

Appendix 2.

Dear Gary,

I write with reference to your letter dated 21 September regarding the Tree Preservation Order on the Beech tree at 10 Aberdour Close T1.

I am pleased that you have made provision for those affected by this order to have our say about how it impacts us. This is a subject I feel passionate about.

My husband and I moved here in 2009, with our 3 children. It's been our dream home and one of the attractions for us was the beauty of the trees and how they offered us privacy from overlooking neighbours. We used to enjoy the sunshine in the garden but over the last 7 years that sunshine has been reduced due to heavy shading from the group of neighbouring trees. The tree which is having the most impact on our overshading is the overbearing Beech tree in the garden of 10 Aberdour, our next door neighbour. It has become so large that it has virtually blocked the skyline, causing the other neighbouring trees to lean and fight for light. One very large sycamore in our garden is leaning worryingly towards the house.

The Beech is a beautiful tree but it has been left to outgrow its surroundings. If it were growing in a city park or on a large estate it wouldn't be an issue, it could grow to its full potential, but it is seriously compromising on space where it is. Hidden behind it, also fighting for light and space, is a mature Oak tree which is already protected. However I doubt if anybody knows it's there.

Our neighbours have just informed us that they are planning to erect a single storey extension which concerns us as this will also restrict our already depleted light levels. To alleviate these concerns, they were planning to reduce the size of the Beech in order to allow more light into our gardens. (There was no existing TPO.) However now all that has changed...

As you can see from your map, our garden at No 9 is significantly more shallow than all of our immediate neighbours meaning it sits directly in the shadow cast by the canopy of the trees which border us, from East to West, with no gaps in between. It's a curtain of trees. This protected group is made up of mainly sycamores which spread widely and have large broad leaves which block out sunlight. We are in almost complete shade for 6 months of the year, when the trees are in leaf. Just enjoying a brief spell of sunshine in mid-summer when the sun peeps over the top of the trees. However this is diminishing the taller the trees become.

When we first moved here we had permission to crown reduce one of our sycamores but that was a waste of time and money as everything has grown back thicker than ever. To make any impact on our light and shade trees need to be removed. We can't afford to be paying out to have branches removed every few years or more. The issue of overcrowding lays mainly with the neighbours trees but because to their objection in the past we were unable to go ahead. Due to the unique positioning of our garden, we are the only ones affected by the dense shading. The houses to the front of us in Moorlands Crescent have the trees at the back end of their gardens and can enjoy the

sun as do the neighbours either side of us as they have much longer and deeper gardens.

Year on year it becomes increasingly frustrating for us as we are losing more and more of our garden to denser shade. The main source of the problem is the Beech tree in No 10 because that is blocking the most light and taking up the most space.

I agree that trees should bring enjoyment to the public and amenity and that TPO's are used to protect them but when it means people lose their light and can no longer enjoy sunny days in their own garden, then I believe the Council should look more closely at updating the TPOs. They need to be reviewed periodically to observe whether the trees the order is protecting are growing within their surroundings or whether they need thinning out to re-balance nature, let the light filter through to allow other plants and vegetation to flourish.

In our case I believe the sycamores have low value compared to the Beech and Oak and some removal should be granted. If this were the case perhaps permitting their replacement with a native species more accommodating to an urban garden. However at this moment in time there is just not enough room to accommodate any more trees. The Beech should also be reduced to a more manageable size and perhaps a restriction order put in place so it can't get too dominant.

I would welcome a visit from you in the very near future so you can see first hand just what a frustrating time we have just trying to find a patch of sun to enjoy in our own garden.

Yours sincerely,

(See panoramic photo of the tree line attached.)

