

Mr. C. Hannington
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DUCKWORTHS
ARBORICULTURE LTD.

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22nd December 2024
Ref: 06604 / 2024

Dear Mr. Hannington,

APPLICATION FOR WORKS TO LEYLANDII TREES WITHIN THE GARDEN OF 45 FAIRWATER DRIVE, WOODLEY PROTECTED UNDER WOODLAND TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NO. 003 / 1951.

I am writing to you with regards to an application to carry out works to 2x groups of Leyland Cypress trees which are growing at 45 Fairwater Drive, Woodley.

A previous application was refused for the removal of both groups of conifers (application ref: 232611). However, in his assessment of the application, the Council's Tree Officer advised that *'On balance the information submitted for the proposed works is not sufficient justification for the removal of prominent landscape trees, however the Council would welcome a further Tree Work Application supported by appropriate levels of arboricultural evidence to justify the proposed works.'*

In response to this decision, I have been asked to review the condition of trees within both tree groups and to provide sensible options on the future management of trees in both groups.

It is understood that the Leylandii groups were originally planted as screening for 45 Fairwater Drive, following the residential development and therefore later than the date of the Tree Preservation Order. I am satisfied that the trees are younger than the date of the TPO and that the trees do not form part of the original 'woodland' tree cover of Woodley which the old Tree Preservation Order (served in 1951) sought to preserve.

Both groups are formed of three trees in a linear group. G001 is growing on the southern boundary and G002 along the northern boundary. It is reasonable to assume, based on their linear form and poor structural form that both sets of trees were planted as hedges. The trees have previously been reduced on a number of occasions and this is visible within the branching structure, however ultimately the trees have been allowed to grow beyond the hedge for which they were intended, and they now form a two linear group of large lapsed-hedging conifers.

Mr. O'Haran has received a number of complaints regarding the trees from the neighbours and tenants of the property, particularly with regards to G001 which are growing 13m from the southern boundary of the terraced properties and the dense evergreen canopy is overbearing and casts considerable shade over the gardens throughout the year.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003 (Part 8) (High Hedges)

A procedure for dealing with complaints from homeowners about high hedges was introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Part 8).

A 'High Hedge' according to The Act is a hedge that is:

- growing on land owned or occupied by someone else
- made up of a line of 2 or more trees or shrubs
- mostly evergreen or semi-evergreen
- more than 2 metres tall
- a barrier to light or access (even if there are gaps)

From this definition, both G001 & G002 could be considered a 'high hedge' under the High Hedges (Appeals) (England) Regulations 2005 and G001 is particularly overbearing as it relates to the adjacent residential properties.

It is therefore reasonable that the owner of the conifers should be permitted to undertake necessary works to prevent them causing an unacceptable shade nuisance for adjacent landowners.

Management Options

- G001 – 3x Leyland Cypress.

The poor structural form of the group and their proximity to property means that these trees cannot reasonably be retained in this location without future damage to the garage as a direct impact from the growth of the trunks and roots. These trees cause particular nuisance to residents in terms of shade and blocking of daylight..

These are low-quality trees with poor structural form. The trees provide no aesthetic enhancement in the local area. Reducing the canopy of the group such as would be required to clear the garage / streetlight and reduce shade to a satisfactory degree would expose the woody centres of the crowns further diminishing their amenity. My recommendation is that these trees be felled and the stumps removed.

The Borough Council is therefore kindly requested not to condition replacement planting, as there is little space for new trees, and any new trees in this location would continue to cast shade for the neighbours.

- G002 – 3x Leyland Cypress.

Trees in G002 are 20m north of the residential properties and will cast shade away from the gardens over the public highway. The individual stems of trees in the group are more widely spaced which allows some room for future growth.

I have therefore recommended a reduction of the height of trees in G002 for maintenance only. This is to ensure their stability (preventing branch failure) due to the weight of new growth beyond the previous reduction points.

Additional works are also required to raise the lower canopy removing selective individual branches where they are obstructing pedestrian and vehicular access.

