



Mr. Graham Vamplew
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Frances Martin
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4th November 2021

Your contact is:

Andrei Nazare, Planning

Dear Mr. Vamplew,

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE SYCAMORE TREE, ONE WALNUT TREE AND ONE GOAT WILLOW TREE AT 63 RUSSELL STREET, READING - SUBJECT TO CONSERVATION AREA STATUS.

Thank you for your notification of 26th September 2021, regarding the above.

Further to our 26th of October 2021 visit to see the trees and to your submitted work specifications, I can confirm that the Council have no formal objections to the following proposed tree work:

- Sycamore tree (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) - prune to former 'pollard' points
- Walnut tree (*Juglans regia*) - crown thin by 20% and reduce by 2.5-3m, crown lift away from neighbouring property, prune back major branch from house.
- Goat willow (*Salix caprea*) - hard prune to reduce and cut back to former pollard points

However, during our visit to see the trees, while talking with Mrs. King, my colleague Lee Garner and I expressed our concerns with the extent of the proposed works. As such, I recommend that you and your client consider amending the works to avoid any potential decline in the trees' long term health and aesthetic value. If you do, I would suggest the following amendments, the reasons for which are explained below, as were suggested to Mrs King in an e-mail following our visit:

- Walnut tree - crown lift 2.5m above ground the side overhanging the neighbouring property (rear garden of no. 65 Russell Street); prune back to create 1.5-2m clearance from the house/roof; elsewhere, reduce by 1m all around.
- Sycamore - crown reduce (all over) by 2.5-3m

I propose amendments to the works on the walnut tree because the cumulative effect of the currently proposed work (20% crown thinning + 2.5-3m all around reduction + crown lifting + pruning back) will result in a significant leaf area loss, along with multiple pruning wounds prone to decay, and likely lead to irreversible decline of the tree. At the very least, it will detrimentally harm the appearance of the tree, rendering it little more than a bare trunk.

The Sycamore is now a 'lapsed pollard', i.e. one for which the pollarding cycle has not been maintained. Good arboricultural practice (as included in the relevant British Standard - BS3998:2010, which you should be aware of) advises against re-pollarding back to previous points where the pollarding cycle has not been maintained due to the harm to the tree's health that can result. It is, however recognised that the weight of re-growth from these pollard points needs to be managed and as such, crown reduction is recommended in this British Standard instead as appropriate management. This reduction would need to be repeated in the future to manage the re-growth (as re-pollarding would be).

Likewise, the works to the Goat willow are intensive, but in light of the species and size of the tree, I think it will be able to cope with the extent of leaf area loss and wound sizes.

As mentioned above, we offer no formal objection to the works regardless of whether our advice is adopted or not, as none of the trees are worthy of a tree preservation order - which would allow us to object to said works.

The agreed works should not be carried out before six weeks from the date of your notification, i.e. before 7th November 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,

Andrei Nazare

Andrei Nazare
Assistant Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Mr and Mrs King, 63 Russell Street