

Mr and Mrs Hancock
Quarry House
3 Mapledene
Caversham
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 7DQ

Alison Bell
Head of Environment &
Neighbourhood Services

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

Our Ref: 161348/TPO
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 374294
Email: sarah.duckworth@reading.gov.uk

3rd August 2016

Your contact is:

Sarah Duckworth, Planning and Building Control

Dear Mr and Mrs Hancock,

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TWO HORNBEAM WITHIN THE REAR GARDEN OF QUARRY HOUSE AND PROTECTED WITHIN GROUP 2 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER 8/05.

Thank you for your application of 18th July 2016.

Further to my visit on 21st July 2016, I can confirm that the work you have applied for - to reduce Hornbeam 1 by approximately 8m to approximately 6m above ground level (where the tree splits in two) and crown thin by up to 30% and to thin Hornbeam 2 by up to 30% has been refused.

As we discussed at our meeting, the reduction of tree 1 as proposed would create a large cross section wound at 6m effectively 'topping' the tree and exposing the heartwood. Such pruning cuts are very weak at resisting the onset of decay. The remaining side branch would be over-extended and eventually undermined by new exposure to wind loading following the removal of the upper canopy and the inevitable progress of decay in the trunk.

The proposed 30% thin to both trees (in particular for T1 following such a heavy reduction) would impact on the health and vitality of the tree with very little tangible benefit to address the issues you raised regarding the trees, in particular in relation to the shading the trees cause to your garden. In view of the above concerns your application has been refused.

The Borough Council would not usually permit an otherwise healthy tree to be reduced outside of for essential health and safety reasons. However, I have noted that these two trees are crowded by the adjacent trees and as such have an asymmetrical canopy growing towards the property. One of the trees also has a wound on the main stem caused by a historic branch failure and a new wall has been constructed near the base which will have had some impact on the trees' roots (see Informative 4).

In order to reduce the end weight of the trees, the Borough Council has hereby approved lesser works to improve the structural condition of the trees and which, it is hoped, will go some way to addressing the shade issues you are experiencing.

I can confirm that the Borough Council approves the following work to be undertaken to the tree subject to the stated conditions.

Approved works:

- 2x Hornbeam - Reduce the canopies of two trees by up to 2m using suitable pruning points.

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 canopy reduction shall be undertaken in mid-late Summer (July - September) when the tree's energy reserves are at their peak or during the Winter months of December - January during the period of dormancy.

Reason: Taking into account the tree's phenological cycle and in order to avoid any unnecessary detriment to the tree as a result of the pruning work.

Informatives

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

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 030 6000

3. In accordance with regulation 14(b) (Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012) you do not need to obtain the consent of the Borough Council in order to remove dead branches from a living tree which is subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

4. Please be aware that in the Secretary of State's view, cutting roots is also a prohibited activity under the Tree Preservation Order and requires the authority's consent. In view of this any excavation within the rooting areas of protected trees (such as has been undertaken to build the retaining wall) and which requires the severing or removal of tree roots of whatever size would require an application to be made to the Borough Council.

If you wish to appeal against any of the conditions attached to this consent or against the Council's refusal of works to reduce one Hornbeam and crown thin both Hornbeam, 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 suffer any loss or damage as a result of the 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
Consultant Assistant Natural Environment Officer