

Mr. Gary Preston
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Frances Martin
Executive Director for
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Our Ref: 190919
Your Ref:

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10th July 2019

Your contact is:

Sarah Duckworth, Planning and Building Control

Dear Mr. Preston,

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES ON LAND AT 6 DURHAM HOUSE, SYMEON PLACE, CAVERSHAM, READING RG4 7AS - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 69/13.

Thank you for your application dated 10th June 2019, regarding the above.

You have applied to carry out a 3m canopy reduction to T1 (Tulip tree) and to crown lift and thin the canopy of T2 (Copper Beech) with a reduction of over-extended limbs by up to 2m.

As I advised you during our telephone call on 3rd July 2019, I accept that the Tulip Tree has been historically reduced in the past but have seen that the tree has grown on well since this pruning operation. Usually, when a mature tree has been ‘topped’ in this way, it can be appropriate to continue to manage the tree in a reduced form in order to prevent overly dense branches from breaking out. However, further reductions were not undertaken and the tree now has mature, but not overly dense regrowth from the previous reduction points. The regrowth is healthy with a reasonable attachment to the parent branch and I am not aware that the tree has shed any major branches which would support the need for further canopy reductions at this time.

Given the time elapsed since the original works, I consider that any further reduction to the canopy of T1 (Tulip Tree) would reduce the tree’s vitality and be detrimental to the health and wider amenity value of the tree. In view of this, your application to reduce the tree has been refused.

With regards to the 20% canopy thin for T2 (Copper Beech), I am not aware of any need

for this work to be undertaken to the tree. It is the nature of Copper Beech trees that they have dense, dark foliage. The proposed canopy thin could potentially reduce the shade cast under the tree however any improvement in light levels under the canopy would be short-lived and the tree would re-grow the thinned foliage within a matter of weeks. The crown thin would create numerous pruning cuts throughout the canopy which would act as potential entry points for decay pathogens. The canopy thin can also increase wind flow through the canopy, changing the oscillation of branches in high winds leaving branches more prone to breakage. The loss of photosynthetic area and energy spent replacing leaves and growth tips would also result in a drop in the tree's energy reserves.

This is a large specimen tree which has been successfully incorporated into the residential development by retaining the tree on a wide amenity verge. The area under the tree's canopy is not residential garden or Public Park and the position of the tree within layout of Symeon Place has been designed to ensure that there is not unreasonable pressure to prune the tree in order to alleviate issues with shade and the potentially overbearing nature of the tree. With this in mind, I do not see any justification for a 20% thin of the canopy and this aspect of your application has also been refused.

Other tree works as detailed in your application and agreed during our telephone conversation on 3rd June 2019, are approved subject to the conditions below:

Approved Tree Works

T2 Copper Beech

- Reduce over extended lateral branches by up to 2m using a suitable reduction point. (Please note that this is of selective longer branches and should not be interpreted as a reduction of the entire canopy)
- Prune where necessary to give up to 3m clearance to neighbouring dwellings.

Conditions

1. 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.

2. The approved branch reduction shall be undertaken in mid-late Summer (July - August) when the tree's energy reserves are at their height or during the Winter months of December - January during the period of dormancy.

Reason: Taking into account the tree's phenological cycle and in order to avoid any unnecessary detriment to the tree as a result of the pruning work.

3. 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.

Informatives

1. You are advised that, in accordance with Part 4, 17 (4) of The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012, this decision is valid for one pruning operation (as per the approved specifications) to be undertaken within two years from the date of this notice, after which the consent lapses and a new application will be required.
2. Removal of dead or dangerous wood: This does not require the formal consent of the Council. 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'.
3. 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 030 6000

If you wish to appeal against the Council's refusal of consent to reduce T1 (Tulip Tree) and thin T2 (Copper Beech), or against any of the conditions attached to the permitted works, 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 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 require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Duckworth

Sarah Duckworth
Consultant Assistant Natural Environment Officer

cc. Merlin Estates, 4 Daves Farm Business, Park Farm Road, Farham Road, Ewshot, Surrey
GU10 5BB