



Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Mr S Arnold
Tree Solutions Arboriculture Ltd
23 Springdale
Finchampstead
RG40 4RZ

Our Ref: 230180/TPO
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 372440
sarah.hanson@reading.gov.uk

25 April 2023

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

Dear Mr Arnold

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 19 LIME TREES AND ONE MAPLE TREE AT ST BARTHOLOMEWS CHURCH, ST BARTHOLOMEWS ROAD, READING - T8-24, T25, T26 & T7 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 62/03.

Thank you for your application of 15 February 2023, regarding the above, and subsequent clarification (revised specification), received on 12 April 2023 in response to my email of the same date.

Apologies for the delay in responding to this application, which is primarily due to current extremely high workloads. As you will appreciate, this does not, in any case, delay the works to T1-T18 (T8-24 & T26 of the TPO) due to the timing requirements attached (see condition 3 below), meaning that works cannot be done at the moment anyway.

Further to my visit on 25 April 2023, I can confirm that the following proposed works, as detailed in your application, are approved subject to the conditions below:

- Limes (T1-T18 of application; T8-24 & 26 of TPO) - re-pollard to just above last pollard/pruning points (note condition 3); removal basal and epicormic growth, *Officer note: given the lapsed nature of the pollard cycle, advice in 7.10 of BS3998:2010 should be followed in terms of the pruning point.*
- Lime (T19 of application; T25 of TPO) - fell due to extensive basal decay (note condition 5),
- Maple (T20 of application; T7 of TPO) - remove dead wood and rubbing branches (note condition 6); crown lift to 5.5m above the road by removing/reducing minor and secondary growth only.

In relation to the Limes to be re-pollarded, I note your comment that these are borderline 'lapsed pollards' and would suggest that they are lapsed, given that re-pollarding seems to have been last approved in 2008 and given the extent of re-growth. The re-growth of the majority of the trees is crowded and, with a few exceptions e.g. several of the new stems on T14 of the TPO, the diameter of the growth is fortunately relatively small. Multiple small branch failures were noted throughout the crowns. As you'll be aware, the advice for lapsed pollards is to consider a crown reduction instead, however, given the crowded re-growth, some of which is failing, and the decay at the pollard points, re-pollarding is, on balance, agreed as a reasonable option. Following the advice in 7.10 of BS3998:2010 (as mentioned above) in relation to pruning points above the pollard knuckles and/or retaining live stubs should help to minimise the harm to the trees from the re-pollarding.

It is obviously a pity that the regular re-pollarding cycle has not been maintained and would urge the Church to do so in the future. Due to the length of time since the last pollarding, this makes the timing of the works even more important (note condition 3).

The re-pollarding of all the trees at one time will have a significant detrimental impact on the London Road street scene. Normally I would recommend re-pollarding alternate trees this year and consider the remaining ones in two years-time, in order to maintain some greenery on this busy and polluted route. In this case, however, due to the lapsed nature of the pollarding cycle, it is more appropriate to do them all this year. I hope, however, that a staggered approach can be considered in the future.

As an aside, I noted Ivy on a number of the trees and would recommend this is severed.

In relation to the Maple, I've amended this to 5.5m, as the statutory height requirement above roads in Reading Borough.

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. The approved re-pollarding shall only be undertaken in mid-late Summer (July - September) when the tree's energy reserves are at their height or during the Winter months of December - January during the period of dormancy.

Reason: Taking into account the tree's phenological cycle and in order to avoid any unnecessary detriment to the tree as a result of the pruning work.

4. 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

5. Following the felling of the Lime tree (T25 of TPO) authorised by this consent, one replacement Lime (*Tilia cordata* or *Tilia x europaea*) of a minimum 10-12cm girth and 3m in height shall be planted within a 5m radius of the felled tree during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the tree, whichever is soonest.

Planting should be carried out in accordance with clause 10 (Planting) of BS 8545:2014 'Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations'

Should the replacement tree be removed, die or become severely damaged or seriously diseased, all within 5 years of planting, it shall be replaced by a tree of a similar size and species to that originally planted. Modifications to the requirements of this condition must be agreed in writing with Reading Borough Council Natural Environment Team.

PLEASE NOTE: The requirement to replant is the responsibility of the tree owner even if the application was submitted by another person.

Reason: To retain the present visual amenity value of the area and ensure continuity of tree coverage.

6. 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. 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.

If you wish to appeal against any of the conditions attached to this consent, 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)

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. Mr Roger Cox, St Bartholomews Church