

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

SOUTHERN LOCAL PLANNING COMMITTEE: 12 SEPTEMBER 2003

THE GLEN LOGAN HOUSE, SORN (PROVISIONAL)

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 2002

Report by Head of Planning and Building Control

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on (1) the making, serving and advertising of the Glen Logan House, Sorn (provisional) Tree Preservation Order 2002 and (2) preparation of a Woodland Survey Report with a view to long term management of the estate woodland at Glen Logan by East Ayrshire Woodlands and to seek the Committee's views on whether or not the existing provisional Tree Preservation Order should be confirmed.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Planning and Building Control Division was formally approached by the owner of Glen Logan House with a view to their having four beech trees in the grounds of the house protected under a Tree Preservation Order.

2.2 The trees are unusual in that they are a good example of a technique known as 'melding' where the single stems of three or more individual trees are grown together. Outdoor Services estimated that the trees are possibly 200 years old.

2.3 Following a visual inspection of the trees by Outdoor Services it was considered that, although they required some maintenance work, the trees were basically sound. A provisional Tree Preservation Order was therefore made and took effect on 17 October 2001.

2.4 While no formal objections to the Order were received within the statutory 28 day period Glen Logan House changed hands during this period and the new owner Mr Sinclair made a formal representation to the Head of Administrative and Legal Services asking that the Order remain provisional until such time as they had had the opportunity to study the potential impact of the proposal on their property.

2.5 In March 2002 Mr Sinclair subsequently advised the Head of Planning and Building Control that both himself and his neighbour Mr Clarke of Daldilling Farm were concerned at the possibility of future damage and injury to Mr Clark's farm buildings and livestock, respectively should the whole or part of any of the trees covered by the Tree Preservation Order fall.

2.6 Accordingly a detailed physical inspection of the trees was undertaken by Outdoor Services who recommended that one of the trees be felled because of its poor condition, and that the other trees should have extensive work undertaken to them to balance them and thereby reduce their potential threat to the above farm buildings. Accordingly a revised further provisional Tree Preservation Order for the three beech trees considered sound by Outdoor Services took effect on 17 April 2002.

2.7 Mr Sinclair formally objected to this provisional Tree Preservation Order principally on the grounds that the trees were not unique specimens and that the costs of any necessary current or future remedial work to the trees would be onerous to Mr & Mrs Sinclair.

2.8 A further consideration was that Mr & Mrs Sinclair subsequently commissioned a woodland survey for the trees and woodlands within Glen Logan Estate from East Ayrshire Woodlands with a view to formulating a long term management plan for woodland within the estate, including trees currently under the provisional Tree Preservation Order. The Glen Logan Woodland Survey Report was finalised in June 2003 and forms a background paper to this report. Such a management plan would provide for long – term future maintenance of the trees.

3. POLICY & PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Glen Logan House, Sorn (Provisional) Tree Preservation Order 2002 was promoted in accordance with Policy ENV 15(ii) of the East Ayrshire Finalised Local Plan, whereby the Council will actively seek to preserve existing broadleaf and native tree species throughout East Ayrshire and protect those individual, groups and areas of trees which contribute significantly to the landscape quality of both the built and rural environment, through the serving of Tree Preservation Orders. The trees are part of the historic planting associated with Glen Logan House and in view of their size are important to the setting of the house and in the landscape.

3.2 However notwithstanding the intrinsic quality of the trees which are the subject of the existing provisional Tree Preservation Order, the trees are not available to public view, there being no public rights of way in their vicinity.

3.3 While the form of the trees is unusual East Ayrshire Woodlands have confirmed that they are not unique even within East Ayrshire.

3.4 Also, the inclusion of the above beech trees within East Ayrshire Woodlands, Glen Logan Woodland Survey Report, as referred to in paragraph 2.8 above, would indicate that future maintenance of the beech trees would be included within a long term management plan for the estate woodlands at Glen Logan as a whole and that therefore little benefit would accrue from confirming the existing provisional Tree Preservation Order.

4. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Given East Ayrshire Woodland's view that the trees in question are not unique even within East Ayrshire, as referred to in section 3 above and that the future care of the trees would be vested in a long term management plan for woodland at Glen Logan Estate approved by East Ayrshire Woodlands also as indicated in Section 3 above, it is considered that confirmation of the provisional Tree Preservation Order would not be appropriate and that the existing provisional Order should be allowed to lapse on its expiry on 17th October 2003.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee agree that the Glen Logan House, Sorn (Provisional) Tree Preservation Order 2002 not be confirmed.

Alan Neish
Head of Planning and Building Control
25 August 2002
(JT/MMC)

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The Glen Logan House, Sorn (Provisional) Tree Preservation Order 2002.
2. Glen Logan Estate, Sorn – Woodland Survey Report (Natural Resource Consultancy for East Ayrshire Woodlands – June 2003).

MISCELLANEOUS: WATERSIDE FARM BEECH TREES

These trees are included within this report because they are the subject of a temporary Tree Preservation Order. There are a few other trees on the access road which are part of the policies and could equally be considered of local landscape interest. The main difference appears to be that they have a backdrop of established woodland and are therefore less distinct from distance views.

Tree 1

A large multi-stem beech lying furthest south of 4 next to the road link between Glenlogan House and Waterside. It is estimated to be 22.5m tall (~75ft) with a diameter at breast height (dbh) of 1.23m. The crown has a pronounced spread to south and east and has two main stems definable at 3m but distinct at 4.5m. Significant damage and rot has occurred where limbs have been removed or broken. This is particularly noticeable on the north and west of the tree where branches would have extended over the road. The crown as a whole is vigorous and healthy with little evidence of dieback.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The tree does not present any immediate hazard and, along with its 3 partners, makes an impressive local landscape feature. In order to extend the life of the tree and minimise the risk from storm damage it would be worth considering removal of the two substantial lower branches on the south side at some point and undertaking limited internal crown thinning to ease the movement of air. Dead pegs could be removed at the same time.

Tree 2

Immediately to the north of tree 1 this beech extends to 24m in height (~80ft) and has a dbh of 1.13m. 5 huge stems are distinct from about 4m. There is significant evidence of rot where a limb has been removed at approximately 6m. The crown is generally more even and more compact than tree one because of the presence of neighbouring trees. There is a distinct spread to the east and no corresponding spread west because of previous limb removal. The crown as a whole is vigorous and healthy with little evidence of dieback.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Again this tree does not present any immediate hazard and, along with its 3 partners, makes an impressive local landscape feature. In order to minimise the risk from storm damage it would be worth considering removal of the heavy branch extending on the eastern side at some point but failure of this branch would not present any hazard to neighbouring property. Undertaking limited internal crown thinning to ease the movement of air through the tree and removal of two small-medium sized branches that overhang the road would be beneficial from an amenity perspective.

Tree 3

This beech is of similar height and dbh to tree 1. Again crown spread has been contained by the presence of neighbouring trees and past limb removal on the roadside. 3 distinct stems almost from ground level suggests that these trees have been created by growing several trees close together ('bundle planting') rather than by coppicing or pollarding. A limb/stem has been removed from the centre of the tree at about 1.2m in the past, and this has rotted back significantly into the bowl. The crown as a whole is vigorous and healthy with little evidence of dieback.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Again this tree does not present any immediate hazard and, along with its 3 partners, makes an impressive local landscape feature. In order to minimise the risk from storm damage it would be worth considering undertaking limited internal crown thinning to ease the movement of air through the tree and to discourage growth of branches over the road.

Tree 4

Furthest north of the four trees it has an even more impressive girth and its dbh was estimated at 1.35m. 2 massive stems carry the crown which spreads distinctly to the north and east where no neighbouring trees compete for light. Limb removal at about 9m has allowed rot to enter and an old pruning scar at about 1m on the eastern side has been adopted as a nesting site. The crown as a whole is vigorous and healthy with little evidence of dieback.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Again this tree does not present any immediate hazard and, along with its 3 partners, makes an impressive local landscape feature. In order to minimise the risk from storm damage it would be worth considering undertaking

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