



Mr D Watts  
Goldleaf Treeworks  
Kiln Cottage  
Kiln Lane  
Binfield Heath  
Henley-on-Thames  
RG9 4EN

Emma Gee  
Executive Director for  
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Our Ref: PL/25/0363  
Your Ref:

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23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025

Your contact is:

Amy Daly: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr Watts

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 1NO. HORSE CHESTNUT, 2NO. BEECH, 1NO SYCAMORE AND 5NO. ASH TREES AT HIGH RIDGE, UPPER WARREN AVENUE, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 7ED - PART OF A2 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 319.**

Thank you for your application of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025, regarding the above.

Further to mine and my colleague, Sarah Hanson's, site meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025 with Mr Mitchla, I have the following comments:

A Sketch Plan, which you have submitted, identifies the trees which you are proposing work to, and labels them with 'T' numbers. The proposal was amended post submission to include the removal of two Ash, identified on site to be the removal of an Ash and a Sycamore at the entrance of the property, which do not have a 'T' number.

The escarpment at the rear of the property is a designated Major Landscape Feature in Reading Borough Council's Local Plan, recognising its value. The importance of preserving such areas is demonstrated within the Tree Strategy, the escarpment being a designated 'area with high treescape value'. The removal of multiple trees within this area would have a significant detrimental impact on the escarpment's character so needs to be carefully considered and justified.

In addition, the escarpment is a valuable wildlife habitat, hence where trees do need to be removed, retaining lying deadwood and performing monoliths, rather than completely removing trees to ground level, would be valuable to wildlife within the escarpment hence is encouraged.

Formal consent is not required to remove dead trees, or deadwood from trees. We have taken your application to be notice of the intention to remove one dead Beech tree (your T2) and this is agreed - as above, we encourage creation of a monolith. Under Section 206(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a landowner is under a duty to replace a tree which is removed because it is dead or dangerous. The duty on the landowner is to plant another tree of an appropriate size and species at the same place as soon as he or she reasonably can. In this case the Council would expect a replacement *Fagus sylvatica* (Common beech) tree of a minimum 6-8cm girth and 2.5m high to be planted on the escarpment, or within 5m of its northern edge, in the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of felling, whichever is soonest.

In relation to the Horse chestnut (your T1), the reason given for felling is that: *'This tree is too close to a lovely Scots Pine and is reaching for light and preventing lower growth on the Pine'*. We would not expect lower growth on the neighbouring Scot's Pine, given its species characteristics of lower limb loss as they mature; the majority of foliage being at the top portion of the tree which is above the height of the Horse chestnut. We also cannot accept obscuring the view as a justified reason for felling, as was cited by Mr Mitchla. **The proposed felling of the seemingly healthy Horse Chestnut is not justified and is therefore refused.**

**The felling of Ash trees; T4, T5, T6 are also refused.** Whilst it is appreciated that there are concerns surrounding Ash Dieback in the area, a proportionate response needs to be taken. It is not the most suitable time of year to assess the symptoms within the tree canopy. We note the presence of deadwood, however this alone isn't sufficient evidence to support felling due to Ash Dieback, particularly where the location of the trees do not pose a significant threat. A future application with sufficient evidence would be considered, preferably following re-assessment when in full leaf so the canopy condition can be properly assessed.

In relation to T7 Ash, this has evidently limited canopy and is close to, and leaning over, The Warren. The potential risk posed by this tree is deemed to be unacceptable hence felling is justified.

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

- T3 Beech - crown clean, i.e. removal of dead, dying, low vigour, crossing/rubbing branches (note Informative 5 below)
- T7 Ash at bottom of escarpment - Remove
- One Ash and one Sycamore at entrance off Upper Warren Avenue - Remove



T7 - Remove



Sycamore (left) and Ash (right) at entrance - Remove



T3 (left) and T2 (right) - Crown Clean and Remove

We await confirmation of replacement planting in accordance with condition 4 below and the 'duty to replant', as detailed above, in the 2025-2026 planting season. For clarity this totals 4 trees.

The unauthorised works and the associated replacement trees will be dealt with separately and the applicant will receive further correspondence in due course.

#### 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

4. Following the felling of the trees authorised by this consent, one *Pinus sylvestris* (Scots pine) of a minimum 1.5m in height shall be planted within the wooded escarpment or within 5m of its northern edge and one *Tilia cordata* (small-leaved Lime), and one *Betula pendula* (Silver birch) both of a minimum 10-12cm girth and 3m in height (at the time of planting) shall be planted along the same soft landscape strip near the entrance from which the Ash & Sycamore are located.

The trees shall all be planted during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the tree, whichever is soonest.

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.

5. Crown cleaning should not include the removal of fused natural braces (branches or stems), or the removal of entwining branches or rubbing branches (where they may be forming a natural brace) from the crown of a semi-mature to fully mature tree without carrying out an assessment of any junctions formed below such natural braces.

Reason: Removal of natural braces may lead to failure of weak unions.

### 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

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.

6. Removal of any dead or dangerous protected tree: This does not require the formal consent of the Council. However you are required to give 5 days notice of the work where it is not an emergency, to allow the Council to agree that the proposed works are exempt from requiring consent. The exception is where works are 'urgently necessary to remove an immediate risk of serious harm', in which case you are required to give notice to the Council 'as soon as practicable after the works become necessary'.

Once felling of a dead or dangerous tree has been carried out, the owner has a duty under Section 201(b) of the Town & Country Planning Act to replant another tree of an appropriate size and species in the same place as soon as they reasonable can. This replacement tree will be covered by the existing Tree Preservation Order. The new tree would be subject to the same requirements for a tree works application if you intend to carry out works upon it in the future.

If you wish to appeal against the refused works and/or 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)

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

*Amy Daly*

Assistant Natural Environment Officer

On Behalf of Sarah Hanson, Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Mr Mitchla, Upper Warren Avenue