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Mr D White
Whiteknight Tree Care & Consultancy Ltd
5 Cressingham Road
Reading
RG2 7RS

Our Ref: PL/25/1611
Your Ref:

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

18 December 2025

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr White

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE WESTERN RED CEDAR AT 83 KIDMORE ROAD, READING - T3 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 158/01.

Thank you for your application of 11 November 2025 regarding the above. Your application sought approval for:

T3 in TPO map (Thuja plicata): Dismantle Thuja plicata to just above ground level due to one of their residents at the property has reported suffering from allergies to this tree. The tree is of low aesthetic value as viewed from the street and presents a dark, dense, unappealing mass of foliage in the garden. It could be replaced with a species that has higher biodiversity value and is less harmful to the occupants' health.

Following receipt, you are aware that I sought more detail on the health issues raised, which were provided by the applicant. I don't propose to discuss these in detail within this letter as it is a public document, but the details were duly noted.

Further to my visit on 5 December 2025, with my colleague Amy Daly, you will be aware that we discussed matters on site, in particular we discussed the health issues in more depth with Ms Cock, the severity of which was noted. You will be aware that I have subsequently exchanged emails with her to clarify certain points, in particular potential replacements, should approval be given, in view of the specific concerns put forward.

When assessing an application to fell any tree, it is the Council's responsibility to carefully assess whether the reasons put forward in support of the felling outweigh the amenity value that would be lost as a result of the tree's removal and whether approval would set an unwelcome precedent.

The tree is a large, mature tree, protected and retained when No. 83 was built, and which is partially visible from the road and will be visible from surrounding gardens; with private views collectively being considered as 'public amenity'.

I have fully noted the details of the health issues provided, and discussed with Ms Cock, and acknowledge the difficulty of these and that the tree species, known for its high allergenic potential, will likely be a significant contributory factor to these, especially given the size of the tree and proximity to the house. However, it was noted that other known allergenic trees were present, including a Silver birch, and additional conifers both in the garden and in adjacent gardens. Whilst these were smaller and further away from the house, specifically the bedroom of the affected family member, it is reasonable to suggest that these will contribute to the health issues raised. As such, it is reasonable to suggest that the health issues will not be fully resolved by the removal of the tree in question.

It is not possible to state with certainty, comparatively speaking, how much the tree in question is contributing to the health issues, which are likely (given the information provided) exacerbated by other trees and vegetation in the locality. The felling would therefore result in the removal of a large tree with no defined benefit or definite resolution of the health issues.

Pruning to alleviate concerns is unlikely to be successful, particularly in a manner that would result in the retention of a tree of amenity value.

Concerns relating to trees impacting health have been raised before in the borough and each case has been dealt with on its own merits, taking into account the specific details in question and the amenity value of the tree(s). It is often a very difficult matter to balance such reasons against the detrimental impact of tree felling and the benefit of doing so.

Whilst I am certainly sympathetic to the issues raised, the verdant nature of the neighbourhood needs to be considered, which would still contain numerous other trees (and other vegetation) potentially contributing to the health issues raised. Without a tangible benefit for the felling, it is difficult to put greater weight on the health issues than the loss of amenity value. In addition, allowing the felling could also result in the Council being forced to approve the felling of multiple, other trees where similar health issues are raised.

Part of the consideration is whether any replacement would be feasible. I discussed potential replacements with the applicant in case felling was agreed, as this also formed part of the balanced decision. In view of the stated need to be able to plant a female tree (so a monoecious species) with low allergenic potential, the choices were extremely limited. Of the limited choices, Ms Cock confirmed that a Cherry would be a potential replacement. In terms of potential height and provision of good wildlife value, a *Prunus avium* (Wild Cherry) was deemed the most reasonable alternative, albeit it would not have the same stature of the Western red cedar.

Taking all the above into account, on balance the felling of T3 Thuja plicata (Western red cedar) is **refused**.

If you wish to appeal against this decision, 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 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. Ms L Cock, 83 Kidmore Road