



Mr O Micallef
Bartlett Tree Experts
The Caravan
Pigeon House Farm,
Sheepridge Lane
Little Marlow
SL7 3SG

Emma Gee
Acting Executive Director for
Economic Growth and
Neighbourhood Services

Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 9373787

Our Ref: PL/26/0137
Your Ref:

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

2 April 2026

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr Micallef

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO ONE CEDAR TREE AT 57-59 BATH ROAD, READING - T45 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 99/06.

Thank you for your application of 2 February 2026 in which you seek approval for the felling of one Cedar tree within the garden of the Little Dragon's Nursery at the rear of 57-59 Bath Road.

The reason for felling is cited as the health risk to the children from pigeon droppings, and your application form details the ways in which the nursery has attempted to resolve the issue.

Further to my visit on 20 March 2026 with my colleague Amy Daly, I have the following comments:

The mature Cedar tree, along with the adjacent Cedar, form a high amenity pair of trees over 100 years old, which have been subject to a TPO since at least 1995, the current TPO made in 2006 as a result of a review. They form part of the historic tree coverage at 57-59 Bath Road, in character with this significant period property on a main route in/out of town and on a designated 'treed corridor' in our adopted Tree Strategy.

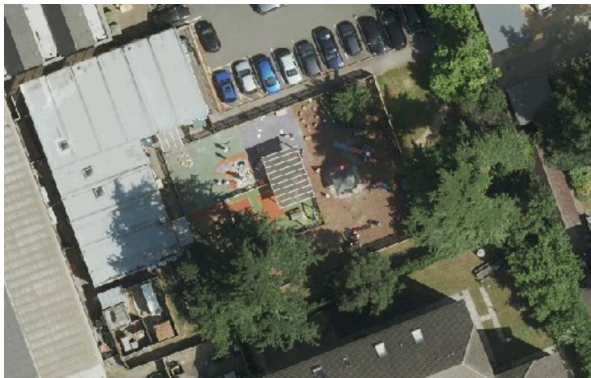
The tree originally stood, with the adjacent Cedar, in an open garden surrounded by grass. We were advised during our visit that the nursery opened in 2003. It can be seen from the aerial photographs below that this created an outdoor play area under the tree's canopy and within its Root Protection Area, the hard landscaping of which has increased over time placing greater pressure on the tree and creating greater conflict - the Cedar in question is on the left:



2002



2006



2013



2026

It is reasonable to suggest that the Nursery should have been opened with the knowledge of the tree and likely associated nuisance issues. The increase in hard landscaping and erection of structures is a concern as this was done without any liaison with the Local Planning Authority - whilst these structures may be 'permitted development', this does not override a TPO.

The tree has been pruned in the past to manage the potential risk it presents, the most recent approval being in 2024.

The measures attempted thus far, with their associated cost, include daily cleaning, falconry, fire gel (bird repellent), false birds and selected limb removal.

It was noted that within the playground are several wooden shelters, a significant one having been erected outside the canopy of the Cedar:



It is unclear why, in view of the concerns about bird droppings, that such structures would not be focused under the tree canopy to act as a barrier. Thus far, using such shelters as a solution has not been implemented.

When assessing an application to fell a protected tree officers assess the amenity value of the tree and the likely impact of the proposal on the amenity of the area, and in the light of their assessment, consider whether or not the proposal is justified, having regard to the reasons put forward in support of it. Other factors in support of tree retention are also considered in order to come to a balanced decision. To justify felling we need to be satisfied that all other options have been exhausted.

The mature Cedar forms part of the historic backdrop to Bath Road, sitting alongside the period property likely to be of the same age. The loss would be detrimental to the setting and locality and having stood for 100+ years prior to the nursery being opened, its proposed loss is as a direct result of the chosen use of the land by the NHS. The loss is not considered to be acceptable and further options should be explored to eliminate the conflict between the land use and the bird droppings associated with the tree.

The willingness to plant a replacement tree on the adjacent (remaining) grass area immediately to the east of the nursery play area, of the same species, is acknowledged.

However, there is insufficient space for a new Cedar on that area due to the other, mature Cedar in place, and no other evident location within the grounds of 57-59 Bath Road to plant one either.

On balance, the loss of the significant Cedar is not considered acceptable and its loss cannot be mitigated.

In conclusion, the felling of T45 Cedar is refused.

If you / your client wishes 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: 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)

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. Bradley Leishman, Estates Coordinator, Berkshire NHS Property Services Ltd