

Planning Officer's Report - LDCA MAY 2020

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| APPLICATION | 2020/25 – Removal of Limbs at the Canister |
| PERMISSION SOUGHT | Permission in Full |
| REGISTERED | 10 th March 2020 |
| APPLICANT | Crown Estates Management, St Helena Government |
| ZONE | Intermediate Zone |
| CONSERVATION AREA | Jamestown Conservation Area |
| PUBLICITY | The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Independent Newspaper on 13th March 2020▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations. |
| EXPIRY | 27 th March 2020 |
| REPRESENTATIONS | One received from Heritage Society |
| DECISION ROUTE | Delegated / LDCA / EXCO |

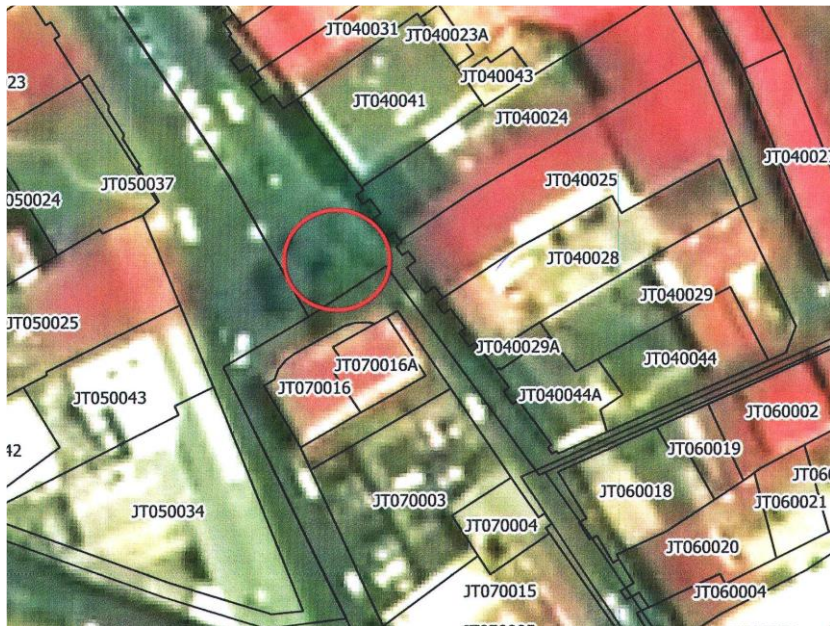
A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

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| Water & Sewerage Division | No Objection |
| Energy Division | No Objection |
| St Helena Fire & Rescue | No Objection |
| St Helena Roads Section | No Objection – There is a huge limb sticking on the side, where the emporium is and this is a hindrance to vehicular users |
| EMD | No Response |
| Public Health | No Response |
| ANRD | The Agent |
| Crown Estates | The Applicant |
| St Helena Police Services | Not Consulted |
| Aerodrome Safe Guarding | Not Consulted |
| Enterprise St Helena (ESH) | No Objection |
| St Helena National Trust | No Response |

B. SITE & WORK DESCRIPTION

The proposal is to undertake maintenance and safety works to the tree on the pavement area outside The Canister. The location site is on the junction of Napoleon Street and Market Street. The proposed works are to remove a number of lower hanging limbs that impact vehicular traffic using Napoleon Street.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSED WORKS

The request is to remove the 'L' shaped limb or elbow, which was brought to the attention of ANRD following a number of complaints from drivers of larger vehicles. The concern is number of high sided vehicles such as lorries and buses travelling along this road into Jamestown are hitting these limb. Occurrences are now becoming more frequent with the recent road closure of Ladder Hill, as well as the increased volume of traffic using Side Path into town.

Removing the limbs would significantly affect the tree, which would result in approximately 30-35% of the structure and canopy to be lost. In considering the age of the tree, it is likely that the tree's regenerative capacity has diminished significantly over the years. The likelihood will be that the tree will be un-able to cope with the losing significant volume of hard and soft material, leading to further dieback and eventual loss of the tree within the immediate to medium future.

There is a second smaller limb growing from the aforementioned limb, which is also showing evidence of being repeatedly hit by larger vehicles. Removal of this limb at the right time will not have a significant impact upon the overall health of the tree. To remove this limb now could potentially have an adverse impact upon the overall tree health.

The assessment has also revealed that there are a number of low hanging limbs at the front of the tree, which is also impacting on traffic as can be seen in diagram 3.

