



Giorgio Framallicco
**Head of Planning Development
and Regulatory Services**

Civic Centre, Reading, RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 937 3787

Mr T Evered
Beechwood Tree Care Ltd
4 Spring Meadows Business Centre
Highfield Farm
Wargrave
RG10 8PZ

Our Ref: 180286/TPO
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 372440
Email: sarah.hanson@reading.gov.uk

22 March 2018

Your contact
is: Sarah Hanson, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mr Evered

**RE: PROPOSED POLLARDING OF ONE LIME TREE AT 56 LOWFIELD ROAD, READING -
SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 64/01**

Thank you for your application of 1 February 2018 and your subsequent email of 23 February 2018 clarifying the reasons for the work.

Further to my visit of 7 March 2018, I have the following comments:

The tree appears to be in good condition and is located on a busy route, thereby increasing its amenity value, which has the potential to further increase as the tree grows. With reference to our adopted Tree Strategy, the property is located on the edge of a 10% or less canopy cover area and opposite an area with High Treescape Value (BBC Caversham Park). Given this, any tree work that reduces the size, hence amenity value of the tree, needs to be carefully considered and the reasons put forward in support of that proposed work must justify the loss of amenity value that would result.

I have considered the reasons explained in your email of 23 February, assessing these whilst on site, and would respond as follows to the points you have raised:

- 1,3,5) The tree stands on the front boundary of the front garden which is not unsubstantial in length at approximately 15m. The distance from the house is

considered to be acceptable and it is considered that alternative, less significant work could be carried out over time to address concerns about proximity and light.

- 2) As you may be aware, as Beechwood Tree Care have worked on the tree before, previous work has been confined to crown lifting to ensure appropriate clearance over the adjacent pavement and road; the tree not having been subject to pollarding or substantial reduction. It is late in the tree's life span to be initiating pollarding and would go against the guidance in BS 3998. It is appreciated that ensuring clearance will involve regular maintenance, hence cost. However, it is not considered appropriate to accept pollarding as an option to avoid this, given the detrimental impact on amenity that this would have. Numerous protected trees across the Borough require regular pruning to ensure statutory clearance over the public highway; setting a precedent by allowing the pollarding of this Lime tree would have a potentially unwelcome impact across the town. Whilst it is appreciated that pollarding may make future maintenance easier (less frequent) and potentially more cost effective, these are not considered to be valid reasons to justify pollarding and the resulting reduction in amenity that this would have.
- 4) You consider that inevitable structural damage to the pavement (as seen with street trees) and driveway will occur in the future and consider that pollarding would reduce the sail area and size of the tree (your reason unfortunately then stops in the middle of sentence). You are correct in that street trees frequently cause root damage to pavements. Whilst these trees are often maintained as pollards, this is primarily due to the trees having been historically pollarded (started many decades ago), i.e. good arboricultural management, rather than to address root issues. The damage that occurs to pavements is dealt with by remedial works and similarly damage to driveways, which occurs fairly often, is common in hard surfacing of minimal construction and remedial works to the hard surfacing is used as a solution.
- 6) The tree could be considered as a street tree in that it is in a prominent location at the front of the property so contributes significantly to the street scene. It is also one of very few protected trees on the Lowfield Road frontage. For the reasons given above, pollarding and its negative affect on the amenity value of the tree is not considered to be acceptable.

In conclusion, the proposed pollarding of the Lime tree is refused. If you wish to appeal against the Council's decision on this matter, 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 your client suffers any loss or damage as a result of this refusal of consent, they may be entitled to recover compensation from the Council. If you/they 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 Hanson

Sarah Hanson
Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Mrs Tappern, 56 Lowfield Road