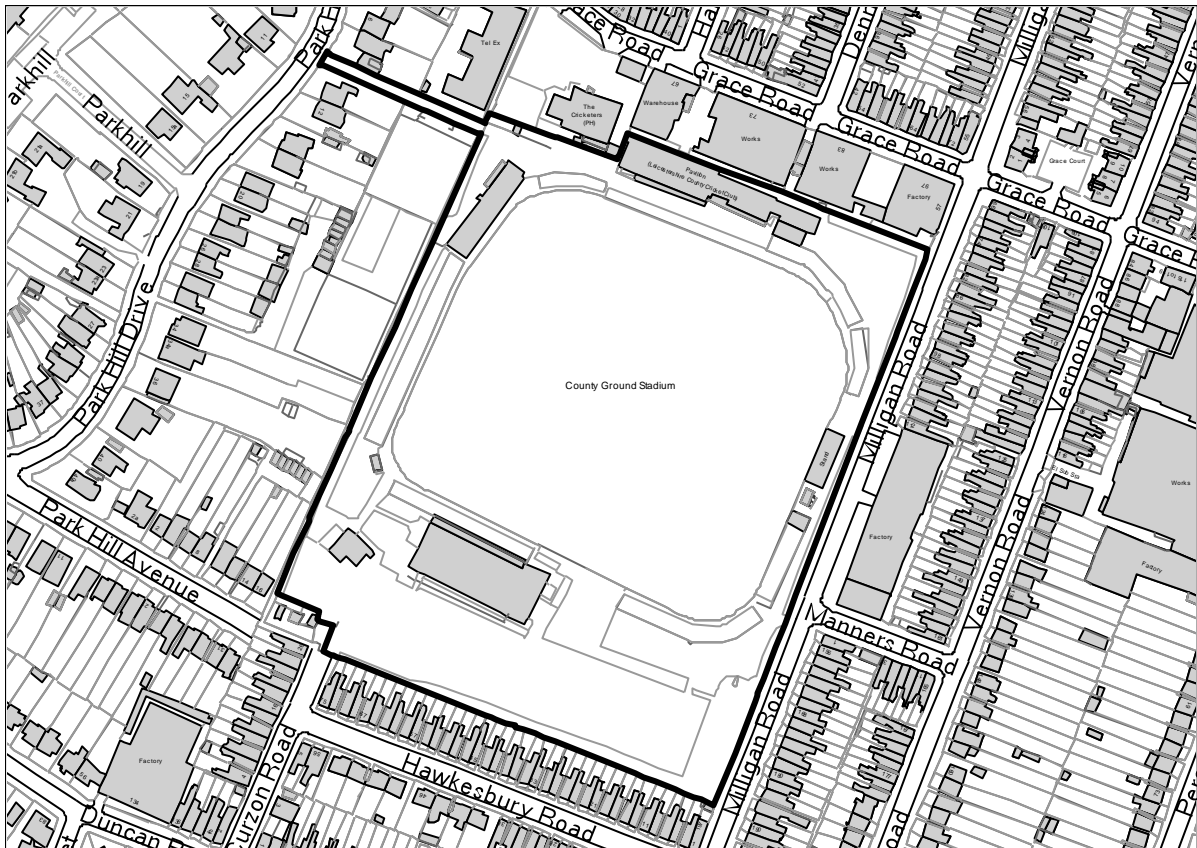


20212237	Leicestershire County Cricket Club, Grace Road	
Proposal:	Works to eight (8) trees and the felling of five (5) trees protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) 284	
Applicant:	Clark	
App type:	Control of works to protected trees	
Status:	Other development	
Expiry Date:	1 November 2021	
DG	TEAM: TW	WARD: Aylestone



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Summary

- Reported to committee as six or more objections received from six different City addresses.
- 8 objections received raising concerns relating to felling/removal of the TPO trees, loss of habitat, wildlife, visual amenity and climate change and lack of replacement trees.
- Issues are impact on amenity, health and safety concerns, climate and habitat

Introduction

The application site is the Leicestershire County Cricket Ground off Grace Road and is within a designated green space.

The site has several trees that are protected by a Tree Preservation Order No. N4.284 that was confirmed in 1998 and originally covered 189 individual trees.

Background

There are several previous applications for works and felling of TPO trees that are not directly relevant to the current application. Likewise, there were several applications for extensions and alterations that are not relevant to the current application.

The Proposal

The proposal is to carry out works to eight *Tilia x europaea* (Lime) as part of site/tree maintenance and to fell/remove five trees due to various health and safety concerns.

Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF)
Paragraph 131 (Trees contribute to urban character)

Development plan policies relevant to this application are listed at the end of this report.

Consultations

Two site notices were placed on Milligan Road, adjacent to the site.

Representations

Eight objections have been received, all raising concerns relating to the felling/removal of the protected trees and the following:

- loss of habitat and wildlife
- harmful effect on mental health
- loss of amenity
- lack of replanting
- climate impact

Consideration

This application relates to two variants of tree works as follows:

Works to TPO trees

The first variant is the proposed works to eight Lime trees (T35, T36, T37, T38, T51, T52, T53, T54) as part of ongoing maintenance program. The eight trees are split into two groups of four and border the site, adjacent to Milligan Road. All have similar size properties with an estimated height of ten metres with average crown spreads of 6 metres, and as groups they have high amenity value.

The work proposed for these trees is to lift the canopy to a height of no more than of four metres. At present both groups of trees are in direct contact with a boundary fence and a boundary wall. The proposed crown lifting works will remove direct contact with the structures as well as provide clearance to users of the Milligan Road footway.

The crown lifting of the trees will have a minimal impact on amenity would not result in the loss of habitat, wildlife or adversely impact on climate change be in accordance with national policy and policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.

Felling/removal of TPO trees

The second variant of works is the felling/removal of five trees (T135, T137, T140, T149, T89) that are sited within the grounds of Leicestershire County Cricket Club, Grace Road. T149 is located adjacent to a building and footpath, T189 and T140 are located directly adjacent to the main carpark, T136 and T137 are located centrally within the main carpark off Curzon Road.

The felling of the trees is due to health and safety concerns as they are a hazard to users of the area. It is proposed to replace all the trees that are to be felled. The reasons for the felling/removal is as follows:

- T135 *Acer platanoides* (Norway maple) is showing extreme signs of decline. crown dieback, deadwood, lack of foliage, basal decay and fungal fruiting bodies present at the base.
- T137 *Betula pendula* (Silver birch) This tree is showing signs of reduced vigour and is in decline, a sparse canopy and deadwood present suggests the tree's safe useful life is minimal.
- T140 *Sorbus aria* (Whitebeam) This tree is in extremely poor health. Poor form, deadwood, split limbs and sparse canopy all highlight that this tree has reached the end of its safe useful life.
- T149 *Sorbus aria* (Whitebeam) This tree is in decline, Poor vigour, deadwood and extensive decay at the base and along the trunk are all visible, the stability of this tree is a cause for concern.

- T189 *Betula pendula* (Silver birch) This tree is in decline, sparse canopy, poor form and showing very little vigour.

I accept that the concerns raised by the objectors are valid in the short to medium term. However, in this case the foreseeability of failure of all the five trees is high due to the declining health and safety of the trees as outlined above and over time they will offer little in the way of habitat/wildlife or amenity value and this will continue to diminish until failure occurs. The introduction of new planting to offset the loss is the best course of action to respond to the failing health and safety concerns, amenity, habitat and climate change issues in the short and long term in accordance with national policy and policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.

Conclusion

The proposed works to the trees would continue to provide amenity value in the area. The felling of the trees for health and safety reasons is necessary but their replacement will help to continue to provide amenity value in the area over medium and long term.

The proposal would be in accordance with national policy and policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.

I therefore recommend APPROVAL subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1. The works shall be completed within two years from the date of this consent. (To enable the City Council to review the situation if the trees grow and develop.)
2. All works shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard for Tree Work BS 3998:2010. (In the interests of the health and amenity value of the trees and in accordance with Policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)
3. In the first planting season following the removal of each tree, a replacement tree shall be planted at or near to the original location. The replacement trees shall be 14-16 stem girth, Extra heavy standard and of British native species, unless an alternative scheme has first been submitted to and approved by the City Council as local planning authority. All replacement trees shall be maintained until establishment following planting. Any tree that dies, becomes seriously damaged or is removed shall be replaced by another of the same specification at the same place in the first available planting season. (In the interests of the amenity of the area, and in accordance with policy UD06 of the City of Leicester Local Plan and Core Strategy policy CS3.)

Policies relating to this recommendation

- 2006_UD06 New development should not impinge upon landscape features that have amenity value whether they are within or outside the site unless it can meet criteria.
- 2014_CS03 The Council will require high quality, well designed developments that contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local natural and built environment. The policy sets out design objectives for urban form, connections and access, public spaces, the historic environment, and 'Building for Life'.