

Tel: (0118) 974 6000
Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 21 April 2026
My ref: TF/TPO/1798/2021/260272



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Ralph Anderson
Anderson Contractors Limited
49 Nine Mile Ride
Finchampstead
Wokingham
RG40 4ND

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

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr Anderson,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 1798/2021
APPLICATION NUMBER: 260272
LOCATION: LAND TO THE REAR OF 59 NINE MILE RIDE, FINCHAMPSTEAD,
WOKINGHAM, RG40 4ND

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received on 03 February 2026 and validated on the 11 February 2026.

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

Approved works to W1 of TPO 1798/2021:

A mature oak tree suitable for veteranisation was identified within the south of the woodland and already had several dead limbs and deadwood features (see Image No. 04 within detailed work specification report). Ideally veteranisation techniques would seek to implement coronet cuts on the upper limbs, and creation of woodpecker holes over the coming winter. However, ring-barked branches, plunge cuts, hanging branches, and vertical fissures are dramatic and invasive measures which need to be sensitively applied by a professional arborist or tree surgeon with experience of veteranisation techniques. Given the quality of the specimen, it is recommended that only small, low-impact measures are implemented initially to assess the tree's response.

Officer comments:

The application seeks consent for the veteranisation of a single oak tree protected under the Woodland Tree Preservation Order 1798/2021.

The oak in question is not currently a veteran tree. It is, however, of comparatively poor form and condition, with some existing deadwood features. Because of this the tree is of limited arboricultural merit in its current state. In view of this, the Council considers that the tree presents an opportunity for habitat enhancement through carefully managed veteranisation techniques. It is emphasised that veteranisation is intended to accelerate the development of veteran tree characteristics over time; it is not a substitute for naturally occurring veteran trees, which remain irreplaceable features within the landscape.

The Council would not ordinarily support veteranisation works to protected trees. However, in this specific instance, an exception is made based on the tree's limited amenity value, its existing condition, and the potential to enhance its ecological contribution. The proposed works are therefore accepted as a controlled and proportionate operation, effectively acting as a monitored test case.

In terms of landscape and visual amenity, the tree makes a relatively modest contribution to the wider woodland setting. The proposed veteranisation works are low impact in nature and will be implemented incrementally. As such, no significant adverse visual effects are anticipated.

It is noted that the works will be undertaken sensitively by a suitably qualified and experienced arborist, with an initial focus on minor interventions to avoid undue stress to the tree. The Council is satisfied, based on the information provided, that the proposed works are unlikely to result in the loss of the tree.

Given the experimental nature of veteranisation in this context, it is necessary to secure a programme of monitoring to assess the tree's response over time. It will also have the added benefit of informing future decision-making although this is not the reason for making monitoring a condition. Furthermore, the Council will require reasonable access to the site, upon prior notice, to undertake inspections as necessary.

For the avoidance of doubt, this consent relates solely to the veteranisation of the identified oak tree. The Council remains clear that such works will only be supported in exceptional circumstances and where robust justification is provided.

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **21 April 2028** and in the event of the works not being completed by that date, further consent will be required.
2. The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the submitted specification and shall be limited to low impact veteranisation techniques unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All works shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced arborist, with demonstrable experience in veteranisation practices. A monitoring report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority at 1 year, 5 years, and 10 years following completion of the works. Each report shall assess the tree's physiological condition, structural integrity, habitat value, and response to the veteranisation techniques, and shall include photographic evidence.
3. Climbing spikes shall not be used whilst undertaking any form of works on living trees, except on trees to be felled.
4. Prior to the commencement of the works the applicant will provide for the approval (in writing) of the council, a programme of arboricultural and ecological monitoring of the tree and of the veteranisation works. Such programme will include monitoring of the fungi (including lichen symbionts), plants, animals and bryophytes associated with the tree with baseline survey at the time of works and surveys at five and ten years. Such survey is to include for proposals to remedy or enhance the veteran tree habitat at each stage.

Reasons for conditions 1-4...

1. To ensure that our records remain accurate.
2. To ensure the health, safety and visual amenity of the tree(s).
3. Spikes can cause extensive long-term damage to trees.
4. To ensure that the works produce suitable veteran tree habitat niches for rare and protected organisms, particularly saproxylic organisms.

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 currently can 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>

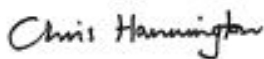
Telephone: 0303 444 5570 or e-mail it to: treeandhedgeappeals@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

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 may be required.

If we can be of any further assistance, please contact the Tree and Landscape 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