

Town Clerk | Swaffham Town Council

From: East and East Midlands Forest Area Enquiries
<eandem@forestrycommission.gov.uk>
Sent: 25 November 2021 15:07
To: Town Clerk | Swaffham Town Council
Cc: cllranscombe.swaffhamtc@gmail.com; cllrscott.swaffhamtc@gmail.com; Deputy Clerk | Swaffham Town Council
Subject: RE: Felling Licence 017/3655/2020 - complaint SWAFFHAM

Dear Richard

Thank you for your email receipt of which we acknowledge.

We will send a further response before your Town Council meets on the 8th December 2021.

Kind regards

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From: Town Clerk | Swaffham Town Council <townclerk@swaffhamtowncouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 24 November 2021 16:03

To: East and East Midlands Forest Area Enquiries <eandem@forestrycommission.gov.uk>

Cc: Judy Anscombe <cllranscombe.swaffhamtc@gmail.com>; cllrcott.swaffhamtc@gmail.com; Deputy Clerk | Swaffham Town Council <deputyclerk@swaffhamtowncouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: Felling Licence 017/3655/2020 - complaint SWAFFHAM

This Message originated outside your organisation.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Due to the high number of enquiries and complaints from our residents Swaffham Town Council wish to raise a complaint about the circumstances of the Felling License 017/3655/2020. Although the site has now been

completely clear felled, we wish to highlight the following points which appear to contradict the license conditions and ash Die Back (Forestry Commission) guidance notes 46.

1. **Public Consultation**

We note that the license application is available on line in a redacted form and that comments may be made for a period of 28 days but that as the Town Council were unaware that the application had been made, we were unable to comment. Had we been informed in the same way that we are with hedge removal applications and TPOs, we feel that much of the complaint could have been dealt with.

2. **Prior to felling all those affected must be made aware (license conditions)**

Adjoining neighbours were issued with a letter informing them of the impending action and providing them with contact details but leaving many with insufficient time to take any action. A few were able to specify certain trees on their boundaries which they wanted kept and the Tree Officer at Breckland Council was able to intercede with the contractor to ensure this. The contractor subsequently felled these trees under instruction from the landowner.

3. **Where practical good examples of Oak and Field maple should be protected and retained (part 3)**

All the trees have been felled, measurement of stumps and examination of felled trees indicates that there are many healthy 50 year old examples of Oak and Field Maple. What does 'where practical' mean?

4. **Ash Die Back management decision tool (Ash die back notes 46)**

The felling license allows for 'clear felling' yet the management tool only appears to allow this option where there is a pure Ash stand with 70% canopy decline or basal lesions. This particular application was a mixed stand. In all cases it is stated that 'potentially tolerant specimens be retained and some dying examples.'

5. **Regeneration of the site (license conditions and guidance notes 46)**

The conditions require the site to be cleared as soon as possible so that the debris doesn't impede regeneration of new saplings and shoots. Currently, a large amount of material has been stacked at either end of the site in direct contravention of this condition.

Guidance notes also state that ash coppice stools are not suitable for regeneration as they are known to be susceptible to disease. In view of this would the regeneration aims be best achieved by replanting at an earlier stage with other species?

6. **General Forestry Commission Principles**

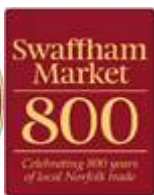
There is a presumption against felling in Forestry Commission (FC) guidance. Has there been an assessment of this application prior to the license being issued? There are environmental objectives within FC guidance and this particular site is part of a larger biodiversity and landscape feature yet there doesn't appear to be any Environmental Impact statement for clear felling rather than selective felling.

I would be grateful if you would respond to the points raised before the Town Council next meet on 8th December – thank you.

Best regards,

Richard Bishop

Town Clerk



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