



Mr L Simoes
LCS Ground Maintenance
43 Hadrian Crescent
Leighton Buzzard
Bedfordshire
LU7 4EH

Emma Gee
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Our Ref: PL/25/0229
Your Ref:

Direct: ☎01189 374294
Amy.daly@reading.gov.uk

30th April 2025

Your contact is:

Amy Daly: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr Simoes

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 2 NO. PLANE TREES, 3 NO. ORNAMENTAL PEAR TREES AND 11 NO. ACER TREES AT CAVERSHAM PLACE, RICHFIELD AVENUE, READING, RG1 8BY - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 19/10

Thank you for your application of 12th February 2025, regarding the above.

Your initial application sought approval for a 50% reduction of all the trees. You were advised in the acknowledgement email of 13th February that the application was not valid due to the wording of the pruning specification, and that such extensive works went against good arboricultural practice so would have to be fully justified.

An amended specification was submitted on 17th February 2025, seeking approval for the following:

Front of Caversham Place:

Trees height is roughly 17 meters tall, plan to pollard 11 meters from ground level and to aid in future routing re pollard every 3-5 years

Rear of Caversham Place:

Trees height is roughly 20 meters tall, plan to pollard 13 meters from ground level and to aid in future routing re pollard every 3-5 years

The reasons stated for the works were given as:

ALL 13 trees are extremely large and very close to the property, it is also over growing towards the road and covering street lights.

There is a concern for safety of the tree, branches falling and injuring residents or people passing by, we have had a branches fall of these trees and some being extremely large.

After some further email exchanges with Sarah Hanson, the reasons for the pruning were clarified as:

Main reason is the selected trees are beginning to outgrow it's space within the estate. Getting closer to main building. Some larger limbs which have failed before. Not allowing an any other smaller trees/shrubs/lawn to grow well.

The trees itself has not been inspected by an arboriculturalist but our qualified tree surgeon was on annual leave but he's back and looked at them. In terms of main reason for a pollard instead of a much lighter reduction is that even after these works the physical size would still outgrow its space.

Further to mine and my colleague, Sarah Hanson's, visit on 24th April 2025, I have the following comments:

It is noted that there are concerns regarding Health and Safety, specifically falling branches. It is recommended that trees should be professionally inspected, on a suitably regular basis, in order to identify any defects. In an email exchange between yourself and Sarah Hanson, on 27th February 2025, it was stated the trees had not been inspected by a Arboriculturalist, but a Tree Surgeon has 'looked at' them. A Tree Condition Survey would be of use to identify tree defects and justify tree work.

The concerns relating to the trees being in close proximity to the property and street lighting can be addressed through forms of lighter pruning than those specified in your application. This will aid in achieving the desired outcome and will not present a significant negative impact to the trees.

Your main reasoning for proposing pollarding, rather than a lighter reduction, is that the physical size of the trees would still outgrow their space. We do not regard this as an acceptable reason to perform such severe pollards to these trees. The proposed works would have a detrimental impact to tree health and amenity. It was evident that some of the trees on site have suboptimal health, hence they may not respond positively to a significant reduction which could cause their health to severely decline.

Whilst the size of the trees is appreciated, pollarding can encourage rapid regrowth and would require regular re-pollarding to meet with the aims of your application; thereafter confining their size, hence amenity value to a lesser amount. **The pollarding of trees; T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, and T7 at 11 meters above ground level is therefore refused. The pollarding of trees; T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13 at 13 meters above ground level, is also refused.**

However, lesser works have been identified to alleviate some concerns whilst not having a detrimental impact on the trees. This is listed below. This includes a reduction of T5 Acer due to a potential structural defect being noted (See Figure 12 below for reference), which justifies work to this tree. If arranging for a full condition survey of the trees, with reference to my advice above, it would be prudent to check T5 carefully.

Pruning of T14-17 (3no. Pear trees), were not included in your application originally. However, following your email exchange of 28th April 2025 with Sarah Hanson, they have been since been added to the application.

