



Ms E Curran
103 Hamilton Road
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Frances Martin
Executive Director for
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8 July 2020

Your contact
is:

Sarah Hanson, Planning and Building Control

Dear Ms Curran

**RE: PROPOSED FELLING OF ONE PINE TREE AT 103 HAMILTON ROAD, READING -
SUBJECT TO CONSERVATION AREA STATUS.**

Thank you for your email of 18 June 2020 advising us of your intention to fell the Pine tree in the rear garden.

Further to my site visit of 24 June 2020, I have the following comments:

The Pine tree, which I believe is a Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*), is a healthy tree of good shape and form. It provides amenity value to the locality being highly visible from Bulmershe Road to the rear, and from the adjacent school, and contributes to the treed nature of the Conservation Area. It is the last tree remaining in your garden, the Eucalyptus having been felled and the mature Yew on the rear boundary providing little value in its much reduced form. In terms of its condition and amenity value, the tree warrants inclusion in a TPO.

Your email advised of your concerns in relation to reduced light levels into the house and garden, the difficulty in growing plants/grass under the tree and the expense of regular pruning to contain the size of the tree. During my visit, you also expressed concern about potential damage to the house, specifically from subsidence. You advised that the house

had previously been underpinned due to subsidence, but confirmed that this was a result of drainage issues. Building Control records confirm underpinning was carried out in 2005.

I appreciate that trees can cause nuisance issues such as those you have highlighted and expense, however they are not considered to be reasons to fell a healthy tree of high amenity value. As you may be aware, the Council declared a climate emergency last year. In addition, we have revised our Tree Strategy (currently under consultation) to recognise the importance of increasing canopy cover in the Borough for the multiple benefits that trees provide. The loss of the Pine would be contrary to our tree protection aims.

In relation to potential subsidence, there are a great many trees in close (and closer) proximity to buildings within the Conservation Area, a significant number of which are also subject to TPOs. In my 20+ years at Reading Borough Council I am not aware of a single tree related subsidence claim in your area. It is reasonable to suggest that this is a good indicator that tree related subsidence is unlikely.

The tree in question appears to be in good condition and provides amenity value to the surrounding area. The Council therefore intend to place a Tree Preservation Order on this tree as the proposed felling is not acceptable.

The TPO will be served prior to 30 July 2020, i.e. within six weeks from the date of your email. You will have the opportunity to object to the TPO when it is served. If you wish to seek formal consent to fell the tree once the TPO is served, a tree works application will then need to be submitted for formal consideration. If the works are subsequently refused, the appeal process can be followed, details of which will be given at the time. Applications can be submitted on-line following the procedure for submitting a planning application: www.planningportal.co.uk/applications

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