



Little Missenden Church of England Infant School

Buckinghamshire HP7 0RA

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Mr K Musgrave
Tree Officer
Chiltern District Council
King George V Road
Amersham
Bucks HP6 5AW

Ref: TPO/19/0009

22 August 2019

Dear Mr Musgrave

Tree Preservation Order 2019

I am writing to appeal against the order made on 20 August 2019 in respect of Lime Tree, reference T1 on your map, which is growing within the school grounds.

We are a small village school with 50 children aged 4-7. Through our nominated tree surgeon, we applied to remove this tree as it is located very close to the main school building and within an area where children play all day. The roots are damaging both the play area and the main school path. This creates potential trip hazards and make it impossible to maintain safe play surfaces.

The governors and the Diocese have a duty of care and a responsibility to ensure the site is always safe. A recent survey of the site by a Diocesan officer highlighted that this tree is a concern. I attach a copy of their report. We are grateful that you agreed that the cherry tree within the site could be removed but would ask you to reconsider this order with regards to the Lime Tree. The site is bounded by many native species mature trees including lime trees.

I would be welcome the opportunity to meet with you on site when school returns on 4 Sept so you can better understand our concerns.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

Mrs Jane Elkins
Chair of Governors

[Redacted contact information]

Next Steps - The next steps are:
 1. Share this information with the Board of Governors
 2. Review how you will potentially fund these works through DFC, LCVAP, Governor Funds or PTA Funds. For more info <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Premises-Handbook-Jane-Mahary-2018-19.pdf>
 3. Contact the Premises team to discuss how we can help you carry these works out- Claire.Hayes@oxford.anglican.co.uk

Element	Item	Construction type Description/ Comment/ Defects	Photo Ref	Condition Grading	Priority Grading	Estimated Cost £
Roofs	Structure	Concealed, assume timber pitched structure.		B	4	
		Concealed, assume timber flat roof structure.		B	4	
Roof Coverings		Timber structure to entrance and early years canopy in satisfactory condition.		B	4	
		Felt flat roof in satisfactory condition.	(1)	C	2	£1,000- £5,000
Chimneys Rainwater Goods Flashings Cladding Fascias Soffits		Tiled pitch roof covered heavily in moss. Recommend brushing the moss off, the moss acts as a sponge keep the tiles constantly wet rather than letting the roof drain.				
		Polycarbonate covering to canopies in satisfactory condition. Recommend cleaning.				
		The school have two chimneys, visually in satisfactory condition.		B	4	
		UPVC rainwater pipes in satisfactory condition. Recommend regular clearing of debris.		B	4	
		The school have had large amounts of lead flashing stolen, caused leaks. Flashing now replaced with a non-lead material in good condition.		B	4	
Drainage External Walls		UPVC fascia's to extension area in good condition.		A	4	
		Timber fascia's in satisfactory condition.		A	4	
Doors & Windows	Below ground drainage	School reported that drains are jetted as part of their maintenance. Recommend regular clearing of debris as part of maintenance.		B	4	
	Brickwork	Areas of brickwork require repointing to remain weathertight. Brickwork above rear door the school shows signs of movement and cracking. Recommend stitch repair to area.	(2)	C	3	£250-£750
Doors Playground Playground safety surface	DPC's	A missing brick to the external wall to classroom 15 requires filling with concrete to main weathertightness of the building.		C	2	£500- £1,000
	Windows	UPVC windows to the front of the school in good condition.		B	4	£200
		High level timber framed windows in poor condition. The school is gradually replacing timber framed single pane windows with UPVC. Small timber framed windows to the toilets in poor condition. The school is gradually replacing timber framed single pane windows with UPVC.	(3)	A	4	<£6,000
Hardscapes	Doors	Metal entrance doors in good condition.		A	4	
	Playground safety surface	Playground in good condition. Playground safety surface in good condition.		A	4	
Playground equipment Tarmac footpath Pavloir ramp Decking area	Playground equipment	Playground equipment in satisfactory condition. Recommend regular safety inspection of equipment.		B	4	
	Tarmac footpath	Tarmac footpath from the front entrance gate has two small holes. Recommend patch repair, possible trip hazard.		C	2	<£500
Other	Pavloir ramp	Pavloir ramp in early years area in satisfactory condition.		B	4	
	Decking area	Decking area to side of playground in satisfactory condition.		B	4	
Trees	Trees	Trees are regularly surveyed by an Arborist. School reported concern that the lime tree to the front of the playground has come to the end of its life. Consult with Arborist whether felling is recommended		C	3	<£1,000
		School reported concern about the health of the large tree in the early years play area. Previous trees in the same area have fallen onto the public footpath. School to contact South Bucks county council regarding Conservation area restrictions on trees. The large tree is blocking much light to the school and restricts movement in the early years play provision area. Recommend felling.	(4)	C	3	<£2,000



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Mr K Musgrave
Tree Officer
Chiltern District Council
King George V Road
Amersham
Bucks HP6 5AW

Ref: TPO/19/0009

2 October 2019

Dear Mr Musgrave

Tree Preservation Order 2019

I am writing further to our meeting at the school today, to further clarify our concerns with regards to the lime tree and why we wish to remove it.

