

Mrs. Rosie Taylor,

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Wednesday, 9th March 2016

Planning Officer,
Gedling Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Arnot Hill Park,
Arnold,
Nottingham.
NG5 6LU

Dear Mr. Gray,

I'm sure that you'll recall my repeated applications for a T.P.O. in respect of the oak tree, in the bottom right-hand corner of the back garden, of 34, Whittingham Road, Mapperley. Numerous photos have been submitted, many emails exchanged & countless phone discussions have taken place.

During last autumn, I sought the advice of local Councillors, Bob Collis & John Truscott. I also spoke to the Service Manager, Peter Baguley, on 3rd December 2015; I realise that this gentleman has recently left his position.

A quick résumé of the conversations that I had with the Councillors & Mr. Baguley covered such facts as my having looked into retaining part of the garden (with separate access) so that a Covenant could be applied, or arranging for a "Ransom Strip", (with/without access) so that a Covenant could be applied, neither of which was a viable option. I offered to pay for a private T.P.O. & set up a fund, in case a court case (for damages) is ever necessary, but I was told that neither is possible.

Mr. Baguley saw the previously submitted paperwork & photos. He explained to me that whilst a T.P.O. would be the safest way to protect the tree, there are rules by which your office must abide. My tree is viewed as being a lovely, straight, healthy specimen, at around 47 years old now but, in the past, it's struggled for light, so is not as broad as the officers would have hoped, & it's had to open its canopy way on high. Since spending 2.5k on having other trees professionally felled & trimmed, along with the garden being restored to its former glory, the light & space issues will no longer be a problem.

I'd begun a local petition, at the end of November, to ask Gedling Borough Council to reconsider the T.P.O. application. I wanted to prove that the neighbours & locals regards the oak as being of "high amenity value in the street scene". Councillor Collis kindly furnished me with the Council's Petition Policy notes. I believe that 140 signatures are required for the matter to be heard at a Council Meeting; I have 263.

The neighbours were all very supportive; one even suggested that copies of the petition were placed in local shops, so this is what I did. Others wanted to know what else they could do to help, apart from sign.

Mr. Baguley was aware of the petition &, whilst he couldn't promise that it would make any difference to the outcome, he suggested that I pursue this, in case anyone added favourable notes about points as yet unraised.

Ironically, the owners of [REDACTED] who own one of the gardens that meet Dad's, near the oak, had seen my arborists working, last September &, unsure which trees were being felled, or trimmed, rang Gedling Council, to protest that trees (including the oak) may be being destroyed in

nearby gardens! In reality, I was having parts of neighbouring sycamores trimmed, in another neighbouring garden (with the owners' approval) as they were interfering with the oak. This is how strongly people feel about the trees in Mapperley, & that little copse, in particular.

██████████, one of the immediate neighbours, ██████████, responded to an email that I sent her. A copy of her reply is included with the other 262 signatures. Soon after sending me the email, she had cause to call at number ██████████ whilst I was busy at number 34. She admired the newly-landscaped garden & agreed with the sentiments of the T.P.O. being applied to the oak, which is now clearly visible from her property. I believe her supporting comments, contained in her email, are worthy of note, with regard to the water consumption, floods, climate change & dad's garden being a "green & living space", which is therapeutic in the neighbourhood. People are fed up with greenery being destroyed. I also believe, from online research, that a 60-year-old oak tree drinks up to 50 gallons of water a day; at 47, mine must still guzzle quite a bit.

Another signatory, ██████████, has included notes about trees being vital in the absorption of greenhouse gases & they provide homes for nesting birds, as well as squirrels. There have, indeed, been many nests, over the years, in the oak & the squirrels also love it. A fairly tame robin (who briefly sat on my husband's hand) currently lives somewhere around the oak. The tree will supply more oxygen than it uses, so is of great importance to the environment.

The initial buyer for 34 ██████████ who signed the petition, pulled out. New buyers, ██████████ & ██████████, also signed the petition; furthermore, they asked if I'd like them to "take up the fight", in respect of the tree. I explained that Mr. Baguley told me that even when the house is no longer mine, I can still apply for a T.P.O. The house sale, to ██████████ completed on 5th February, 2016. ██████████ & I'm sure that if someone needs to see the tree, in person, he'd be happy to oblige.

There is a plaque, with which they are perfectly happy, at the foot of the oak (photos included) & "special conditions" written into the house contract, by my solicitor, in respect of the oak. They readily agreed & signed, even though it's not enforceable by law. I've included a copy with this letter.

I will provide Councillor Collis with copies of all documents that I'm enclosing with this letter. ██████████ hence the delay in submitting the paperwork, which has been sitting, waiting for me to write the covering letter.

In conclusion, "The Neighbourhood has spoken". I've been overwhelmed by the interest, & support, from people who live nearby & can see the tree, those who walk by, those who have visited the house regularly, or occasionally & those who simply feel it's a good cause. I decided against an online petition for fear of some "idiot" choosing to cause wilful damage, to either the empty house or the tree, simply for "the hell of it". Please will the relevant people review the situation, consider the petition & points raised & let me know if it, or when, it will be submitted at a Council Meeting?

Thanks you to everyone for their time; I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Rosie Taylor (Mrs.)

ENCLOSURES ~

- * Petition concerning the application for a T.P.O. on the oak tree at 34, Whittingham Road, Mapperley.
- * Copy of the Special Conditions Clauses of the house contract; sale completed 5th Feb '16.
- * Copy of ██████████ email, dated 15th January 2016.
- * Recent photos of the oak tree, taken over winter, to Feb '16.

Copies of all the above-noted paperwork will be given to Councillor Collis.