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Our Ref: 171669/TPO
Your Ref:

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14 November 2017

Your contact is: Sarah Hanson, Planning and Building Control

Dear Mr Arnold

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 3 PLANE TREES AND 3 LIME TREES AT 287-291 OXFORD ROAD, READING (LIDL/MCDONALD'S CAR PARK) - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 40/13.

Thank you for your application of 13 September 2017, regarding the above.

Further to my visit on 8 November 2017, I have the following comments:

Your application seeks consent to crown lift 6 trees, which seems reasonable to give adequate clearance above the car park and the highway along the Oxford Road frontage. In relation to T1, your application states that the works are required under notice from the highways department. Having spoken to the relevant Neighbourhood Officer, I understand that the request was just to ensure the tree meets the statutory heights of 2.75m above the pavement and 5.5m above the highway. I noted during my site visit that the tree's crown was low over the car park and pavement, hence crown lifting is appropriate, albeit this should not involve the removal of main limbs. However, your application also includes the proposal to reduce the lateral spread by 2-2.5m; the reason for which is not clear. I noted during my visit that the furthest extent of the crown growing towards the public highway extends just past the kerb line, hence over the road. It would therefore be reasonable for selective branch reduction to be carried out to prune the branches back to a point approximately 1m inside the kerb line. Any further reduction, both on this side and elsewhere around the crown, does not currently appear necessary and no justification has been provided for this proposal. This is the largest Plane tree of the 3 offering the highest amenity value which is important on this main route in/out of Reading. The importance of this tree is increased given the unauthorised reduction carried out to T2 last year which resulted in a much reduced crown size.

Approved works

I can confirm that the following proposed works are approved subject to the conditions below:

- T1 Plane – crown clean by removing dead wood and crossing/rubbing branches; crown lift to 3.5m above ground level through 360° by removing/reducing minor branches only; selective branch reduction to the north side of the crown (overhanging the highway) back to appropriate growing points approximately 1m inside the kerb line
- T2 & T3 Plane – Crown lift to 2m above ground level by removing/reducing minor branches only
- T4-T6 Lime – Crown lift to 2m above ground level. This should not involve the removal of main limbs.

Refused works

- T1 Plane – crown reduce (mainly in lateral spread) all round by 2-2.5m

Please note that, whilst not labelled with a 'T' number, the TPO includes another Lime (T7), as per the tree list on TPO plan E2842, the location of which is shown on the plan. I note that no works to this tree are included in your application and therefore assume that none are required or proposed.

Conditions

1. Five days notice in writing shall be given to the Council prior to undertaking the approved works.

Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority is given sufficient notice of the works to enable the effective monitoring of tree work within the Borough.

2. 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

3. This decision is valid for two years from the date of this notice after which the consent lapses

4. 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

5. 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. 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'.

2. 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 060 3900; enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

3. 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

4. Tree work consents on land not owned by the applicant: It is strongly recommended that the owner of the tree be advised of any proposed works. The owner's permission must be sought if the tree works involve work past the boundary line. This consent does not in any way imply that this Council has informed the owner or sought permission or will condone the use of consents to force any landowner to grant such permission.

5. Crown lifting of trees over the footpath and carriageway: If the clearance of vegetation overhanging the highway only involves the removal of branches to give a ground clearance to the statutory heights of 2.7m over the footpath and 5.5m over the road, this does not require formal consent from the Council. You are advised, however, to give notice to the Council of these intended works in order that they can be agreed.

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 they wish to make a claim they must do so within 12 months from the date of this decision (or, if you/they 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 wish to appeal against the refusal of consent to reduce T1 Plane or against 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 require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Hanson
Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Mr A King, Mason Philips Chartered Surveyors, 302-308 Langham House, Regent Street, London, W1B 3AT