Diagram 2: 'L' Shaped limb



Diagram 3: 'L' Shaped Limb

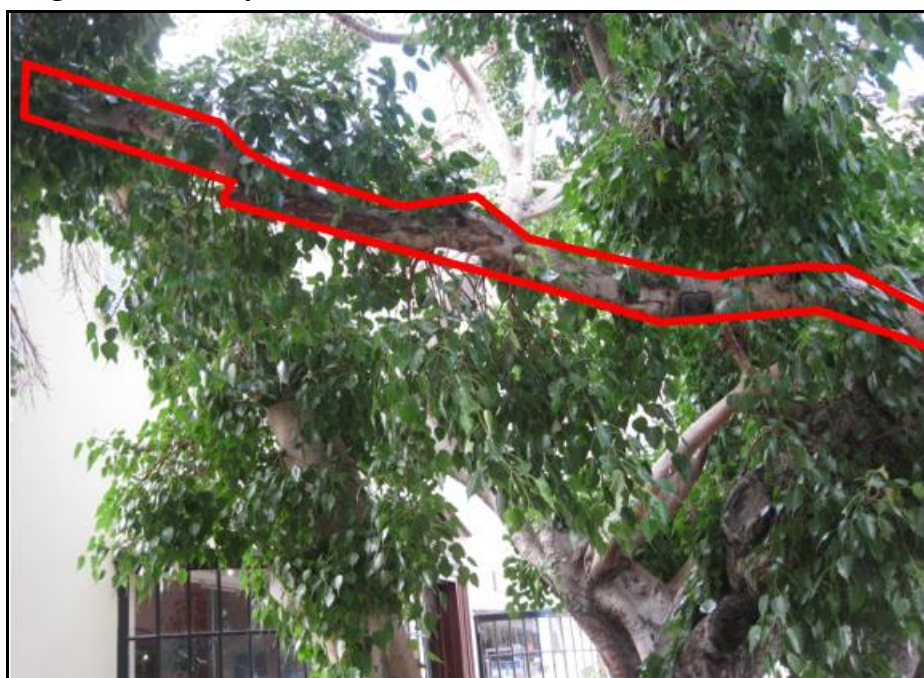


Diagram 4: Low Hanging Limbs



Risks are possible loss of the tree should removal of the larger, significant 'L' shaped limb be undertaken. Secondly potential dieback of limbs should surgery works be undertaken now, as required, when the tree is actively growing.

The recommendation is that when a suitable window occurs, the smaller limbs that is affecting traffic adjacent to the Emporium are removed, as well as lifting the canopy of the tree to remove low hanging limbs. This will be cut back to suitable growing points so it provides a clear and unhampered passage for all vehicles. Cuts will also be made, where possible with screening foliage.

REPRESENTATION

An objection was received from the Heritage Society, which has been summarised below:

- Concerns regarding the survivability of the tree.
- Roots was severely cut and may impact the trees health.
- Forestry Officers assessment outdated as a result of the works carried out around the Canister was carried out after the assessment was submitted.
- Historical and cultural importance of the trees, which are both locally and internationally significant, as it is the site of slave auctions.
- One of few remaining trees through town that were brought here from India by East India Company.
- Tree cutting to make way for traffic in towns went out of fashion after the 1980's.

- All drivers of large vehicles on the island know of trees existence, in particular if the vehicles involved were allowed onto the island while exceeding the size limit. Solution should like elsewhere.
- This TPO tree in a Conservation Area within a potential World Heritage Site should be considered more carefully than just as a traffic obstruction.

OFFICERS RESPONSE

The Forestry Officer was contacted regarding the concern and undertook a second assessment on 22nd April, where the response by the Officer is summarised: On inspection the tree appears to be in good health and has not shown any adverse reaction from the works carried out at the Canister. There is a possibility that the damage may become apparent within the near future, as it is not always immediate that a reaction is seen and would recommend that more frequent assessments, say monthly in the first instance be carried out to assess any possible adverse effects that may arise, and to address these accordingly.

C. PLANNING OFFICER'S STATEMENT

Trees are significant and important features in Jamestown due to various reasons. For this reason, most trees within Jamestown are subject to the Tree Preservation Order of 2015, which includes these in front of the Canister Building.

The trees under discussion have been subject to a thorough and comprehensive examination by forestry experts within ANRD. In considering the proposed works, special regards to historical heritage and the effect on the landscape must be taken into account. These trees form part of the site that was once used for slave auctions, therefore is of historical importance. Furthermore the trees have formed part of the area for hundreds of years; it would have an adverse impact on the landscape should they be lost. It is clear from the assessment, there is damage being caused to private and public works vehicles, however preservation of the tree, where possible should be the primary factor therefore following thorough assessment and based upon the advice and recommendation from the Forestry Officer the recommendation on the proposed development is set in Section D of the Report.