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Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 21 November 2025
My ref: TF/TPO/301/1986/252202



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Christine Cowap
7 California Country Park Homes
Nine Mile Ride
Wokingham
RG40 4HT

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

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mrs Cowap,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 301/1986

APPLICATION NUMBER: 252202

**SITE ADDRESS: HOMES, NOS 5, 6 & 7 CALIFORNIA CHALET AND TOURING PARK,
NINE MILE RIDE, FINCHAMPSTEAD, WOKINGHAM, RG40 4HT**

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received and validated on the 15 September 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 20 and 21 of TPO 301/1986:

T2, Scots Pine (T20 on TPO):

- Remove 3 no. lowest major limbs.

T3, Scots Pine (T21 on TPO):

- Remove 5 no. lowest major limbs.

Reasons stated for works:

These trees are in extremely close proximity to homes with TPOs established in 1986 (photo evidence). Most of the current properties on the park have only been in situ in the Park in the last 20 - 25 years with the Park licence only established in 1991. These trees have grown exponentially resulting in branches overhanging nos 5,6 & 7. In addition branches overhang 2 log burner chimneys. - The overhang concerns three properties and this is very considerable for no 6, also reaching beyond the property over the pavement and road. (photo evidence) There have been many instances of branches falling with 2 major incidences occurring: 1 - a large branch fell on the roof of no 5 with damage to the roof which was documented by WBC with permission granted to cut remaining larger branch. 2 - a large branch falling on the garage of no 7 damaging the roof which required completely replacing. - Our home insurance could also be impacted if claims arise for any damage with any trees nearby not being properly managed and maintained. - Pine trees including Scots Pines are subject to 'self pruning' whereby as the tree grows taller the lower branches can become shaded by the upper branches reducing their ability

to photosynthesise. The trees may then shed these less productive branches to conserve energy and resources. In addition in crowded conditions (in this instance 3 large trees in close proximity) pine trees may drop lower branches due to competition for sunlight, water and nutrients. These reasons for us provide a serious threat to our homes and our health and safety, causing constant worries in windy and stormy conditions. In addition the units' plyboard and light roof construction are a further factor. - There is evidence of many branches previously removed on both T20 and T21 (photo evidence) - These trees are not visible from the surrounding public highway due to the large and varied number of trees in the area. They are only visible from within the Park Homes area which is not a public highway.

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 subject Pine trees are mature specimens which are clearly visible from the surrounding public highway contributing significantly to the character and amenities of the local and wider landscape subsequently the trees command high landscape amenity both as individuals and as a group.

The proposed work to remove eight large diameter branches back to the main stem would create multiple wounds which will have a detrimental effect on the health and visual appearance of the trees impairing their ability to produce carbohydrates and sustain themselves and increase their susceptibility to the ingress of decay and dysfunction to their main supporting structure. Additionally, the excessive removal of lower branches can lead to the development of poor stem/crown balance, where a tree may become top heavy consequently subjecting the main stem to increased forces.

The complete removal of medium to large diameter branches should only be considered if, owing to decay or structural weakness, there is a need to remove the risk of branch failure. While tree work can be desirable to accommodate the size and position of the trees, any work that exposes the woody tissues is a form of damage/wounding that can be detrimental to the long-term health and structural integrity of a tree. Some lesser pruning works appear to be reasonable to give greater separation to the adjacent residential structures which are detailed below.

On balance the information submitted for the proposed works are not sufficient justification for the detrimental pruning of prominent landscape trees, however 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 above proposed tree work have 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 20 and 21 of TPO 301/1986:

T2, Scots Pine (T20 on TPO):

- Remove the two low hanging branches on the northwest side back to source.
- Crown clean removing deadwood and decayed branches.
- Tip reduce low hanging branches to provide a crown clearance of 8m above ground level.

T3, Scots Pine (T21 on TPO):

- Remove lowest branch with wounding and decay on southwest side back to source.
- Crown clean removing deadwood and decayed branches
- Tip reduce the lower overextending branches by up to 2.5m
- Tip reduce low hanging branches to provide a crown clearance of 8m above ground level.

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **21 November 2027** 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'. Ensuring all pruning is taken back to a suitable growth point.
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 would 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

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