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Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 22 July 2025
My ref: TF/TPO/1514/2016/251152



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Stephen Newell
9a Russley Green
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 3HT

Place and Growth
Development Management Team
P.O. Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 1WR

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr. Newell,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 1514/2016

APPLICATION NUMBER: 251152

SITE ADDRESS: LAND BETWEEN 9A AND 10 RUSSELY GREEN, WOKINGHAM, RG40 3HT

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received and validated on the 14 May 2025.

I can confirm Wokingham Borough Council **refuses consent**, to the following work being carried out to tree(s) included in the above-mentioned Tree Preservation Orders (TPO):

Proposed tree works to Single 1 of TPO 1514/2016:

T1, Lime:

- Reduce in height by approx. 10m (half the current height); pollard; remove epicormic growth.

Reasons stated for works:

There are two lime trees on land between 9A and 10 Russley Green, Wokingham, RG40 3HT. The specific lime tree (reference T1) is not a fine specimen and frequently drops large branches onto the adjacent properties. The tree is covered with a heavy growth of ivy and has been neglected without any judicial pruning to maintain its shape and health. Our application is to have the tree professionally pollarded by a reputable arborist to a height of approximately 50%. The existing height of the tree is estimated to be approximately 20 metres, and after pollarding approximately 10 metres. The pollarding would encourage the tree to generate new growth and would improve the shape and stability overall. Existing, excessive epicormic growth should also be removed to encourage the tree to re-generate.

Officer comments:

When looking to undertake works to a protected tree it is the responsibility of the applicant to supply adequate proof with the TPO application, in the form of 'written arboricultural advice or other diagnostic information from an appropriate expert.' To date, no detailed arboricultural

information has been submitted to demonstrate that the work is in the interests of health and safety or based on any arboricultural need and no overriding reason for the proposed work was apparent.

The subject Lime tree is a mature specimen which is clearly visible from the surrounding public highway contributing significantly to the character and appearance of the local and wider landscape subsequently the tree commands high landscape amenity.

Crown reductions of this magnitude remove an extensive amount of leaf and live material which will affect the trees ability to photosynthesise and sustain itself. It also causes multiple large wounds which increases the tree's susceptibility to disease and decay and should only be considered where there would otherwise be a risk of failure due to a significant defect. Whilst the Council appreciates that a certain amount of pruning to the subject Lime tree appears reasonable, the proposed reduction in height by 50% does not appear to be justified at this time.

Pollarding is a process of tree management where the crown of a tree is cut back to a single stem. Trees are specifically managed in this way from an early age allowing them to adapt to such severe work. The proposed works would essentially be "topping" of a maiden mature tree which would be highly disfiguring, have a detrimental effect on the health and visual appearance of the tree and is also more likely than crown reduction to cause severe dysfunction and decay in major structural parts of the tree.

Wokingham Borough Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 which commits us to playing as full a role as possible in reducing our carbon footprint to be net carbon zero by 2030. The Borough Council aims to increase the levels of carbon sequestration through greening the environment. The preservation and enhancement of tree canopy cover in the Borough will play an important role in this

On balance the information submitted for the proposed works are not sufficient justification for the detrimental pruning of prominent landscape trees, however the Council would welcome a further Tree Work Application supported by appropriate levels of arboricultural evidence i.e. full VTA, climbing inspection (with photographs of all bio mechanical defects that require remedial pruning) and results of any secondary investigations (i.e. resistograph and/or Sonic Tomograph) to justify the proposed works

Due to the reasons stated above the above proposed tree work have been refused.

I can confirm that Wokingham Borough Council **consents, with conditions**, to the following work being carried out to the tree(s) included in the aforementioned Tree Preservation Order (TPO):

Approved Tree Work to Single 1 of TPO 1514/2016:

T1 Lime:

- Removal basal sucker and epicormic growth to 4m above ground level.
- Tip reduce branches to give a height clearance from ground level of 5m and ensure a 2m clearance to the adjacent building.
- Crown clean to remove all dead, broken and significantly decayed branches.

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **22 July 2027** and in the event of the works not being completed by that date, further consent will be required.
2. Work must be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998 – 2010 'Tree work - Recommendations'. Ensuring all pruning is taken back to a suitable growth point.
3. Climbing spikes shall not be used whilst undertaking any form of works on living trees, except on trees to be felled.

Reasons for conditions 1-3.....

1. To ensure that our records remain accurate.
2. To ensure the health, safety and visual amenity of the tree(s) and ensure works are undertaken in accordance with recognised arboricultural good practice. Ensuring all pruning cuts are made back to suitable growth points.
3. Spikes can cause extensive long-term damage to trees.

Informative:

If you are aggrieved by any of the conditions attached to your consent, you may appeal to The Planning Inspectorate (PINS). Because of coronavirus (COVID-19), you can currently only make a planning appeal online. You cannot currently apply by post.

For more information go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-preservation-order-appeal-form>

Telephone: 0303 444 5570 or e-mail it to: treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Your appeal should be received within one month of receipt of this decision or any such longer period as the Planning Inspectorate may allow.

You are advised that this letter is in respect of the **Tree Preservation Order only** and it does not imply that consent would be forthcoming from the owner of the tree(s) or any such other persons from whom consent would be required.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact the Tree Officer via email to: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,



Chris Hannington
Trees and Landscape Team Manager

Please note that your attention is drawn to the following information:

Bird Nesting Season and Presence of Bat Roosts

In accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and Countryside Rights of Way Act (2000), consideration must be given to the timing and type of tree work operations, to avoid causing disturbance to any nesting birds or bat roosts that may be present within the tree(s).

The Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to intentionally kill, injure, or take, possess, or trade in any wild animal listed, and prohibits interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places.

It is advised that all non-urgent major tree work and hedge cutting operations are undertaken at a time to avoid disturbing nesting birds during the breeding season (to which the bird nesting season is considered to be from March to July). Where bats are suspected to be present, it is recommended that advice first be sought from a licenced bat specialist and if appropriate, the relevant licence(s) be obtained before any major tree work or hedge cutting commences.

Further information can be found at the following:

DEFRA (Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs)
Tel: 08459 33 55 77 or by email at helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.defra.gov.uk/

Natural England
Tel: 0845 600 3078 or by email at enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk
Website: www.naturalengland.org.uk

Bat Conservation Trust
Tel: 0845 1300 228 or by email at enquiries@bats.org.uk
Website: www.bats.org.uk

Forestry Act 1967 and Felling Licences

If it proposed to fell a tree or trees greater than 5 cubic metres or sell more than 2 cubic metres of timber in any calendar quarter, a Felling Licence from the Forestry Authority may be required.

Please note that Felling Licences are not required to remove trees from domestic (residential) gardens. Where you are the landowner of large pieces of land with numerous trees, clarification from the Forestry Commission may be required as to whether a Felling licence is needed.

For more information on Felling Licences, please speak to the Woodland Officer at the Forestry Commission on 01296 696543

Further Information can be found on the Forestry Commission Website:
www.forestry.gov.uk