

Tel: (0118) 974 6000
Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 14 May 2025
My ref: TF/TPO/898/1997/250521



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Greg Webb
Webb and Cook Arboricultural Specialists Ltd
Itchell Corner
Itchel Lane
Crondall
Farnham
GU10 5PT

Place and Growth
Development Management Team
P.O. Box 157
Shute End, Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 1WR
Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr Webb,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 898/1997

APPLICATION NUMBER: 250521

SITE ADDRESS: 28 HOLMBURY AVENUE, CROWTHORNE, WOKINGHAM, RG45 6TQ

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received on 05 March 2025 and validated on the 10 March 2025. Please accept my apologies for this delayed decision.

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 2 of TPO 898/1997:

T1 Silver Birch (T2 within TPO):

- Crown reduction by 2m in height and 1.5m in lateral spread.

Reasons stated for works:

This specimen has an asymmetrical crown and is bias to the neighbouring property these works are to reduce end weight on the lateral branches and reduce the wind sail of the canopy.

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 T1 is dangerous or diseased or that the proposed work is in the interests of health and safety.

Crown reductions remove a large amount of leaf and live material which will affect the trees ability to photosynthesise and sustain itself. It also causes multiple wounding 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 Silver Birch would be reasonable, the proposed crown reduction does not appear to be justified at this time.

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 reasons and information submitted with the application are not sufficient justification for the proposed work specification to T1. However, if there are concerns over a trees structural integrity the Council would welcome a further Tree Work Application supported by appropriate levels of arboricultural evidence i.e. full VTA, aerial inspection (with photographs of all bio-mechanical defects) and results of any internal decay detection investigations of the lower main stem and/or scaffold branches (i.e. Sonic Tomograph and/or Resistograph Drill) to justify the proposed works.

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

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

Approved Tree Work to G4 and Single 2 of TPO 898/1997:

G1, 3 x Silver Birch (part of G4):

- Fell and replace

T1 Silver Birch (T2 within TPO):

- Tip reduce branches to ensure a 3m clearance to adjacent built structures and over the associated roof.
- Tip reduce branches to ensure a 4m height clearance from ground level.

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **14 May 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 branches are 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.
4. Replacement planting: Following the removal of the three trees as authorised by this consent, 3 no. replacement Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) trees, shall be planted in accordance with the following:

The replacement trees will be planted within the boundary of the Group TPO 898/1997 and during the planting season (Nov-March) following or at the time of removal of the subject trees, whichever is soonest following the works.

The new tree(s) should be a minimum of 2m tall. 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 trees be removed, die, or become severely damaged or seriously diseased, all within 5 years of planting, they shall be replaced by trees of a similar size and species to that originally planted. Modifications to the requirements of this condition must be agreed in writing with Wokingham Borough Council Tree and Landscape Team.

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

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.
3. Spikes can cause extensive long-term damage to trees.
4. To maintain canopy cover in the Borough for the benefit of the local environment and amenity.

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

cc. Applicant: Mr Simon Whatley, 28 Holmbury Avenue, Crowthorne, Wokingham, RG45 6TQ

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

Application Reference:
TF/TPO/898/1997/250521



Please return this form to confirm that you have planted the replacement tree/s required under a tree replacement duty or planning condition.

Please post to: or email to: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk

Wokingham Borough Council
Tree and Landscape Department
Development Management Team
P.O. Box 157
Shute End
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 1WR

Application Number: 250521

I (*state your name*)

of (*state your address*)

Location of trees (*if different from the address above*)

Telephone number.....

Email address.....

Confirm that (*state number of trees planted*) were planted
on (*state date*) in accordance with either the duty to replace tree/s or a
planning condition as imposed under the Town and Country Planning Act.

The tree/s planted are (*state species e.g., Oak*)

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Signed: Date:

If you need any help filling out this form please contact the Tree Officer on: (0118) 974 6000

Important Note:

If you do not return this form then the land charges register may not hold up to date records on the tree preservation order/s covering your property, which could cause difficulties if you come to sell your house in the future.

Any further comments:

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