



Mrs V Harrison
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Emma Gee
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Our Ref: PL/24/1598
Your Ref:

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

26 March 2025

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mrs Harrison

RE: PROPOSED FELLING OF ONE OAK AND ONE CHERRY AT 24 RUSSET GLADE - T7 & T8 RESPECTIVELY OF TREE PRESERVATION 20/02 AND PROPOSED 30% REDUCTION OF ONE OAK ON LAND TO THE REAR OF 22 RUSSET GLADE - PART OF W1 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 30/02.

Thank you for your application of 28 November 2024 regarding the above. As you are aware, initially the Oak on land to the rear was included in a separate tree works application, however as the same evidence was submitted for both and the claimant was the same, we agreed to consider all proposed tree works under one application.

The application is submitted on behalf of the insurers and loss adjusters for 22 Russet Glade.

You have submitted the following in support of your application:

Addendum Arboricultural Report from Crawford dated 26.11.24
Revised MWA Arboricultural Report Rev dated 03.02.24
Crawford Technical Report on Subsidence Claim dated 02.04.19
CET Site Investigation Factual Report dated 13.06.19
CET Site Investigation Report (DNA Testing investigations) 14.06.24
EPSL Root Identification Report dated 17.06.24
Knight Level Monitoring Results from 24.04.19 - 13.09.22
Forest Research Oak DNA Results 27.06.24
MWA ROOT DNA FINGERPRINTING TEST REPORT (22 Russet Glade) dated 04.07.24

It should be noted that several iterations of the Addendum Arboriculture Report from Crawford & Co have been provided, the final version being provided on 19 March 2025 -

this final version (and others preceding that) did not have revision dates or references hence the date of receipt is the only way to distinguish the final version from others. The original versions included internal and external photographs and crack monitoring results that did not relate to 22 Russet Glade. The final version includes photographs of 22 Russet Glade, albeit these have not been updated since the 2019 report.

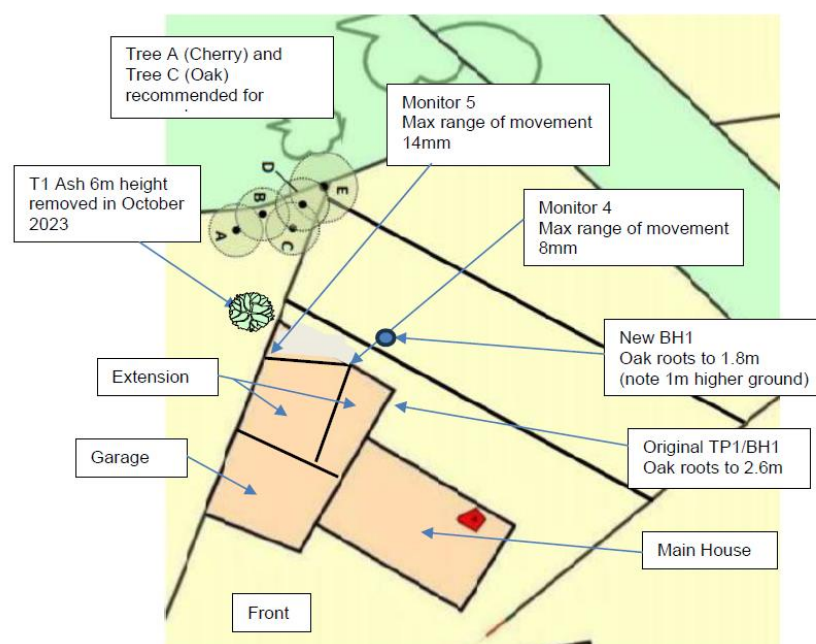
This application follows two applications submitted in 2020 (ref 201016 & 201017) which were never validated due to the lack of DNA analysis to confirm implication of certain Oak trees over others. Largely the same reports have been resubmitted, some with amendments. The revisions to the pre-existing reports are not easy to follow as it has not highlighted within the reports where the changes have been made.

