



Waldringfield

Parish Council

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WPC Tree Warden's Report

DC/22/4771/TPO | T9 of TPO No. 163 / 2003 Re-pollard to previous pruning points

Request to prune oak tree T9 within overall TPO no. 163 relating to trees along the river side and banks

T9 of TPO No. 163 / 2003

1no. Oak (T9 on Order) - TPO no. 163/2003

The reasons for the Tree Preservation Order are given on page 8 of the TPO document of 2003 and are quoted here:

'The trees and woodlands are visible from the wider landscape including the opposite bank of the River Deben and public footpaths. They help accommodate the buildings and other uses into the landscape providing significant screening. They also enhance the character of the landscape for other users of the beach, footpaths, huts, sailing club and estuary.'

1. Oak tree T9

This is a mature oak tree of medium stature ; diameter is about 600mm just below the first pollard position. Crown spread varies up to 5m maximum radius.

It has been pruned early in its life to 2m so forming a pollard. From the original pollard there are 4 or so branches forming a rather lop sided head. These have also been pruned back at about 2m above the original. The pruned ends have sent up large numbers of shoots as is normal with this sort of pruning. These appear about 4-10 years old and it appears that similar shoots have been pruned back in the past forming knobby ends on the pollarded branches some having birds' nests on them.

The side towards the huts is less well developed due apparently to additional rough and ready pruning from that side, whereas the side towards the river is better developed and stronger.

The branches all carry many fat buds and the only dead wood appears to be one of the earlier pollarded stumps which has deteriorated providing nesting places no doubt. Expected life of the tree would be 2-300 years although rising sea levels may affect it before that.

2. Proposed work

The request to prune again back to pollarding points probably means doing the same again and not back to the original points **although this is not clear**.

There is no reason given for this request. The usual forms (PP-11678086?) seem not to have been submitted . This includes a question as to why the work is being proposed.

3. Comments

From the point of view of rescuing the tree to form a decent head of branches I would suggest thinning the many thinner branches to allow selected good branches to grow and form a decent balanced head removing perhaps half of the thinner ones. This might be followed up in future years by further thinning to give a good structure.

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I do not think carrying on with the severe pollarding is beneficial to the tree and looks ugly. This is the sort of street tree pruning once popular in France (and some places in England) where the object is to prevent a large growing tree from developing to its full stature and make it form to a lollipop shape.

This sort of thing is not really in the spirit of the TPO which seeks to preserve and enhance the landscape of the River Deben in spite of the pressures it is under from multiplication of beach huts and visitors. Since 2003 when the above statement (quoted under 1.) was made by what was then Suffolk Coastal District Council there are more and larger beach huts and other pressures to make the area more busy and developed.

A good move would be to appoint a knowledgeable arboriculturalist to do the thinning to achieve well shaped crown in due course. **This would require a new application explaining what they were going to do.**

4. Conclusion

This application should in my view be refused on the grounds that it would further damage the tree shape leading to a distorted crown not appropriate to the location. An application to improve the tree by thinning out the congested branches arising from bad pruning in the past to be carried out by an approved arboriculturalist might be acceptable.

Christine Fisher Kay

Tree warden to Waldringfield Parish Council

9th January 2023