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Mrs H Williams
Heights Tree Care
Mayfield
Gallowstree Common
RG4 9DJ

Our Ref: 231827/TPO
Your Ref:

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

8 April 2024

Your contact is: Sarah Hanson, Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mrs Williams

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES AT 1 WESTONBIRT DRIVE, READING - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 98/05.

Thank you for your application of 18 December 2023, regarding the above, with accompanying 'Duty of Care Report' (no date or ref).

As you are aware, following receipt of your location plan on 14 February 2024, I visited on 29 February but was unfortunately unable to identify all the trees for which approval was required, as advised in my email of the same date. As you / Laurence were unable to clarify matters from my email and photographs, I met with Laurence on 19 March 2024 to discuss the works. On 8 April, you subsequently supplied a photograph of one of the Ash trees (thought to be 558) in leaf, as Laurence advised he would do when we met.

I can confirm that the proposed works, as detailed in the 'Duty of Care Report', are approved subject to the conditions below and with reference to the annotated photographs attached, but with the following amendments, as discussed on site:

- 578 Ash - reduce height to fork above the point where the tree crosses with 579 Maple; reduce branch overhanging rear garden to growing point just past the elbow,
- 579 Maple - reduce height by 2-3m following reduction of 578 Ash,
- 580 Maple - reduce by a max of 1m if required (see comments below).

Please specifically note condition 3 for the works to 578 & 579.

Your application originally included the felling of 578 Ash, but I questioned the impact of this on the Maple given that they are crossing/rubbing, and will have been for some time,

and the extent of join is unknown. We therefore agreed, for now at least, to amend the application to a reduction of the Ash and a subsequent reduction of the Maple to mitigate against its greater exposure following the Ash reduction.

In relation to the adjacent Maple, taken to be 580 on the report (not noted on the location plan), we noted probable squirrel damage when viewing the tree from the road. As this one-sided tree is growing all towards the garden, we agreed that a reduction would be acceptable, subject to a closer inspection of the extent of the squirrel damage confirming that this is required.

The intention to remove dead wood and sever Ivy is noted. The latter should be done with care to ensure damage to the tree bark is avoided.

The tree works within the report include the felling of five trees (dead: elm stem leaning on 523 Yew, 542 Elm, 566 Larch, and live: 558 Ash, 561 Ash, 565 Ash). To maintain tree coverage, which is important in view of the aims of the Council's adopted Tree Strategy, condition 3 is attached below to require replacements for those live trees removed. In relation to the dead trees, we are unable to require a replacement due to the type of TPO but I would encourage replacement planting for the same reason.

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. The approved canopy reductions to 578 Ash and 579 Maple shall be undertaken in mid-late Summer (July - September) 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 tree's phenological cycle and in order to avoid any unnecessary detriment to the tree as a result of the pruning work.

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. Following the felling of the three Ash trees authorised by this consent, three native or naturalised broadleaf trees of a minimum 4-6cm girth and 1.2m in height (at time of planting) shall be planted within the curtilage of 1 Westonbirt Drive during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the tree, whichever is soonest. The species shall be agreed with the Natural Environment Team prior to purchase and planting.

Planting should be carried out in accordance with clause 10 (Planting) of BS 8545:2014 'Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations'

Should the replacement tree be removed, die or become severely damaged or seriously diseased, all within 5 years of planting, it shall be replaced by a tree of a similar size and species to that originally planted. Modifications to the requirements of this condition must be agreed in writing with Reading Borough Council Natural Environment Team.

PLEASE NOTE: The requirement to replant is the responsibility of the tree owner even if the application was submitted by another person.

Reason: To retain the present visual amenity value of the area and ensure continuity of tree coverage.

6. 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. You are advised that, in accordance with Part 4, 17 (4) of The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012, this decision is valid for one pruning operation (as per the approved specifications) to be undertaken within two years from the date of this notice, after which the consent lapses and a new application will be required.

2. Removal of dead or dangerous wood: This does not require the formal consent of the Council. However written notice is encouraged, 5 working days in advance of removing dead wood in order that we are aware of such works. 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' or in any other case, at least five working days prior to the date on which the works are to be commenced.

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. Removal of any dead or dangerous protected tree: This does not require the formal consent of the Council. However you are required to give 5 days notice of the work where it is not an emergency, to allow the Council to agree that the proposed works are exempt from requiring consent. The exception is where works are 'urgently necessary to remove an immediate risk of serious harm', in which case you are required to give notice to the Council 'as soon as practicable after the works become necessary'.

5. Prior to the severing of well-established Ivy at the base of the tree, it would be prudent to carry out an assessment of whether any of the stems of the Ivy are forming a natural brace above a suspected bark-included union

If you wish to appeal 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:

Trees and Hedges
Room 3A Eagle Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Telephone: 0303 444 5000

E-mail it to: treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Website: [Tree Preservation Orders and trees in conservation areas - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas)

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. Mr & Mrs Lowry, 1 Westonbirt Drive