

[REDACTED]
5 Crispin Close
Caversham
Berkshire
RG4 7JS

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Our Ref: 191523
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 374294
sarah.duckworth@reading.gov.uk

7th October 2019

Your contact is:

Sarah Duckworth, Planning & Building Control

Dear [REDACTED]

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO FELL A CEDAR ON LAND AT 4 CRISPIN CLOSE - PROTECTED AS T1 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO. 73/14

Thank you for your application dated 20th September 2019 regarding the above.

You have applied to fell the Deodar Cedar growing at the front of 4 Crispin Close due to the perceived excessive shading and low amenity value of the tree. You have advised that the residents take no pleasure in seeing the tree and that you intend to replace with bushes and shrubs in the same location.

In response to your application, I have been out to view the tree and identified it to be a significant, healthy tree with the potential for future growth and a long life expectancy. The tree is growing in a prominent location at the end of Crispin Close and with good form and a broad canopy, the tree makes a significant contribution to the amenity of Crispin Close and its amenity value will increase as the tree continues to grow.

Tree Preservation Order 73/14 was served on 20th September 2014 at the request of the tree's then owner, Mr. Smith. At the time you raised an objection to the TPO with regards to the potential damage to the pavement, site drainage and Thames Water property and also the number of times the tree has been struck by delivery lorries in the Close.

Your overall objection to the Tree Preservation Order was presented to the Elected Members of the Planning Applications Committee who determined that the tree did meet

the criteria for inclusion in a Tree Preservation Order and agreed that the TPO be confirmed (made permanent).

I consider that the condition of the tree has not in any way deteriorated since 2014 when the TPO was served. You are of the opinion that the tree has low amenity value. This is not something I agree with. The tree is located at the front of the property at the end of Crispin Close and is the largest specimen tree in the road. Further afield there are other specimen conifers which are visible as a back-drop to houses and thus, the Cedar tree is considered to be in keeping with the overriding tree character of the local area. As mentioned previously, the amenity of the tree will increase with the future growth of the tree.

Regrettably, shade is an inevitable consequence of living in any area with trees and this alone would not support an application to fell a healthy protected tree. Allowing a tree to be removed to alleviate shading alone could be used to support the removal of most trees within an urban area and would set an unacceptable precedent for deciding similar tree removal applications in the future.

In support of your application you have advised that the residents take no pleasure in seeing the tree. This has been countered by your neighbour, the tree owner, who has confirmed in response to our consultation that they do take pleasure in seeing the tree and the presence of the tree was one the positive reasons for us moving into their property. They have stated that they do wish the tree to be felled, therefore, that the tree owner's consent to fell the tree is highly unlikely to be forthcoming even if your application to fell the tree were permitted.

The Borough Council considers that trees are vital to the future sustainability of the urban environment. They contribute many social, environmental and economic benefits to the local area. Aside from providing habitat and foraging for birds and wildlife, trees counter pollution and have been found to have a notable benefit to the health and mental wellbeing of local residents.

The Council declared a Climate Emergency earlier this year. The Borough's street trees will play an important role in countering the effects of climate change and the urban heat island effect by providing shade and slowing surface water run off to reduce flooding. As such, the Borough Council is committed to preserving and enhancing tree cover where it is safe and reasonable to do so, in accordance with the Borough's adopted Tree Strategy.

I am therefore writing to advise you that, for the reasons given above, your application to fell T1 Cedar of Tree Preservation Order 73/14 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.

If you require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Duckworth

Assistant Natural Environment Officer

cc. Mr Shanmuanathan Thiagaraja, 4 Crispin Close, Caversham, RG4 7JS