



Mrs L Smith
Ground Control Ltd
Kingfisher House
Radford Way
Billericay
CM12 0EQ

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Our Ref: 221847/TPO
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 374294
andrei.nazare@reading.gov.uk

28 February 2023

Your contact is:

Andrei Nazare, Planning, Development & Regulatory Services

Dear Mrs Smith,

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO SEVEN TREES AND ONE GROUP OF TREES AT ABBOTS HOUSE, ABBEY STREET, READING - T1, T4, T6-T10 AND G2 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 60/05.

Thank you for your application of 9 December 2022, regarding the above.

Your application initially referred to only 7 trees. A number of e-mails with my colleague Sarah Hanson were exchanged between 9 December 2022 and 1 February 2023 in order to clarify the proposed works. As there were difficulties in confirming the work specifications via e-mail, it was decided that these would be discussed with us on site during our visit.

On 9 February 2023 I met with your colleague Mr Frampton and with Mrs Dawn Hennes of JLL outside Abbots House to discuss and amend the proposed works.

I note that a majority of the works amount to crown lifting over pavement or highway, reduction of branches overhanging the southern balcony and removal of branches rubbing against a light pole. These works are deemed part of good management and maintenance of the trees and are agreeable. I am listing the detailed specifications below.

We also discussed the condition of two spineless Honey locust trees (T7 and T8 on TPO) which overhang the rear parking area at 10-12 Abbots Walk. Mrs Hennes mentioned the nuisance these trees create to those neighbours parking their vehicles there due to bird droppings and confirmed this is the reason the reduction is proposed.

I note these 2 trees appear to have well balanced crowns and no arboricultural reason has been provided for their crown reduction. We do not consider nuisance such as leaf fall, honey dew or bird droppings as a valid reason to reduce a tree, as this will lead to significant tree or canopy cover loss throughout the Borough, harm to their amenity value

and, in any case, it is unclear how an overall reduction would address the issue raised. As such the reduction of T7 and T8 Honey locust trees is not agreeable.

In conclusion, for the reasons stated above for the following proposed works to the two Honey locust trees (T7 and T8 on TPO) are refused:

- 2x Honey locust (spineless) (T7, T8 on TPO)
 - Crown reduction 3m all around

I can confirm that the following amended works relating to the other trees, as discussed with Mrs Henness and Mr Frampton during my visit on 9 February 2023, are approved subject to the conditions below and with reference to the annotated photograph at the end of this letter:

- 1x Snake Bark Maple (T1 on TPO)
 - crown lift to 2.75m above ground only cutting secondary branches
- group of Tibetan Whitebeam (G2 on TPO)
 - Crown lift to 5m above highway and to 2.75m above pavement via tip reduction
 - 1-1.5m reduction of one branch overhanging the balcony
 - 3 branches rubbing against light pole: remove back to base (as per annotated photograph)
- 1x London Plane tree (T4 on TPO)
 - Lateral reduction of the branches overhanging the balcony back to the balcony line.
 - Crown lift to 5m above roadway only cutting secondary branches
- 3x Raywood Ash (narrow leaf Ash) (T6, T9 and T10 on TPO)
 - Crown lift to 2.75m above ground only cutting secondary branches

During my visit it was noted that both Honey locust trees (T7 and T8) are covered with Ivy on the first 2-3m from the ground which prevents visual inspection of their bases. I have advised Mr Frampton to sever the Ivy and allow some time for it to wilt. After the Ivy has wilted, it should be removed and the trees inspected.

Please remind your client about their duty to plant one broadleaved tree as a replacement for the London Plane tree (T5 on TPO) which was removed due to a partial failure in June 2018. I attach the Council's response letter to application 191878/TPO which includes details of the approved removal and the replacement condition.

Conditions

1. Five days' notice in writing shall be given to the Council prior to undertaking the approved works.

Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority is given sufficient notice of the works to enable the effective monitoring of tree work within the Borough.

2. All tree surgery shall be in accordance with BS 3998: (2010) Tree Work - Recommendations.

Reason: To ensure that all works are carried out in an acceptable arboricultural manner

3. Climbing spikes shall not be used whilst undertaking any form of works on living trees, except on trees to be felled.

Reason: Spikes can cause extensive long-term damage

4. The approved works should not be carried out in the period immediately before or during bud burst and leaf fall to minimise the effect on the long-term health of the trees.

Informatives

1. You are advised that, in accordance with Part 4, 17 (4) of The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012, this decision is valid for one pruning operation (as per the approved specifications) to be undertaken within two years from the date of this notice, after which the consent lapses and a new application will be required.

2. Removal of dead or dangerous wood: This does not require the formal consent of the Council. However written notice must be given 5 working days in advance of removing dead wood. Where a branch is deemed to be 'dangerous', i.e. where works are 'urgently necessary to remove an immediate risk of serious harm', you are required to give notice to the Council 'as soon as practicable after the works become necessary'.

3. Disturbance of wildlife: It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to disturb roosting bats or nesting birds. It is advisable to consult your tree surgeon/consultant to agree an acceptable time for carrying out any work. Wildlife and habitat controls are administered by Natural England who can be contacted on 0300 030 6000

4. Tree work consents on land not owned by the applicant: It is strongly recommended that the owner of the tree be advised of any proposed works. The owner's permission must be sought if the tree works involve work past the boundary line. This consent does not in any way imply that this Council has informed the owner of sought permission or will condone the use of consents to force any landowner to grant such permission.

5. Crown lifting of trees over the footpath and carriageway: If the clearance of vegetation overhanging the highway only involves the removal of branches to give a ground clearance to the statutory heights of 2.7m over the footpath and 5.5m over the road, this does not require formal consent from the Council. You are advised, however, to give notice to the Council of these intended works in order that they can be agreed.

6. Trees not considered to be protected by the current Tree preservation order: Work can be carried out to this tree without the formal consent from this Council.

7. Prior to the severing of well-established Ivy at the base of the tree, it would be prudent to carry out an assessment of whether any of the stems of the Ivy are forming a natural brace above a suspected bark-included union.

Appeals

If you are aggrieved by the refusal of consent for felling or by any of the conditions attached to your consent, you may appeal to The Planning Inspectorate (PINS). Because of coronavirus (COVID-19), you currently can only make a planning appeal online. You cannot currently apply by post.

For more information go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-preservation-order-appeal-form>

Telephone: 0303 444 5500 or e-mail it to:

treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Your appeal should be received within one month of receipt of this decision or any such longer period as the Planning Inspectorate may allow.

If your client suffers any loss or damage as a result of this refusal of consent, they may be entitled to recover compensation from the Council. If they wish to make a claim, they must do so within 12 months from the date of this decision (or, if you appeal to the Secretary of State, within 12 months from the date of his decision). Claims should be made in writing to the Insurance Section, Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU.

If you require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely,

Andrei Nazare

Andrei Nazare
Assistant Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Mrs Dawn Henness, JLL, Abbots House, Abbey Street

1. G2 - 3 branches to be reduced back to source.

