

TREES



Supplementary Planning Guidance

Trees: Protection and Planting

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1 • Introduction

1.1 Trees are a vital component in maintaining the quality of the landscape in the City of Salford. Trees and woodlands enhance the environment and make a valuable contribution to the character of an area. They do this in a number of ways: by screening unsightly structures and activities; by providing shelter and shade; by helping to define and structure spaces and by framing and consolidating views. In all these ways trees soften the harshness of the built environment. Trees also form an important habitat for a wide range of wildlife and are instrumental in encouraging animals and birds into an area.

1.2 Trees also play a significant role environmentally by absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere, helping to clean and filter the air of dust and pollutants. These types of environmental issues have gained a considerable amount of public support and interest in recent years and they are now high on the national agenda.

1.3 Many of the opportunities for new tree planting, particularly in urban areas, arise through the development of land. This may be for residential, industrial, commercial or recreational uses. In addition to encouraging new planting to improve the landscape and soften hard development, the Council wish to preserve and enhance existing trees and hedgerows.

1.4 This Policy Note therefore aims to provide advice and guidance for developers and landowners where there are existing trees to be protected and integrated into the development, or where new or additional tree planting is to be carried out. The advice will also be used in the consideration of Planning applications and in support of planning conditions.



2 • Policy

2.1 Policy EN7 of the City of Salford Unitary Development Plan states:

The City Council will encourage the conservation of trees and woodland by :

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- i. supporting the retention of trees, woods, copses and hedgerows;
- ii. identifying and taking opportunities to increase the area of trees and woodland within the city;

- ii. ensure that new tree planting is designed to contribute to wildlife conservation, recreation and education opportunities as well as landscape quality; and
- iv. making Tree Preservation Orders or entering into management agreements as necessary.

2.2 The reasoned justification for policy EN7 states:

Woodland and trees are of considerable ecological, recreational, educational and landscape value within both the rural and urban environment. A high priority is therefore placed upon their protection and enhancement. The loss of mature and semi-mature trees can be particularly damaging, given the length of time required for trees to reach this condition. In exceptional circumstances, where the loss of trees is unavoidable, a developer will be required to replace such trees to the satisfaction of the City Council.

This policy is aimed at preserving and enhancing the amenity of the City and does not purport to deal with commercial forestry activities, which are expected to continue to play their part in the economy of the area.

2.3 Policy EN10 states:

The City Council will seek to protect and enhance landscape quality within the City through:-

- i. The protection and wherever possible the enhancement of features of the landscape which are of intrinsic value or which make a contribution to the quality of the landscape in which they are found;
- ii. The improvement of existing landscape in terms of quality, diversity and maintenance; and
- iii. The provision of improved standards of landscaping within all new developments.

Landscape features to be considered

for protection in accordance with criterion (I) of the policy will include, trees (single or grouped), woodlands, hedges, ponds, streams, ditches and lakes. In considering the impact of a proposal on a landscape feature particular attention will be paid to:

- a) The value of the landscape feature per se;
- b) The value of the landscape feature within its wider setting;
- c) The value of the landscape feature for wildlife
- d) The contribution that the landscape feature makes towards the viability of a wildlife corridor;
- e) The contribution that the landscape feature makes towards the local amenity of the area in which it is found.

In pursuing the policy the City Council will, in particular encourage the provision and protection of landscaping which is conducive to wildlife.



2.4 The reasoned justification for policy EN10 states:

Landscape plays a vital part in creating an attractive and pleasant environment for the people of Salford, through its impact on open spaces, parks, woodlands, transport corridors, the urban fringe and rural and urban environments. A rich and diverse landscape also helps to support an abundance of wildlife. By protecting the best of the City' landscape from adverse development and improving the quality

of new and existing landscape across the City as a whole, the attractiveness and image of the City can be enhanced.

The City Council will produce a Landscape Strategy which will provide a detailed interpretation of the policy in terms of landscape protection, provision and improvement. It will provide supplementary planning guidance to the Unitary Development Plan and it will be the subject of public consultation.

The Strategy will establish the framework for the protection and enhancement of the sites and features covered by this policy. It will also identify those parts of the city where landscape quality is poor and where there will be an emphasis on landscape improvement measures.

