

45 Peterborough Road
Castor
Peterborough
PE5 7AX

30 JUL 2020

The head of Planning Services
Planning Services
Peterborough City Council
Sand Martin House
Bittern Way
Fletton Quays
Peterborough
PE2 8TY

29th July 2020

Dear Sir,

RE: TPO reference 20/0001/TPO Site Location 45 Peterborough Road Castor

I write to object to the imposition of TPO referenced above dated 15th July 2020.

I had already commissioned an arboricultural report, prior to and included in my recent planning application No.20/00151/FUL to develop part of my large rear garden with a single dwelling. I was aware of the constraints to consider in terms of trees' retention categories

Any future development on the land would naturally be informed by this information, and the planning process could have taken its normal course.

As the trees are within a rear garden, viewing the trees from the public highway is limited, with the exception of those with particular stature which can still only be seen when standing adjacent to the front driveway.

Trees can be viewed from the land to the rear of the property, however, this area is not considered to be public.

In terms of importance to the local landscape, several of the trees can not be viewed at all.

In terms of future developments, there are sufficient boundary trees to screen the land from all sides, that could be retained.

As a TPO is usually served in the interests of amenity there does not appear to be a reason to make the TPO in this case. I feel the TPO is being served with the sole purpose of preventing any future development on my land.

I would point out that whilst my house is a listed building and is within a conservation area the garden area, where the trees are located is outside the conservation area but within the designated village envelope.

Surely it is not usual to apply TPOs to trees within the rear of private gardens for those reasons described above?

While I accept that the tree officer does have the right to enter property to make a TPO, I am surprised that there was a need to enter the property unannounced, particularly during the current climate of social distancing. I was not at home when he called and he informed my neighbour that he did not need to be accompanied. This suggests to me that he already had a plan prior to his visit and was happy not to find me present.

I feel that I have been treated unfairly, with restrictions placed upon my property, creating additional administration, both to myself, future residents and on the public resource.

The proposed TPO relates to all the trees of merit in the rear garden, and I would therefore make a representation with regard to some of the trees placed into the order, (ie those not visible from any public space) and any that would need to be removed to facilitate the subject of my planning application, namely T10 and T5

With regard to the group G1, I feel it may be more appropriate for the order to specify those trees that really are of sufficient amenity to justify long term protection, rather than adding every tree within the group to the order. The group comprises several self-sown sycamores so close together that none will grow to be decent specimens. The group also includes what is described as two hazels (actually cobnuts) which are not in fact properly formed trees but merely scrub. (see attached photo)

I am also mystified by the TPO on a very old apple tree T1 actually located in the garden of No 43. It has never been pruned in the 26 years that I have lived in my house and was already a large tree when I moved in in 1994. It is so large that the fruit cannot be picked and falls to ground in my garden creating a considerable mess.

To summarise the TPO is generally in respect of sycamore trees which by their nature are messy and prone to individual branches dying off and needing to be removed before they actually drop off.

T11 has low hanging branched that threaten to damage the adjacent building and I request permission to remove the offending branches. Perhaps a meeting could be arranged to discuss and agree a maintenance schedule. Every year there are hundreds, if not thousands of sycamore seedlings that spring up throughout the garden, all of which have to be pulled up by hand or the garden would turn into a forest in just a few years. All of these sycamores are self-sown and are only present due to the property being derelict for many years prior to my buying and renovating it.

The way that this TPO has been carried out suggests that It is a blatant attempt to thwart my planning application. I would point out that on both my previous planning applications to develop my garden the presence of the trees was not amongst the reasons given for refusal.

I would also draw your attention to the planning permission history of my property since I have owned it and you will see that whenever a tree was required to be removed approval was sought and readily granted.

The blanket approach in this TPO seems to suggest that the tree officer feared that I was about to embark on some sort of deforestation project but my history of seeking approval for major tree works demonstrates that I am not an environmental vandal.

I fully accept that trees are a valuable resource and need to be protected but surely this does not preclude the removal of the odd tree (bearing in mind that there are so many) to facilitate a modest one house development especially when supported by an agree compensatory tree planting scheme for elsewhere within the site?

To conclude I therefore respectfully request that the detail of this TPO be revisited in the light of the above comments.

If any further site visit is necessary please ensure that an appointment is made in advance and for a time when I can be present to discuss the merits or otherwise of all relevant trees. Please ensure that the officer complies with all current social distancing practices particularly as I am 70 years old.

Yours faithfully

P D Ruskie.