For clarity, T7 Oak & T8 Cherry of TPO 20/02 are TG2 Oak (C) and Cherry (A) respectively of MWA / Crawco Arb Report, and W1 Oak of TPO 30/02 is T2 of MWA / Crawco Arb Report.

My acknowledgement email of 2 December 2024 advised that T4 Beech of TPO 20/02 (your T6) and T6 Oak of TPO 20/02 (your T3?) were given permission to be felled in 2023 (ref 230689). The householder has subsequently confirmed that these were felled in 2023. Neither the MWA Arb Report nor Crawfords Addendum Arb report includes this, despite both post-dating this felling. The latter is an update insofar as it includes a new root analysis, comment on the DNA results and confirms removal of G1 Cypress in January 2020 and T1 Ash removal in October 2023.

Discussion

Given the different plan representations and new information provided with this application, the following presents a summary of the current situation:



The original trial pit (2019) was located away from where the main movement was being recorded to the extension. The borehole undertaken in June 2024 was at 1.6m distance from the rear elevation and was approx. 1m above the ground level of the property. No roots were recovered below 1.8m suggesting that roots were no more than 800mm below foundation level, albeit the 'remoteness' of this BH within the raised, grass area, does not demonstrate the presence of roots under the foundations. Whilst no trial pit / borehole has been undertaken to the rear left-hand corner of the extension where the greatest movement is being recorded, the evidence of Oak tree roots to the rear of the building and to a depth of 2.6m below the rear right-hand corner (ref CET's 2019 report) suggests an influence of the Oak tree C on the extension.

You confirmed that Level Monitoring ceased after the readings taken 13/09/22, that being after the removal of G1 Cypress but before the removal of the 6m high T1 Ash which was located closest to the area with maximum movement. Point 5 located to the rear left-hand corner of the extension showed continual seasonal movement. The range of seasonal movement recorded was a maximum of around 14mm. Point 4 located adjacent to the rear right-hand corner of the extension showed seasonal movement with a maximum range of around 8mm. Seasonal movement continued despite the removal of the TG1 Cypress in January 2020. It would have been beneficial to continue to monitor the property following removal of the T1 Ash tree to assess the influence of T1 on the property.

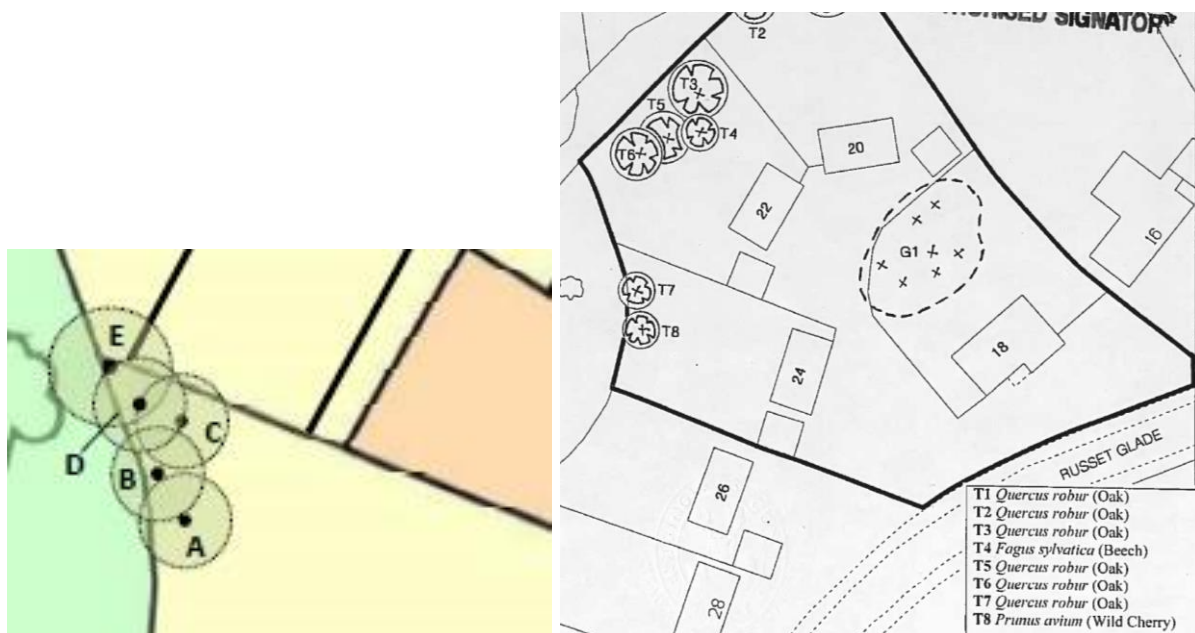
Crack Monitoring has not been updated and no new photos included but am advised by the householder that the cracks observed in 2019 are now greater. Our 2019 observations noted that externally, only minor cracking damage was recorded along the juncture between the extension and main house and extension and original garage. The junction between the main house and rear extension is a rigid mortar joint and given the difference in foundation forms and depths, a flexible filler should be considered. The flexible filler along the juncture between the garage and rear extension has performed better but has opened up slightly. No cracking damage was recorded to the brickwork externally which is unusual in tree root related clay shrinkage damage.