The removal of deadwood does not require formal consent. We have taken your application to be notice of the intention to remove the deadwood from all of the trees, although it is not mentioned in your application. It is recommended this is performed as deadwood is prone to falling from trees and presents a risk to residents and the public, about which you've expressed concerns.

You also do not require consent to crown lift trees to the statutory height requirements of 2.75m over a footpath and 5.5m over a road. Your application also serves as this notice. This work must follow good arboricultural practice and be the minimum necessary to achieve these heights. This applies to T1 Acer and T6 Acer at the current time.

I can confirm that the following works are approved subject to the conditions below and with reference to the annotated photographs provided:

- T2 Acer - Remove 1no. secondary branch (see Figure 1); crown lift to 5.5m through 360°, **not** including the removal of any main branches and leaving suitable growth points.
- T4 Acer - Prune to provide clearance from the lamppost, back to indicative previous reduction points (See Figure 2), leaving suitable growth points.
- T5 Acer - Reduce the radial crown spread and height by approx. 4-5m, as indicatively shown (see Figure 3 and Figure 4), leaving suitable growth points.
- T7 Plane - Prune to clear lamppost by 0.5m by removing/reducing minor growth only, including removal of 1no. secondary branch to source and 1no. minor branch below, to the source, which is in contact with the lighting column (See Figure 5). Crown lift over the road, by removing 3no. secondary branches to the source (See Figure 6 and Figure 7).
- T8 Plane - Crown lift to 3m above ground level, including the removal of 2no. lowest main limbs and 1no. stub (See Figure 8); prune to give 2m clearance from building, leaving suitable growth points.
- T9 Acer - Crown lift to 3m above ground level by removing minor growth only, including basal growth and epicormic growth from the main stem up to the crown break; remove the cluster of epicormic growth from the main branch (See Figure 9); prune to give 2m clearance from the building, leaving suitable growth points.
- T10 Acer - Crown lift to 3m above ground level, leaving suitable growth points; remove the hanging branch in the crown.
- T11 Acer - Crown lift to 3m above ground level; prune to give 2m clearance from building, leaving suitable growth points.
- T12 Acer - Crown lift to 3m above ground level, leaving suitable growth points.
- T13 Acer - Crown lift to 3m above ground level; prune to give 2m clearance from the building back to indicative previous pruning points (See Figure 10), leaving suitable growth points; remove 1no. lower, small diameter branch (See Figure 11).

- T14-T17 Pear - Crown lift to 3m above ground level through 360°, removing epicormic growth, removing/reducing secondary growth and horizontal growing main branches ONLY, leaving suitable growth points where possible.
Officer note: the upright growth form of these Pears means that removal of any diagonal / upright growing branches as part of the crown lifting would result in the removal of a portion of the canopy, impacting the trees' appearance. Hence the specification of removal of horizontal branches only.

No work was considered necessary to T3 Acer, other than the removal of dead wood.



