



Mrs K Fisher
Environmental Services
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Frances Martin
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22 July 2020

Your contact
is: Sarah Hanson, Planning and Building Control

Dear Mrs Fisher

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE OAK AND ONE ASH TREE AT 2 RUSSET GLADE, READING -
SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 33/02.**

Thank you for your application of 10 March 2020 and following submissions:
Engineers Addendum Report
Location Plan
Root Identification report
Level Monitoring April 2019-December 2019 (updated monitoring received 3/7/20)
Soil Analysis report
Geotechnical Report
Arboricultural Report dated 25/3/2019
Details of previous underpinning (received 17/4/20)

As you are aware, there was a delay in being able to process your application as a result of Covid-19 movement restrictions. A site visit was carried out on 2 June 2020 with our consultant engineer Tim Pither from Subtilis Consulting Ltd.

The Arboricultural Report recommended the felling of T1 Oak and works to T2-T4 Oaks. Following our visit, I confirmed that T4 was an Ash, not an Oak. A subsequent email from Paul Sampson on 15 July 2020 confirmed that the application related only to T1 Oak and T4 Ash; with T2 & T3 Oaks being excluded. After seeking clarification of the works to T4

Ash in my letter to you of 8 June, subsequent email to you of 2 July and subsequent emails to Paul Sampson on 3 and 13 July, a specification for T4 Ash was agreed on with Paul Sampson on 16 July 2020. I understand that the inclusion of T4 Ash was at the owner's request as a precaution.

We acknowledge from the technical reports provided and from our site visit that T1 Oak is a major contributory factor in the subsidence related damage to the property. Despite the property having been underpinned, circa 2008, to a depth of 2.7m, roots have grown under the property and damage has again occurred.

T1 is a large, mature Oak situated on the edge of the woodland which continues west into Russet Glade. As you know from our correspondence, we have engaged with Innovation Group to seek a potential alternative to felling given the size and prominence of the tree, hence the significant amenity value it provides along with multiple environment benefits. The loss of the tree will have significant disbenefits to the area and harm to the amenity of Russet Glade and Marchwood Avenue and the wider locality. As such it was appropriate for us to try and seek an alternative resolution. However, though my correspondence with you, and later with Paul Sampson, it was confirmed that you did not consider crown reduction of any extent to be a viable solution to provide long-term stability to the property, hence that only felling was considered appropriate. This is obviously disappointing, but we acknowledge that your interests are to ensure no future damage to the property.

I can confirm that the following proposed works are approved subject to the conditions below:

- T1 Oak - fell
- T4 Ash - Reduce height by 3-4m; reduce branches growing south/towards the house by a maximum of 3-4m ensuring no more than one third of the foliage of each branch is removed; further minor later branch reductions, if required, to ensure a balanced and flowing canopy shape.

In response to our concern regarding potential windthrow of adjacent trees following the removal of T1 Oak (the largest tree), your email of 19 June 2020 confirmed that you did not consider this to be likely.

As you are aware, we have expressed strong concern about the potential for heave following the removal of T1 Oak, not just to the property in question but to the neighbour, as a result of both being within the distance of influence. Paul Sampson's email of 2 July stated that your engineers have confirmed that the vegetation at the rear can be removed without risk of causing ground heave. Whilst we have not been privy to their detailed analysis and whilst we acknowledge the conclusion of your engineers, we still consider this to be a concern.

You will note the replanting condition below as it is important to replace T1 in accordance with the objectives of our Tree Strategy and to respond to the Council's Climate emergency declaration. The woodland in question is primarily native Oak and Ash but planting of either is not considered appropriate due to the high water demand of Oak and potential issues with Ash dieback. The species required by condition 6 is deemed, in NHBC Guidance, to be low water demand and is a native species.

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. Climbing spikes shall not be used whilst undertaking any form of works on living trees, except on trees to be felled.

Reason: Spikes can cause extensive long-term damage

5. The works hereby approved to T4 Ash shall only be carried out late July-September or December to January.

Reason: To minimise harm to the future health of the tree.

6. Following the felling of the Oak tree authorised by this consent, one replacement Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) tree of a minimum 12-14cm girth and 3m in height shall be planted within the rear garden during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the tree, 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 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. 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:

Trees and Hedges, Room 3A Eagle Wing, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN

Email: treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Tel: 0303 444 5570

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 Syed ImadUdDin, 2 Russet Glade