

Mr Stephen Parker
Southern Housing Group
Fleet House
59-61 Clerkenwell Road
London
EC1M 5LA

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

Our Ref: 170013/TPO
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 372440
sarah.duckworth@reading.gov.uk
18th January 2017

Your contact is:

Sarah Duckworth, Planning & Building Control

Dear Mr Parker,

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES AT MANDER COURT, 8 DERBY ROAD, CAVERSHAM -
SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 26/03**

Thank you for your application of 4/1/2017 regarding the above.

I have been out to view the trees on 5th January 2017 in order to consider the merits of your application.

You have applied to undertake the following works:

- fell a line of Lime pollards (Group 1) as they are crowding out the area
- fell a Western Red Cedar (T7) as it is too large for this proximity to the building and causes a nuisance from pine needles falling around it particularly on the drive.
- fell a Monterey Cypress (T5) as it is dead.

The Borough Council includes significant trees in the Borough in Tree Preservation Orders in order to protect the verdant character of the Borough. Trees have considerable importance to the environment, biodiversity and economy of the Borough as well as for the physical and mental health of our residents. In view of the above, Reading Borough Council would not want to see the removal of significant protected trees in the Borough unless their removal was considered essential for health and safety reasons.

You have applied to fell a linear group of pollarded Limes. Pollarded Limes are a common and much valued feature of Reading Borough's tree cover. The pollard trees within Group 1 provide a sense of landscape continuity which extends from the avenue of larger pollards planted either side of Derby Road. Collectively the trees are prominent local landscape features.

The trees within Group 1 are small, low level pollards and although planted close together, the size and density of the trees will not have changed to any great extent since the Tree Preservation Order was served in 2003. Any identified 'crowding' of the soft landscaped area around Group 1 can be alleviated by re-pollarding the Limes and thinning out the adjacent holly and shrubs. The removal of protected trees to achieve this

aim is unacceptable in principle due to the harm this would cause to the amenity of the site.

I have also taken the opportunity to view the Western Red Cedar (T7). This is a triple stem specimen tree in good health with the potential for a long life expectancy. As a large specimen tree located opposite the site entrance the tree makes a notable contribution to the amenity provided by the mature forest - style trees in the local area. With regards to the size of the tree, I have noted that it is located on the far side of the access drive around 8m from the property. The tree's canopy is not unacceptably low nor is it near enough to touch the roof of Mander Court in high winds.

The Borough Council will not usually permit otherwise healthy trees to be removed to alleviate shading, leaf drop, bird droppings or falling of other small scale debris as these issues are an inevitable consequence of living close to mature trees. Although an accepted inconvenience, it is important not to overlook the wider acknowledged benefits to the health and wellbeing of residents living in urban areas where they have established mature tree cover. Permitting an otherwise healthy and significant protected tree to be removed due to the size or leaf drop is not appropriate arboricultural management and would set an unacceptable precedent for similar applications in the future.

In view of the above considerations your application to fell G1 (Limes) and T7 (Western Red Cedar) is refused.

I can advise you that the Borough Council would be minded to grant consent for you to pollard the Lime trees with hand tools taking any new growth back to the previous pruning point and taking care not to damage the pollard knuckle should you wish to submit a new application for this revised work specification.

I can confirm that an application to fell T5 (Monterey Cypress) is not required for the following reason(s):

- The tree is dead / dangerous

Under Section 206(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a landowner is under a duty to replace a tree which is removed because it is dead or dangerous. The duty on the landowner is to plant another tree of an appropriate size and species at the same place as soon as he or she reasonably can.

In this case the Council would expect a replacement tree of a minimum 'standard' size (2.75-3m high) to be planted at the front of Mander Court in the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of felling.

If you feel that the duty to replant should be dispensed with in this case, please write to the Council within 28 days of the date of this letter with justification for the request.

If you wish to appeal against the Council's refusal of consent to fell G1 (Limes) and T7 (Western Red Cedar), 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