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13 May 2020

Your contact is: Sarah Hanson, Planning and Building Control

Dear Mr Thomas

RE: PROPOSED FELLING OF TREES ON THE THAMES VALLEY ESCARPMENT, EAST OF ELGAR ROAD, READING - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 200/06.

Thank you for your application of 28 October 2019, regarding the above, which included the following supporting documents:

Drainage Investigation Report
Engineering Appraisal Report
Level Monitoring
PRI Arboricultural Report
Root Sample Report
Site Investigation Report Feb 2019
Site Investigation Report Nov 2018
Soil Sample Report
TPO Statement of Reasons

Updated Level Monitoring was also provided on 11 December 2019 and 22 April 2020.

The application sought consent to fell all Willow, Hawthorn and Sycamore trees within an identified rectangular block (TG1) but the Arboricultural Report recommended to '*Fell and treat stumps of all sapling growth within 8m of PH Property*'. It was subsequently confirmed and agreed in an email of 11 December 2019 from Vicky Ironside that the application should include all species within the specified area and that the area of 8m

distance would effectively be an 8m 'arc' from the most northly western corner of the building to 8m from the most southerly western corner of the building rather than the rectangle shown on your site plan.

Following receipt of the application, which was acknowledged on 30 October 2019, we visited the property on 4 December 2019 following which several initial points of clarification were sought in my email of 4 December 2019. Clarification was provided via email on 11 December 2019 from Vicky Ironside following which several more questions were asked in our return email of 11 December 2019. Following that, chasing emails were sent to Vicky Ironside on 18 & 20 December, 7 January 2020 and 11 February 2020. Following our exchange of emails in mid-February, then early April, all the outstanding responses were provided in your email of 22 April 2020.

Reading Borough Council has employed the services of Subtilis Consulting to review the engineering aspects of the submission. The report can be provided on request, however the recommendations within it have been provided below.

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

- Fell all species within 8m of 71 Milman Road; that being an 'arc' 8m from the most north-western corner of the building to 8m from the most south-western corner of the building.

Whilst it is considered that the evidence provided points to vegetation related subsidence, the above works are approved with some caution and with some further recommendations as follows:

The vegetation is located within the escarpment and appears to have been present for many years. As such the vegetation and root systems may well be providing some stability to the escarpment. It is suggested that prior to any significant removal of vegetation that consideration be given to assessing the stability of the embankment. In any case, the landowner's permission will be required prior to proceeding - please note Informative 3 below.

Alternatively, consideration could be given to a reduction in the proposed arboricultural recommendations. The depth of the foundations to the main property were not established during the ground investigations and it is not clear as to whether the root systems have only just penetrated to below foundation level. Given the age of the property, and the absence of any commentary relating to any historic foundation subsidence movement, this would suggest that the influence of the vegetation is of only recent origin.

The cracking shown in the provided photographs shows cracking relating to lateral as well as downward movement to the right-hand section of the property. Whilst the level and crack monitoring suggests that the damage is related to seasonal movements and

considered to be attributable to tree root related foundation subsidence movement, consideration should also be given to inspecting the property to assess the lateral restraint (tying in of the gable end wall) to the property. Any lateral or outward rotation as a result of inadequate lateral restraint would produce similar pattern of cracking.

The vegetation is providing a significant amount of screening to the subject property and the rear gardens and removal of all vegetation within a distance of 8m of the property would leave a large void in the screening and detrimentally affect the amenity value provided by the escarpment. As such, and to meet with the objectives of the Council's tree related policies and Tree Strategy, we request that you liaise with the owner to consider replanting of appropriate species on the embankment. This may, in any case, be a recommendation following assessment of the escarpment's stability. Please note condition 4 below.

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. This decision is valid for two years from the date of this notice after which the consent lapses

4. Following the felling of the trees authorised by this consent, a scheme of replacement planting within the identified area of felling, aiming for a minimum 1:1 replacement, shall be submitted and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to the November 2020-March 2021 planting season, unless evidence can be provided to demonstrate that replanting of any kind should not be undertaken.

Replanting, if agreed, shall take place during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the trees, whichever is soonest.

Planting should be carried out in accordance with clause 10 (Planting) of BS 8545:2014 'Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations'

Should a replacement tree be removed, die or become severely damaged or seriously diseased, all within 5 years of planting, it shall be replaced by a tree of a similar size and species to that originally planted. Modifications to the requirements of this condition must be agreed in writing with Reading Borough Council Natural Environment Team.

PLEASE NOTE: The requirement to replant is the responsibility of the tree owner even if the application was submitted by another person.

Reason: To retain the present visual amenity value of the area and ensure continuity of tree coverage.

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

3. Tree work consents on land not owned by the applicant: It is strongly recommended that the owner of the tree be advised of any proposed works. The owner's permission must be sought if the tree works involve work past the boundary line. This consent does not in any way imply that this Council has informed the owner or sought permission or will condone the use of consents to force any landowner to grant such permission.

If you wish to appeal against any of the conditions attached to this consent, please contact the Planning Inspectorate within 28 days of receipt of this letter to obtain the relevant forms:

The Environment Appeals Team, 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: 0117 372 8192

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. GE CIF PROPERTY NOMINEE COMPANY NO 1 LIMITED, of 3rd Floor, 1 Ashley Road, Altrincham WA14 2DT.
GE CIF PROPERTY NOMINEE COMPANY NO 2 LIMITED of 3rd Floor, 1 Ashley Road, Altrincham WA14 2DT trustees of The GE UK Pension Common Investment Fund.
Mr Adam Harrington, 71 Milman Road, Reading.