Whilst the presence of roots, a shrinkable clay and a seasonal pattern of movement have been recorded to the rear section of the extension, the level of damage both internally and externally would be considered as very minor.

The pattern of damage is considered consistent with differential movement between the differing founded sections of the property. However, the influence of tree roots on the clay subsoil below foundation level cannot be ruled out particularly given the level of seasonal movement recorded during the level monitoring exercise. This movement was primarily related to the rear left-hand corner of the extension where very little damage exists. The absence of significant seasonal movement to the right-hand side of the rear extension during the level monitoring exercise suggests that the vegetation is not influencing this section of the extension. This suggests that the cracking damage internally above the hallway door, the cracking along the juncture between the main house and extension and any movement to the sliding patio doors are not related to tree root related clay shrinkage subsidence.

As per my acknowledgement email, I note from Crawfords Addendum Arb report that the

root analysis carried out in June 2024 only implicates Quercus (Oak), as did the 2019 report. In addition, ROOT DNA FINGERPRINTING TEST REPORT (outlining the DNA result from FC) stated that: *'Trees T2, T3, T5, T7, T10, TG2 T2 and TG2 B & D generated different DNA fingerprints and did not match the roots'*. Reference to TG2 A (Cherry) is omitted, I assume, due to no Prunus roots being found. As such I sought clarity on why the felling of a Cherry is included in your application. You responded in your email of 29 January 2025 that: *'The Cherry is to be included given its species, size, and proximity. As per Cutler, D.F. and I.B.K. Richardson, (1989) further confirmed by Mercer, Reeves & O'Callaghan (2011) in shrinkable clay soils, Cherry species are capable of causing subsidence damage at distances up to 11m, with 75% of cases occurring where the tree was within 6m and 90% of cases occurring where the tree was within 7.5m'*. I note that the distance of this tree to the building is not provided; with both arb reports only giving an average distance for five of the trees, with the Cherry (A) / T8 being the furthest away in a south-west direction:



In relation to the ROOT DNA FINGERPRINTING TEST REPORT (outlining the DNA result from FC), this confirmed that *'Tree TG2 C [Oak] generated the same DNA fingerprint as the roots and so can be considered to be the source of the roots'* but that (as above), T2 Oak did not match the roots.

Conclusion

Soil analysis classifies the clay soil as having a medium to high (original TP/BH1) and medium (BH2) potential for volume change. Soils of this classification can suffer significant volume change due to variations in the moisture content and such changes can result in damage to buildings bearing on such a clay subsoil. It is therefore acknowledged that there is potential for tree related subsidence.

