

Suggested course of tree work at Chazey Bank RG4 7RB

Application on 24th March 2015 by Mr Hashim Mitchla – ref 150513

Hi Sarah, in 2015, permission was given for various TPO tree works at Chazey Bank at the end of The Warren in Caversham. Most of this work has since been carried out, however some of the trees have declined in health and Mr Mitchla asked me to come and have a look at the trees in regard to “cutting them back”. I asked to look at the consent he was given and he produced the documents, which due to the date issued, are no longer valid.

I am not a trained surveyor of trees by any means, however as an arborist with some experience, I had some recommendations of what I would do if I were him, especially with the property within close proximity to the group G2 (from the TPO plan) in particular. G2 consists of Ash and Horse Chestnut with the exception of a large White Poplar at one end. Many of these trees are poor specimens and are leaning heavily, unbalanced, often with no leader and in some cases very diseased. These trees are also now of a size where they are just too close to each other and growing and resting into each other.

A large twin stemmed Horse Chestnut in the middle of the group appears to have been granted removal work to the North stem, 1m from the ground which has not happened. In my view this tree is now very dangerous and should be felled as soon as possible. There is a lot of decay in the join of the two stems and a lot of bark has fallen off leaving bare trunk in several places. The tree is leaning heavily towards to front end of the house and will only fall one way which is a great risk to anyone or any vehicles on site. Other work is needed elsewhere but this tree takes greatest priority in my opinion.

Due to the proximity of the house (not the trees fault!) there are several tall trees which could potentially cause great damage or worse to the property and people should they fall over. It is my view that a lot of the trees be brought down to a height of approximately 30ft or the nearest best growth point. I must admit that quantifying measures is not my strong point, but approximately ½ the existing height. The reason for this is to keep the trees doing their valuable job of aesthetics, screening, shading and water take up from the surrounding area, but with greatly reducing their sail area to minimize the chance of failure. The Ash's would respond well to a hard reduction/pollard, but i'm not that familiar with Horse Chestnut reductions although I am aware they are not the strongest of trees.

It is my recommendation that at least 3 trees (max 5) and one dead monolith stem be felled to remove poor stock and make space for the better specimens to grow. The White Poplar just wants another deadwooding but seems ok otherwise.

Mr Mitchla is keen to remove the Pine in front of the house and is happy to replace it with a more suitable fruit tree or similar to avoid having a huge tree right in front of the house in the future. The client received permission to carry out works to T4 (Ash) on the opposite side of the house on the previous application, but did not manage to get this work done, and he is now concerned about it's proximity to overhead cables. We would be looking to get the tree away from any wires and come to a sensible solution to this. He is also aware of existing and potential future obligations regarding the planting of new trees and is happy to meet those obligations. He is keen to plant a row of trees to one side of his property to reduce general exposure from the elements and to redress the balance of felled trees with replacements.

I would suggest a meeting on site with Mr Mitchla, yourself and myself if possible to discuss potential works before a new TPO form is submitted. Please let us know how you would like to proceed.

Best regards,

Alex Darby.

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