

## Crawley Borough Council

### Minutes of Planning Committee

Tuesday, 14 January 2025 at 7.30 pm

#### Councillors Present:

S Pritchard (Chair)

M Mwagale (Vice-Chair)

O Adeniyi, I Ashraf, T Bidwell, J Charatan, J Hart, K L Jaggard, Y Khan and A Nawaz

#### Also in Attendance:

Councillor K Abu Mosa

#### Officers Present:

Siraj Choudhury

Head of Governance, People & Performance

Jean McPherson

Group Manager (Gatwick Northern Runway DCO)

Jess Tamplin

Democratic Services Officer

#### Apologies for Absence:

Councillor B J Burgess

#### 1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

#### 2. Lobbying Declarations

No lobbying declarations were made.

#### 3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 2 December 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 4. Crawley Borough Council Tree Preservation Order - Oak Tree at the Moat House, Balcombe Road, Pound Hill, Crawley, RH10 7SY - 07/2024

The Committee considered report [PES/477](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which sought to determine whether to confirm the Tree Preservation Order (TPO) – Oak Tree at the Moat House, Balcombe Road, Pound Hill, Crawley - 07/2024 – with or without modification for continued protection, or not to confirm the TPO.

Councillor Jaggard declared she had visited the site.

The Group Manager (Gatwick Northern Runway DCO) provided a verbal summation of the application, which related to an oak tree in a residential garden in Pound Hill. The tree was a large mature specimen and was considered to have significant amenity value. In August 2024 the tree was protected under a six month provisional TPO, which the Committee was now requested to confirm.

Peter Walker, the landowner, spoke in objection to the application. Matters raised included:

- When the property was purchased undergrowth was cleared from the property's grounds, but no mature trees or shrubs were removed. The two trees in the rear garden, one of which was the oak the subject of the TPO, were retained.
- A separate planning application for the site had been submitted which included a tree planting plan, which proposed planting four new trees in the rear garden and six in the front garden.
- The oak tree was under good arboricultural management - a tree surgeon had previously undertaken works mostly consisting of the removal of deadwood - and there was no threat to the tree of being overly pruned or damaged.

The Committee then considered the application. A Committee member asked for clarification on whether other trees had been removed from the site as part of the works to the garden that had been undertaken. The Officer explained that trees along the front of the property and some mature shrubs in the rear garden seemed to have been cleared, which the property owner was entitled to do as there was no protection in place at the time.

Some Committee members expressed sympathy for the householder in relation to the TPO process and its complexities. The Officer explained that the making of a TPO is a reactive process; often a provisional TPO is made due to works occurring at the site of a tree. It was highlighted that a TPO did not prevent works to a tree from being undertaken, and an application to do so could be made to the Council at any time.

The Committee then moved to a vote on the item. The recommendation was moved by Councillor Pritchard as the Chair and seconded by Councillor Mwangale as the Vice-Chair. Councillor Charatan was not present for the majority of the officer's presentation on the item so abstained from voting on the recommendation.

## **RESOLVED**

Confirm, without modification.

## **Closure of Meeting**

With the business of the Planning Committee concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.52 pm.

**S Pritchard (Chair)**