



Dr C Policarpo Garcia
9 Oak Grove
Emmer Green
Reading
RG4 8AW

Emma Gee
Acting Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Our Ref: PL/24/1605
Your Ref:

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

18 February 2025

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Dr Policarpo Garcia

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE OAK TREE AT 9 OAK GROVE, READING - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 91/09.

Thank you for your application 29 November 2024 regarding the above. I apologise for the delay in processing the application.

Further to my visit on 7 February 2025 I have the following comments:

We discussed the current condition of the tree, and I explained that the tree appeared to be under stress; shown by the photos submitted in your application from when the tree was in leaf. The crown density and dieback indicate the tree is not in optimum health hence any pruning needs to be carefully considered to minimise the detrimental impact on the tree's health.

Your application sought permission to reduce the crown on the property side and over the remaining crown (to retain a natural crown shape), in addition to crown lifting to 4.5m. Removal of major dead wood was also noted.

As discussed, pruning to provide further clearance from yours and your neighbour's property is appreciated, as included in the approved works below. However, given the tree's condition, it is not advisable to remove further foliage by reducing the crown elsewhere, particularly as this is only for aesthetic reasons. As such a reduction of the remaining crown by 1m (as per the application) is refused.

In relation to the proposed crown lifting, the height proposed (4.5m) is appreciated where branches are over the driveway to provide clearance for vehicles, however, given the

above concerns about the tree's health we agreed to limit the crown lifting to a lower height over the grass area to ensure clearance above head height.

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

- T1 Oak - reduce the crown on the property side by 1.25-1.5m (from the outer extremity); crown lift to 4.5m above ground level over the driveway and approx. 3m over the grass area (to the height of small conifer on rear boundary), removing epicormic (from the main trunk), secondary and tertiary growth only.



Only side growing towards properties to be reduced (N.B. red outline is NOT indicative of the amount of reduction but is ONLY to confirm branches to be reduced).

Red arrow indicates conifer referred to in the crown lifting specification.

Intended removal of major dead wood is noted.

As discussed, it was noted that the grass area had been used for a vehicle recently. You explained that this was only temporary and limited due to the current skip on the driveway. As I advised, driving on the grass area causes compaction of the ground, which can occur after only one use. This compaction reduces water penetration into the ground and gaseous exchange between the air and soil - all important for a healthy rooting environment and root survival. The condition of the tree may be as a result of the development of Oak Grove, as impact on tree health can take years to show. Any actions that compound the impact should be avoided and ideally positive action taken to improve the health of the tree. As explained, the best and easiest action you could take would be to apply mulch to an area around the tree (50-75mm deep; not touching the trunk itself) -

to the edge of the canopy is preferable (where feasible) but otherwise as much as you would be happy with. The breakdown of the mulch releases nutrients into the soil, improves the soil conditions for root survival and growth and helps to maintain soil moisture. The added benefit would be to limit compaction should that area need to be used temporarily for vehicles in the future. I understand that the grass area around the tree is primarily owned by you, but also has a small part is owned by your neighbour. It would be good to work with them on this matter.

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. 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. 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

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 any of the conditions attached to the consented work or against the refused work, 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/government/topics/trees-and-landscapes/tree-preservation-orders)

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 Hanson

Sarah Hanson
Natural Environment Officer