

Tel: (0118) 974 6000
Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 23 January 2026
My ref: TF/TPO/701/1994/252632



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Phil Hyatt
JDB Contractors & Son Ltd
Timber Mill Yard
Fleet Road
Eversley
RG27 0PY

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

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr Hyatt,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 701/1994
APPLICATION NUMBER: 252632
SITE ADDRESS: 30 MURDOCH ROAD, WOKINGHAM, RG40 2DF

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received on 28 October 2025 and validated on the 31 October 2025.

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 1 of TPO 701/1994:

T1, Lime:

- Reduce height by 5m; cut back branches overhanging driveway and house by 1m.

Reasons stated for works:

T1 - Large Lime tree situated at the front of the property close to the house. Crown reduce by 5 meters. Reduce back by 1 meter the side over hanging the house and driveway - this will also give a better shape to the tree The 5m reduction refers to the height only and the 1 metre side reduction is to reduce the overhang over the house and driveway. The 1 metre reduction will mean that the tree will also be better balanced.

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 the work is in the interests of health and safety or based on any arboricultural need and no overriding reason for the proposed work was apparent.

The proposed works include a crown reduction of approximately 5 metres and a lateral reduction of 1m to the side overhanging the house and driveway. Having assessed the submitted information, the Council considers the proposed works to be excessive, unjustified, and detrimental for the following reasons.

The application does not provide any arboricultural evidence to demonstrate that the proposed level of crown reduction is necessary in the interests of health and safety. No supporting documentation has been submitted identifying structural defects, decay, disease, or abnormal growth patterns that would warrant a reduction of this magnitude.

Furthermore, within the application form, the applicant has confirmed “No” in response to the question regarding the condition of the tree (i.e. whether it is diseased or whether there are fears it may break or fall). This directly contradicts the scale of works proposed, as substantial crown reductions are generally only considered appropriate where there is a demonstrable and significant structural defect or an identified risk that cannot be mitigated through lesser works.

A crown reduction of approximately 5 metres would result in the removal of a substantial proportion of the tree’s functional leaf area and excessive reduction can lead to physiological stress due to sudden loss of photosynthetic capacity, depletion of stored energy reserves and increased susceptibility to pests, pathogens, and decay fungi. Such stress can significantly compromise the long-term vitality of the tree.

Reductions of the scale proposed are likely to result in large pruning wounds. These wounds may be slow to occlude and can act as entry points for decay, particularly in mature trees. Over time, this can lead to internal dysfunction and reduced structural stability.

In addition, heavy crown reduction often stimulates the production of dense epicormic growth particularly in Lime trees. This regrowth is typically weakly attached and can increase future maintenance demands while creating a less stable crown structure, ultimately elevating risk rather than reducing it.

The stated objective of achieving “a better shape” is not considered a valid justification for extensive crown reduction on a protected tree and disproportionate reduction can result in an artificial appearance that is inconsistent with the tree’s natural habit. The proposed works would therefore be detrimental to the tree’s visual amenity value and to the character of the surrounding area.

In the absence of evidence demonstrating a compelling arboricultural, structural, or safety-based need, the proposed crown reduction is considered excessive and harmful. The works would be likely to adversely affect the tree’s health, structural integrity, and amenity value, and are therefore contrary to the purpose of the Tree Preservation Order.

If there are concerns about the trees structural integrity, the Council would welcome a further Tree Work Application supported by appropriate levels of arboricultural evidence i.e. full VTA, climbing inspection (with photographs of all bio-mechanical defects that require remedial pruning) and results of any secondary investigations (i.e. resistograph etc.) to justify the proposed works.

Due to the reasons stated above the proposed works to the subject Lime tree has been refused.

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

Approved Tree Work to Single 1 of TPO 701/1994:

T1, Lime:

- Tip reduce branches to give up to 2m clearance to the adjacent building.
- Tip reduce branches to provide a lower crown clearance of 3m above ground level.

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **23 January 2028** 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’.
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. Ensuring all pruning cuts are made back to suitable growth points.
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 may 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Hannington". The script is cursive and fluid.

Chris Hannington
Trees and Landscape Team Manager

cc. Applicant - Mrs Jennifer Storey, 30 Murdoch Road, Wokingham, RG40 2DF

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