

Tel: (0118) 974 6000
Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 01 November 2024
My ref: TF/TPO/819/1996/242296



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Stuart Webster
Webster's Arboricultural Services Ltd
13 Nightingale Gardens
Nightingale Gardens
Sandhurst
Berkshire
GU479DQ

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

Dear Mr Webster,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 819/1996

APPLICATION NUMBER: 242296

SITE ADDRESS: 3 WATSON CLOSE, FINCHAMPSTEAD, WOKINGHAM, RG40 4YF

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received and validated on the 06 September 2024.

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 T4 of TPO 819/1996:

T4 Norway Maple:

- Re-pollard back to previous pollard points, reducing limbs by approx. 3m.

Reasons stated for works:

The tree has become over mature for its location with a height of 10 metres and a crown spread of 8 metres. The western profile of the tree has been pruned to give clearance to overhead services along Nashgrove lane. The tree is now suppressing the garden and property of 3 Watson Close. The tree has been historically pollarded and so to keep a balance of the canopy of the tree I advise the tree to be re-pollarded back to the previous pollard points

Officer comments:

When looking to undertake significant crown reduction 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.' The arboricultural information which has been submitted does not demonstrate that the tree 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 Norway Maple appears reasonable to give adequate height clearance over the adjacent garden, the submitted work specification of 'Re-pollard back to previous pollard points' would be highly disfiguring.

The reasons given for the proposed work were 'The tree is now suppressing the garden and property of 3 Watson Close'. However, the subject tree has a history of crown reduction to maintain the crown at reduced dimensions and is situated adjacent the rear boundary of the property with a crown clearance of approximately 5m from the rear elevation. The continuation of appropriate minor pruning when necessary and the lifting of the crown would ensure that the overall garden is not so constrained by the presence of the tree to result in an unacceptable quality of outdoor space.

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. 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 lesser works being carried out to the tree(s) included in the aforementioned Tree Preservation Order (TPO):

Approved Tree Work to T4 of TPO 819/1996:

T1 Norway Maple:

- Tip reduce branches to give a 3m height clearance from ground level over the rear garden of 3 Watson Close.
- Tip reduce lateral spread overhanging the garden of 3 Watson close by between 0.5m to 1m to maintain a natural crown profile.
- 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 **01 November 2026** 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.

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.

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 Richard Easton, 3 Watson Close, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4YF

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