

REPORT FROM: PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGULATORY SERVICES MANAGER

TO: COLNE & DISTRICT COMMITTEE

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For Information
Tree Planting in Colne Town Centre

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform members of possible planting sites for trees in Colne and the implications.

ISSUE

1. At the meeting of 7th November 2019 the issue of planting trees in Colne Town Centre was discussed. It was resolved that the Planning, Economic Development & Regulatory Services Manager report back to the Committee with alternatives for siting trees in Colne Town Centre.
2. The Principal Environment Officer undertook a survey of Colne Town Centre to locate possible planting sites.
3. The survey found that there is no green areas with Colne Town Centre that do not already have trees planted on them.
4. Pendle Borough Council own very little land within the Town Centre that doesn't have trees planted or is suitable for trees to be planted in to the hard surfaces.
5. There is scope for trees to be planted into pedestrian areas however, this will require working with partners to achieve this (see map in appendix 1).
6. Section 96 of the Highways Act allows Pendle Borough Council to plant trees in the highway with the consent of the Highways Authority. In this case Lancashire County Council.
7. Lancashire County Council will expect Pendle Borough Council to indemnify LCC from any third party claim relating to the tree. Nor will they maintain any 'consent' trees.

8. Principal Environment Officer noted that some areas had indications of services in close vicinity. A survey of all services would be required before any planting could take place and would determine whether or not tree could be planted in any location.
9. While it is possible to plant trees in to paved areas several factors need to be taken in to account. These include:
 - The design and construction of the tree pit – This should allow sufficient water to the roots and prevent compaction of the soil.
 - Soil – It is highly likely that the existing soil will be very poor and would be likely to hinder the establishment of the tree. Imported material would have to be brought in.
 - Root barriers and directors – Root barriers would need to be installed to ensure that the trees did not cause damage to buildings or surfaces.
 - Water – a system will need to be installed to ensure that the trees are able to get sufficient water.
 - Protection – Due to the high occupancy of the area trees will require metal tree cages until they become established enough to withstand knocks and vandalism.
 - Establishment – The tree will require watering, feeding and formative pruning within the first few years in the location.
 - Maintenance – Once established the tree will require cyclic maintenance. Maintenance costs are likely to be high due to the need for traffic and people management while works are carried out.
10. Due to the high occupancy rates of the area any tree planted will require inspecting every two years to ensure that it is good condition.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy:

Pendle Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy, Policy ENV1 states:

‘Open space and green infrastructure

Existing open spaces will be protected from development. The Council will encourage and support improvements to these spaces and the route ways between them along with the creation of new sites as part of a wider programme of green infrastructure provision.’

Financial:

The cost of planting trees in to pedestrian areas is expensive. Recent studies indicate that it costs around £5,000 to plant a street tree (Greenblue Urban accessed 2019).

In addition to this there will be budgetary implications for inspecting and maintaining the tree for its life time.

Finance would need to be found for the project and subsequent maintenance.

Legal:

Section 96 of the Highways Act allows us to plant trees in the highway with the consent of the Highways Authority (Lancashire County Council).

The planting of trees helps us fulfil our obligations under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

When planting adjacent to buildings the Council must be mindful not to cause a legal nuisance by allowing the branches or roots to encroach on to adjoining land.

Risk Management:

Due to the high occupation levels of the area, the tree will require an inspection every two years.

Health and Safety:

None

Sustainability:

Any tree planted will contribute to the Council's commitment to reduce its carbon footprint. The tree will also remove particular matter from the air and help with sustainable drainage.

Community Safety:

None

Equality and Diversity:

None

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Map of possible locations.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS