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Councillor wants to save threatened tree

[KATE SCOTTER](#)

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A row has erupted over the future of one of Norwich's trees.

The Evening News reported earlier this month that Norwich City Council had drafted in tree experts to carry out state-of-the-art decay detection tests on some of the city's trees.

One of the trees that came under scrutiny was the beech tree on Dereham Road. Tree consultants from Tree Care discovered, by using a Picus sonic tomography unit, which uses sound waves to detect decay, that the 40ft tree had decayed by 31pc and that the damage was off-centre and towards the road.

Experts fear the tree could topple over into one of the city's roads and the city council is considering felling it.

But green campaigners have vowed to save the tree, saying there must be something the council could do.

Rupert Read, a Green Party city councillor for Wensum ward, said: "Sooner or later it could die but sooner or later we could all die. It may have a good few years of life in it.

"They could bolt together the two forks", the two trunks", and it could be safeguarded for another decade or two. It's a very striking, very large tree and virtually all of the trees of this kind are gone. It's quite a special tree and I want to save it."

Robert Marshall, who lives nearby, also said he wanted the tree to be saved.

A spokeswoman for the council, however, said public safety must come first. She said: "The issue is that the main problem is at the bottom of the tree, so any further work to reinforce the top of it would not help the decay.

"The decay in this tree is very off-centre, on the road facing side, so there is an increased danger that the tree could fall into the road. It is a big tree so if this did happen it would cause some damage, and pose a threat to the safety of passers-by or people using the road. Obviously we don't want this to happen, and want to take corrective

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action as soon as possible to avoid this.

“Our investigations are thorough and we aim to save as many trees as possible by making in depth assessments and acting accordingly. Where a tree is so badly decayed that it has to be taken down we will replace it and put more trees into the landscape.”

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