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Miss L Smith  
Ground Control Ltd  
Kingfisher House  
Radford Way  
Billericay  
CM12 0EQ

Our Ref: 240191/TPO  
Your Ref:

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

30 April 2024

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

Dear Miss Smith

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE LIME TREE AT TESCO, PORTMAN ROAD, READING (REAR OF 60 CHESTER STREET) - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 46/02.**

Thank you for your application of 13 February 2024, regarding the above.

Your application originally sought approval for the following and was accompanied by an annotated photograph indicating the height and lateral reduction:

- Tree crown to be reduced by 2 metres.

I understand that the application was prompted by concern from the resident at 60 Chester Street.

On 12 April 2024, I viewed the tree from the Tesco car park to the east and visited 60 Chester Street with my colleague Andrei Nazare to speak to the resident about his concerns.

In terms of a lateral reduction, it was apparent that a reduction of branches growing west (over the garden of 60 Chester Street) would be reasonable, as would a reduction to the east side to provide clearance from the building. However, a reduction of the north and south sides of the crown would appear both unnecessary, not achieve any benefit and in fact more likely to result in a disbenefit for the resident in making the unattractive western façade of the Tesco building more visible.

In relation to the proposed height reduction, we queried with the resident what benefit this would provide given that the height of the sun at the time of our visit (10am) was almost above the height of the tree and given other trees in the line and the building

itself. The resident advised that it would make a difference to sunlight into his garden.

Previous applications have sought a reduction in height of the Lime trees and have been resisted. The group of Lime trees provide a significant landscape feature of high amenity value and is located within Battle ward - one of the two lowest canopy cover wards in the borough, falling significantly below the target 12% canopy cover (currently at 7.4%). Any assessment of the proposed works therefore needs to be mindful of the importance of the trees, previous decisions, any unwelcome precedents that might be set if the proposed height reduction was approved and assess whether the benefits of the work were wholly demonstrated.

We have considered carefully whether a reduction in height would make a significant difference and it is difficult to appreciate how it would. We visited on 12 April when day length is only at about half its maximum (21 June). At 10am the sun was already past the top of the tree and most of the garden was receiving direct sunlight. Even at this point in the year, it is clear that at least from 10am onwards the tip of the tree does not block direct sunlight into some of the garden.

In wintertime, the sun will be lower on the sky in the morning. However, the sun will also rise more towards the South, hence even at sunrise time it appears that the tree may not be between the garden and the sun. In addition, during the winter months, the tree is not in leaf - light will easily pass through the crown, especially through the top-most 2m of it.

We've looked carefully at sunrise and sunset positions as well as the sun position and angle in the sky in relation to the garden throughout the year (21 Dec, 21 Jan, 21 Feb, 21 March, 12 April, 21 April, 21 May & 21 June). This shows that the tree effectively does not block the sun during the winter months and it just barely blocks it up until 10am during the summer months. This would not apply to the end of the rear garden of 60 Chester St, which will probably be shaded until the afternoon, regardless of whether the 2m height reduction is carried out or not due to its proximity to the tree.

I emailed you on 15 April to seek clarity on the directional reduction (as above) and on how a 2m reduction of height to this specific tree only was determined as being sufficient to make a difference to the resident given the sun's orientation, angle throughout the year, other adjacent trees and shading of the house itself? You agreed in your email of 25 April that the lateral direction of only east & west was reasonable and that a height reduction of 2m would be ineffective; with any greater reduction likely to damage the structure and shape of the tree. Your email of 30 April confirmed amendment of your application to only the east-west lateral reduction, hence omitting the north-south reduction and the height reduction.

I can confirm that the following proposed works, as detailed in your application (as amended), are approved subject to the conditions below:

- 1 No. Lime rear of 60 Chester Street - lateral reduction on west side back to the rear boundary of 60 Chester Street and lateral reduction on east side to provide 2m clearance from the Tesco building.

## 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

## 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. 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

5. 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 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](mailto:treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

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. Shaun Kitchener, Tesco  
Mr Wilkinson, 60 Chester Street