The Strategy will encourage the creation of a diverse range of landscape across the City reflecting the individual identity of local communities. It will provide guidance on the design of landscaping associated with new developments and it will establish a code of practice for landscape maintenance.

The Strategy will seek to foster nature conservation and the improved management of trees and woodlands, although detailed policies in this respect will be incorporated within specific strategies dealing with these respective topics.

3 • Existing Trees

3.1 New development can benefit from the retention of existing trees as they can enhance the environment by screening development, providing an appearance of maturity and improving the character of the area. Trees can make a valuable contribution to the visual appearance of a site and they should be incorporated into the planning scheme.

3.2 Where a development proposal (either outline or in full) is likely to affect trees or hedgerows within a site a tree

survey will be required to indicate the following information:

- (a) The exact location of existing trees and hedges.
- (b) Details of the disposition of all buildings, walls, roads, drives, sewers, drains and services.
- (c) Tree species, trunk girth, height and spread of canopy.
- (d) Ground levels, particularly where changes are involved.
- (e) Finished floor levels and heights of all buildings
- (f) Tree condition and remedial work required.
- (g) Trees should be inspected and classified by a competent arboriculturist before detailed plans are prepared for development. This survey should be available before any detailed layout for the proposed development is prepared in order to assess the effect of any proposals on the trees. For example, the root pattern of existing trees may influence the position and extent of underground works and surface levels.

4 • Considerations for layout design



4.1 The physical size of a tree can dominate a building, causing concern about its safety and the obstruction of light. In order to maintain the growth of a tree and to avoid associated problems

such as drain blockage and slippery surfaces, development should not take place within the maximum spread of the tree. This is to avoid damage to the tree and the building due to branches whipping against the structure.

4.2 In the case of residential buildings, a development in which a principal window (main window to a lounge, dining room or main bedroom) is overshadowed by a tree, or where any part of a tree is sited within 3.6 metres of a window will be resisted (this distance may be greater should it be necessary to prevent damage to the tree itself.)

4.3 The following factors should also be considered:

- (a) Private gardens should not be planned to include an excessive proportion overshadowed by trees.
- (b) No underground drains or services should be placed within the root spread of trees. Where this is unavoidable, all excavations should be done by hand to avoid root damage and filled in within 48 hours. (To obtain guidance on planning, installation and maintenance of utility services in proximity to trees visit the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) web site at www.njug.org.uk.)
- (c) Care should also be taken to ensure that trees do not cause a traffic hazard by obstructing visibility or the passage of high-sided vehicles. Trees should not reduce the adequacy of street lighting due to overhanging branches.
- (d) Ground levels within the root spread of existing trees should not be raised or lowered. These areas should also be left largely unpaved or with a surface which permits adequate drainage.
- (e) Any approved tree moving or pruning must be carried out

by qualified tree surgeons to British Standard 3998, (1989) Recommendation for Tree Work.

- (f) Weeping trees should not be planted near footpaths or roads as these can cause obstruction when mature.
- (h) Avoid planting thorny species close to pathways and areas where children play, although they may provide a barrier to intruders in appropriate situations.

5 • Protection of trees during construction



5.1 Trees on development sites should be protected at all stages of development as they may be damaged or felled in a few minutes after taking many years to reach maturity. Even when the site is vacant, damage may occur from waste tipping, interference with the drainage system or even by children or animals removing the bark or breaking the branches.

5.2 British Standard 5837 (1991), "Trees in Relation to Construction"



provides clear guidance on this matter and the Council expects the contents of this document to be followed and adhered to closely.

5.3 In order to avoid damage to existing trees, the following precautions should be taken during development operations:

- (a) Before construction commences, trees should be fenced around the canopy to prevent the storage of materials, lighting of fires or excavations, erection of site accommodation, deposition of waste due to tipping or leakage, ground compaction by traffic or any other actions likely to affect the health of the tree. Details of the fencing should be approved before work commences (see BS 5837).
- (b) The fence should be properly maintained during construction to provide adequate protection.
- (c) The site should be inspected frequently during works to ensure that trees are not being damaged.

5.4 Where excavation works near the trees are unavoidable, all excavation

should be carried out by hand in order to minimise the disturbance to the root system and supervised by a qualified arborist.

