

Mr. Philip Wallbank
172 St Saviours Road
8 Ullswater Drive
Coley Park
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 6ET

Alison Bell
Director of Environment &
Neighbourhood Services
Civic Centre, Reading, RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 937 3787

Our Ref: 170628/TPO

Direct: ☎01189 372440
sarah.duckworth@reading.gov.uk

11th May 2017

Your contact is: Sarah Duckworth, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mr. Wallbank,

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO AN ASH TREE AT 10 BARBROOK CLOSE, TILEHURST -
PROTECTED AS T6 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 31/003.**

Thank you for your application dated 20th April 2017 regarding the above and for taking the time to meet me on site yesterday (10th May 2017) to discuss your tree works application.

You have applied to remove the overhanging lateral limbs from an Ash within the garden of 10 Barbrook Close which were specified as 'three from the left and two from the right' as viewed from the rear garden of 8 Ullswater Drive. As this was not clear to me on my initial site visit of 27th April 2017, you agreed to meet me on 10th May 2017 and indicated the branches to be removed as being five large limbs around 20cm in diameter growing south over the rear garden of 8 Ullswater Drive.

You have advised that this work is intended to alleviate the concerns of Mrs Peters, resident of 8 Ullswater Drive, that the tree may fall towards her house as it is weighted in her direction. You have also reported that Mrs Peters wishes to have more light into her garden as the tree dominates the garden. You have informed me that a retaining wall has had to be replaced having been pushed over by the tree roots.

As we discussed on site, the removal of these 5 branches would create very large pruning cuts, exposing the heartwood and allowing sizeable entry points for decay pathogens in the structural framework of the tree.

In addition, the lower branches of a tree create a dampening effect to the movement of the tree. Removing the lower branches will increase the oscillation of the stems in high winds. With the large cavities and greater movement of the upper canopy the proposed work may leave the tree more vulnerable to branch or stem failure.

Lower branches are also important in assisting the draw of nutrient flow to the upper

canopy of the tree. The proposed tree work will remove the draw of nutrients by the five lower branches resulting in stress and loss of vitality in the upper canopy.

Overall, it is likely that the removal of the lower branches will not address the concerns raised by adjacent residents with regards to the overbearing appearance of the tree. Removing lower branches can change the perception of the tree making it appear taller, more upright and precarious in appearance for the residents of Ullswater Drive.

To date no information has been submitted to demonstrate that the tree is in a poor condition or hazardous such that would justify the proposed work. I must conclude that the removal of these large lateral branches is likely to cause significant harm to the protected tree and as such is contrary to best practice as outlined in BS:3998 2010 'Tree Work Recommendations'. The work is likely to cause long term management issues for the tree which is likely to result in its premature removal.

In view of this, I can confirm that your application to remove 5 overhanging lateral branches from the Ash tree is refused.

However, I can confirm that the following lesser works have been identified to reduce the canopy overhang for residents at 8 Ullswater Drive and are approved, subject to the conditions below:

Approved work

- T6 (Ash) Undertake a 2-3m tip reduction of branches overhanging the gardens in Ullswater Drive using suitable pruning points.

I would also recommend an inspection of the lower trunk of the tree following the careful severing and removal of ivy on the lower trunk using hand tools.

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. 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

4. The approved works shall be undertaken in mid-late summer (July - August) 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 the trees' phenological cycle and in order to avoid any

unnecessary detriment to the trees as a result of the pruning work.

Informatives

1. You are advised that this decision is valid for two years from the date of this notice after which the consent lapses and further consent will be required.
2. 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'.
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
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 of sought permission or will condone the use of consents to force any landowner to grant such permission.

If you wish to appeal against the Council's refusal of consent to remove the 5 lateral branches from T6 or any of the conditions attached to the permitted tree work, 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. Mrs Lynn Peters, 8 Ullswater Drive, Tilehurst RG31 6RS
Mr John Chiles, 10 Barbrook Close, Tilehurst RG31 6RT