



Mrs A Elliot
26 Florida Court
Bath Road
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Frances Martin
Director for Economic Growth
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Our Ref: 210564/TCA
Your Ref:

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12 May 2021

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mrs Elliot

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES AT FLORIDA COURT, BATH ROAD, READING - SUBJECT TO CONSERVATION AREA STATUS.

Thank you for your email of 12 April 2021 regarding the above.

Your email gave notice of the intention to fell one Holly tree rear of Nos 16-17 due to concern over whether the tree roots are or will affect the foundations of the property.

During our meeting on site of 11 May 2021, we discussed the Holly in question but also discussed and added works to one other Holly on the frontage of No. 16, the Limes on the Bath Road frontage and one Ash in the rear car park area.

In relation to the Holly, on which the Notice was originally based, this semi-mature tree appears to be in good condition and is of good form. I appreciate it is fairly close to the building, but this does not confirm that damage to the building will occur. We have no information about the soil type or foundations of the building to give any guidance on the probability of damage and I understand that no historic damage to Florida Court (from trees) has occurred, albeit I note that this may be due to the fact that trees have been removed previously as a precaution. As explained during our meeting, the only way we can prevent felling of a tree in a conservation area is to place a TPO on the tree. I do not consider that the tree in question is of such merit or amenity value that warrants this. However, this does not mean that the tree should be removed. As I mentioned, the Council has recently adopted its second Tree Strategy (viewable at www.reading.gov.uk/trees), one of the aims of which is to increase canopy cover in the Borough. This is more important in certain areas, including conservation areas, where a verdant environment is part of their character. As such, I would encourage you to give

further consideration as to whether the removal of the tree is justified. If felling is carried out, I would encourage Florida Court to carry out replacement planting.

Further to my site visit of 11 May 2021, I can confirm that the Council have no objections to the following proposed tree work, as discussed during our visit:

- Holly to the rear of 16-17 Florida Court - fell (note advice above)
- Holly to on the frontage of 16 Florida Court - fell due to poor condition
- Limes on Bath Road frontage - remove basal growth
- Ash in car park area (rear of No. 24) - re-pollard back to previous pollard points

In relation to the Ash tree, you explained that there was concern about roots blocking the nearby surface water drain and soakaway - the drain running from the car park into a soakaway somewhere in the grass area on which the Ash (plus two other trees) stand; flooding of the car park having occurred due to blockages. However, it is not clear that the Ash tree is solely responsible for any blockages and I understand that, in any case, there is no immediate intention to unblock the drain - as advised, removal of the tree would not result in the drain or soakaway becoming unblocked; these would have to be dealt with as well. In addition, I explained that due to the loss of a significant amount of Ash (generally) from Ash dieback, we are discouraging tree owners from removing healthy Ash trees unless absolutely necessary as it is important to identify which may be resistant to the disease. We therefore agreed that the tree would be re-pollarded, as opposed to being felled; the works enabling both the retention of the tree and maintaining its size to one appropriate to the location.

The agreed works should not be carried out before six weeks from the date of your notification, i.e. before 24 May 2021.

This decision is valid for two years from the date of this letter, after which it lapses.

Informatives

1. 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'.

2. 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 060 3900; enquiries@naturalengland.org.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