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Petersfield Society
Winton House
18 High Street
Petersfield
GU32 3JL

07 August 2018

Maria Stewart,
Arboricultural Officer,
East Hampshire District Council,
Petersfield,
Hampshire, GU31 4EX

Dear Maria

Application for designation of Tree Preservation Orders for the five Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*) trees at 14 Heath Road Petersfield GU31 4DU

On behalf of the Petersfield Society, I wish to apply formally for Tree Preservation Orders to be placed as soon as possible on the five Western Red Cedar trees currently under threat as a result of intentions identified in Planning Notice **SDNP/18/03856/TCA**. The EHDC website suggests that I should sent this application to yourself.

You will appreciate the importance of these trees to the character of their immediate area, and that of the Conservation area for Petersfield as a whole. They are recognized specifically in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan for Petersfield¹. The trees are an important and valuable component of views down the High Street from The Square, from Tor Way and College Street, from The Avenue, from Dragon Street and, more closely, from Heath Road west and east all as the attached photographs testify (see p. 4). They form a critically important setting for the Scout Hut itself, the Festival Hall and other local listed buildings. The combination of built and natural environments and the dark red brickwork and dark green of the trees is unique and powerful. The group of five trees forms a significant feature of the landscape, and is a 'green welcome' at the entrance to the 'Festival Hall car park', within which there are no equally large trees except the Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) at the corner of the Festival Hall itself.

The trees are of large dimension, with the two trees (T1, T2) identified for felling measured at 19.8 and 23.7 metres height respectively. Their size identifies their age and their value as heritage trees for Petersfield. The Petersfield i-Tree survey (www.petersfieldsociety.org.uk/itree.pdf) identified that the town is comparatively poorly endowed with large trees, which makes the retention of existing ones all the more important. Large trees also provide disproportionately more shade, cooling, air pollution and storm water attenuation². Most obviously, they take a long time to replace.

The Petersfield Tree Survey used the CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees) methodology to assess amenity value. East Hampshire District Council is a member of the National Association of Tree Officers

¹ SDNPA (2017). Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan for Petersfield. SDNPA, Midhurst.

² Center for Urban Forest Research/Southern Center for Urban Forest Research & Information (2004). *The Large Tree Argument*. https://www.fs.fed.us/psw/topics/urban_forestry/products/cufr_511_large_tree_argument.pdf

which promotes the use of this industry standard for valuing the amenity of trees as public assets. Co-authored by Dr Kieron Doick, Head of Urban Forest Research Group, Forest Research, a paper of the same title published in the *Arboricultural Journal*³ states that 'CAVAT has been in use for over a decade now and the authors' knowledge of its use suggests that it is being used on a consistent basis by a large number of UK local authorities for urban amenity tree valuation'. CAVAT has been employed now to value the two Western Red Cedars under threat of felling. The amenity value in monetary terms of each tree is assessed at over £100,000 demonstrating the importance of these trees to the town and its community. And this amenity value does not take into account the benefits accruing from the trees in terms of cooling, shading, noise attenuation, flood water attenuation and biodiversity habitat. The other three trees not assessed in this way are also likely to have similar CAVAT values. This gives the group of five trees a total value of around half a million pounds.

The trees in question are considered healthy and there has been no evidence or accusation otherwise. Robin Hart (Petersfield's Tree Warden) and I consider that they have a good life span ahead, measured in several decades. This should be taken into account when deciding to designate them with Tree Preservation Orders – that there is every expectation that the trees will continue to deliver vital amenity benefits if effectively managed for many years.

