



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2026

by R J Perrins MA ND Arbor Tech ArborA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/TPO/E0345/10604

2b Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 7LU

- The appeal is made under regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012 against a refusal to grant consent to undertake work to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
 - The appeal is made by Mr MacCarthy against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: PL/25/0209, dated 10 February 2025, was refused by notice dated 10 April 2025.
 - The work proposed is described as Yew x2, section fell in safe and controlled manner to just above ground level.
 - The relevant TPO is the Reading Borough Council TPO 124/001. 2 and 2b Kidmore Road, Reading and 6a and 4a The Mount, Reading, which was confirmed on 30 January 2002.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and consent is granted to fell x2 yew trees, protected by the Reading Borough Council TPO 124/001. 2 and 2b Kidmore Road, Reading and 6a and 4a The Mount, Reading at 2b Kidmore Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 7LU, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: PL/25/0209, dated 10 February 2025, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The work for which consent is hereby granted shall be implemented within two years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The work shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard BS3998:2010 *Tree Work – Recommendations*.
 - 3) Following the felling of the trees, authorised by this consent, two replacement trees shall be planted within the front garden in the first planting season following the removal of the trees (Nov-March). The replacement trees shall be a minimum of 8-10 cms in girth and shall be planted and maintained in accordance with BS 8545:2014 *Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape Recommendations*. The species shall be agreed with the Council's Natural Environment Team prior to purchase and planting.
 - 4) If within a period of 5 years from the completion of the new planting, any replacement tree is cut down, felled, uprooted, removed, destroyed, dies or becomes, seriously damaged or defective, another tree of the same

size and species shall be planted at the same location. Unless the Council agrees in writing to dispense with or vary the requirement.

Main Issues

2. The effect on the character and appearance of the area if the yew trees were removed and whether the reasons submitted justify the proposed work.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. This section of Kidmore Road is predominantly residential with dwellings of various sizes and styles, set within generous plots. London plane trees contribute to the street scene with two growing outside the appeal property either side of the two yew trees. These trees, along with other mature trees in the vicinity, provide a mature and verdant landscape adding to the character and appearance of the locality.
4. There is nothing to suggest the trees are dead, dying or dangerous but I see no reason to disagree that the crowns are sparser than one would expect of yews in full vigour. Although, given that, there is an argument that the yews, lesser in stature, set back from the pavement and flanked by street trees have less of an impact. However, they are particularly noticeable during the winter months when nearby trees are out of leaf. They also help break up the built form and their loss within the street scene would be both noticeable and harmful to the wider area. That is as recognised by the Residents' Association.
5. The effect of the removal on the character and appearance of the area would therefore be unacceptable. Although, given the modest size of the trees, replacement planting would go some way in reducing that harm to a moderate level. Nevertheless, any justification for the works needs to be robust and convincing and it is to that, the second main issue, to which I now turn.
6. I recognise there are many trees in the locale which may be contributing to the health concerns of one of the occupiers of the property. Any positive effect of the removal of two yews in that context would be difficult to quantify. In addition, there may be other residents of the Borough with similar health issues.
7. However, each case must be decided on its own particular merits and set of circumstances. In this case there is undisputed evidence from a professional health care consultant who points to two health conditions that are exacerbated by the two yew trees. It seems to me that even though the benefit of removal is not quantifiable, living with those conditions in the face of a potential resolution or decrease in symptoms, that cannot be actioned, must be difficult to say the least.

8. Moreover, the supporting information suggests removal of the trees is 'highly likely' to improve management of the chronic conditions cited. Whilst I do not have details of how those conditions effect day to day living, I am in no doubt the presence of the trees, in light of that recommendation, has led to unacceptable harm to the living conditions within No 2b. Without evidence to the contrary, I must give that harm significant weight.
9. Overall, it seems to me, given the very particular circumstances of this case that the harm to living conditions and the benefit of replacement trees justify the removal of the yew trees. I will condition that the works are carried out to the relevant British Standard to ensure best practice and to protect the adjacent trees, along with conditions to secure the replacement trees and their maintenance. That is in order to maintain the character and appearance of the area. I have amended the other suggested conditions such that they accord with the tests set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.

Conclusion

10. With every application to fell trees a balancing exercise needs to be carried out. The works would have a moderately harmful effect on the character and appearance of the locality. However, given the very particular circumstances of this case, I find the weight in favour of the felling outweighs the harm. On balance, the appeal should be allowed.

RJ Perrins

INSPECTOR