South Tyneside Council

Reference:	260532
Location:	HALL COURT,14 Front Street,Whitburn,SR6 7JE
Ward:	Whitburn and Marsden
Description:	Application for Tree Works: Works to Trees Subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO219) T1 - Sycamore - Prune for crown lift to 8m; to reduce shading T2 - Sycamore - Prune for crown lift to 8m; to reduce shading T3 - Sycamore - Prune to crown lift tertiary growth to 6m; to reduce shading.
Recommendation:	Split Decision TPOW
Case Officer:	Samantha Gallagher
Case Officer Contact No.:	0191 4247447 or 07741109243

Summary of Consultation Responses

Neighbours

1no. Representation was received in support of the application raising the following:

- Support the works which are needed for both safety and aesthetic reasons

Tree Team

I have visited the site and checked the crown clearances using an electronic clinometer.

The proposed works to T3 Sycamore appear justified. A crown lift to approximately 6m is required to provide clearance above the roof beneath the canopy.

The proposed crown lifting of T1 and T2 to 8m appears excessive. The trees have sufficient ground clearance and there is no obvious conflict with the lower branches. I am also not persuaded that the trees cast an unusual shading, or that lifting the crowns to 8m would have in any meaningful result.

I would therefore support the works to T3 only. In my view, a split decision would be the best option, approving T3 and refusing the proposed works to T1 and T2 due to insufficient justification. Alternatively, we could seek further clarification from the agent. The application currently provides only a broad description of "crown lift to 8m" and does not adequately justify the extent of the proposed works.

Relevant planning policy

The following policies are relevant to this application:

- Local Plan Policy SP21: Natural Environment
- NPPF Policy N2

Assessment

The application relates to works to 3no. mature Sycamore trees located within/around Hall Court, Whitburn. Collectively these trees make a strong and positive contribution to the local landscape and are visually prominent when viewed from Front Street. As such, they provide a high degree of public amenity.

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is imposed when the Council considers that it is expedient to do so in the interests of amenity. This will include circumstances where there is a threat to a tree that is considered to be in good health and where it makes a valuable contribution to the amenity of the area. Once protected by a TPO, there must be very good reasons for a tree's total loss or removal. This is usually on the grounds of health, property damage, or danger and must be robustly demonstrated by sound justification and evidence.

The Town and Country Planning Act (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 20212, and Policy N2 of the NPPF are of relevance to this application.

Local Plan Policy SP21 seeks to protect against the loss, damage or deterioration of the Borough's trees, woodland and hedgerows, where possible or provide replacement planting where necessary.

The Council's Tree Officer has visited the site to assess the trees, and as set out above, there is no objection to the proposed works to T3, subject to conditions.

The justification for the proposed works to T1 and T2 are crown lifts to 8m to both trees to reduce shading. The lifting of the crowns to 8m is considered excessive. The trees have sufficient ground clearance and there is no obvious conflict with the lower branches, nor does the Council's Tree Officer consider that these trees cast unusual shading, or that the lifting of the crowns to 8m would have a meaningful result. The Council's Tree Officer considers that insufficient justification has been provided for the extend of the works to T1 and T2. Having sought clarity from the agent, they have requested that a decision be made.

Neighbours have provided comments on the application in support of the works for aesthetic and safety reasons. Neither of these are reasons put forward within the application. Having visited the site it is clear that whilst the trees are close to residential properties, the trees have sufficient clearance from these properties.

It is considered that the extent works to T1 and T2, consisting of an 8m crown lift, has not been adequately justified thorough this application.

Conclusion

In light of the Council's Tree Officer recommednation, the works to T3 are justified in this instance, subject to conditions. However, Trees T1 and T2 are in good condition, do not present safety concerns and provide a high level of amenity within the locality, and it is considered that the extent of the proposed works to T1 and T2 have not been fully justified. Therefore, the application is recommded to be a split decision which would firstly refuse the crown lifts to T1 and T2, and recommend the approval the crown lift to T3.

Recommendation

Split Decision TPOW

1. The following works are hereby APPROVED

   T3 Sycamore- Prune to crown lift tertiary growth to 6m.

   Reason: To define the consent and ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained in accordance with Policy SP21 of the Local Plan and Policy N2 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The tree works to which this consent relates must be completed in full, not later than 2 years from the date of this consent and may not be carried out more than once, unless authorized by a further grant of consent.

   Reason: In order that the works remain appropriate and suited to the present form and condition of the tree(s) concerned.

3. The tree works are to be compliant with British Standard: 3998 [2010] (tree work – recommendations).

   Reason: In order to maintain the health and visual amenity of the trees affected.

4. The following works are hereby REFUSED:

   Crown lift to 8m to T1 (Sycamore)
   Crown Lift to 8m to T2 (Sycamore)

   It is considered that insufficient evidence has been submitted in relation to trees T1 and T2 to demonstrate that the proposed works are necessary at this time in accordance with good arboricultural practice. The works are considered unjustified and excessive and would have a detrimental impact upon the visual amenity and character of the area contrary to the aims of the Tree Preservation Order and are in conflict with Policy SP21 of the Local Plan and Policy N2 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

List of plans/documentation etc. for standard note on decision

Plans/Documentation

Site Plan – Received 29/07/2026

Case officer: Samantha Gallagher

Signed: S Gallagher

Date: 21/09/2026

Authorised Signatory: Helen Lynch

Date: 22/09/2026