ACCESS

The trees are growing to the front and rear of 45 Fairwater Drive and can be seen clearly from the highway. The property owner is Mr. Mark O'Horan of 39 Longlands Way Camberley GU15 1RH. Mr. O'Haran can be contacted on 07754066551. Please note that the property is currently let to a tenant.

Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this application.

Kind regards,

Sarah Duckworth – Arboricultural Consultant
Dip Arb (RFS), MArborA, Tech. Arbor.A, BA Hons
LANTRA Professional Tree Inspector



TREE PRESERVATION ORDER PLAN

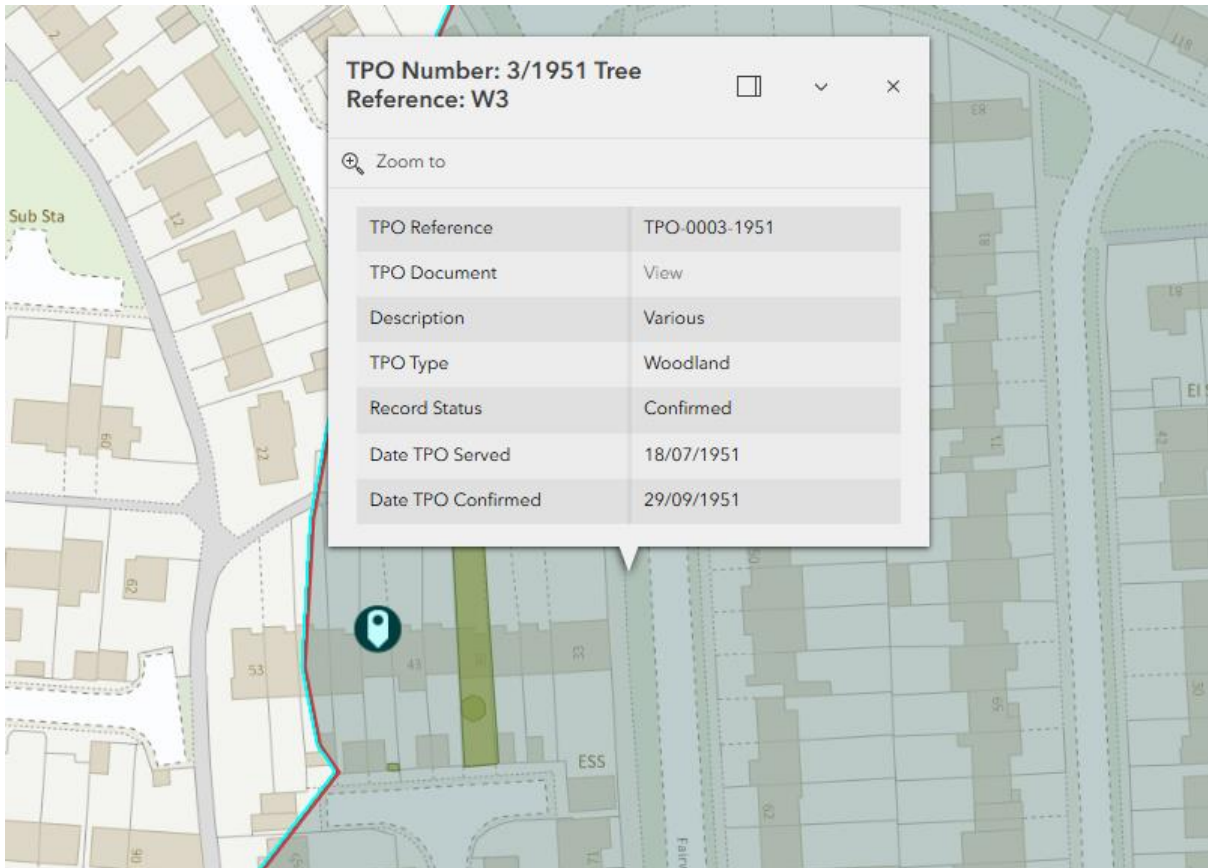


Figure 1 – Wokingham Borough Council Tree Preservation Order Map

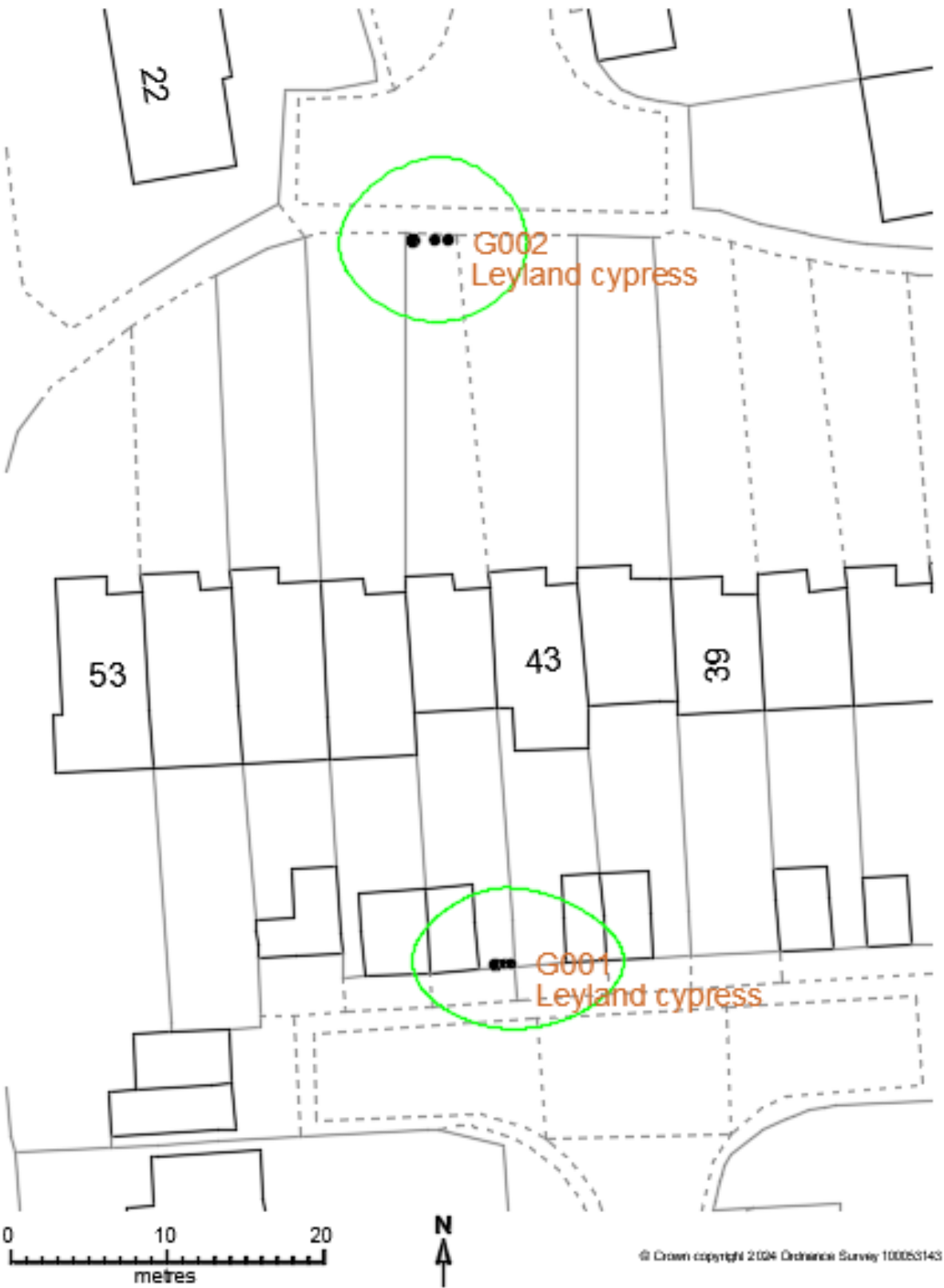
SURVEY DATA

Ref.	Species	Measurements	Survey Notes	Condition	Inspect Period	Recommendations
G001	Leyland cypress (<i>X Cuprocyparis leylandii</i>)	Trunk diameters (mm): 610, 460, 440 Height (m): 15.5 Crown Radius (m): 4.5N, 7.5E, 4.5S, 6W Stems: 3	Three stems planted very close together such that the mature stems are now touching. The tree group is less than 1.5m from the adjacent garages. Girdling roots around the base. All three trees have previously been topped around 2m above ground level and again at 4m. This has created a dense branching structure with poor form