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Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 4 September 2026
My ref: TF/TPO/119/1976/261607



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Michael Gale
3 Aldworth Gardens
Crowthorne
Wokingham
RG45 6PQ

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

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr Gale,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 119/1976
APPLICATION NUMBER: 261607
LOCATION: 3 ALDWORTH GARDENS, CROWTHORNE, WOKINGHAM, RG45 6PQ

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received and validated on the 07 July 2026.

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

Approved works to Single 25 and A1 of TPO 119/1976:

T25, Beech Tree:

- To raise the crown to 5m and to reduce the crown overall by 2.5m.

A1, Oak Tree:

- Removal of dead branches.

Reasons stated for works:

Beech tree (T25) is a large, mature tree in the front garden of 3 Aldworth Gardens. It has been subject to periodic authorised trimming to keep it at a safe size. The last such works were carried out in 2020 (Ref KN/TPO/119/1976/182312). This year the tree has experienced a sudden branch drop of a major limb on the 1/7/26. The limb was c.25cm in diameter and would have posed significant risk to any person or vehicle underneath it. The tree is very heavily loaded with nuts and these represent a significant load on the tree. There was no warning or indications that this failure might occur and we have placed a notice in the front garden to alert drivers to the risk of further falls. We have consulted an arborist (Warner Trees) and received a recommendation to raise the crown to 5m and to reduce the crown overall by 2.5m. This is with the objective of restoring the shape of the tree and to reduce the loading on the major limbs to safer levels. We have lived in the property for 32 years and have no wish to have the tree felled but we do want it to be kept in a safe condition for all.

Officer comments:

The proposed works to T25 (Beech) are considered acceptable on arboricultural grounds and consent is granted. The supporting information identifies a recent failure of a substantial limb from the crown, and whilst the precise cause of that failure has not been determined, the incident demonstrates that parts of the crown are subject to elevated loading and that the tree occupies a location where branch failure has the potential to affect people, vehicles and adjacent property.

The tree has a documented history of crown reduction, with the most recent authorised pruning works undertaken in 2020. Site inspection confirms that substantial regrowth has developed from previous reduction points. In mature beech, regrowth arising from historic pruning wounds can become increasingly elongated and heavily weighted over time. Such shoots are frequently attached via secondary unions which may not possess the same structural integrity as naturally formed branch architecture. As the regrowth increases in length, diameter and end-weight, the potential for tearing, splitting or failure at these attachment points correspondingly increases.

The Council accepts that a degree of crown reduction is justified to reduce end-weight on extended lateral limbs, lessen mechanical loading on historic pruning points and assist in managing the future risk of branch failure. The proposed works will also help restore a more balanced crown form following the recent limb loss and provide an appropriate cyclical management intervention consistent with the tree's established pruning history.

However, Beech is generally less tolerant of severe crown reduction than many other broadleaved species. Excessive pruning can result in large pruning wounds, increased susceptibility to decay, physiological stress, reduced vitality and the production of weakly attached regrowth. Consequently, the Council does not consider it necessary or desirable to uniformly reduce the entire crown by the maximum extent proposed.

The approved reduction should therefore be applied selectively. The full reduction of up to 2.5 metres should be confined to those limbs which are demonstrably overextended, heavily weighted, or projecting beyond the tree's natural crown outline. Elsewhere, a lighter reduction should be undertaken sufficient to rebalance the crown and reduce loading whilst retaining as much leaf-bearing material as reasonably practicable. This approach will minimise the size of resultant pruning wounds, maintain the tree's physiological health, preserve visual amenity and reduce the likelihood of future decay associated with unnecessarily large pruning cuts.

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **04 September 2028** and in the event of the works not being completed by that date, further consent will be required.
2. The approved crown reduction shall not encroach further than the previous recognised pruning points resulting from earlier authorised crown reduction works.
3. Work must be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998 – 2010 'Tree work - Recommendations'.
4. Climbing spikes shall not be used whilst undertaking any form of works on living trees, except on trees to be felled.

Reasons for conditions 1-4...

1. To ensure that our records remain accurate.
2. The tree has a history of crown reduction and the previous pruning points provide suitable target pruning locations from which established regrowth has developed. Extending reductions beyond these points would necessitate the removal of larger diameter branches, creating disproportionately large wounds which may adversely affect the health, structural integrity and long-term amenity value of the tree. The condition is imposed to ensure that the works remain proportionate, minimise physiological stress, reduce the risk of decay ingress and accord with good arboricultural practice, particularly given the limited tolerance of mature beech trees to heavy crown reduction
3. To maintain the tree's aesthetic value, structural integrity, and physiological health, and to ensure that the works do not result in large pruning wounds, or other detriments likely to impair the tree's long-term vitality or visual amenity.
4. 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 currently can only make a planning appeal online. You cannot currently apply by post.

For more information go to:

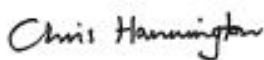
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tree-preservation-order-appeal-form>

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