



Mr D White
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Frances Martin
Executive Director for
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Your Ref:

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17 April 2023

Your contact is: **Andrei Nazare, Planning, Development & Regulatory Services**

Dear Mr White,

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE HORSE CHESTNUT TREE AT 79 TILEHURST ROAD AND ONE ATLAS CEDAR TREE AT 77 TILEHURST ROAD, READING - T1 AND T2 RESPECTIVELY OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 32/11.

Thank you for your application and the accompanying annotated photographs of 16 February 2023, regarding the above.

You have submitted a separate application on 2 March 2023 proposing works to T2 Cedar at no. 79 - while it will be dealt with a separate letter, I note that the works on this tree will be assessed as cumulative from both applications so that the effective impact on the tree is accurately considered.

I visited the address on 14 March 2023 to look at the trees and briefly discussed the proposed works with Mr. Steer - in line with the description of works you already provided.

You applied to obtain approval for the following works:

- 1x Horse chestnut tree (T1 on Application and on TPO)
 - Crown raise by removing epicormic growth on main stem, in order to prevent foliage from interacting with pedestrians and cyclists on the footpath
 - Crown reduction by removing approximately 2-3m in branch length to lessen detritus landing on vehicles on driveway
 - Reshape North-East and North-West face of crown by reducing over-extended limbs back in line with crown average in order to reduce sail area of these significantly extended portions of the crown
 - Remove major deadwood
- 1x Atlas Cedar tree (T2 on Application and on TPO; growing at no. 77)
 - Reduce low limb by approximately 2-3m over driveway in order to lessen

detritus landing on vehicles on driveway

With regards to the Horse chestnut, I note the crown lifting to the height indicated on the annotated photographs and is agreeable as it is considered part of reasonable maintenance. I observed the overextended limbs (one towards North-East and one towards North-West) above the public pavement and the green verge and I agree with the proposal to reduce their sail area and their weight/leverage by cutting back their tips as shown on the annotated photographs.

You also proposed an overall crown reduction of the Horse chestnut tree by removing approximately 2-3m in branch length to lessen detritus landing on vehicles on the driveway. We receive numerous applications based on nuisance caused by trees growing above driveways and parking areas, but we do not consider this alone a valid reason to prune trees. As you know, proposed works to protected trees must be supported by sound arboricultural reasons. In addition, we know that in recent years Horse chestnut trees have been struggling with the effects pest and diseases such a Horse chestnut leaf miner and bleeding canker. As such, pruning should be done only based on arboricultural reasons to avoid creating unnecessary additional stress on the tree. It is not considered that the crown reduction would alleviate the concerns raised to any degree that would justify the potential detrimental impact of the works and as such the proposed crown reduction is not agreeable.

The intention to remove major deadwood from the Horse chestnut is noted - you do not need permission to remove deadwood from a protected tree, however you should give a 5 day notice before doing so. Will have taken you application as due notice of this intention.

During my visit, Mr. Steer raised concerns about low epicormic branches extending over the pavement. I explained to him that these can be regularly reduced to maintain 2.75m clearance above ground. However, a 5-day notice should be given each time this work is carried out. The works approved in this letter address this matter currently, but the information in this paragraph may aid Mr Steer in maintaining the tree safe for pedestrians in the future without the need to submit a tree works application.

The proposed reduction of one low limb on the Atlas Cedar is agreeable in light of the tree's condition provided with the separate application of 14 March 2023 (230270/TPO). In said application you have noted the risk of potential internal decay as indicated by the bulge on the main stem.

In conclusion, for the reasons stated above, the following proposed works to one Horse chestnut tree are refused:

- 1x Horse chestnut (T1 on Application and on TPO) - Crown reduction by removing approximately 2-3m in branch length

I can confirm that the following proposed works are approved subject to the conditions below and with reference to the attached annotated (by you) photograph:

- 1x Horse chestnut tree (T1)
 - Crown raise by removing epicormic growth on main stem (as shown on

- Reshape North-East and North-West face of crown by reducing over-extended limbs back in line with crown average (as shown on annotated photographs nos. 2 and 3)
- 1x Atlas Cedar tree (T2 on Application and on TPO)
 - Reduce low limb by approximately 2-3m over driveway (as shown on the annotated photograph no. 4)

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

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. 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.

Appeals

If you are aggrieved by the refusal of consent for the proposed crown reduction of the Horse chestnut tree 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 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. Mr Steer (via e-mail)