and areas of bark inclusion. The broad low crown extends low over the garden of 45 Fairwater Drive. The broad, collective canopy is also in direct contact with the garage roof and obscures the streetlight to the southeast. All three trees have a poor structural form from past management and the group frequently drops small to medium sized branches over the garden and road. Foliage dense, good vitality.	Poor	-	Fell to ground level
G002	Leyland cypress (<i>X Cuprocyparis leylandii</i>)	Trunk diameters (mm): 500, 560, 700. Height (m): 16.5 Crown Radius (m): 5.5N, 5.5E, 5S, 6.5W Stems: 3 Life Stage: Mature Life Exp.: 40+ Years	Three lapsed hedgerow trees growing adjacent to parking area. Individual trees are more widely planted than with G001. Multi-stem from 1.5m. Included bark in forks. Low canopy branches under 100mm diameter obstruct footpath to 45 Fairwater Drive. Multiple leaders in upper crown. Foliage dense. Good vitality. Historic bark wounds on several low branches 1.8m canopy clearance over parking, 2m over pavement.	Fair	2 Years	Reduce crown height by approximately 4m. Crown lift to 3.5m over parking spaces and 2.5m over pavement. Selectively remove secondary branches under 70mm diameter to clear access to 44 Fairwater Drive. Timescale: 28-Nov-2025 (1 Year)

Reasons for the proposed work: Both tree groups are lapsed hedging trees with defects associated with past poor management. Trees in G001 are growing south of the property and in this location cast an unacceptable degree of shade over the residential properties to the north. Individual stems are growing together with areas of bark inclusion between the trunks. The trees are overly close to residential properties and garages and cannot grow to their full potential without impacting on property.

G002 is north and further away from residential dwellings. Shade cast by the tree group is away from the property and over the public highway. The individual trees within the group are more widely spaced and can continue to grow without impacting the property. However, as with G001, the group has been topped and heavily managed in the past. Works are therefore recommended to reduce the height of the group to reduce the length / weight of branches beyond the previous reduction points. Works are also required to raise the canopies over the access path, foot path and public highway for pedestrian access.

SITE PLAN



GALLERY



Photo 1 – Combined canopy of G001. Streetlight obscured. Trees are overbearing in relation to the adjacent residential gardens.

