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Mrs S Namaseevayum
3 Notley Place
Emmer Green
Reading
RG4 8PW

Our Ref: PL/26/0712
Your Ref:

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

9 July 2026

Your contact is:

Sarah Hanson: Planning, Transport & Public Protection

Dear Mrs Namaseevayum

RE: PROPOSED WORKS TO TWO HORNBEAM AND ONE SYCAMORE AT 3 NOTLEY PLACE, READING - T23, T24 & T19 RESPECTIVELY OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER 50/13.

Thank you for your application of 29 May 2026 regarding the above.

Your application follows recent application PL/26/0264 which approved the felling of T20, T21 & T22 Hornbeams as a result of tree related subsidence, submitted by Innovation Group (IG) on behalf of your insurers. The Arboricultural Report submitted with that application recommend pruning of other trees, in addition to the felling of the 3 Hornbeam, however this additional work was not included in that application, for whatever reason. In my decision letter of 28 April 2026, addressed to IG, I noted this stating:

‘The Arboricultural Report recommends a crown reduction to T1 Sycamore (T19 of the TPO) and to T6 & T7 Hornbeam (T23 & T24 of TPO) but this work is not included in your application. I further note that no Section 211 Notice has been submitted for works to the non-TPO trees, which would be required as the property is within a Conservation Area. It is therefore assumed that Innovation Group are satisfied that further work is not necessary and that the felling of the 3 Hornbeam trees specified, alone, will prevent further property damage.

I note that the Arboricultural Report recommends that: ‘following tree surgery we recommended that the building be monitored to establish the effectiveness of the works in restoring Stability’. This would seem prudent given the remaining trees and the lack of work proposed to these’.

Ideally, to avoid potentially unnecessary and detrimental tree works, the 3 Hornbeam

would be felled and the property monitored to confirm if their removal resolved the subsidence issues. However, as the additional works were included in the Arboricultural Report, this may not be an acceptable course of action for your insurers. Furthermore, I understand that monitoring does not tend to continue following felling in these cases.

The Arboricultural Report recommended a 30% crown reduction to the 2 Hornbeam and 1 Sycamore subject to this current application. Your application sought approval for the following to all 3 trees, which is different wording to that in the arboricultural report:

‘Crown and lift above Surley Row to 5.5m above road. Reduce overall crown height by 2-3 metres and reduce lateral spread by up to 2 metres to suitable growth points, maintaining the tree’s natural shape and form’.

I was mindful of the recommendations when assessing your proposals. In any case, we would not have accepted a pruning specification as a percentage - good arboricultural practice recommends avoiding such specifications but providing reductions in metres instead.

During my visit of 7 July 2026, with my colleague Amy Daly, we discussed the above proposed works.

In relation to the Hornbeam, we discussed concerns with the specification insofar as the difficulty with lateral spread reductions on trees with an upright form, as these have. Also, their spread varies in different directions due to natural suppression by adjacent trees. As a result, we agreed that the specification would be amended to include the height reduction with reduced lateral reduction, focused on leaving a reasonable shaped crown.

In relation to the Sycamore, it will remain to be seen how it responds to a reduction. As pointed out to you on site, there are some degraded fungal brackets growing from the large pruning wound at head height. It would be prudent to identify these - easier when fresh brackets appear. Their presence indicates some likely decay / dysfunction in this location, which is not surprising given the size of the wound and that Sycamore do not readily resist decay. This is something to be mindful of in terms of any decay/dysfunction in the main stem which could compromise the structural stability of the trunk. You may wish to consider employing a specialist to undertake decay detection.

I can confirm that the following proposed works, as detailed in your application (as amended), are approved subject to the conditions below and with reference to the annotated photographs below:

- T23 & T24 Hornbeam - reduce height by 2-3m to suitable growing points and reduce lateral spread only as necessary to leave a flowing crown line as indicated on the photograph below; crown lift over Surley Row to ensure 5.5m clearance above the road; crown lift on site side to fence height if desired;
- T19 Sycamore - crown reduce by 2-3m in height and 2m overall spread, back to suitable growing points and focusing on re-shaping, leaving a flowing crown line; crown lift to ensure 5.5m clearance above Surley Row.



T23 & T24 indicative reduction



T19 indicative reduction

We discussed the timing of the reductions in order to limit the long-term impact on the trees' health; especially the Sycamore. Please note condition 3 below to which I would add that reduction in the current high temperatures / drought conditions should ideally also be avoided.

As advised, the previously approved felling can take place as soon as it's arranged - presumably IG will be arranging this ASAP.

Whilst on site, we discussed replacement planting for the 3 Hornbeams (felling pending) and Horse chestnut (already felled) and I will address this separately.

Work to the non-TPO trees are dealt with separately under tree works notice PL/26/0715.

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 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

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/government/topics/trees-and-woodland/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

Sarah Hanson

Sarah Hanson
Natural Environment Officer

C.c. Innovation Group