1. The tree is impacting on the main school building and the entrance path. It is a mature tree very close to the main building. It is shading the main building impacting on light in the classrooms and causing a build-up of moss on the roof. Its roots are causing problems with the drains and we have a damp problem. It is also undermining the path which is breaking up and will become a serious trip hazard.
2. It is situated in the play area for the nursery and reception children and its roots are exposed and a trip hazard. Furthermore, the root structure spreads across the whole area which is uneven and muddy. Outdoor play is a key part of the curriculum for Early Years and this area needs to have a safe all-weather surface. This is a significant outlay for the school, and it's difficult to commit to this when the tree continues to undermine the surface.
3. I would strongly refute your suggestion that the school is aiming for no trees. We are a small site with limited outdoor space but are surrounded by trees that in the main belong to the Church, which in any case is the owner of the school site. We are totally committed to the environment and have a thriving garden area and planters. Environmental studies are a key part of the curriculum for all the pupils and we take every opportunity for them to be outside enjoying their surroundings.
4. The governors have a duty of care with regards to the safety of the children and this is a mature tree that has the potential to drop branches or fall. We regularly check this of course, but it remains a risk.

You outlined how the process will run going forward and I trust that this letter will be included in your report and given due consideration by the Planning Committee/Officer. Please let me know when a date has been agreed for this to be discussed.

Yours sincerely

Jane Elkins

Mrs Jane Elkins
Chair of Governors



Little Missenden Parish Council

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Holmer Green
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Dear Mr Musgrave,

RE: PL/19/2380/KA

I am writing to express Little Missenden Parish Council's full support for Little Missenden School's application to remove a lime tree from their site. This follows your 2nd October meeting at the school with Chair of the school governors, Jane Elkin, another governor, Matt Hopkins, and the Little Missenden Ward Councillor, Ben Scotchbrook.

I understand Jane Elkin has already written to you to reiterate the school's argument for removing the tree. We would like to add our voice for the consideration.

CASE FOR REMOVAL:

- The roots of the tree are penetrating the school's drains which is believed to be the cause of a damp problem in part of the main school's wall (Image 1). On basic health grounds, we're sure Chiltern District Council would accept damp can cause health issues for people of any age. The problem could be fixed but as long as the tree and its roots are left, the problem can only return or get worse.
- Secondly, the roots are undeniably causing issues on the main path into the school, with the tarmac beginning to crack (Image 2). There are other places where the path is deteriorating (Image 3). While the risk of tripping may not be substantial currently, the problem will only worsen if the tree is left in situ.
- In the play area to the east of the tree, the roots are already contributing to a more substantial trip-hazard. The ground is very uneven and this isn't helped by a tarmac circular 'track' in the middle of the play area which the school would like to replace – not least because it makes tripping more likely (Image 4). However, there is no practical point in replacing anything here - or considering ways to develop a better play area – while the lime tree and its roots are still in situ. The integrity of a more level playing surface would soon be undermined by growing roots.
- The roof of the school is covered with moss – caused by the extensive shade from the tree which blocks out a lot of light. The moss needs removing, but with the tree there, it will doubtless return.
- These arguments are underpinned by the financial challenges all our schools face. Little Missenden School is currently unable to make improvements it might otherwise consider for its children because the tree presents a current and ongoing impediment which doesn't allow for 'future-proofing'. Put simply, there's no point investing in areas that will always be undermined by this tree.

POINTS FROM THE MEETING:

At the meeting with the school's governors and Councillor Scotchbrook, you said that the school appeared to be arguing to get rid of all trees on the school site. Little Missenden Parish Council believes that certainly isn't the school's position by any means - and the school wouldn't enjoy Council's support if it was. It is our understanding (and Cllr. Scotchbrook's three children attended the school) that awareness of, and protecting, our environment has always been at the heart of the school's curriculum and ethos.

You also stated that children should learn how to deal with trip-hazards. Whilst we all have a duty to teach children about life's perils – big and small – I'm sure you will accept the overriding concern of any council (district and parish) - and certainly any school - is to reduce risks where feasibly possible. It is, in fact, our statutory duty.

Looking at the Little Missenden Parish Council's planning interventions over the years, you will note councillors have frequently argued for preserving the 'status quo', against over-development and, crucially, for the protection

Little Missenden Parish Council

of our countryside and conservations areas. It is in that context we still believe this particular tree should be removed for the greater good.

CRITERIA FOR TREE PRESERVATION ORDER:

According to Chiltern District Council's own criteria, a Tree Preservation Order is considered where a tree makes "*a significant contribution to the amenity of the area. It should also be an attractive specimen in good health with a reasonable life expectancy ahead of it*".

It is the Little Missenden Parish Council's position that this particular tree does not make "a significant contribution to the amenity of the area". While it can be seen from the road and pavement, there are (literally) countless other trees in the immediate vicinity – to the left of the school, to the right of the school, over the road from the school, everywhere you look, in fact.

There is little way of establishing the overall life expectancy of the tree but the Parish Council do not believe it is a particularly "attractive specimen"; it possibly *could* be - with some extensive, and expensive, tree surgery work - but that wouldn't solve the overriding issues it presents to the school.

We would ask that Little Missenden Parish Council's position is considered going forward and we are made aware of any developments and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Hogan

Parish Clerk

For and on behalf of LMPC