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Our ref: University of Northampton – TPO 235

13th February 2018

Mr. Jonathan Hazell
Project Officer: Arboriculture
Northampton Borough Council
The Guildhall
St Giles Square
Northampton
NN1 1DE

**Northampton Borough Council
Tree Preservation Order: No. 235
Boughton Green Road, Former Park Campus**

Dear Mr. Hazell,

Thank you for notifying Persimmon Homes that Northampton Borough Council has served a provisional TPO under section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on eight groups of trees and one woodland belt at the University of Northampton's Park Campus.

As you are aware Persimmon Homes has some interest in the site as it owns a small section on the western edge and it is currently in discussions with the landowners to purchase the site for residential development. There is an outline planning permission for the site and significant work has already been undertaken to assess the trees on site and identify those worthy of retention. Outline planning permission for the site was granted under application N/2014/0475 and a master plan for the site was approved as part of Condition 8 of that permission on 15/05/2017.

Whilst Persimmon Homes understands the desire of Northampton Borough Council to protect the existing trees on site the scale and complexity of the provisional TPO served will make it extremely difficult for Persimmon Homes to follow the approved master plan and, ultimately, create a layout for the site which will sustain and enhance the area for decades to come.

The outline planning permission (N/2014/0475) has a condition, Condition 11, which Persimmon Homes believes is sufficient to ensure that those trees that are worthy of preservation are retained on site without stifling the development of the site or detrimentally affecting the optimum layout of the site. The proposed TPO is an added obstacle which will prevent the regeneration of the site and we do not believe it is required.

However, it is appreciated that Persimmon Homes do not have full control or responsibility of the site at present and therefore if you do still insist on confirming the Order it would be appreciated if you could take the following comments on board before the Order is formally confirmed:

Group 1

This group contains numerous trees which are located very close to the access road which runs in a southeast direction from the roundabout on Boughton Green Road. In the tree survey submitted with the outline planning application the lime trees and Norway maples numbered 452-475 are classed as small and young mature. They make little visual contribution to the area but more importantly the location of these trees prevents the necessary road widening and reconstruction of this access road into the development. It is therefore requested that these lime trees are removed from the Group 1 TPO prior to confirming the Order. Trees 575-586 should also not be included as they may prevent access to the north of the site.

Group 4

The eastern sections of Group 4 are located in an area that is shown in the master plan in the outline permission as one of the secondary streets. There are various species in this area that are included within the TPO and to retain these trees would prevent this part of the development from being constructed in accordance with the approved master plan (Condition 8 of N/2014/0475). It is therefore requested that the following trees are not included within the Group 4 TPO:

362-370 (Stags Horn, Rowan, Swedish Whitebeam, Birch and Larch)
389-396 (Birch, Swedish Whitebeam, Goat Willow and Western Balsam Poplar)
398-417 (Lime, Birch, Black Pine, Swedish Whitebeam, Sycamore and Beech)

Group 5

Again, the master plan indicates that a road is planned to be located at the northern tip of this row of trees. It is therefore kindly requested that the northernmost specimens of this group are removed from the TPO, primarily 333, 334, 350 and 351 (Limes).

Group 6

The western section of this group includes three individual trees that are located close to or on a critical surface water attenuation pond. The trees affected are 283, 284 and 285 (one Lime and two Ash trees). Final drainage calculations have not yet been completed and it may be that this whole group has to be felled to enable the provision of the attenuation pond.

Group 7

Again, the western section of this group is located close to a proposed attenuation pond that is essential to the development. As such the following trees are affected:

244-250 (Horse Chestnut and Sycamore)
251-256 (Cherry Plum and Sycamore)

The Oak (41) and Birch (201) are also located on areas identified in the master plan as secondary roads to serve the development and therefore should not be included within Group 7.



Woodland 1

The approved master plan identifies an estate road running along the northern edge of the section of woodland belt which runs east-west and also another estate road on the western edge of the north-south belt to the north of this area. The approved master plan also identifies a drainage pond in the northeast corner of the site, all of which are approved under the outline planning permission and all of which would now require the removal of some of the trees covered by this TPO. We believe these areas of trees should be excluded from the Woodland TPO as development which affects these trees is already approved. The northeast corner in particular is likely to require significant tree removal as the attenuation pond and drainage in this area will be far larger than the master plan indicates.

Also, the trees on the western end of the woodland TPO should be excluded. Some of these may need to be removed to facilitate the location of access roads depending on the requirements of the Local Highways Authority.

A plan of the trees covered and a copy of the tree report is included with this letter to aid your consideration of the abovementioned points. In addition a copy of the approved master plan is provided, as is a plan showing our proposed layout for the site to help you identify trees that would need to be felled in order that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved master plan.

Summary

As a responsible developer Persimmon Homes understands the Council's desire to protect the existing trees on the University of Northampton Park Campus. However, some of the specimens included within the groups of TPO's would prevent delivery of the scheme based on the previously granted outline planning permission (N/2014/0475). As such we politely request that the trees identified above and highlighted on the BHA Trees drawing are removed from the TPO before confirmation so that the outline planning permission and TPO 235 align.

Persimmon Homes will seek to retain as many of the existing trees on site as possible. Wherever possible the trees identified above will be retained and therefore the exclusion of those trees from the TPO does not indicate that it is a certainty that they will be felled. We simply want to ensure that the TPO and outline planning permission align and that there is no duplication of work for Northampton Borough Council, given that a thorough Tree Report was included with the outline permission for this site and that Persimmon Homes are bound by the requirements of Condition 11 of that outline permission.

I welcome any thoughts or comments you may have regarding our representations and I am happy to arrange a meeting on site to informally discuss the details of the Order before it is formally confirmed if you believe it would be helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Davies
Senior Planner

Encs.

