



Mr D Holden
Arborite Tree Services Ltd
62 Greenacres
Woolton Hill
RG20 9TA

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25 May 2023

Your contact is: Sarah Hanson, Planning, Development & Regulatory Services

Dear Mr Holden

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE PLANE TREE AT KENDRICK HALL, CROWN PLACE,
READING - T17 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 5/03.**

Thank you for your application of 12 April 2023, regarding the above.

You have applied for permission for the following works:

- Crown Reduction - Reducing the height and spread of the tree by approx. 3 metres. Tree crown to be left balanced.
- Sever ivy at base, to allow tree to be inspected once ivy has died back.
- Remove deadwood and crown clean [*crown cleaning definition provided as: Removal of dead or diseased wood, debris or hanging damaged wood*]
- Crown raise to 4m from ground level

Following submission, you subsequently provided reasons for the proposed works as: *'The tree at its with its current crown span is becoming too large for its location and the lower limbs have the potential to cause an obstruction/injury to pedestrians'*.

As advised in my acknowledgement email of 12 April 2023, works were only approved to this tree in 2021 under application 210812 (copy of the decision was provided to you). Due to the similarities between that application and this current one, I queried whether the approved work had been carried out given that ivy does not appear to have been severed (as was recommended in 2021) - you advised that only crown lifting may have been carried out. I advised that this previous approval is valid for 2 years from its date, i.e. until 8 September 2023 hence could still be implemented if it was not done at the time.

Previous application 210812/TPO originally sought approval for the following:

- *Crown reduction 4m (height and spread) to restrict growth of tree within the property. Reason: The client has asked for works to be carried out as they think the tree is slightly overgrown within the area its currently situated*
- *Sever at ground level and hard prune throughout the tree leaving the main structure attached to the tree to prevent damaging the bark of the tree*

Following my visit at the time, and subsequent suggestion, crown lifting to 3-4m above ground level was added. Also following my visit, I queried the crown reduction and reason stating: *'The tree has plenty of space for the crown spread hence I don't agree that it is overgrown in the area and I'm not clear on the justification for a height reduction. I think there is scope to reduce the eastern side to provide 1m clearance from that boundary to provide better clearance from adjacent dwellings and TPO Holly'*. An amended pruning specification was subsequently agreed in response to my queries and the following was then approved:

- *T17 Plane - crown lift to 3-4m above ground level, through 360°, by removing/reducing minor growth only; crown reduce lateral branches on the eastern side, back to suitable growing points, to provide approximately 1m clearance from the boundary in order to provide greater clearance from the adjacent property and TPO Holly tree.*

With regard to the crown reduction currently proposed, the same concern applies in that it is not agreed that the Plane tree has become 'too large' for its location. When the student accommodation was built, the tree was obviously a constraint and sufficient space provided around it to allow for its retention without the need for significant pruning. Having visited the site again, on 22 May 2023, there is clear and sufficient clearance between the tree and surrounding buildings, except to 6 Crown Place to the east. In addition, it is unclear how the height of the tree is considered to be too large for the location - whilst I note a height reduction is included in your application, the reason put forward only relates to the crown 'span' being too large. The situation is therefore unchanged since a crown reduction was proposed 2 years ago and no arboricultural reason has been put forward to support this work. As such, the **crown reduction of 3m (height and spread) is refused**. Lesser work is approved below, and we would welcome a new application for a crown reduction should arboricultural justification be determined once the Ivy is removed and the tree inspected.

The crown lifting is entirely reasonable, as it was in 2021, as is crown cleaning.

The severing of Ivy does not require formal approval and the intention to do this is noted and agreed as a prudent action to enable full inspection of the tree. Due care should be taken when carrying this out to avoid damage to the bark of the tree. Please note Informative 6 below.

I can confirm that the following works are approved subject to the conditions below:

- T17 Plane - Crown lift to 4m above ground level, through 360°, removing / reducing minor growth only; crown reduce lateral branches on the eastern side, back to suitable growing points, to provide approximately 1m clearance from the boundary in order to provide greater clearance from the adjacent property (6 Crown Place) and TPO Holly tree; crown clean (removal of dead or diseased wood, debris or hanging damaged wood).

As this approved work is the effectively the same as that previously approved, this approval is taken as a renewal of the 2021 approval, hence extending the period over which the works could be implemented beyond the 8 September 2023 date at which the 2021 approval expires. You / the applicant now have a new two-year period during which the works can be implemented (one time only operation for each element specified).

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. Crown cleaning should not include the removal of fused natural braces (branches or stems), or the removal of entwining branches or rubbing branches (where they may be forming a natural brace) from the crown of a semi-mature to fully mature tree without carrying out an assessment of any junctions formed below such natural braces.

Reason: Removal of natural braces may lead to failure of weak unions.

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. It is best to avoid works in the period immediately before or during bud burst and leaf fall to minimise the effect on the long-term health of the tree

5. 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.

6. 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

If you wish to appeal against the refusal of the proposed crown reduction or against any of the conditions attached to the consented work, please contact the Planning Inspectorate within 28 days of receipt of this letter to obtain the relevant forms:

Trees and Hedges
Room 3A Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Telephone: 0303 444 5000

E-mail it to: treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Website: [Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/topics/trees-and-woodland/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas)

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

Sarah Hanson

Sarah Hanson
Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Ms L Gatavyna, Homes for Students