

Mr Hugo Loudon,
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6th April 2018

Your contact is:

Sarah Duckworth, Planning and Building Control

Dear Hugo,

**APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO TREES ON LAND AT ST MICHAELS RECTORY, ROUTH LANE.
TILEHURST RG30 4JY SUBJECT OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 11/10.**

Thank you for your application of 8th February 2018 regarding the above.

I have been out to look at the application for works to protected trees at Tilehurst Rectory, Routh Lane.

You have applied to carry out pruning works to T2 (Oak), T10 (Lime), T11 & T12 (Norway Maples) those being T6, T10 and T8 respectively of TPO 11/10. The work has been proposed to give clearance to vehicles, alleviate asymmetrical canopies or 'overdeveloped' selected laterals or to encourage a dominant central leader.

As we have subsequently discussed via email, with regards to T11 and T12 (T8 and T9 of TPO 11/10), these Norway Maples have grown with asymmetrical canopies due to the competition for light with adjacent trees.

I am of the opinion that these trees have grown in competition with other trees and this is reflected in their form but overall they are in a satisfactory condition. Reducing these elongated branches when there is no specific need to do so will cause inevitable stress for the trees. The loss of photosynthetic area will trigger new and inevitably asymmetrical growth in order to recover the leaf area lost by the pruning works.

Additional works to T2, to crown lift the tree to 4m and prevent vehicular damage in the future are not currently justified - The representative from the Oxford Diocese who showed me round the site confirmed the largest vehicles they currently might have on site is a minibus which would not touch the current height of the tree's canopy.

The size of vehicles which can currently access the property is at present restricted by

the width of the entrance gates. I understand that there is some discussion at present with regards to the future of the site and potential for new development. If these plans do progress then at this point appropriate tree pruning works can be identified which take into account the likely size and location of the traffic which may be on site.

I also consider that the proposed work to T10 Lime (T10 of TPO 11/10) to reduce the sub stem to the southwest by 2.5m is not justified at this time. The stem fork is currently in a satisfactory condition. A reduction of the less dominant stem would affect the amenity of the tree in the short term and is overly speculative in the long term given the lack of certainty of the end result.

In response to my concerns you have informed me that your client, who is in charge of building maintenance for the site, advised that some vehicular damage has nearly occurred with work deliveries at the front of the property. You have suggested that the light canopy lifting of sub branches to T2 (Oak) would *'reduce the possibility of vehicular damage and is a prudent precaution. This work has been considered so as not to compromise the aesthetic value of the tree both in the immediate area and from the street scene.'*

With regards to the proposed work to T10, T11 and T12 you write *'retrospective formative works in early maturity helps dictate form that is more compatible to surroundings in the future. Light formatives avoid future larger future wounds. The asymmetrical form can be less dominant with time and some hormonal leader influence may even assist future form.'*

I appreciate you taking the time to review my comments and I do understand that whilst there is a differing of professional opinion on this occasion, neither professional opinion with regards to the management of the trees is fundamentally wrong.

However, at this point the Borough Council would not permit pruning to protected trees where there is not currently a need for the work or where the work is not required to alleviate a present or inevitable defect which is likely to cause a structural issue in the future for the tree.

In conclusion, the proposed work to T2, T10, T11 and T12 (protected as T6, T8, T9, T10 of TPO 11/10) is refused.

I can confirm that other works to protected trees, as specified in your application, are approved subject to the conditions below:

Approved tree works

- T1 --Yew (T7 of TPO 11/10) - Associated ground works.
- T3 --Ash (T5 of TPO 11/10) - Remove Deadwood - consent not required
- T4 --Oak (T4 of TPO 11/10) - Reduce selected elongated laterals to north and east by 2-2.5m and crown lift to give 1.5m clearance to the garage block.

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 to trees.

Informatives

1. Your tree work specification includes that your client might 'consider felling and replacing T6A, T6B (T2 & T3 of TPO 11/10)' and to consider the relocation of T15 (T12 of TPO 11/10). At this point, without confirmation that your client wishes to proceed with these suggestions, they have been taken to be a note to your client only and have not been considered a specific tree works proposal as part of this tree works application.

2. You are advised that this consent is valid for two years from the date of this correspondence after which it lapses and a new application will be required.

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 decision on this matter or against any of the conditions of planning 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 Natural Environment Officer

cc. The Oxford Diocese, Church House, Oxford, Kidlington, Oxford OX5 1GF