



Miss E Harman
18 Dickens Close
Reading
RG4 5LZ

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Our Ref:221772/TPO
Your Ref:

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

20 December 2022

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

Dear Miss Harman

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO FOUR WHITEBEAM TREES AT DICKENS CLOSE, READING - G3 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 15/10.

Thank you for your application of 26 November 2022, regarding the above.

During my visit on 13 December 2022 we discussed appropriate works to the trees. Your application originally proposed:

- *Pollard the trees to remove 2-3m in height and reduce the side canopy to retain the natural form/shape of the trees*

All trees are multi-stemmed from 1-2m resulting in crowded, upright main branches some with tight unions between branches. I can appreciate why the above pruning was proposed, to manage the weight of these branches whilst retaining the trees. However, looking at the form of the trees, they will need to be managed regularly and it is questionable whether this will be enough to address the crowded branch structure. The management will have a detrimental impact on their appearance and repeated pruning may also impact their future health. The 4 trees (along with the recently removed fifth) are in close proximity to each other hence this has also affected their growth due to competition.

On balance, and whilst unfortunate, it is considered reasonable to fell the trees and 'start again' with better form trees. As discussed, there appears to be no reason why these can't be Whitebeam - if supplied with a single clear leader (no competing main stems), a repeat of the issues currently experienced can be avoided. Replacement Whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*) would be a like for like replacement; however, you could also consider Swedish Whitebeam (*Sorbus intermedia*) which is more tolerant of the urban environment whilst, as with the native *Sorbus aria*, providing wildlife benefit.

We discussed how many replacements would be appropriate and agreed that to reduce crowding, 4 trees could be planted in total, reducing the number in G3 by one - this would consist of 3 replacements required by condition of this consent and 1 required under the 'duty to replant' previously agreed (northern most tree in G3, recently felled). The spacing of the replacements can be done to spread ownership with the 'duty to replant' tree adjacent to the parking space for No. 20; 2 adjacent to the parking spaces for No. 18 and 1 adjacent to the parking space for No. 16. This would also move the trees slightly away from the properties.

As discussed, it may make replanting easier if the stumps of the existing trees are ground out. I have specified a stock size of replacement tree slightly smaller than normal in order to reduce the root ball size to make planting easier. As mentioned, it would be prudent to consider a root barrier on the car park side of the tree pit (300mm deep) to direct roots down before they spread under the car park in order to avoid root damage to surfacing, albeit none was evident in this particular location at the moment. The need for a root barrier may depend on the make up of the car park - it could be that the lack of root issues at the moment are due to a deep sub-base hence a root barrier may not be required - this could be explored during tree removal to establish what is required on replanting.

I can confirm that the following proposed works, as detailed in your amended application (as agreed on site), are approved subject to the conditions below:

- G3, 4 No. Whitebeam - fell

Please feel free to share this letter with your neighbours, whose agreement, in any case, will be required for the felling of trees in their ownership (please note Informative 3 below).

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. Following the felling of the four trees authorised by this consent, three replacement trees of a minimum 8-10cm girth and 2.75m high shall be planted within the same planting strip during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the trees, whichever is soonest. The replacements shall be either *Sorbus aria* (Whitebeam) or *Sorbus intermedia* (Swedish whitebeam).

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.

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. 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
3. 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.

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)

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