The results of level monitoring up until July 2020 showed seasonal movement recorded predominantly to the rear left corner of the extension. Upward movement was recorded

during the (wetter) winter periods and downward movement recorded during the drier summer months. The range of seasonal movement recorded was a maximum of around 10mm. In relation to the updated results, these indicate that Point 5 (located to the rear left-hand corner of the extension) showed continual seasonal movement; the range of seasonal movement recorded being a maximum of around 14mm. Point 4, located adjacent to the rear right-hand corner of the extension, showed seasonal movement with a maximum range of around 8mm.

Root analysis confirmed the presence of Quercus (Oak) roots and that Tree TG2 C [Oak] generated the same DNA fingerprint as the roots and so can be considered to be the source of the roots. No Prunus (Cherry) roots were found, hence were not implicated in the DNA results, nor did the DNA results implicate T2 Oak.

In view of the evidence above, tree related subsidence is agreed, however it is only considered that the reports demonstrate T7 Oak of TPO 20/02 / TG2 Oak (C) of MWA / Crawco Arb Report as being a contributory factor.

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

- T7 Oak of TPO 20/02 / TG2 Oak (C) of MWA / Crawco Arb Report - fell

The following proposed works are **refused**:

- T8 Cherry of TPO 20/02 / Cherry (A) of MWA / Crawco Arb Report - fell
- W1 Oak of TPO 30/02 / T2 of MWA / Crawco Arb Report - 30% reduction; reducing height from 18.5m to 12m and reducing crown spread from 22m to 15m

It is suggested that level monitoring would be prudent in case of future tree works applications to demonstrate the impact of tree removals. It is also acknowledged that DNA analysis may show different results if additional boreholes are implemented.

Any future application should include updates of all reports to demonstrate the situation at the time of (or as close to) submission. All reports should be checked for accuracy, have revision references and dates, and accurate, scalable plans would also be beneficial. It is unreasonable to expect the LPA to spend time checking reports for inconsistencies and errors. Clearer, up-to-date and accurate reports will make future applications progress more smoothly.

As you will appreciate, it is to the benefit of all parties to clearly establish the cause of building damage to ensure that measures taken resolve the issues. I am aware of the history of the land at Russet Glade, that being a former clay pit, most likely linked to the adjacent Emmer Green tile and brick works. The incidences of subsidence in this road appear disproportionately high compared to surrounding roads. It would be beneficial to ensure that ground investigations consider the potential for other causes and consider the fact that properties could be prone to subsidence regardless of the presence of trees. This is important to consider in view of the multiple benefits that trees provide, which are lost from their felling, and in view of the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019

and second adopted Tree Strategy in 2021, one aim of which is to increase canopy cover in the borough. Alternatives to felling are therefore encouraged that allow the retention of trees, particularly where property damage and repair are likely anyway.

I note a non-TPO Sycamore (not implicated by root ID) and Oak (not implicated by DNA results) are proposed for removal and assume you will make it clear to the tree owner at No. 24 that these are not implicated, i.e. not 'require' them to fell these at this point in time.

Please note, for information, that the land to the rear of 22 Russet Glade is under a different land title, separate to the gardens of Tower Close. Identification of the owner of this land if works to T2 Oak is pursued in the future would be useful.

Conditions to the consented works

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. Following the felling of the tree authorised by this consent, one native or naturalised species of a minimum 10-12cm girth and 2.75m high (at the time of planting) shall be planted within the rear garden of 24 Russet Glade 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 Council prior to purchase and planting and should consider NHBC guidance on water demand and distance from buildings.

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.

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 from a live tree: This does not require the formal consent of the Council. However you are encouraged to give 5 working days in advance of removing dead wood. 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'.

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. 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.

5. Trees not considered to be protected by the current Tree Preservation Orders: Work can be carried out to this tree without the formal consent from this Council.

If you wish to appeal against any of the conditions attached to the consented work or against the refusal of permission to fell one Cherry and one Oak (as identified), 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/trees-and-woodland-in-conservation-areas)

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.

Please ensure a copy of this letter is provided to 24 Russet Glade.

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 C Davies, Crawford & Co
Mr S Ashley, 22 Russet Glade