



Emma Gee
Acting Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Mr Jamie Mitchell
Thames Water
(Via email)

Our Ref: PL/26/0020
Your Ref:

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

5 March 2026

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr Mitchell

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES AT FOBNEY WATER TREATMENT WORKS, ROSE KILN LANE, READING - SUBJECT TO TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 343.

Thank you for your application of 9 January 2026 regarding the above.

We met on site with my colleague Amy Daly and several of your colleagues from Thames Water on 13th February 2026 and walked the site to discuss the proposed tree removals and pruning, required in order to install new security fencing.

Following that meeting, your colleague David Wilson has set out why the tree works would fall under the exemptions as listed in Regulation 14 of The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012 and cited the following:

14. (1) Nothing in regulation 13 shall prevent:

*a) The cutting down, topping, lopping or uprooting of a tree -
(iii) by or at the request of a statutory undertaker, where the land on which the tree is situated is operational land of the statutory undertaker and the work is necessary -
aa) in the interests of the safe operation of the undertaking;
bb) in connection with the inspection, repair or renewal of any sewers, mains, pipes, cables or other apparatus of the statutory undertaker."*

It is agreed that the reasons for tree pruning and removal in this case results in the works falling under the above exemption, hence formal approval is not required under the TPO.

As discussed during our meeting, it is important that replacement planting is considered in order to assist with the aims of the Council's adopted Tree Strategy to increase canopy cover in the Borough. I also understand that TW have a policy of replacement planting for

biodiversity reasons. Maintaining tree cover and its associated benefits is particularly important on this site, being within a 'Major Landscape Feature', directly abutting 'Areas of Identified Biodiversity Interest' and being close to Fobney Island Nature Reserve - all identified in Reading Borough Council's Local Plan. In accordance with the aims of our Tree Strategy, the preference would be for replacement planting to be either native or wildlife friendly, preferably native where adjacent to the river.

I understand that if you are unable to replace the number of trees removed on site, that planting will take place elsewhere on TW land. If this can be within or at least close to the Reading Borough area, that would be preferable.

It is assumed that all tree works will follow good arboricultural practice and that works will avoid contravening wildlife legislation.

I would be grateful for a date of commencement of works once this is known.

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. David Wilson, Thames Water