5.5 Where changes in ground levels are unavoidable, care must be taken to ensure a minimum change in level around the base of trees which are to be retained on site.

5.6 Contrary to popular belief, the root system of most trees tends to be very shallow and radiates out for considerable distances, often outside the crown spread of the tree. As most of the root system is located in the top two feet of soil, even shallow excavations or minor changes in soil level can adversely affect the health of the tree and can render it unstable and a liability to the development.

5.7 It is therefore essential that the root system is adequately protected before any construction is begun. Should excavation work in the vicinity of trees be unavoidable, then the advice of an experienced arboriculturalist should be sought.

5.8 In normal circumstances the Case officer for the planning application will be the designated officer responsible for monitoring the preservation of protected trees during construction, and liaising as necessary with specialist advisors as required.

6 • Tree Preservation Orders

6.1 Many trees in Salford are protected by a Preservation Order. These are trees of a high amenity value or which have a significant impact on the environment and have been identified by the Council and protected by an order.

6.2 Where a Tree Order (TPO) is made under Section 198 of the Town and County Planning Act, 1990, the tree or group of trees are identified on a location plan. Copies of the order are served on the owners of land upon

which the trees are growing, and on the owner occupies of affected adjoining properties. Details of which trees are protected can be obtained from the Development Control Section of Development Services in the Civic Centre, Swinton. Once an order has been made, the consent of the Council is required before a tree may be pruned or felled. In certain circumstances, it may be agreed that pruning or removal may be permitted in order to accommodate development, but the TPO enables the Council to control these actions and to obtain new planting to replace trees which are removed.

6.3 If a tree is cut down, uprooted or wilfully destroyed or is deliberately damaged, or pruned in a manner likely to destroy it, in contravention of a TPO, the responsible person may be prosecuted and liable to pay a substantial fine.

7 • Trees in Conservation Areas



7.1 Trees in Conservation Areas are also subject to special provisions introduced in 1974. Anyone wishing

to fell, prune or uproot trees in a Conservation Area, unless they form a hazard to public safety or are already covered by a Tree Preservation Order, must give the Council six weeks notice. Work must not be carried out within that period without consent, otherwise penalties may be incurred. The Regulations made under this Act give certain exemptions from this requirement, and applicants are advised to contact the Development Control Section if they are in any doubts about the procedures.



7.2 Conservation Areas in the City of Salford

1. Flat Iron, Chapel Street,
2. The Crescent,
3. Adelphi and Bexley Square,
4. The Cathedral,
5. The Cliff
6. Ellesmere Park
7. Monton Green
8. Barton upon Irwell
9. St. Augustines
10. Irlams o'th Heights
11. Radcliffe Park Road
12. St.Marks
13. Worsley Village
14. Worsley Old hall
15. Roe Green/ Beesley Green
16. Mines Rescue Station.

8 • Planting Adjacent to Highways

8.1 In an urban context, trees and landscaping adjacent to the highway form a very important part of the local environment and contribute significantly to the amenity of the locality. There are however important highway issues that need to be taken into account in order to ensure highway safety. To this end the City Council has produced a Code of Practice which sets out the rules governing the nature and location of planting adjacent to the highway designed to minimise any such problems. The Document is entitled "Code of Practice for Planted Areas in and Adjacent to Highways"



9 • New Tree Planting

9.1 Some trees may survive for a long time, but do not live forever and will eventually die of old age, disease, from accidents due to bad weather, or just outgrow the situation. Even if all trees are retained successfully on a development site there may be a need to replace them with new, young trees after a relatively short period of time. It may also be necessary or desirable to replace certain unsafe trees, and planting schemes should take this factor

into account. Any replacement trees should be of an appropriate size and species relative to the site and this should be agreed with the Development Control Section.

9.2 In the case of replacement tree planting the Council will require, wherever practicable, the replacement on the basis of two new trees for each tree lost.

9.3 Where a development site contains mainly older trees, new planting will normally be included in the landscaping conditions for the site. The most desirable state is to aim for a mixture of young, middle-aged and mature trees on any one site and provision should be made to replace the older trees with new growth.

