

Officer Comment:

A letter was received from Ulcombe Parish Council on 14th May 2010, detailing its concerns over the Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The full text is attached at **Appendix A** to this update but the key points are summarised below:

1. The description of the TPO is considered inaccurate. The tree is located on land which is part of the school playing field and not on land adjacent to the school.
2. The measurements as shown on the accompanying scale plan are inaccurate.
3. Dawn Redwood can grow up to 28 – 35 metres in height when mature, and is best suited in a park/ arboretum.
4. Whoever planted the tree would have been unaware of its ultimate height. It was probable planted because of it was believed to be extinct for 5 million years. The Parish Council believe due to its location it will become a problem and will need to be removed.
5. The land has been declared surplus to requirements and, is proposed to be sold and the capital receipt is to be made available for a limited time to assist in the financing of the development proposals.
6. The proposed extension will enhance the education provided by the school and provide a meeting point for the community. The village has lost its Post Office and village shop in the last decade and believe that the imposition of the TPO could reduce the value of the land.
7. The Parish Council are willing to plant a replacement Dawn Redwood and have identified a suitable location nearby.

Officer comment:

1. The description of the location provides sufficient information for the TPO in the first instance. It was based on the information available at the time the order was made.
2. The location of the tree as shown on the scale plan is diagrammatic and in accordance with government guidance.
3. The remaining issues raised (points 4,5, 6 and 7 above) are similar to those raised in the letter of objection from the Headmaster of Ulcombe Primary School and Kent County Council and have been addressed in the Committee Report.

My recommendation remains unchanged.