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Mr M Curtis-Donnelly
tmd Building Consultancy
One Bridge Wharf
156 Caledonian Road
London
N1 9UU

Our Ref: 190275/TPO
Your Ref:

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

12 March 2019

Your contact is: Sarah Hanson, Planning and Building Control

Dear Mr Curtis-Donnelly

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES AT UNIT 1, ACRE ROAD, READING - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 28/03.

Thank you for your application of 15 February 2019, regarding the above.

Your application sought consent for the following works:

- Group 1: 3 No. False acacia – crown reduce by 3 metres; all cuts to be no more than 100mm and to local growth points
- T1 & T2 Tree of Heaven - crown reduce by 3 metres; all cuts to be no more than 100mm and to local growth points
- T4 False acacia - crown reduce by 3 metres; all cuts to be no more than 100mm and to local growth points
- Group 2: 3 No. Pine – crown reduce by 1.5m
- Group 3: 3 No. Pine – crown reduce by 1.5m

Your application provides details of the reasons for the works which, briefly, is to alleviate issues relating to leaves blocking rainwater downpipes and Automatic Opening Vents resulting in water ingress and damage to internal finishes.

During our meeting of 5 March 2019 with John from Big Heart Tree Care, we discussed the above works and tried to achieve a balance between alleviating your concerns whilst not

carrying out tree works that could be detrimental to their future health and/or appearance. Specific pruning was discussed and I subsequently provided annotated photographs of that pruning which you agreed, via email on 6 March 2019, was a true reflection of that discussed.

In relation to the crown reduction proposed, whilst it is appreciated that a height reduction may reduce leaf fall, it is not acceptable from an arboricultural point of view. The False acacia trees in particular are unlikely to tolerate significant work due to their age and a reduction in height, as well as producing numerous wounds, each a source of entry for pathogens, will detrimentally affect the amenity value of the trees. In particular, the reduction proposed for T4 would result in the removal of almost the entire south side of the crown and no work seems necessary (for clearance purposes) to T1 or the northern tree in G1.

In relation to Group 2 Pines, these together form a notable group of good shape and amenity value. An overall reduction would be detrimental to their amenity value and would in any case have little to no impact on the issues being experienced. Appropriate reduction to give better clearance from the building is wholly reasonable.

In relation to Group 3 Pines, a reduction of these for the reasons stated is not appropriate given their location away from the building. Some minor works are appropriate as detailed below.

In conclusion the proposed works as detailed in your application are refused for the reasons stated above. However, lesser works are considered reasonable and I can confirm that the following is approved subject to the conditions below and with reference to the attached photographs:

- G1, two southern trees closest to building:
 - o Western tree: reduce branches growing towards the building to the specific pruning points indicated on the attached photographs; crown thin outer canopy (2-3m) by 10-15%
 - o Eastern tree: selective tip reduction to give 2m clearance from the building; crown thin outer canopy (2-3m) by 10-15%
- T2 tree of Heaven – reduce specific branches in the lower crown as indicated on the attached photographs and reduce the upper crown by the minimum necessary to give a flowing crown line with the lower reduction points
- T4 False acacia – selective branch reduction of branches growing southwards towards/over the building by a max of 1m (with associated re-shaping) and crown thin the outer canopy by 10-15%
- G2 Pine - reduce crown on south-west side to give 2-3m clearance from building, reshaping upper crown if necessary and by the minimum to maintain a flowing crown shape; crown clean, i.e. remove dead, dying, low vigour, crossing/rubbing branches (note informative 7 below)

- G3 Pine – crown clean, i.e. remove dead, dying, low vigour, crossing/rubbing branches (note informative 7 below); carry out any minor pruning/crown lifting necessary over the public footpath to ensure statutory clearance of 2.75m is achieved.

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 shall only be carried out [specify time].

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

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. It is best to avoid works in the period immediately before or during bud burst and leaf fall to minimise the effect on the long-term health of the tree

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. Trees not considered to be protected by the current Tree preservation order: Work can be carried out to this tree without the formal consent from this Council.

7. Crown cleaning should not include the removal of fused natural braces (branches or stems), or the removal of entwining branches or rubbing branches (where they may be forming a natural brace) from the crown of a semi-mature to fully mature tree without carrying out an assessment of any junctions formed below such natural braces.

Reason: Removal of natural braces may lead to failure of weak unions.

If you suffer any loss or damage as a result of this refusal of consent, you may be entitled to recover compensation from the Council. If you 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 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:

The Environment Appeals Team, 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: 0117 372 8192

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. Big Heart Tree Care