



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

Emma Gee
Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Civic Centre, Reading, RG1 2LU
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Our Ref: PL/25/1345
Your Ref:

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18 November 2025

Your contact
is:

Sarah Hanson, Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr Watts

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE JAPANESE PAGODA TREE AT 30 CHAZEY ROAD, READING
- T2 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 24/06.**

Thank you for your application of 23 September 2025 regarding the above. Your application sought approval for the following:

- *Reduction of False Acacia by 1m all round and removing any deadwood.*

In my acknowledgement email of 23 September, I provided a copy of the TPO plan, advising that the tree was a Japanese Pagoda tree, requested the reasons for the proposed works and asked for contact details of the householder. Your response of the same dated advised that it was T2 False acacia. My response, again of the same date, advised that it would be T2 Japanese Pagoda tree and reiterated my request for the pruning reasons and householder details, which I chased on 3 October.

Your response email of 3 October advised that the reasons for the pruning were that '*the tree is a little out of shape and full of dead wood*'. My response of the same date requested that you elaborate on what you meant by '*a little out of shape*'. The proposal was for 1m reduction all over, hence not indicating any more is required in any particular place to balance / improve appearance, not that pruning just to make a tree look better (other than removal of dead wood) is necessarily acceptable. You advised in your email of 14 October that '*the weight of the branches is all dry one sided, other than one dead branch hanging over the driveway most of the work is to the road side*' and you provided this annotated photograph:



In response to my query that the above did not show an overall reduction, but focuses on one side, you stated that *'the photo doesn't show it correctly can we suggest a 1-2m reduction?'* My advice was that you could suggest whatever you feel is justified but it needs to be clear for us to assess in terms of amount and why that specific amount. I followed this up on 3 November advising that the proposed pruning was quite unclear, but it seemed that you might be proposing a 1-2m reduction on the road side only? I have not received a response.

We visited on 14 November and have the following comments:

The crown is reasonably balanced in the north-south direction, but east-west is biased to the west due to suppression by the adjacent Japanese pagoda tree (RBC tree at the front of No. 30). If pruning was undertaken, then focusing on the west side would make sense. However, the only reason you have given for any pruning is due to the tree being one sided. As this is a result of natural suppression by the adjacent tree, it is unclear why pruning is justified, i.e. no arboricultural reasons have been put forward. In addition, the extent of pruning is unclear (if not as per your application form) given the contrary written specification given and annotated photographs, which you advised did not show the proposals properly.

This species is rare in our Borough - I only know of 5 in the borough; 3 being close together in Chazey Road, which provide a high degree of amenity value to the street scene. With this species, it may be reasonable to prune the longer laterals to reduce their weight, albeit the timing of this should ideally be in late summer. Mature trees of this species do not generally respond well to a hard crown reduction, hence any proposed work needs to strike a balance between managing weight and limiting the extent of reduction.

To conclude, and in the absence of a clear pruning specification with arboricultural justification, your application has been taken as a proposal to reduce the crown by 1m all

round to balance the crown as it is one-sided. As indicated above, a reduction all round is not necessary or reasonable given the unbalanced nature of the crown. The application fails to provide a proper assessment of the tree and a clear pruning specification, with reasons, tailored to the nature, age and species of the tree. As such, the proposals are unacceptable.

We would be happy to assess a new, clearer and more considered application for works to the tree.

In conclusion, the proposed reduction by 1m all round is refused. If you wish to appeal against the Council's decision on this matter, 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-hedges)

If you (or your client) 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

C.c. Mr Hamilton, 30 Chazey Road