



Mrs E King
C & R Contractors Limited
The Cottage
Morton Underhill
Astwood Bank
Redditch
B96 6SP

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Civic Centre, Reading, RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 937 3787

Our Ref: 200163/TPO
Your Ref:

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

14 February 2020

Your contact
is: Sarah Hanson, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mrs King

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 10 NO. LONDON PLANE TREES AT TOBY CARVERY, RICHFIELD AVENUE, READING - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 87/05

Thank you for your application of 31 January 2020 in which you sought approval to:

‘Crown Raise 10 No London Plane trees along the roadside frontage boundary to 5.2m making no cuts over 50mm’.

It is assumed that the crown lifting is proposed through 360°.

Further to my visit of 5 February 2020 I requested in my email of 6 February that reasons for the crown lifting were provided, as required by Section 5, particularly in view of the current crown clearance heights. You advised in your email of 7 February 2020 that your client wishes the work carried out ‘to improve site lines and vision from the main road into the site’.

As advised in my email of 6 February 2020 the statutory height requirements in the Reading Borough Council area are 2.75m above the pavement and 5.5m above the road. Currently the trees are an adequate height above the pavement and only overhang the road very slightly (a few branch tips). I expressed concern that crown lifting to 5.2m above the pavement (and through 360°) would unnecessarily remove branches, to which

you asked if any crown lifting would be acceptable.

Any pruning of a tree will cause the tree stress in that it will have to expend energy responding to the wounds created, all of which are entry points for pathogens. It is therefore appropriate in assessing any tree works application to question whether the work is absolutely necessary in order to avoid harm to high amenity trees without good reason.

It is appreciated that your client would wish to ensure visibility under the crowns for their business. Whilst I accept that this time of year, i.e. where the trees are not in leaf, is perhaps not the best time to appreciate how 'visible' the business is, it seems reasonable to suggest that the current crown height (height of lowest branches) is sufficient to allow a view under the canopies and into the site for both pedestrians and road users. The crowns are well above the statutory height for the pavement and the statutory height above the road can be achieved by minor pruning of branch tips. In relation to crown lifting of trees over the footpath and carriageway, if the clearance of vegetation overhanging the highway only involves the removal of branches to give a ground clearance to the statutory heights of 2.7m over the footpath and 5.5m over the road, this does not require formal consent from the Council. You are advised, however, to give notice to the Council of these intended works in order that they can be agreed.

In conclusion, the proposed crown lifting to 5.2 metres through 360° is refused. If you wish to appeal against the Council's decision on this matter, please contact the Planning Inspectorate within 28 days of receipt of this letter to obtain the relevant forms:

The Environment Appeals Team
Trees and Hedges
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: 0303 444 5584

If you/your client suffer any loss or damage as a result of this refusal of consent, you/they may be entitled to recover compensation from the Council. If you/they wish to make a claim you must do so within 12 months from the date of this decision (or, if you appeal to the Secretary of State, within 12 months from the date of his decision). Claims should be made in writing to the Insurance Section, Reading Borough Council, Civic Centre, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU.

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