

**APPLICANT:** Mrs Lilian Wilson Rockcliffe, Colwinston, CF71 7NE  
**AGENT:** Mr Joshua Clark 142 Pandy Road,, Caerphilly., CF83 3P

**Rockcliffe, Colwinston**

Work to tree covered by TPO No.6 of 1972: Remove Sycamore tree and plant a replacement tree within the garden

**SITE AND CONTEXT**

The site is a modern two storey dwelling on an elevated location in the village of Colwinston and it lies within the Colwinston Conservation Area. The mature Sycamore tree located on the edge of the rear garden is already protected by Tree Preservation Order No.6, 1972, which was confirmed on 22 February, 1973.

**Plan view of Tree to be removed & site photos**

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Existing large Sycamore tree to be removed outlined orange.

Large Sycamore Tree – too near House and too large in comparison To house



Large Sycamore Tree – too be removed.

Top of Roofs in neighbouring property.

**Rockcliffe, Colwinston CF71 7NE**

## DESCRIPTION OF WORKS

Consent is sought to remove the identified, established sycamore tree, which is located to the edge of the rear garden. An application to reduce the branches of the identified tree back to their growing point was approved in 2014 (ref: 2014/00415/TPO).

Photos of the tree taken on site on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024 are provided below:





## PLANNING HISTORY

1987/00891/FUL, Address: 'Rockcliffe', Colwinston, Proposal: Conversion of flat roof to lean-to pitched roof, Decision: Approved

2014/00415/TPO, Address: Rockcliffe, Colwinston, Proposal: Reduce weight loading of overhanging limbs by approx 1.5 metres, reduce and shape branches by removal of branch tips back to growing point, Decision: Approved

## CONSULTATIONS

Due to the type of application submitted, consultation is not statutorily required and therefore, not carried out.

## REPRESENTATIONS

Due to the type of application submitted, consultation is not statutorily required and therefore, not carried out.

## REPORT

The key issues to consider within this application is the health and condition of the tree, and the contribution to the character and visual amenity to the Colwinston Conservation Area.

It was noted during the Site Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024, that the applicant is concerned that the identified Sycamore Tree will fail due to recent strong winds and branch failure. It is noted that no further applications to carry out maintenance work to the tree have been received since the application in 2014 (ref: 2014/00415/TPO).

### Visual Amenity and Tree Survey

The Sycamore tree is of a large and prominent scale, visible above the ridge of the host dwelling from the adopted highway, and clearly overhanging neighbouring properties.

A detailed Tree Survey was provided in support of the application and notes the following:

“The base and surface of the root plate were accessible for inspection and were not visually obscured. No fruiting bodies related to pathogenic decay fungi were found around the base or root plate. There was also an absence of bleeds, cavities, cracks/splits, basal swelling, surface decay or dysfunctional cambium at the base. There are two large wounds at approximately 4m on the main stem, a result of previous limb removal. The larger of the two is approximately 300mm in diameter with the smaller being approximately 200mm diameter. There is evidence of failure compartmentalisation in these wounds with decayed wood that has not been occluded and basic resonance testing with a sounding hammer indicated hollowing of the main stem. There is excessive epicormic growth on the main stem which is indicative of stress. There is a small area of dieback at the top of the crown in the form of bare branches, this is indicative that the tree is dealing with a pathogen or fungi or the tree is in decline. Incidences of deadwood are within normal levels, attributed to the natural shedding of branches through attrition. Leaf coloration and dimensions are typical for a tree of this species and age. The branch architecture demonstrates standard characteristics, featuring a proportional length-to-diameter ratio. The crown's fork unions are structurally optimized, devoid of frail V-shaped junctures, and devoid of indications of decay, voids, or pathogenic fungi presence.”

The final recommendation of the provided Tree Survey identifies the following:

- Structural Condition- Physical Defect
- Physiological Condition- Fair
- Overall Condition- Poor

Recommendations:

- Tree removal.
- Plant replacement tree.
- The above work should be carried out within 6 months

In summary, the Sycamore tree is considered to be a positive visual feature within the Conservation Area. However, evidence has been submitted that the tree is of declining health. Therefore, whilst the tree is also highly visible from the public footpath to the East of the site, and is considered to form an attractive feature within the wider street-scene, as seen below, it is also considered to be a potential hazard to the host dwelling and neighbouring properties. Moreover, the replacement trees, which will be ensured by condition, will retain the visual amenity of the wider area in future years, maintaining the character of the host dwelling and surrounding area.



### TEMPO Assessment

Whilst it was considered that the Sycamore Tree is of a large scale, visible to the public, the Tree itself does not appear to have any additional redeeming features, for example, historic or rare aspects. As such, given the perceived threat to the Tree, as explained within the provided Tree Survey, it was deemed that the identified Sycamore Tree was no longer worthy of a TPO and should be removed.

### Replacement Trees

To mitigate the impact that the loss of the tree will have on visual amenity, the removed Sycamore tree will have to be replaced with the provision of three new trees (equating to three replacement trees altogether) as per the requirements of Planning Policy Wales. This will be ensured by way of condition.

### Conclusion

Therefore, it is considered, following a TEMPO assessment of the Sycamore tree, that the identified Sycamore Tree no longer merits the Tree Protection Order due to its declining health and increasing hazard to surrounding residential dwellings and as such, the Council has no objection to the removal of the identified Sycamore Tree.

## REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

Having regard to the Council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 the proposed development does not have any significant implications for, or effect on, persons who share a protected characteristic.

It is considered that the decision complies with the Council's well-being objectives and the sustainable development principle in accordance with the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The appropriate marine policy documents have been considered in the determination of this application in accordance with Section 59 of the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

## RECOMMENDATION

### APPROVE subject to the following condition(s):

1. The work shall be carried out in accordance with accepted rules and practices of good tree surgery to conform to B.S. 3998 - Recommendations for Tree Work.

Reason:

To ensure the work is carried out to an acceptable standard.

2. The work hereby approved shall be carried out by a suitably qualified professional tree surgeon.

Reason:

To ensure the continued health of the tree and therefore, that the visual amenities of the area are protected.

3. The work hereby approved shall be carried out within 12 months of the date of this consent.

Reason:

To ensure the work is completed within a reasonable time limit

4. Three replacement trees of a native species, such as, but not limited to: Oak, Beech, Birch and Sycamore, shall be planted within the rear garden of Rockcliffe, Colwinston, during the next available planting season (October 2024 to March 2025) following felling and shall be properly staked and watered during periods of drought for a period of five years. In the event that one of the trees becomes diseased or dies another similar sized tree shall be planted in its place.

Reason:

To ensure that the visual amenities of the area are protected.

**NOTE:**

**Please note that this consent is specific to the plans and particulars approved as part of the application. Any departure from the approved plans will constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action. You (or any subsequent developer) should advise the Council of any actual or proposed variations from the approved plans immediately so that you can be advised how to best resolve the matter.**

**In addition, any conditions that the Council has imposed on this consent will be listed above and should be read carefully. It is your (or any subsequent developers) responsibility to ensure that the terms of all conditions are met in full at the appropriate time (as outlined in the specific condition).**

**The commencement of development without firstly meeting in full the terms of any conditions that require the submission of details prior to the commencement of development will constitute unauthorised development. This will necessitate the submission of a further application to retain the unauthorised development and may render you liable to formal enforcement action.**

**Failure on the part of the developer to observe the requirements of any other conditions could result in the Council pursuing formal enforcement action in the form of a Breach of Condition Notice.**