

**REPORT FROM: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES MANAGER**

**TO: WEST CRAVEN COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 6 FEBRUARY 2018**

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## **LEYLANDII TREES AT THE BOTTOM OF PRIORY WAY, BARNOLDSWICK**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update members on the trees at the bottom of Priory Way and to present options and costings for consideration.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That members note the report.
- (2) That members decide which of the options at paragraph 22 to approve and where the additional money required might come from.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) To resolve the issue of the trees at the bottom of Priory Way.

### **BACKGROUND**

1. This time last year, Neighbourhood Services received concerns from residents of Robinson Court that the leylandii trees leading up to their main doors, at the bottom of Priory Way, were too large and were swaying in the wind, which they felt was dangerous.
2. We put forward proposals and costings to West Craven Committee with three options for the site and they decided on removing all the leylandii trees, installing a post and rail fence and planting five or six native trees. Funding was approved and is still ring fenced for this:
  - £1,870 from West Craven Committee's Capital Programme; and
  - £600 from Problem Sites (managed by Neighbourhood Services).
3. The works were ordered and were due to start. Cllr Whipp put a message on Facebook to explain the situation.

4. Staff then received telephone messages from residents from Priory Way saying they were not happy with the situation and felt they had not been consulted.
5. The work was cancelled until a meeting with residents could be arranged.
6. The window for planting had been missed and there was a danger of disturbing nesting birds once spring arrived and so there has been a year's delay for the meeting.
7. A residents' meeting was scheduled for 11 January 2018 at Robinson Court at 6.30pm.

## **CURRENT POSITION**

### Residents' Meeting on 11 January 2018

8. A brief update was given by Pendle Council officers, as above.
9. Residents from Priory Way explained their situation and why they were not happy. Last year, when the message went out on Facebook to say the trees were coming down, they felt they had not been consulted and were upset that there seemed to be a lot of wildlife in the trees which they did not want to disturb and they felt the trees acted as a barrier for them as without them people could look directly into their living rooms.
10. However, residents on Federation Street had other issues such as the trees overshadowing their houses, making them very dark.
11. Claire Boardwell, Scheme Manager for Robinson Court, said that she was the one who initially made the complaint about the trees because it had been brought to her attention that they were swaying in the wind during a storm and it felt dangerous for residents. She felt that the residents were vulnerable.
12. Lee Johnson, the Council's Tree Officer, provided some technical information about the trees, which are not yet fully grown and so will only get bigger. He informed the residents that thinning leylandii is difficult because when you remove the outer branches or thin out the trees by removing alternate trees the branches that are left are often dead and brown. In addition, the trees are growing from the bottom and producing gaps.
13. Residents were interested in Lee's opinion on the matter. Lee is a conservation wildlife biologist. He suggested that it would be better to replace the leylandii with native pollinating trees that would attract wildlife.

## **DISCUSSIONS AROUND THE ROOM**

14. Residents wondered why the trees had been pruned in the past and grew again quite well and asked why Pendle Council had not kept up with the maintenance.
15. There was some discussion over the street lamp on site which has not worked for many years and there is also a BT telegraph pole on site. Both of these are in danger of being swamped by the trees.
16. There were various suggestions/comments from around the room, such as:
  - Could we remove half the trees at the Federation Street end where it is dark and plant with new trees and as they grow take the next half down?

- Some people expressed at the meeting that they would be very sad to see the trees go as they held a lot of wildlife and birds.
  - Since the meeting, we have also had a suggestion put forward to replace the large leylandii with new leylandii which would form a barrier in the future.
17. It was suggested that Council officers inform residents about what the site might look like if the leylandii trees were removed, for example:
    - what type of trees would we plant and how big would they be initially?
    - how big would the trees grow and how fast?
    - what would the timber fence look like?
  18. Residents were keen to take on Lee's advice noting that the Council had a responsibility for the safety of the site.
  19. Cllr Whipp finished the meeting by advising that we could not take a vote as not all residents were in attendance. So, in consultation with Lee Johnson, Neighbourhood Services would write a report to the February meeting of West Craven Committee summarising the meeting and explaining the various options in more detail.
  20. The Area Committee would then decide on the way forward.
  21. Barnoldswick Town Councillors were also in attendance and they agreed that there may be some additional funding from the Town Council's budget.

## OPTIONS

22. The options offered are:
  - (a) **OPTION 1:** Cut the tops of the existing leylandii trees and prune – (Lee Johnson warned that this might look unsightly and there could be dead layers underneath the top healthy layers) – total cost = **£1,500**.
  - (b) **OPTION 2:** Remove the existing leylandii and stump grind; replace with 8 No 2m high pot-grown leylandii that will grow to form a barrier in the future, install 2.1m high Yorkshire board fence (similar to the existing fence at Robinson Court) along the existing fence line. Cost: cut down leylandii trees and stump grind – £2,450; plant 2m high leylandii and mulch – £350; install Yorkshire board fence – £1,450 – total cost = **£4,250**.
  - (c) **OPTION 3:** Remove the existing leylandii and stump grind; replace with a Yorkshire board 2.1m high timber fence (similar to the existing fence at Robinson Court) along the existing fence line and plant 8 No native bare rooted 10–12cm girth pollinating trees that will attract wildlife such as Broad Leaved Hawthorn, White Beam and Ornamental Cherry: Cost: cut down leylandii trees and stump grind – £2,450; plant native trees and mulch – £560; install Yorkshire board fence – £1,450 – total cost = **£4,460**.
23. Committee to decide on their preferred option.
24. Residents to be informed of the final decision before work is carried out.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Policy:** The Council has a responsibility to make the site safe. The site falls under the Engineering Section of Neighbourhood Services, under Problem Sites.

