



Frances Martin
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Ms H Williams
Heights Tree Care
Hazelmoor Lane
Gallowstree Common
RG4 9DJ

Our Ref: 221052/TPO
Your Ref:

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

15 August 2022

Your contact
is:

Sarah Hanson, Planning, Development & Regulatory Services

Dear Ms Williams

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDER: 124/05 RELATING TO 66-68 CONISBORO AVENUE
APPLICATION REFERENCE NUMBER: 221052/TPO**

I acknowledge receipt of your application of 18 July 2022 under the above Tree Preservation Order to carry out the following works:

- Walnut in rear garden of 68 Conisboro Avenue - Full canopy reduction in height and spread by approximately 2m.
Works are to reduce wind loading on decay pocket at approx 5m from ground level (as photographed, can be seen from garden of Morecambe Avenue).

I can confirm that an application for works is not required for the following reason:

- The tree is not protected by the above Tree Preservation Order

There were two Walnuts when the garden was surveyed for a TPO in 2005, only one of which was included in the TPO; that being the one on the boundary with No. 6 Morecambe Avenue, with another on the boundary with No. 8 Morecambe being omitted (both can be seen on 2009 Google St views). I note from our file that the Walnut included in the TPO is the one that partially collapsed in 2014 and which was subsequently removed. Two replacement trees (Silver birch) were planted at the rear of the rear garden, on the boundary with the Uplands Road garden. As such, the Walnut subject to your application is not protected, hence approval is not required for the proposed pruning.

Having viewed the Walnut, I would suggest that there are more defects to consider than the decay pocket highlighted; the depth / extent of which you confirmed had not been

investigated through a climbing inspection. From our brief inspection of the tree over the fence from the garden of 8 Morecambe Avenue, it was noted that there was evidence of fungal activity in the union between the two main stems - it appears a young fruiting body was present (see attached photograph). When sounding the inside of both main stems with a nylon hammer, both indicated the presence of decay / dysfunction, and a probe indicated that the gap between the two stems (hidden by accumulated organic matter) would benefit from investigation. In addition, a substantial eastern stem has snapped off at some point in the past leaving a large wound which, no doubt, will have decay present, the extent of which should be investigated given that this could impact the structural integrity of the adjoining eastern stem. Other pruning wounds, with associated decay, were also noted throughout the crown. The presence of the decay pocket indicated on the application is of potential importance, subject to the decay present (which should be investigated) but of primary importance is the condition, hence integrity, of the tree at a lower level.

Given the above, I would strongly recommend that if there is a desire to retain the tree, that a full inspection should be carried out to determine appropriate pruning, based on all defects present. As you will know, pruning of Walnuts is best done in late summer so if a substantial reduction is to be done, it is best to progress with an additional inspection as soon as possible in order that the pruning can be implemented within the more favourable pruning period.

As an aside, if the tree is retained, Mr Bromfield at 8 Morecambe Avenue has requested the removal of two low branches overhanging his outbuilding (indicted on the attached photographs) be included in the pruning - I will leave you to discuss that with your client.

In addition, it was noted that some conifers west of the Walnut (r/o 4-6 Morecambe Avenue) have been reduced. If the Walnut is retained, it would benefit from a reduction of the adjacent conifers to reduce the current conflict between canopies.

If you would like any further information about your application or our procedures, please contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Hanson

Sarah Hanson
Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Mr & Mrs Wick, 68 Conisboro Avenue
Mr P Bromfield, 8 Morecambe Avenue