Figure 1 (T2 Acer) - Indicative Branch Removal



Figure 2 (T4 Acer) - Indicative Previous Reduction Points



Figure 3 (T5 Acer) - Indicative Radial Crown Reduction



Figure 4 (T5 Acer) - Indicative Radial Crown Reduction

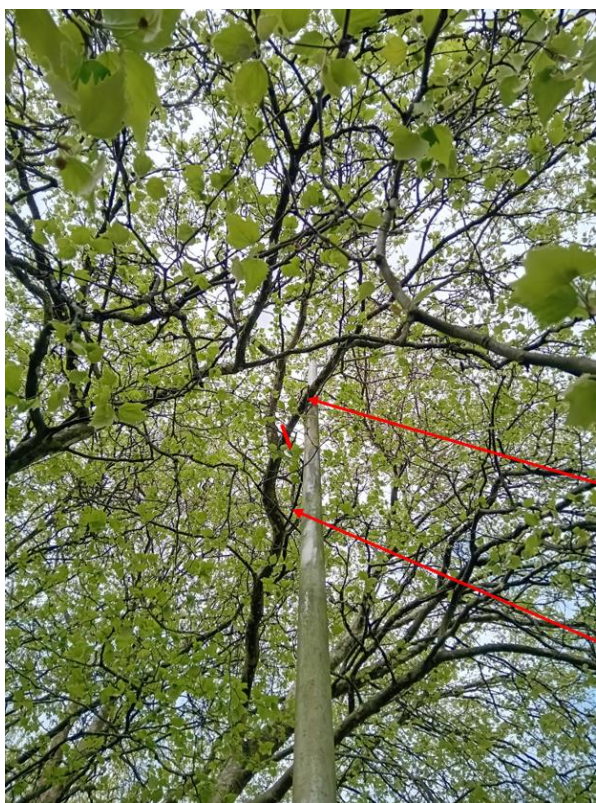


Figure 5 (T7 Plane) - Branch Removal for Lamppost Clearance

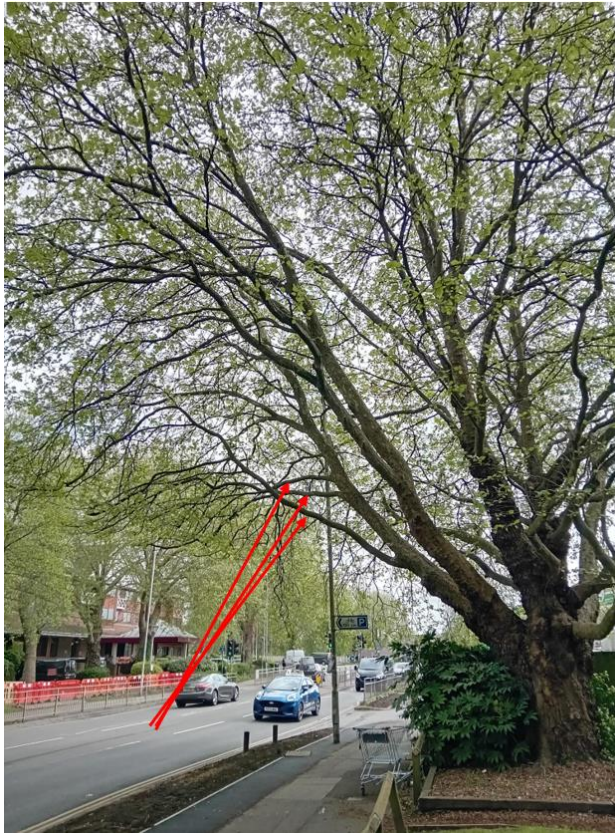


Figure 6 (T7 Plane) - Branch Removal for Crown Lift



Figure 7 (T7 Plane) - Branch Removal



Figure 8 (T8 Plane) - Branch Removal



Figure 9 (T9 Acer) -Epicormic Removal on Main Branch



Figure 10 (T13 Acer) -Previous Pruning Points



Figure 11 (T13 Acer) - Small Diameter Branch Removal



Figure 12 (T5 Acer) - Potential Structural Defect

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. The approved canopy reduction to T5 Acer shall only be undertaken in mid-late Summer (July - September) when the tree's energy reserves are at their height or during the Winter months of December - January during the period of dormancy.

Reason: Taking into account the tree's phenological cycle and in order to avoid any unnecessary detriment to the tree as a result of the pruning work.

4. 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. 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. 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.
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. Crown lifting of trees over the footpath and carriageway: If the clearance of vegetation overhanging the highway only involves the removal of branches to give a ground clearance to the statutory heights of 2.75m over the footpath and 5.5m over the road, this does not require formal consent from the Council. You are advised, however, to give notice to the Council of these intended works in order that they can be agreed.

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 wish to appeal against any of the refused works and/or the conditions attached to the consented works, 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/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas)

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