**Financial:** There is a small budget for Problem Sites. However, this money was only approved two years ago and so the site had already been neglected for some time. Funding from the Problem Sites only covers three visits per year. This is for weed kill and to make the site safe. A bid was submitted to West Craven Committee last year because there was not enough funding in the Problem Sites Budget to make the trees safe.

**Legal:** The Council would be liable if damage was done to any property should any branches fall. There is not an option to do nothing.

**Risk Management:** The options are put forward to reduce the risk of any future damage on site.

**Health and Safety:** By agreeing on one of the proposed options and funding for the works, we are considering health and safety of residents.

**Climate Change:** If we remove the leylandii, we will replace with other trees.

**Community Safety:** It is in the interest of community safety that we are putting forward these proposals. Residents from Robinson Court will feel less vulnerable.

**Equality and Diversity:** The scheme aims to consider all options and listen to all residents opinions to come up with a solution that suits all.

## APPENDICES

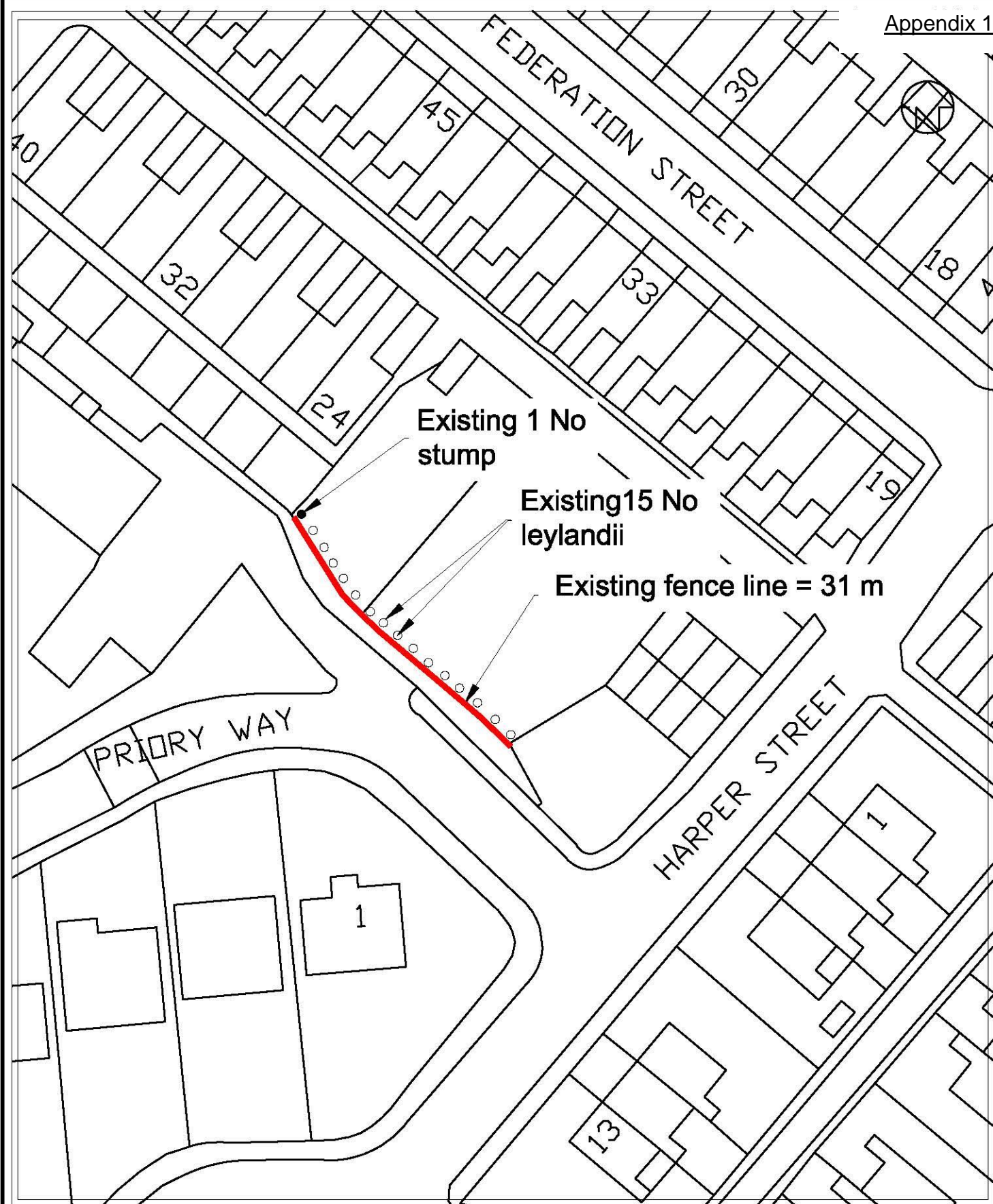
Appendix 1: Site plan.

Appendix 2: Photographs showing existing fence line and proposed Yorkshire board fence.

Appendix 3: Photographs of the types of native trees proposed for the site for Option 3.

## LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.



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**Service**  
 Engineering and Special Projects

**Project**  
 West Craven Area  
 Committee

**SCALE**  
 1:500

**Drawn By**  
 TW

**Checked By**

**Date**  
 January 2018

#### Revisions

No.	Detail	Date
•		

**Drawing No**

**Description**  
 Leylandii trees

**Borough of**  
**Pendle**





## Existing Yorkshire Board fence at Robinson Court





**Broad Leaved Cockspur Thorn, Hawthorne x 3**





White Beam x 2





### Ornamental Cherry x 3

