



Mr. Nathan Cantell  
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Frances Martin  
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17 May 2022

Your contact is: Sarah Hanson, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mr. Cantell,

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO AN ASH TREE - T1 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 210/06  
AT WESTERN ELMS SURGERY, OXFORD ROAD, READING, BERKSHIRE RG30 1AT**

Thank you for your application of 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 regarding the above.

You have applied to raise the crown of a protected Ash (your T2; T1 of TPO) to approximately 5.5m all round by removing secondary growth only where possible. No reasons have been given for the work and no information has been given to demonstrate a need for the proposed pruning works however it is assumed that the work is required to create adequate clearance for vehicles and pedestrians within the site and on the public highway.

In response to your application, the Council's Arboricultural Consultant visited the property to view the tree on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and has found the tree to be a high amenity tree growing in a prominent location at the junction of Western Elms Avenue and the Oxford Road, a designated Treed Corridor in the adopted Tree Strategy and one of the principal arterial routes in Reading.

Western Elms Surgery is also within the Borough's Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), the area encompassing all the main arterial routes in and out of Reading and central area and where there is an exceedance or likely exceedance of an air quality objective. Reading Borough Council is committed to enhancing tree canopy cover in these environmentally sensitive urban areas and preserving existing tree canopy cover plays an important role in this.

The Ash tree (T1) is a short, squat, low-branching tree around 8-10m tall. The tree has a strongly decurrent form with no main trunk and the canopy is created from a number of

slender, co-dominant stems. Much of the amenity from the tree is provided by the broad, low branches which create a low-level green screen between the surgery and the adjacent public highway.



T1 - Ash viewed from Western Elms Avenue, looking west.

The proposed canopy lift to 5.5m all around a tree only approximately 8-10m high would result in the removal of a significant volume of the tree's photosynthetic area causing permanent harm to the health and wider amenity of the tree.

The work would significantly disrupt the flow of plant hormones created in the branch tips and would reduce the overall health and vigour of tree by removing the energy stored in the severed branches. Following the work, the multiple pruning cuts are likely to be vulnerable to decay pathogens which can weaken the structure of the tree.

**The proposed canopy lift for the Ash tree (your T2; T1 of TPO) is, for the reasons given, considered to be harmful to the health and wider amenity value of an otherwise healthy protected tree contrary to good arboricultural practices therefore your application is refused.**

Lesser works have been consented to in the second half of this letter, to prune to create statutory clearance over the public highway and over the adjacent parking areas. This work will provide sufficient clearance for pedestrian and vehicle access whilst preserving as much of the wider amenity of the tree as possible.

I can confirm that the following works to T1 - Ash, are approved subject to the conditions below:

### Approved Tree Works

Ash (T1 of TPO; T2 of application)

- Crown lift to create 4m canopy clearance above parking spaces within Western Elms Surgery by reducing or removing smaller secondary branches back to source as necessary to avoid leaving stub cut branches.
- Crown lift branches which overhang the public highway to create 2.7m clearance over the public footpath and 5.5m over the roadway, reducing or removing smaller secondary branches back to source as necessary to avoid leaving stub cut branches.

### Conditions relating to the approved works

1. 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

### 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 raise the entire canopy of this tree to 5.5m above ground level 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](mailto: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 suffer any loss or damage as a result of this refusal of consent, you may be entitled to recover compensation from the Council. If you wish to make a claim you must do so within 12 months from the date of this decision (or, if you appeal to the Secretary of State, within 12 months from the date of his decision). Claims should be made in writing to the Insurance Section, Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU.

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. Ms L Trimble, Western Elms Surgery, Oxford Road, Reading, RG30 1AT