

Mr. Julian Clarke
Cannon Tree Care
6 Wyld Court Hill
Hampstead Norreys
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Berkshire
RG18 0TN

Frances Martin
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

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Our Ref: 190866
Your Ref:

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3rd July 2019

Your contact is: Sarah Duckworth, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mr. Clarke,

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 2X OAKS AT 30 COCKNEY HILL, TILEHURST, READING -
PROTECTED AS T3 AND T4 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 3/04**

Thank you for your application dated 28th May 2019 regarding the above.

I visited 30 Cockney Hill on Wednesday 26th June 2019 and met your client Mr. Roberts. You have applied to carry out a 20% canopy reduction reducing the height and side growth by approximately 200-250cm and to carry out a crown clean, removing all major deadwood, crossing / rubbing branches and broken hanging branches where present.

These are two mature Oak trees which are visible as a back drop to houses as viewed from Mandeville Close and to a lesser extent in views from Cockney Hill. The trees contribute to the collective amenity provided by mature trees to the local area.

At the time of my visit, the trees had been fenced off to protect them during the building works so I have not been able to view their bases and trunks in detail; however, they appeared to be healthy specimens. I have noted that the foliage of T4 (Oak closest to the property) is clustered and gappy indicative of low vigour. Ivy was recently cut around the tree, the dieback of which, may explain the cause of the gaps in the canopy. Provided the tree is otherwise healthy, it is expected to make a full recovery.

The Borough Council would rarely permit a complete reduction of an otherwise healthy, protected tree. The proposed 2-2.5m canopy reduction would result in a greatly reduced canopy volume for both trees and create a large number of pruning wounds throughout the canopy. Such work is detrimental both the long term health and wider amenity value of the trees. When undertaken to a tree already exhibiting symptoms of reduced vitality, this work can bring about or hasten the decline of a tree.

In view of these concerns, and without any supporting information being submitted to demonstrate that the work is required on safety grounds, I am writing to advise you that your application to reduce the tree by 200-250cm has been refused.

As discussed during our telephone conversation on Friday 28th June, the following lesser works have been approved subject to the conditions listed below:

Approved Tree Works

- T3, T4 (Oak) - Crown lift to give up to 4m clearance of canopy above ground level in order to increase lower light levels in the garden.
- T3, T4 (Oak) - Crown clean, removing all major deadwood, crossing / rubbing branches and broken hanging branches where necessary.
- T4 (Oak) only - Reduce branches on northern side of canopy (side nearest to dwelling) by approximately 1.5m using nearest suitable reduction points to leave a natural looking canopy outline.

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. 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

3. 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.

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

4. 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

If you wish to appeal against the Council's decision on this matter or against any of the conditions attached to your consent, 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
Assistant Environment Officer