The planning proposal makes claims that the trees are causing structural damage. However, we can see no evidence for this using our professional judgement, except perhaps to the wall in front of the property next to tree T1 which exhibits some superficial cracks. In any event, such damage is not regarded as potentially dangerous or liable to inflict significant financial risk to the owners of the Scout Hut, and the applicant to fell the trees has provided no evidence to the contrary. In similar circumstances where the value of trees is recognized, suitable cost-effective engineering solutions can be found. The arboricultural sector is well placed to give advice, supported by modern guidance from TDAG⁴ for example. **Tree felling is a totally unacceptable solution to issues frequently met and frequently solved by other means.**

In conclusion, given the lack of understanding of the trees under care of the 1st Petersfield Scout Group in Petersfield, and its apparent disregard for the considerable amenity and other value that the trees bring to the town's community and its visitors, I am applying, on behalf of Petersfield's Civic Society, for TPOs to be placed on the five trees in question, such that the full weight of the appropriate legislation be applied⁵.

I would welcome receipt of this application by email to: andyjmoffat@btinternet.com and look forward to hearing of a successful outcome to this application.

Yours sincerely



A.J.Moffat, BSc, PhD, DSc, FRGS, FISoilSci, MICFor

³ K.J. Doick, C. Neilan, G. Jones, A. Allison, I. McDermott, A. Tipping & R. Haw (2018). CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees): valuing amenity trees as public assets, *Arboricultural Journal*, 40:2, 67-91.

⁴ Tree Design Action Group (TDAG) (2014). *Trees in Hard Landscapes. A guide for delivery*. TDAG, London.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas#tree-preservation-orders--general>

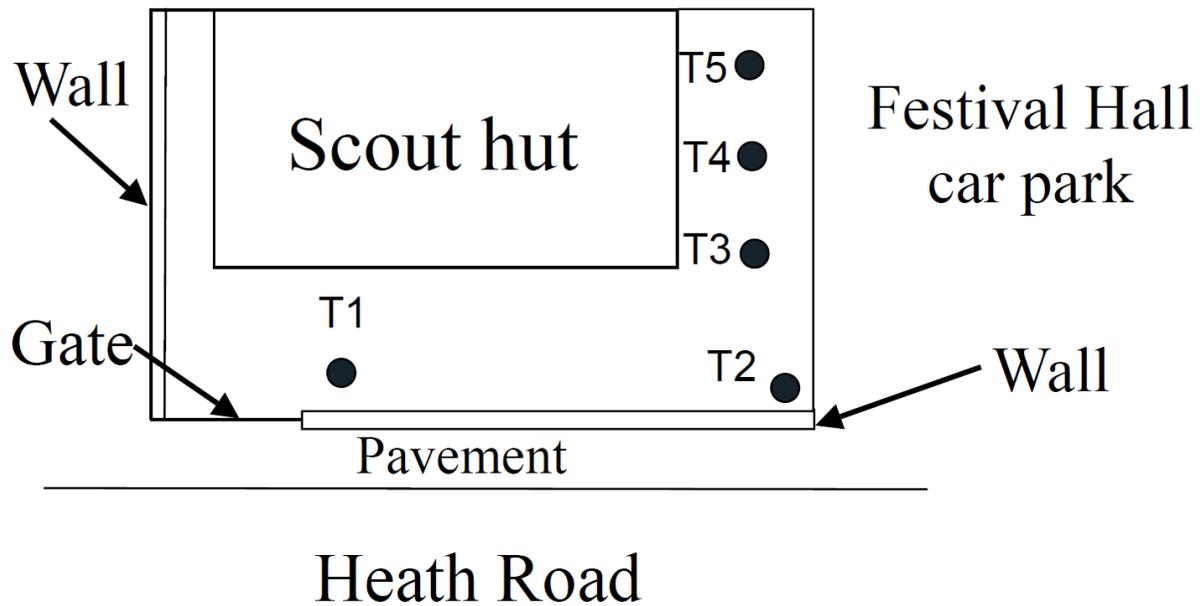


Diagram showing the location of the five trees under threat in Planning Application **SDNP/18/03856/TCA** and for which designated Tree Preservation Orders are sought. T1, T2 etc identify specific trees.

14 Heath Road : Views of Western Red Cedar trees from around the Town

