



Mr D White
White Knight Tree Care & Consultancy
5 Cressingham Road
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RG2 7RS

Emma Gee
Acting Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
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Our Ref: PL/24/1438
Your Ref:

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

26 March 2025

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr White

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TWO HONEY LOCUST TREES AT ABBOTS HOUSE, ABBEY STREET READING - T7 & T8 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 60/05.

Thank you for your application of 27 October 2024 regarding the above. You have sought permission for the following:

- Crown reduction to suitable pruning points in line with annotated photos, removing approximately 1-2m in branch length from the sides and 2-3m in height

Following my visit on 9 December 2024, my email to you of 12 December sought clarity on the reasons for the works, which are stated as: *'part of routine maintenance and to limit overhang over carpark whilst retaining a balanced crown'*. I queried this in view of the fact that a crown reduction of these trees (by 3m all round) was refused under application 221847, the decision letter stating:

'I note these 2 trees appear to have well balanced crowns and no arboricultural reason has been provided for their crown reduction. We do not consider nuisance such as leaf fall, honey dew or bird droppings as a valid reason to reduce a tree, as this will lead to significant tree or canopy cover loss throughout the Borough, harm to their amenity value and, in any case, it is unclear how an overall reduction would address the issue raised. As such the reduction of T7 and T8 Honey locust trees is not agreeable'.

Given the refusal in 2023, the proposed reduction would not be 'routine maintenance'.

I assume that the reference within the reason to 'limit the overhang over the car park' may relate to 'nuisance' concerns from users of that car park, however this is not clear.

You advised that the specification had been devised by another tree surgeon and that you had been employed to submit the application. As such you confirmed you would contact that tree surgeon to ask for a response to my query. Your email of 13 February confirmed that no response had been received from them.

Given the previous refusal in 2023, lack of clarity over reasons and lack of evidence to justify the proposed crown reductions, the work is refused.

If it is considered that lesser work would alleviate any concerns whilst not having a detrimental impact on the trees, your client may wish to consider submitting a new application for alternative works.

I note the replacement for T5 Plane has been planted, which is positive. At the time of my visit I noted that it has the almost full height bamboo stake left in place (as well as a proper stake) which is rubbing on the trunk and branches - removal would be prudent if it is still in place.

If you wish to appeal against the refusal of 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-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.

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