



Mr C King
6 Fern Glen
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Reading
RG31 5NL

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
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Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
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Our Ref: 201601/TPO
Your Ref:

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

21 December 2020

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson, Planning

Dear Mr King

**RE: PROPOSED FELLING OF THREE FALSE ACACIA TREES AT 6 FERN GLEN, READING -
SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 89/09.**

Thank you for your application of 11 November following our visit of the same date to view the remains of T4 which had failed on 8th November 2020. As you are aware, agreement was given to fell T3 due to its proximity and connected root systems with T3, under the 'dead or dangerous' exemption - I understand this was felled on 17 November.

Your application seeks consent to fell the remaining three False acacia; those being T6, T7 & T8 of the TPO; with T5 having been previously felled in 2018 with approval (app ref 181746).

As per my acknowledgement of 12 November where it is indicated in Section 4 (1) that you are worried about the condition of the trees, i.e. that they may break or fall, as you have done, you are then required to provide written arboricultural advice or other diagnostic information from an appropriate expert. You indicated that you were '*sure the arborist will air his views on the matter*' hence I requested that you seek a written statement from your arborist to support your application. Your letter of 7 December states that your arborist is '*very busy at the moment and is unable to give me his opinion on the trees in question*'. It is unfortunate that he was unable to find any time to elaborate, even verbally - speaking directly to the Council would have been an option.

However, despite the lack of any input from your arborist, we have considered all the

factors and determined that we are able to take a view based on the evidence provided and that gathered during our site visit.

All three remaining trees are most likely the same age and it is expected that all will have some central decay, as one would expect with trees of this age.

T7 has a significant southerly lean towards Elmstone Drive, hence it would be appropriate to consider reducing this side in order to reduce the weight on the leaning side of the tree. However, there is limited scope to carry out a meaningful reduction without detrimentally affecting the health and appearance of the tree. On balance, its removal is therefore a reasonable option,

In relation to T8, fungus (mushrooms) are present around the base which have the appearance of *Pholiota squarrosa* (Shaggy scalycap) and is linked with rot in trees. The removal of this tree is therefore reasonable, even though the tree may not be imminently dangerous, depending on the extent of rot currently present.

In relation to T6, there does not appear to be anything, when viewed as an individual, that would warrant its removal, aside from some likely, normal internal decay. However, once T7 & T8 (along with previously removed T5) are felled, T6 will be exposed to wind patterns to which it is unaccustomed, which could lead to 'windthrow' (failure). In addition, root grafting is inevitable between the trees therefore the loss of T7 and T8 would result in the gradual loss of root support as the roots of the felled trees decay and may also then reduce its long-term stability. Felling this tree alongside T7 & T8 is therefore reasonable.

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

- T6, T7 & T8 False acacia - fell for the reasons stated above.

Please note particularly condition 3 below in relation to replanting. Please forward me your replanting plans as soon as possible in the new year with a view to agreeing these, so implementation can take place within the required timescale. The replanting plans should include replacements for T3 & T4 as well, as detailed in my email of 9 November 2020.

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. Following the felling of the three trees authorised by this consent, three native or wildlife friendly trees of a minimum stock size of 10-12cm girth and 3m in height shall be planted in the front garden during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the tree, whichever is soonest. The species shall be agreed with the Council prior to purchase and planting.

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 the 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. 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. 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 this consent, 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 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