



Emma Gee
Acting Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

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

Mrs H Klarner
Property Risk Inspection Ltd
2 The Courtyards, Phoenix Square
Severalls Business Park
Wyncolls Road
Colchester
CO4 9PE

Our Ref: PL/25/0060
Your Ref:

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

26 March 2025

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

Dear Mrs Klarner

RE: PROPOSED FELLING OF THREE HORSE CHESTNUT AND ONE BEECH TREE AT 18 ST PETERS HILL, READING - PART OF G1 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 127/08.

Thank you for your application of 13 January 2025 regarding the above.

Your application is supported by the following documents:

Arboricultural Assessment Report dated 8/3/23
Site Plan (Appendix 2 of the Arb report)
Statement of Reasons for Tree Preservation Order Application to fell
Engineer Appraisal Report ref 9660381 dated 11/1/25
Site Investigation Factual Report dated 22/12/22
Crack & Level Monitoring results dated 29/11/24 (covering period 15/02/23- 29/11/24)
Subsidence of Low-Rise Buildings A Property Risk Case Study

As you are aware, I visited the property on 28 January 2025, with our consultant engineer Tim Pither of Subtilis Consulting. Further to that, my letter of 28 February 2025 (attached for ease of reference) provided our consideration of the findings (on site and within the reports submitted). It was acknowledged in this letter that there is the potential for the trees in question to cause damage to the property given their heights and distance from the building, and the soil analysis (from the single trial put) indicates that volume change due to variations in the moisture content is possible and such changes can result in damage to buildings. However, the remainder of the letter highlighted issues with the findings and reports, the conclusion being:

It is considered that there is insufficient evidence to confirm an influence of the trees to the extension, based on;

- No foundation depth of the extension being recorded (or presence of a basement), no ground conditions being recorded and no roots being recorded under this.*
- Confirmation that all drainage repairs have been completed, including under the footprint of the extension*
- No confirmation of the mechanism of movement to the extension.*
- No confirmation that other causes (i.e. change in loading from the roof conversion for example) have been ruled out.*

The evidence provided is considered to be insufficient to justify the removal of the trees as recommended.

My letter emphasised that it is in the interest of all parties to ensure that the cause of the damaged is properly established such that remedial action is appropriate and provides a resolution for the householder.

The end of the letter stated:

*If further investigations, as suggested, are to take place, and particularly if these will take time, I would suggest withdrawal of the current application and re-submission when you consider that the above concerns have been addressed.
Please let me know how you wish to proceed.*

Your response, within your email of 6 March 2025, was:

Having now referred this back to the engineer, he has advised as follows:

“I have read and considered the report and the comments are reasonable.

We do not think that further investigations are warranted at this time based on the results of the monitoring to date”.

Therefore, we now ask that you make your decision based on the information you have to date.

In my response email of the same date, I stated that ‘*I note that your engineer agrees with the content of our letter and won’t be doing any further investigations*’ and, as a result, my later email of 18 March advised that withdrawal of the application was an option open to you - this was not forthcoming.

In conclusion, with reference to the content of my letter of 28 February, summarised within this letter, the proposed felling of the three Horse chestnut and one Beech tree is refused.

If further investigations are carried out with a view to submit a new application in the future, I would suggest that DNA testing may be appropriate given the current submissions implicate certain Horse chestnut and not others.

If you wish to appeal against the Council's decision on this matter, 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-woodland/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

C.c. Mr Chaplin, owner of Flats 2 & 4, 18 St Peters Hill