



Mr J Crook
Oakfall Tree Surgery
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Sherborne St John
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RG24 9LN

Emma Gee
Executive Director for
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Our Ref: PL/26/0478
Your Ref:

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20th May 2026

Your contact is:

Amy Daly: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr Crook

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 1NO. BEECH TREE AT 60B ST PETERS AVENUE, CAVERSHAM, READING - T1 OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 79/05.

Thank you for your application of 8th April 2026, regarding the above.

Further to my visit on 16th April 2026, I have the following comments:

The Beech tree is of a significant size which has multiple co-dominant main stems growing from its base. A previous reduction of 15% was approved in June 2005, which was over 20 years ago. In this previous approval letter, there was discussion of installing Cobra bracing to the tree, which was clearly undertaken at some point as the brace was noted during my site visit. Where the tree has been reduced previously, there are established/historic previous pruning points (shown in Figure 2 below). As the tree was previously reduced a significant amount of time ago and the tree will have grown substantially since then, the reduction will create new pruning points rather than reducing the branches all the way back to the historic pruning points. Your application form doesn't mention reducing the tree back to previous pruning points, so I acknowledge this isn't what is proposed; perhaps as this would not be appropriate.

The reduction is considered reasonable as similar works were previously approved and reducing the tree will alleviate the weight (which you mention) and thereby pressure from natural forces on the tight unions (shown in Figure 5 below), formed from the co-dominant stems, thereby reducing the likelihood of failure. Whilst relieving the tension on the brace (one of your reasoning for works) doesn't justify the reduction itself, as the brace can be adjusted to address this concern, for the reasons above the works are considered justified. It was also noted that some of the lateral branches are starting to encroach on the adjacent properties. Therefore, the reduction will also improve the level

of clearance between the tree and the properties.

It was noted that the brace appears to be tight around the stems which it is attached to and supports. Whilst your application form doesn't specifically state that the brace will be inspected, I note your intention to undertake this and adjust it accordingly, as this was discussed in your email exchange with my colleague Sarah Hanson of 9th April 2026.

The base of the tree was difficult to inspect due to basal growth; hence I have also approved the removal of this basal growth (not included in your application) so that the base can be inspected without hinderance. There is also some vegetation that somewhat obstructs the base of the tree, so removing some of this to allow for a full basal inspection would be prudent. In addition, I noted a significant amount of ivy growing up the main stems and into the canopy. Given that the ivy will be contributing to the weight load of the tree and obscures the main unions, it would be prudent to remove the ivy and inspect these unions for any defects. Whilst severing/removing ivy does not require formal consent, we kindly ask that this is undertaken with care using hand tools to avoid any damage to the bark and cambium layers of the tree.

It was noted during my site visit that the canopy is relatively low to the ground. Therefore, for ground clearance purposes, I have also included a crown lift. Whilst this was not mentioned in your application, these works are considered reasonable and will likely be desirable in the near future, hence inclusion negates the need for another application.

I can therefore confirm that the following proposed works, as detailed in your application with additional works included following my site visit, are approved subject to the conditions below and with reference to the annotated photographs below:

T1 Beech tree

- reduce in height and overall lateral spread by approximately 2-3m, as shown in Figure 1 below, ensuring no more than one third of the foliage is removed from each branch, leaving suitable growth points and a natural canopy shape;
- removal all basal growth, through 360°;
- crown lift, through 360°, to approximately 1-1.5m above the height of the apex of the adjacent shed, as shown in Figure 4, removing secondary growth only and leaving suitable growth points.



Figure 1: approximate 2-3m height and overall lateral spread canopy reduction



Figure 2: historic pruning point (blue arrow); approximate canopy reduction (yellow curved line)



Figure 3: basal growth to be removed



Figure 4: apex of shed (blue arrow); approximate 1-1.5m crown lift (yellow line)



Figure 5: co-dominant union/tight fork (blue arrow)

Officer note:

I acknowledge that the applicant is the owner/occupier of the adjacent property of 62 St Peters Avenue. At the time of my visit, the property where the tree is located (No. 60b) was vacant due to it being a rental property. Therefore, please ensure that you discuss access into the land with the tree owner and obtain their permission to undertake the works. I note this was discussed also in your email exchange with Sarah Hanson. However, I am mentioning it in case land/tree ownership changes prior to the approved works being undertaken. Informative 5 mentions permission for accessing land that is not owned by the applicant.

Conditions

1. Five days' notice in writing shall be given to the Council prior to undertaking the approved works.

Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority is given sufficient notice of the works to enable the effective monitoring of tree work within the Borough.

2. All tree surgery shall be in accordance with BS 3998: (2010) Tree Work - Recommendations.

Reason: To ensure that all works are carried out in an acceptable arboricultural manner

3. The approved canopy reduction to T1 Beech tree shall be undertaken in mid-late Summer (July - September) when the tree's energy reserves are at their height or during the Winter months of December - January during the period of dormancy.

Reason: Taking into account the tree's phenological cycle and in order to avoid any unnecessary detriment to the tree as a result of the pruning work.

4. Climbing spikes shall not be used whilst undertaking any form of works on living trees, except on trees to be felled.

Reason: Spikes can cause extensive long-term damage

Informatives

1. You are advised that, in accordance with Part 4, 17 (4) of The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012, this decision is valid for one pruning operation (as per the approved specifications) to be undertaken within two years from the date of this notice, after which the consent lapses and a new application will be required.

2. Removal of dead or dangerous wood from a live tree: This does not require the formal consent of the Council. However you are encouraged to give 5 working days in advance of removing dead wood. Where a branch is deemed to be 'dangerous', i.e. where works are 'urgently necessary to remove an immediate risk of serious harm', you are required to give notice to the Council 'as soon as practicable after the works become necessary'.

3. Disturbance of wildlife: It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to disturb roosting bats or nesting birds. It is advisable to consult your tree surgeon/consultant to agree an acceptable time for carrying out any work. Wildlife and habitat controls are administered by Natural England who can be contacted on 0300 030 6000

4. Tree work consents on land not owned by the applicant: It is strongly recommended that the owner of the tree be advised of any proposed works. The owner's permission must be sought if the tree works involve work past the boundary line. This consent does not in any way imply that this Council has informed the owner of sought permission or will condone the use of consents to force any landowner to grant such permission.

5. Prior to the severing of well-established Ivy at the base of the tree, it would be prudent to carry out an assessment of whether any of the stems of the Ivy are forming a natural brace above a suspected bark-included union

If you wish to appeal against any of the conditions attached to this consent, 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)

Please ensure your client and the tree owner receive a copy of this letter as soon as possible.

If you require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely

Amy Daly

Assistant Natural Environment Officer

On Behalf of Sarah Hanson, Natural Environment Officer