

8 January 2025

Mr. David Whittles
Environmental Services
Bromsgrove District Council
Crossgate House
Crossgate Road
Redditch
Worcestershire B98 7SN

Reference: Tree/s on land at: 2 The Coppice, Hagley, Worcestershire, DY8 2XZ

Dear David

We are writing in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 to formally object to the Tree Preservation Order (provisional) that came into force on 19th December 2024 relating to the tree ("T1") on the Order's schedule (a Cedar with a split trunk, located at the front of our property in close proximity to our house and the road).

We object for the following reasons:

1. We believe that the tree T1 is becoming increasingly dangerous and represents a serious safety risk. During storm "Darragh" (6th-7th December 2024), a quantity of very large branches and debris was ripped from the tree, causing damage to property. One of these branches (of around 8ft in length) landed in our neighbours garden (over 30 feet away). Had any of the debris hit an occupant or passerby, we believe the injury could have been fatal given the size of the branches that were dislodged. We do not believe that Storm Darragh was a "once in a lifetime" event; given the general consensus that severe storms and high winds are becoming more likely, the risk that the tree causes damage or injury is also becoming more likely.
2. The tree T1 has become too large for the site, given it's proximity to our and our neighbours properties. It's twin stems require structural support bracing (already installed at our cost) and regular pruning (also at our cost). Should the brace fail during a storm or heavy winds, we believe there is a risk that the tree could split and fall. Given the massive size and weight of the tree, this would cause significant property damage at the least, and in the worst case a fatal injury. We continue to try to manage this by checking the brace regularly and reducing the tree's height but this work is becoming increasingly expensive given the size of the tree (and will be impacted by the Preservation Order's restrictions). The tree is also beginning to impact other parts of our property - the roots are breaking through our driveway, and there is a risk that the roots could begin to damage the foundations of our house.

3. The preservation order is made in the interests of amenity, although we note that no other preservation orders exist on other trees in the vicinity and we do not understand why the tree suddenly has amenity value given that no Tree Preservation Order was put in place when the house was originally built. A tree's amenity value includes its impact on stress and illness levels as well as its ability to provide a sense of wellbeing and should consider the people that live in close proximity to the tree as a priority. It seems there has been no consideration given to the significant negative amenity value that the tree has given its increasingly negative impact on the mental wellbeing of ourselves, our family, and our neighbours. The people that live in close proximity to this tree should be the primary beneficiaries of the tree's amenity value, but are all objecting to the Preservation Order based on the health and safety risks that we've outlined in this letter.

We strongly urge you to rescind the Tree Preservation Order and consider our alternative proposal:

1. We intend to remove the tree (T1), at our cost, for all of the reasons we have outlined;
2. We already intend to plant new trees on our property, at our cost, that are more appropriate (both in terms of size and position) and we are happy to select replacement trees (species, maturity etc) in consultation with you and your team;
3. We are happy to make the planting of those replacement trees a condition of the consent to remove T1.

We note that the Preservation Order came into force on 19th December 2024 on a temporary basis for six months, creating an effective deadline of 19th June 2025 for the Council to either make the order permanent or to remove it. However, we would very much appreciate an earlier response to our objection as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Paul and Nicola Collins

2 The Coppice, Hagley, DY8 2XZ