



Mr J Smith
Big Heart Tree Care
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Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
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Our Ref: 211935/TPO
Your Ref:

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24 January 2022

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson, Planning

Dear Mr Smith

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE TREE OF HEAVEN AT 68 NOTHCOURT AVENUE AND 1 CEDAR AT 11 STANSFIELD CLOSE, READING - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 18/10.

Thank you for your application dated 25/10/21, received on 1 December 2021, regarding the above.

Further to my visit on 10 January 2022, I have the following comments:

In relation to the Cedar (T13 of the TPO), your application seeks approval to *'have the 3 lowest overhanging property branches cut back by 3 metres - for more light in garden'* and you provided annotated photographs to highlight those branches. This was amended on site with Mr Saktreger to deal with all branches overhanging the garden to the below specification.

In relation to the Tree of Heaven (T15 of the TPO), your application seeks approval to *'have lowest branch removed for more light in garden'* and provides an annotated photograph identifying the branch. I note from my visit that the tree has been subject to significant pruning in the past, with one very large pruning wound facing the house, along with additional pruning wounds on the main stems. In addition, Mr Saktreger reminded me of the branch failure that occurred, albeit during high winds, which from our records, was in July 2020. At that time, we advised that an inspection of the tree be carried out and it seems that advice has only been given from a ground inspection thus far, the extent of which is unclear. At this current time, we have no information on the overall condition of the tree, including the extent of any decay associated with the aforementioned pruning wounds.

The diameter of the branch to be removed is significant and I would suggest that it is at least equal to one third of the diameter of the main stem from which it originates. As such, its entire removal is against good arboricultural practice, with reference to 7.2.4 of BS3998:2010; with the age of the tree indicating that an even smaller wound should be considered. I am therefore concerned that about the size of the wound, the tree's ability to 'heal' this wound, the potential additional stem decay that may result, the resulting loss of foliage (hence energy producing crown) from the removal of the branch, hence the overall ability of the tree to cope with the proposed branch removal. I consider that the proposed branch removal is an extreme response to the issue of light into the garden and potentially detrimental to the longer-term health of the tree and as such this work is refused.

I can confirm that the following proposed works, as detailed in the amended application, is approved subject to the conditions below:

- T13 Cedar at 11 Stansfield Close - prune all branches overhanging the rear garden of 68 Northcourt Avenue back to appropriate growing points approximately 1m from the boundary, i.e. such that the branches overhang the garden by approximately 1m.

I would strongly suggest that you advise the owners of the Cedar of the intended work, out of courtesy.

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

If you wish to appeal against any of the conditions attached to the consented works or against the refusal of works to the Tree of Heaven, 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 your client suffers any loss or damage as a result of the refused work, your client may be entitled to recover compensation from the Council. If your client wishes to make a claim, they 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

C.c. Mr R Saktreger, 68 Northcourt Avenue