

Decision Notice

Duty to Consult on Street Tree Felling

Consultation Number: COLSTB02111-25

Parish/Ward: Colchester

Location: St Botolph's Circus, Colchester, CO2 7EF

What3words reference: ///drama.many.poppy

Species: Larch (T6/021125), Beech (T11/021124), Leylandii (T15/021123 & T17/021121), Silver Birch (T18/021122) & T40/021111), Scots Pine (T21/021120, T28/021116, & T34/021112), Sycamore (T32/021118), Maple (T29/021115), Horse Chestnut (T31/021117), Silver Maple (T36/021113 & T39/021114), Unknown dead (T25/021119)

Notice was given under S115 of the Environment Act 2021 and 96A of the Highways Act 1980 that this tree is proposed to be felled.

The objections received in relation to:

- The timing of the felling (occurring too far in advance of the scheme);
- The scheme not being of sufficient benefit to outweigh the tree removals;
- The lack of care of any replacement trees leading to tree mortality;
- That the trees could be moved to a more suitable location;
- There has not been any consideration of the environmental impact of tree removal.

In response to these concerns, Essex Highways provide the following response:

- The four trees that have been identified as dead (21119, 21120, 21122 and 21125) may be removed at any time for reasons of health and safety, however for the other trees it is not proposed to remove these until construction costs are known and the scheme has full approval and funding.
- Essex County Council is committed to managing, improving and extending the county's tree stock therefore the decision to cut down trees is never taken lightly and is guided by our comprehensive Tree Management Plan. On this occasion the decision to remove the trees listed within the consultation was made for one of the following reasons:
- Safety Concerns: Trees that are dead, dying, or structurally unsound pose a significant risk to public safety. Removing these trees helps prevent potential accidents or injuries caused by falling branches or entire trees.
- Infrastructure and Development: Trees need to be removed to make way for redevelopment of the St Botolph's Circus area.

- We have balanced development needs with environmental preservation. As such the number of trees that have been identified for removal has been kept as minimal as possible. ECC are committed to replacing trees that need to be removed and enhancing out green spaces. For each tree to be removed, two trees are to be planted to maintain and improve the urban landscape to this area of Colchester.

In conclusion, all objections have been considered, but having reviewed all reasonable alternative solutions, we find that felling is necessary for the scheme to be delivered.

Replacement planting will be carried out in the next available planting season after the scheme has been completed (November to March inclusive) and will be maintained to aid establishment.

Date of decision notice: 6th May 2025

The Arboricultural Team at Essex County Council.

