

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

SUBJECT: Confirmation Report: Tree Preservation Order (TPO) MCC273

DEPARTMENT: Tourism, Leisure and Culture.

MEETING: Planning Committee

Date to be considered: 5th June 2108

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: St. Kingsmark.

1. **PURPOSE**

To consider the confirmation of provisional Tree Preservation Order number MCC273 (2017) without modification.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the County Council confirms Tree Preservation Order No. MCC273 (2017) – Woolpitch Wood, Bayfield, Chepstow without modification.

3. **REASONS**

- a) The woodland to which this TPO relates is growing on land in the ownership of Persimmon Homes, Cardiff. Persimmon were one of the original developers of Bayfields, Chepstow.
- b) The intention was for this land and its trees to be transferred to Monmouthshire County Council and maintained by them thereafter at the Council's expense. Persimmon Homes were required to pay the Council a sum of money equivalent to twenty years the annual cost of maintenance in the form of a commuted sum. It is understood that Persimmon Homes have refused to comply with this requirement and therefore the land remains in their ownership.
- c) Over the years, a number of trees on this land have, for various reasons, been pruned or removed. This has occasioned a numerous complaints from concerned residents that the visual appeal of the woodland was being eroded.
- d) During November 2017, Mark Cleaver and Jonathan Wassell of the Council's Landscape Unit held a site meeting with residents and the local member to discuss the future of this plot of land (please refer to the email extract of 14th November 2017). In view of the fact that Persimmon had little or no interest in the trees it was perceived that they would have little interest in retaining them either and would, in all probability, take no action if trees were removed. There is also the possibility that this land is being retained in order to pursue infill development in some later date. Consequently Mark Cleaver felt that the making of a TPO would be expedient.

e) It should be noted that in 2014, Natural Resources Wales (NRW) produced the world's first study into urban tree canopy cover. The survey was entitled "**Tree Cover in Wales' Towns and Cities Understanding canopy cover to better plan and manage our urban trees**". The report assessed the square metreage of canopy spread within each town's total area in order to arrive at a percentage. Surprisingly, Monmouthshire, despite being perceived as a "green" county fell below the national average for urban tree coverage.

f) Taking into account all the factors above plus the statutory duty placed upon local planning authorities under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to protect trees, a TPO was prepared and served upon the landowner. In line with the legislation copies of the TPO were also sent to residents whose properties share a common boundary with the woodland.

4. Three letters of objection to the TPO were received and are appended to this report.

5. **Relevant Policies**

The retention of these trees will be in accordance with **Strategic Policy S13 – Landscape, Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment.**

6. **CONSULTEES**

Cllr. David Dovey

7. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None.

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Letter of objection from Ms Brigitte Allen, 4 Yew Tree Wood Chepstow dated 21st January 2018.
- Letter of objection from Mr and Mrs Hester, 1 Bayfield Wood Close Chepstow dated 27th January 2018.
- Letter of objection from Mr and Mrs Evans-Randall of 2 Bayfield Wood Close, dated 30th January 2018.
- Email extract from Mark Cleaver, MCC Landscape Unit.
- Aerial photograph of the woodland.
- Google Street View image of the woodland.

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