



Mr D White  
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21<sup>st</sup> May 2026

Your contact is:

Amy Daly: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mr White

**RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO 1NO. ASH TREE AND 1NO. POPLAR TREE AT 7 COCKNEY HILL, TILEHURST, READING - T5 & T6 RESPECTIVELY OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 3/04.**

Thank you for your application of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2026, regarding the above.

You initially applied for the following, supported by a rationale to justify the works:  
*T6 (poplar): Dismantle poplar tree, leaving the main stem as a standing monolith at a final height of approximately 2-4m above ground level*

Further to mine and my colleague Sarah Hanson's visit on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026, I have the following comments:

Sarah and I met with the applicant's wife to discuss the proposed works. It is evident that T6 Poplar tree has significant decay/dysfunction occurring within its base/main structural stem. There is a large basal cavity, which you have identified in your rationale as '*Open cavity on south west side of base approx. 70 cm deep with mostly well defined edge, 30cm wide 20cm high aperture*'. You have provided a photograph of this cavity, demonstrating the extent of which a probe can be inserted into the into it, which I have reproduced in Figure 1 below and we were able to verify this on site. Due to the extent of probe insertion, it is clear the decay/dysfunction is substantial. The tree's vitality is suboptimal, which is likely due to the decay impacting the tree's sapwood/cambium layer. On this same aspect included in your rationale, you have identified a '*main tensile root*' which has historically been severed.

In addition, you have identified several other defects including: '*Vertical line in bark on west side; pillars of reactive growth, possible audible defect around*'; '*Holes typical of*

*Wood wasps evident around base*; *'Customer says fungal growth present around base but no evidence at the time of visit*'; *'Vertical Audible defect on east side up to approximately 0.7m above ground level'*. The history of branch failures mentioned in your rationale, both through old branch failure points and broken branches within the canopy were noted during our site visit. We did not observe any fungal fruiting bodies either at the time of our visit, but the extensive decay is clear through audible differences in the tree's timber and probe insertion. Given the significance of these defects, and lesser works i.e. a significant crown reduction, aren't expected to improve the health or structural integrity of the tree, felling is considered reasonable.

We have approved the felling to ground level in case retaining a monolith is not feasible, as I acknowledge you are proposing to leave the tree as a monolith between 2-4m in height. I understand the applicant would like to retain this monolith as it forms part of the boundary line, located within the rear fencing. I note that in your rationale, you have mentioned whether the newly planted trees in the rear garden and the retention of a monolith will negate the condition to replant a replacement tree. Unfortunately, we require replacement trees specifically planted to replace felled trees subject to the TPO, for several reasons discussed during our visit - the main requirement being that the new trees replace the lost amenity value. The small fruit tree species planted would not do this. As discussed with the applicant's wife, we are happy to provide advice on replacement species and locations for planting.

Regarding the T5 Ash tree, whilst this was not included in application, however from a cursory ground inspection during our visit, we discovered a fungal fruiting body which is suspected to be *Inonotus hispidus*. The fungal fruiting body is located slightly above the tree's first/main union and crown break, shown in Figure 2 below. The fungal bracket was dark brown/black in colour, which is a characteristic of this fungus' aged fruiting bodies. The bark also appears to have started to break from the branches, indicating the fungus has been there for some time and a characteristic of this species fungus. *Inonotus hispidus* typically forms fungal fruit bodies at the point of which the decay/dysfunction is occurring; in this instance, an area which is supporting the weight of majority of the canopy. Therefore, any lesser works to manage the weight load of the canopy to manage this structural defect would result in a significant impact to the tree's health, structure and appearance (amenity value), thereby felling is considered to be a reasonable option.

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

- T5 Ash tree: fell to ground level
- T6 Poplar tree: fell to ground level



Figure 1: T6 Poplar - basal cavity with probe inserted



Figure 2: T5 Ash - *Inonotus hispidus* fruiting body above first/main union

### 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. Following the felling of 1no. Ash tree (T5) and 1no. Poplar tree (T6) authorised by this consent, 2no. replacement trees of a minimum 8-10cm girth and 2.75m in height (at time of planting) shall be planted within the rear garden during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of the felling of the tree, whichever is soonest. The species shall be agreed with the Natural Environment Team prior to purchasing.

Planting should be carried out in accordance with clause 10 (Planting) of BS 8545:2014 'Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations'

Should the replacement tree be removed, die or become severely damaged or seriously diseased, all within 5 years of planting, it shall be replaced by a tree of a similar size and species to that originally planted. Modifications to the requirements of this condition must be agreed in writing with Reading Borough Council Natural Environment Team.

PLEASE NOTE: The requirement to replant is the responsibility of the tree owner even if the application was submitted by another person.

Reason: To retain the present visual amenity value of the area and ensure continuity of tree coverage.

### 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

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](mailto: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 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

C.c. Mr Tripathi, 7 Cockney Hill