



Mr J Fulcher
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13 October 2022

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

Dear Mr Fulcher

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE OAK TREE AT 17 KIDMORE END ROAD (FORMER READING GOLF CLUB), READING - T20 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 96/02 AND PART OF AREA TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 4/18.

Thank you for your application of 21 September 2022, regarding the above, and accompanying letter of 16 September 2022 which reports on the situation and discusses the proposed works.

Your application followed the failure of a significant branch, hence significant portion of the Oak (approx. one third), on the night of 31 August / 1 September. The tree survey submitted with the planning application for the site raised no foreseeable concerns and I would agree with your conclusion, in part 1 of your letter, that there is no clear reason for the failure and perhaps attribute it to the weather conditions this year.

The partial failure of this highly significant tree; the oldest and best on the site, is extremely unfortunate. In determining the appropriate course of action, it is important to consider the detrimental impact on the health of the tree from the foliage lost as a result of the failure, i.e. to balance any justifiable remedial work with the need to minimise any further loss of foliage. It is also important to consider the further impact of proposed work on the amenity value of the tree. You have considered both of these matters in point 2 of your letter. Further to this, the timing of the proposed reduction is important to minimise the impact of the work - you have considered this in point 3 of your letter.

Further to my site meeting of 27 September 2022 with Steve Rhodes from Vistry, his colleague and my colleague Andrei Nazare, I can confirm that the following proposed works, as detailed in your application, are approved subject to the conditions below:

- Oak (your T53) - reduction in the height of the crown by up to 2m.
The pruning should be to BS3998:2010, taking particular account of section 7; noting 7.2.4, 7.2.5 and 7.7. N.B. that this is not an overall crown reduction, but a height reduction only. [Please note condition 3 below in relation to timing]

As a non-arboricultural point, the retention of the failed branch for biodiversity benefit is an important consideration and this was discussed on site and agreed in principle. The failed branch (the large diameter wood) should be retained on site under/around the tree in smaller size portions to provide important habitat and ultimately recycling of nutrients - it should be ensured that their positions allow access to the tree for future inspection and pruning. The retention of these large sections of tree will also act to prevent public access (on completion of the development) under the tree, which is a positive way of managing the risk the tree presents. This, coupled with unobtrusive fencing around the tree, would be prudent and in line with common management of such trees in places such as Richmond Park, Windsor Great Park and Sherwood Forest - example photographs are at the end of this letter for reference.

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 canopy reduction shall 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

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 is requested to 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 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 5570

E-mail it to: treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.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
Enc

C.c. Caroline Belmont & Steve Rhodes, Vistry (via email)

