for the pedestrian footway which could retain one or both of the Lime trees. Three Rivers District Council Trees and Landscape Department have been involved during this process.

The two trees are situated opposite the entrance to the Old Mill and do contribute to the character of this part of Hunton Bridge. It has become apparent that the level of engineering which would be necessary to retain these trees would require the introduction of hard structures. Such a level of engineering would itself alter the character of this part of Old Mill Road.

Hertfordshire Highways have now adopted the whole of the embankment which runs between Old Mill Road and The Maltings. The current proposal is to reprofile the whole of the embankment to facilitate a footway at road level and a 1.5m wide step along the middle of the embankment which will be planted with 3 replacement Lime trees which will be of Large Standard size stock. At planting the trees would be 4-5m tall. They will be large enough to give some immediate visual benefit but young enough to successfully establish.

The proposal requires the removal of the two protected Lime trees. Both of these trees were historically managed as 'Pollards'. They have not been managed in this way for a number of decades and the re-growth is now so large that the trees would need to be heavily reduced to ensure that they do not break apart. One of the trees has extensive decay at the base and should be removed anyway for safety reasons. The changes that have been made to scheme since September 2015 mean that the current proposal would seem to be the best solution. The character of Old Mill Road will be maintained and residents will have a much needed pedestrian footway. Hertfordshire Highways have begun a consultation on this project with local residents and businesses

3. **Options**

- 3.1 There are two options available to the Committee:
- (a) Grant consent for 16/2302/TPO to allow the removal of two Lime trees.
 - (b) Refuse consent for 16/2302/TPO.

4. **Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

5. **Financial, Legal, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

5.1 None specific.

6. **Recommendation**

6.1 Grant consent for 16/2302/TPO to allow the removal of two Lime trees.

Report prepared by: Terence Flynn, Landscape Officer

Background Papers

- TPO829 file
- Herts Highways Consultation Documents HC_G-I1603.74