



Mr & Mrs Jordan
9 Brackendale Way
Reading
RG6 1DZ

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Civic Centre, Reading, RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 937 3787

Our Ref: 201774/TPO
Your Ref:

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

3 February 2021

Your contact is: Sarah Hanson, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mr & Mrs Jordan

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE OAK TREE AT 30 BRACKENDALE WAY, READING -
SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 55/06.**

Thank you for your application of 4 December 2020 regarding the above.

This current application follows two previous applications made in 2019 and 2020.

Tree works approval 192017/TPO approved the following pruning:

- Crown lift through 360° up to the height of the first main branch removing secondary and tertiary branches only
- Remove secondary, vertically hanging branches from the limb overhanging the roof to give 1.5m clearance from the aerial
- Prune branches overhanging the front of the roof by 1-2m, back to suitable growing points

Following the implementation of the above approved works, a further application was submitted seeking approval to fell the Oak tree and was a joint application between you and Mr Critcher (tree owner) - reference 201454/TPO. This application to fell was refused on 2 November 2020 and no appeal against the Council's decision was made by either yourselves or Mr Critcher.

In the decision for 201454/TPO, I advised the following:

'For the reasons explained above, it is considered premature to fell the tree based on how it appears, particularly without any evidence to suggest that there may be something structurally wrong or emphatic evidence that suggests the tree is in a terminal decline. As such, felling is not agreed at this time, but it would be appropriate to revisit the tree in spring/summer 2021 to assess its condition, if only to take further photographs for future comparison. Mr Critcher could have the tree inspected by a suitably qualified arborist (ideally the Inspector should hold the LANTRA Tree Inspector Qualification as a minimum) and he should continue to monitor the tree over the autumn / winter for any signs of pathogens. If evidence is provided to demonstrate that the tree is structurally undermined or in a state of terminal decline at a later date, then the necessary health and safety works will be permitted under a new Tree Preservation Order application'.

It is of course your right to submit a new application at this time, however it would have seemed prudent to wait to assess the condition of the tree later this year. I do not know if Mr Critcher has taken the above advice on inspection of the tree as he has not been in touch since the decision was issued.

In any case, you have submitted a new application hence it appropriate for me to determine this. Further to the request for clarification in my letter of 11 December 2020 you confirmed that this current application seeks consent to remove all branches overhanging your property, i.e. to prune vertically at your boundary line.

As you will appreciate, given the proximity of the tree trunk to your boundary, a considerable portion of the tree overhangs your property. As such, pruning vertically will remove a substantial portion of the crown. The result of this will be detrimental to the tree's appearance, making it one-sided. In addition, multiple large wounds will be created, each being an entry to pathogens and decay hence the work would be detrimental to the future health of the tree. The pruning would remove a significant portion of the leaf area, i.e. that photosynthesising area that 'feeds' the tree enabling it to survive and response to any pruning carried out. This would be a concern with a tree in evidently good physiological condition, however, the concerns raised in your application to fell indicate that this may not be the case - this is discussed in the decision for 201454/TPO. As such, in addition to being contrary to good arboricultural practice, the proposed works are likely to have an even more pronounced detrimental effect on the tree's health if it is already under stress that may result in its decline and death, i.e. it is unlikely to respond favourably to such significant pruning.

Whilst I acknowledge the concerns you have raised and the inconvenience and costs they have caused, they are not reasons to carry out harmful works to a protected tree.

In conclusion, the proposed pruning of all branches of the Oak tree in neighbouring 30 Brackendale Way back to the boundary is refused. If you wish to appeal against the Council's decision on this matter, please contact the Planning Inspectorate within 28 days of receipt of this letter to obtain the relevant forms:

The Environment Appeals Team
Trees and Hedges
The Planning Inspectorate
Room 3/25, Hawk Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Email: environment.appeals@pins.gsi.gov.uk
Tel: 0303 444 5584

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.

As per the advice in the decision for 201454/TPO, it would be prudent to assess the tree's overall condition in the spring and summer. Therefore, please contact me later in the year as soon as the tree is in full leaf.

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 Critcher, 30 Brackendale Way