



Mr J Smith
Big Heart Tree Care
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Emma Gee
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Our Ref: PL/25/1044
Your Ref:

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1st August 2025

Your contact is:

Amy Daly: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr Smith

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 1NO ASH TREE AND 1NO. BIRCH TREE AT 134 CHILTERN ROAD, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 5JD - T8 AND T7 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 4/10

Thank you for your application of 22nd July 2025, regarding the above.

In relation to the Ash tree (T8), you have applied for the following:

‘Reduce the Southern side by 3 metres, the West side by 4 metres and the East side by 4 metres. The top of the West side is also slightly higher than the rest of the canopy and could be reduced by 3 metres to keep the tree uniform in shape.’

Further to mine and my colleague Sarah Hanson’s visit on 25th July 2025, I have the following comments:

The reasoning for the above works were given as: *‘branch failure’*.

It was discussed on site with Mr and Mrs Goff that there are concerns following the recent branch failure of the tree, which is situated adjacent to a frequently used footpath. It was explained to Mr and Mrs Goff that the recent hot and dry weather is likely to have been contributing factor of the branch failure. As the tree had not been thoroughly inspected, other defects which could have been factors that led to the branch failure were unknown. The true cause is difficult to determine, however we suspect the recent weather conditions have increased tree stress.

We had expressed that the extent of the proposed specification was not fully justified; with the reasons for the work being very brief. Whilst we recognise the setting of the tree

and that weight management of the extended branches would be appropriate, we could not justify removing the majority of the tree's foliage for the reason of a single secondary branch failure. The failure of one branch does not necessarily indicate the remainder of the tree is unsafe.

In order to justify such works, we recommended that a more thorough climbing inspection is undertaken to the tree to identify any defects that are not visible from the ground. It was also noted that there are several sizeable pruning wounds within the tree, it would be appropriate to inspect them and assess the extent of the decay present.

Sarah and I proposed an alternative pruning specification which mainly aimed to reduce the weight of the extended branches as well as providing clearance from the ground and overhead wires. It was explained that a lesser amount of pruning would still significantly reduce the weight of the branches yet poses a less detrimental impact to the health and amenity value of the tree.

Works to the Birch tree (T7) were also discussed on site which have been added to your application and are listed in the approved works below.

Following our visit, Sarah emailed Mr and Mrs Goff of 28th July 2025 to confirm the discussion which took place and the specification we have proposed. On 30th July 2025, Mrs Goff agreed to the pruning specification we had suggested and that the application could be formally amended to that specification.

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

T8 Ash

- Removal of basal growth (growing towards the road).
- East side, see Figure 1 - remove secondary upright branch touching the wire, back to source (red line); tip reduce branches by 1-1.5m to provide clearance from the wire and reduce the weight on the main branch (blue line); crown lift to 5.5m above ground level over the highway and 3-4m above ground level over the driveway to provide clearance and reduce the weight on the main branch (yellow lines).
- South side - tip reduce branches to provide 1-1.5m clearance from the wires (see Figure 2); crown lift by removing 3 secondary branches back to source (see Figure 3) and crown lift any remaining foliage to 5.5m above ground level over the highway.
- West side, see Figure 4 - reduce lowest branch back to growth point (red line); tip reduce branches in the mid crown (blue line) to meet with that of the upper crown to form a natural canopy shape.

T7 Birch

- Reduce branches growing towards the house to provide approximately 1-1.5m clearance; crown lift to approximately 2m above ground level (see Figure 5).



Figure 1 - T8 East Side Works



Figure 2 - T8 South Side Reduction from Wires



Figure 3 - T8 South Side Removal of 3no. Secondary Branches



Figure 4 - T8 West Side Works

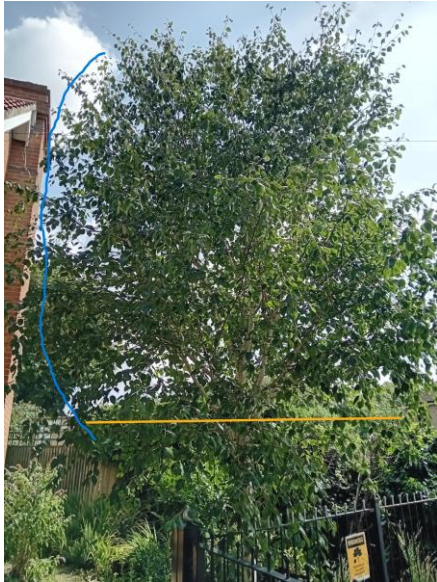


Figure 5 - T7 Birch Crown Lift (orange line); Reduce from House (blue line)

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. The approved canopy reduction to T8 Ash shall 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.

3. 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

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. 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 2.7m 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 wish to appeal against 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

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-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

C.c. Mr and Mrs Goff, Chiltern Road