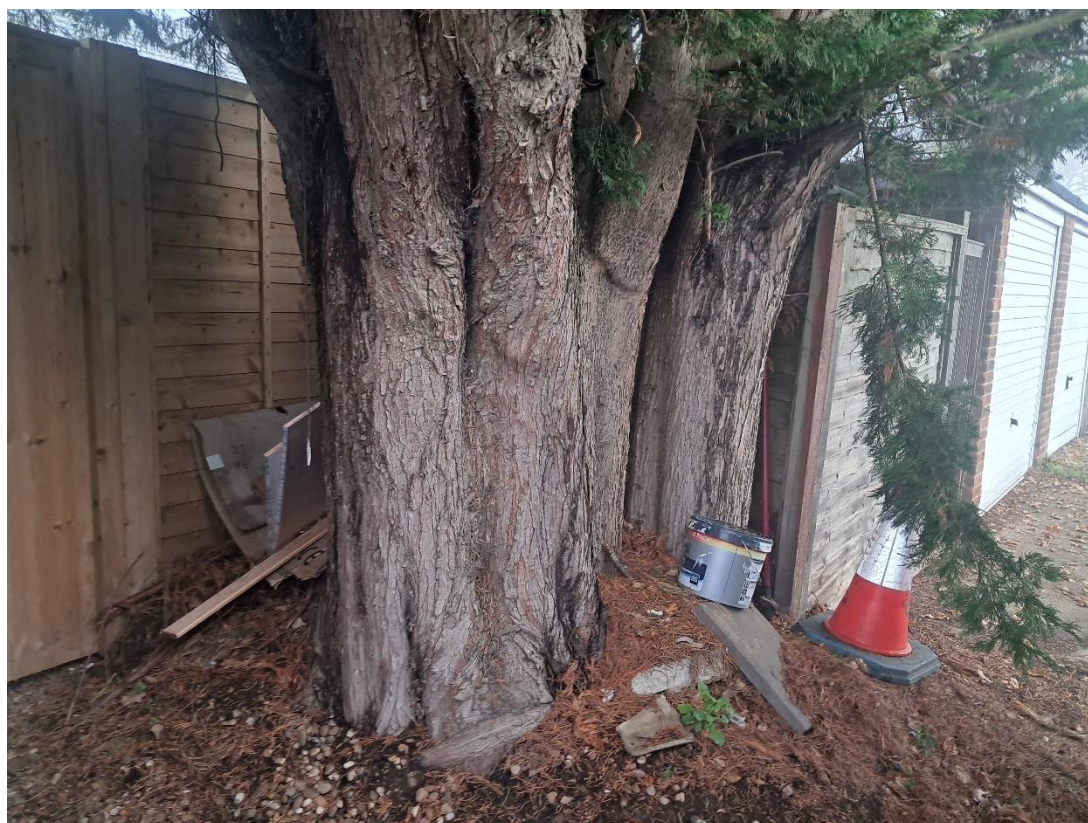


Photo 2 – G001 – densely planted stems now touching. Future stem growth unsustainable.



Photo 3 – G001 – poor form with multiple points of growth above previous topping points 2m above ground level.

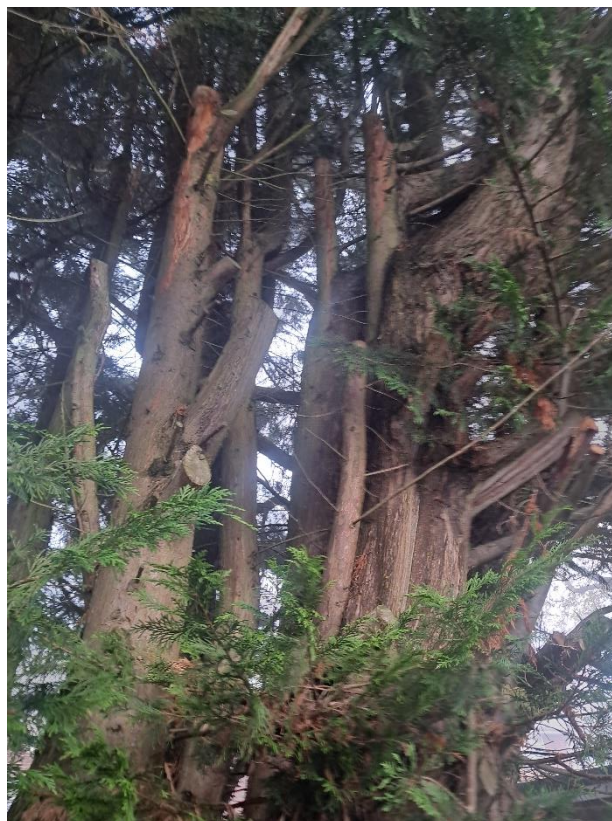


Photo 4 – Dead branch stubs associated with previous topping points. Stumps of side branches from previous branch failure.



Photo 5 – G002 - North side of group canopy and indicative line of proposed reduction



Photo 6 – G002 - South side of group canopy with indicative line of proposed canopy reduction. Note low branches over access path.



Photo 7 – G002 – Low branches block access to property



Photo 8 – G002 – Low canopy over footpath and parking