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Ms. Tayma Cannon
19 Blenheim Road
Caversham
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 7RT

Our Ref: 181892/TPO
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 374294
sarah.duckworth@reading.gov.uk

10th December 2018

Your contact is:

Sarah Duckworth, Planning and Building Control

Dear Ms Cannon,

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO A WALNUT AT THE REAR OF 19 BLENHEIM ROAD, CAVERSHAM AND PROTECTED AS T8 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 147/01.

Thank you for your application dated 31st October 2018, regarding the above.

Further to my visit on 28th November 2018 I am writing to advise that your application to carry out a 2-3m canopy reduction and 're-shape' the Walnut tree is considered to be major pruning works and potentially harmful to the health and amenity of a significant protected tree.

On my site visit I noted that the Walnut appears healthy. The lower trunk is obscured by decking around the base however the canopy is full and with a reasonable bud density indicating good vitality.

The proposed work would remove all smaller branch tips (apical branch growth points) and create sizeable pruning cuts which would act as potential entry points for decay pathogens. Following this work, the tree would need to be regularly reduced to a similar extent in the future in order to alleviate the risk of branch failure therefore any harm to the amenity of the tree would be long lasting.

In view of this, as we discussed at our meeting, your application to carry out this work has been refused.

However, the Borough Council is aware of the concerns raised by you regarding the impact of the tree on you and your neighbour's garden. I have also taken into account that areas of the trees canopy have been reduced in the past. In view of this, the following lesser works have been approved and may be undertaken subject to the conditions below:

Approved Tree Works

- Remove dead branch stubs left from previous reduction back to suitable growth points.
- Reduce canopy by up to 1.5m using a 'drop-crotch' technique (please refer to informative 2) to create a smaller but natural canopy and thinning regrowth where necessary on previous reduction points.
- Work to remove any deadwood from the canopy is exempt under the Tree Preservation Order and can be undertaken without the prior consent of the Borough Council

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. The approved canopy reduction shall be undertaken in mid-late Summer (July - September) 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 tree phenology to limit any harm to the tree as a result of this work.

Informatives

1. You are advised that this decision is valid for one pruning operation 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. Drop-crotching is a type of thinning cut that reduces a tree's size while preserving its natural shape. To drop-crotch, select and cut higher branches back to laterals at least one-third the diameter of the limbs being removed. Cut outside the branch collar at a 45 to 60 degree angle to the branch bark ridge. Leave the branch collar intact to help prevent decay from entering the trunk. This type of thinning cut is proposed to stimulate growth throughout the tree without prompting prolific new growth from the pruning cut.

3. 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'.

4. 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 Borough Council's refusal of permission to carry out the 2-3m reduction of the tree's canopy as per your application, or 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 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