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Date: 17 July 2026
My ref: TF/TPO/780/1996/261116



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Shane Kenny
Associated Arborists
64 Venning Road
Arborfield
RG2 9QG

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

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr Kenny,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 780/1996

APPLICATION NUMBER: 261116

SITE ADDRESS: 23 HEATHERMOUNT DRIVE, CROWTHORNE, WOKINGHAM, RG45 6HJ

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received on 10 May 2026 and validated on the 15 May 2026.

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 A1 of TPO 780/1996:

T4 and T3, Oak (A1 on TPO) - to be felled to ground level and replaced with smaller manageable trees.

Reasons stated for works:

Both trees have a significant lean towards the building and new permitted development which is in the process of being built.

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 and other diagnostic information from an appropriate expert.' To date, no detailed arboricultural information has been submitted to demonstrate that the removal of such prominent trees is in the interests of health and safety or based on any arboricultural need.

The Council acknowledges the applicant's concerns regarding the lean of the subject trees and their relationship to the dwelling and permitted development. However, the evidence submitted does not demonstrate that either tree presents an unacceptable risk requiring removal.

No arboricultural report, tree risk assessment, decay investigation or other technical evidence has been provided to substantiate the assertion that either tree is unsafe or that felling is necessary. The presence of a lean, including a historic lean or asymmetric crown form, does not in itself indicate structural instability or an elevated likelihood of failure. Many mature trees

naturally develop eccentric growth, adaptive buttressing and crown architecture that allow them to remain stable for prolonged periods.

In relation to T4, the description of the tree as having an "80 percent dog-leg lean" is not supported by quantified arboricultural evidence. Visual observations alone are insufficient to demonstrate that the tree is structurally compromised or presents an imminent or foreseeable risk of failure. No evidence has been submitted identifying root plate movement, significant decay, cracking, recent soil heave, fungal fruiting bodies, or other indicators commonly associated with instability.

Similarly, the assertion that T3 and T4 lean towards the dwelling and proposed development does not justify removal. Trees frequently coexist in close proximity to buildings, and the applicant has not demonstrated that the current separation distances are inadequate or that the trees are exerting a direct and unacceptable threat to structures or occupants.

The Council also notes that the proposed development has been designed and progressed in the presence of the protected trees. The relationship between the development and the trees therefore appears to be a foreseeable site constraint rather than a new circumstance arising from unforeseen tree-related issues. The existence of a development proposal does not diminish the protection afforded by the Tree Preservation Order.

Furthermore, insufficient consideration has been given to alternative and less harmful management options. No evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that selective crown reduction or ongoing monitoring have been assessed as reasonable alternatives to complete removal, which represents the most severe option and should only be considered where less intrusive measures would be ineffective.

The proposed replacement planting of smaller, more manageable trees would not adequately mitigate the immediate loss of public amenity provided by the existing mature trees. The trees contribute to the character, landscape quality and visual amenity of the locality through their size and stature. The loss of these mature specimens would result in a substantial reduction in canopy cover and environmental benefits, including visual screening, biodiversity value and carbon storage, which would not be replaced for many decades.

The submitted photograph indicates that the trees remain standing with established form and canopy structure. While a degree of lean is apparent, no obvious signs of active failure or collapse risk are evident from the information supplied. Consequently, the Council is not satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist that would outweigh the significant amenity value of the subject trees.

For these reasons, and in the absence of robust supporting evidence demonstrating that removal is necessary and proportionate, the Council considers that the proposed works would result in an unjustified loss of protected trees and therefore consent is refused

Due to the reasons stated above the proposed removal of T3 and T4 has been refused.

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 signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Chris Hannington
Trees and Landscape Team Manager