9.4 Provision for new tree planting should be made at the earliest stages of design. The layout plan must provide adequate space for the full growth of trees. This factor is governed by the amount of open land on the site and the use made of this open land. The future use of the development, the choice of species and the location of planting are influenced by physical and technical restrictions. In order that trees do not interfere with buildings to such an extent that their removal may be necessary, the following considerations should be taken into account.

- (a) The dimensions of the fully grown tree and whether it will shade windows and gardens during its growth, careful choice of species and siting will reduce the need for pruning.
- (b) Trees should not be planted over underground services or drains due to possible disturbance and blockage by root damage.
- (c) Avoid heavy leaf fall trees, such as horse chestnuts, near roads, car parks and footpaths where slippery conditions could be dangerous. These trees should also be kept away from gutters and drains.

- (d) Similarly, trees such as limes and sycamores are affected by the sugar secreting aphid. These trees should also be avoided in car parks or near seating areas.
- (e) Damage to foundations and drains by the removal of water from the soil may be caused by certain trees (poplars, willows, ash) on shrinkable clays.
- (f) The shape, size and colour of trees should be carefully considered in relation to the design, size and layout of the buildings as a design feature.

- (b) Beneficial environmental effect, such as wildlife, shade and shelter and atmospheric improvement.
- (c) Accentuating height or natural contours.
- (d) Breaking up flat landscapes and adding points of interest.
- (e) Forming a back cloth to buildings to relieve roof lines.
- (f) Filling in the space between buildings to add interest and focal points and to complete an otherwise disjointed layout.
- (g) Extend a woodland by linking up existing trees on adjoining land with new planting.

10 • Species selection

10.1 Tree species selected should be suitable for conditions present on site, both above and below ground. Consideration should be given to the following factors:

- (a) Soil and ground conditions: texture, soil acidity/alkalinity, water availability, seasonal variations and pollutants.
- (b) Climate: general climatic conditions, extremes of temperature and precipitation, exposure to wind.
- (c) Atmospheric pollution.
- (d) Light availability.

10.2 In addition, plants should be chosen to be in harmony with their surroundings. Attention should be made to ultimate size and foliage characteristics.

11 • Landscaping

11.1 Trees can be used for their own beauty, but their maximum value is obtained when they are used to compliment existing architecture and grouping of buildings or used in a functional design role for:

- (a) Screening of wind, noise and unsightly views.

11.2 The presence of trees can enhance the appearance and quality of almost any type of development, and the existence of mature trees on the site can help to give an instant appearance of maturity to new buildings.

11.3 Many of the opportunities for new tree planting, particularly in urban areas, arise from the development of land. The Council will require satisfactory landscaping as part of development proposals. In order to ensure that landscaping forms an integral part of the development, it is important that landscaping details are submitted to the Council with planning application.

11.4 The proposed development and its surroundings will influence the basis for landscaping and tree planting. Landscaping schemes can assimilate the development into its setting and also improve the immediate surroundings of the new buildings.

11.5 Tree planting and landscaping must not be considered as an afterthought to development, but as an integral part of the scheme.

11.6 With any tree planting and landscaping works it is important that the trees and plants are maintained. The Council will normally impose conditions or enter into agreements to secure the

long term maintenance, and it will be the developer and owners of the land who will be obligated to ensure compliance.

11.7 All landscape work required by planning permission must be carried out to the satisfaction of the Director of Development Services. Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in both, unacceptable damage to existing trees and minimal and inappropriate new landscaping, which does little to improve amenity, and is of little value for wildlife.

12 • Further Information

12.1 Detailed technical advice on all the above matters is not normally available from the Council Officers. It is the developer's responsibility to seek the appropriate expert advice from external sources. Qualified landscape architects should be used to design any landscape scheme.

12.2 For general information about trees and arboriculture visit the Arboricultural Association's web site www.trees.org.uk. This site includes a full list of the Association's approved contractors and consultants.

12.3 For detailed information on every aspect of trees and tree care visit the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) web site www.champaing.isa-arbor.com.

12.4 Building and Development Control Section can be contacted at
Civic Centre
Chorley Road
Swinton
Salford
M27 2AD

Telephone 0161 793 2492/2823

E.mail: planning.contact@salford.gov.uk

Website: salford.gov.uk/planning

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A statement of the consultation undertaken is available on request.

