

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Mr. David White
White Knights Tree Care
5 Cressingham Road
Reading
Berkshire
RG2 7RS

Our Ref: 220306/TPO
Your Ref:

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

14th April 2022

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson, Planning

Dear Mr. White,

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO CEDAR OF LEBANON (T1) ON LAND AT 41 KIDMORE
END ROAD - PROTECTED AS T1 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 54/04.**

Thank you for your application dated 3rd March 2022, regarding the above.

You have applied to carry out the following tree works

T1 - Cedar of Lebanon (Listed in the application as a Blue Atlas Cedar)

- Crown reduction, removing approximately 2m of branch length
- Remove major deadwood

The reasons given for the work is to '*to lessen sail area and weight acting on the limbs*'

In response to your application, the Council's Tree Officer visited the property on Wednesday 6th April 2022 to view the tree and assess the expediency of the proposed pruning works.

The Council has noted that the Cedar is a significant mature tree growing adjacent to the public highway. The tree is one of two mature Cedars growing two properties apart on this side of Kidmore End Road (a Blue Atlas Cedar is growing in the front garden of 37 Kidmore End Road) and the trees, both as individual specimens and as a prominent pair, are highly visible landscape features along Kidmore End Road. Both trees have full canopies and a high degree of public amenity value.

Reading Borough Council would rarely consent to the entire reduction of a protected tree's canopy unless there is a substantial health and safety justification for the work. To date, no information has been provided to demonstrate any

defect(s) present on the tree. Many excurrent evergreen trees such as Cedar will develop a strong central leader without the need for pruning or maintenance and generally it is accepted that pruning a mature Cedar is contrary to arboricultural good practice unless there is an overriding health and safety justification for the work.

I am aware that this tree lost a number of smaller branches in the recent storms of Dudley, Eunice and Franklin, but this is not exceptional as many other local trees also lost branches due to the exceptionally high winds. Otherwise, the tree is a well formed, single stem specimen Cedar. Foliage density and health is as anticipated on a mature tree of this type. I am not aware of any previous branch failure (other than that which occurred in the recent high winds) which might suggest future branch breakage is regular and predictable on this tree and which would otherwise indicate a reduction of the tree's canopy as proposed is a prudent course of action.

The proposed 2m canopy reduction in height and lateral spread would harm the distinctive horizontal growth form and silhouette of the Cedar to the detriment of the tree's wider amenity value. The pruning would create multiple wounds around the outer canopy which would act as potential entry points for decay pathogens. Furthermore, the work would increase the future management intervention required on the tree in the future as any regrowth from the reduction points would be more prone to fail due to the weaker attachment to the parent branch.

In considering the proposals we have assessed the amenity value of the tree and the likely impact of the proposal on the amenity of the area, and in the light of this assessment have considered whether or not the proposal is justified, having regard to the reasons put forward in support of it. In general terms the higher the amenity value of the tree and the greater the impact of the application on the amenity of the area, the stronger the reasons needed before consent is granted.

The Council has concluded that insufficient information has been submitted in support of your application to demonstrate a need or justification for the proposed tree reduction work at this time. The reduction would reduce the distinctive form and wider amenity of an otherwise healthy and visually significant urban tree. In view of this, your application to carry out a 2m reduction of the tree's canopy is refused.

I can confirm that the following lesser works to T1 - Cedar of Lebanon, are approved subject to the conditions below:

Approved Tree Works

T1 - Cedar of Lebanon

- Reduce tips of over-extended, low lateral branch over driveway by up to 2m to reduce weight and asymmetry of branch and to clear the adjacent hedge. Cuts should be made back to suitable reduction points and graded to create a natural looking canopy shape (refer to annotate photo below).
- Crown lift to create 2.7m clearance over the public footpath and up to 5.5m

clearance over the adopted highway where necessary. Smaller branches should be removed back to source as appropriate to avoid leaving stub-cut branches.

- Remove dead, dangerous, or dysfunctional branches from tree canopy.

Conditions relating to the approved works

1. All tree surgery shall be in accordance with BS 3998: (2010) Tree Work - Recommendations. Pruning cuts shall not exceed 100mm diameter
Reason: To ensure that all works are carried out in an acceptable arboricultural manner

2. 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

If you are aggrieved by the refusal of consent to reduce the canopy of the Cedar by 2m as per your application, or against 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 5570 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

Sarah Hanson

Sarah Hanson
Natural Environment Officer

cc. Mr Norman Elliott, 41 Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading, Berkshire
RG4 8SN

