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Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 15 December 2025
My ref: TF/TPO/781/1996/252560



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mrs Elise Morgan
76 Heathermount Drive
Crowthorne
Wokingham
RG45 6HN

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

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mrs Morgan,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 781/1996

APPLICATION NUMBER: 252560

SITE ADDRESS: 76 HEATHERMOUNT DRIVE, CROWTHORNE, WOKINGHAM, RG45 6HN

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received and validated on the 21 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 A1 of TPO 781/1996:

T2, Norway Maple:

- Reduce limbs on all sides by 1.5m

Reasons stated for works:

Work Required: To raise the crown of tree to 3 meters (currently the tree is at risk of damage from some onsite deliveries), to shorten limbs on all sides by 1.5 meters (tidy crossing branches to further protect tree from future disease) and to raise any overhanging branches over the highway to 5.5 meters. See Aerial photo showing relationship of Tree -T2 in relation to the road (Heathermount Drive) & house. The tree is approximately 3 meters from Highway and approx. 9 meters from house.

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 application does not provide sufficient arboricultural evidence to demonstrate that a uniform reduction of 1.5 metres to all sides of the crown is necessary. The tree is located approximately 3 metres from the highway and approximately 9 metres from the adjacent dwelling, distances which are considered adequate for a mature Norway maple of this size. No evidence has been submitted to indicate that the current crown spread is causing structural damage, actionable nuisance, or presenting an unacceptable risk to persons or property.

The proposed reduction is expressed as a blanket dimensional reduction rather than as a targeted, arboriculturally justified operation. Such an approach does not reflect the principles of good arboricultural practice set out in BS3998:2010 - Tree Work - Recommendations, which advises that pruning should be undertaken to achieve a clearly defined objective and should be limited to the minimum necessary to meet that objective.

A reduction of 1.5 metres to all aspects of the crown would necessitate multiple pruning cuts throughout the canopy. While individual wounds may be relatively small, cumulatively they represent a significant level of wounding. This would increase the tree's susceptibility to decay organisms and physiological stress, particularly in a species such as Norway maple, which can be sensitive to excessive or repeated pruning.

The subject tree makes a positive contribution to the visual amenity of the area, forming part of a mature tree streetscape. The proposed crown reduction would result in a noticeable alteration to the tree's natural form and balance, leading to a loss of amenity value that is not justified by the reasons provided.

Unnecessary crown reduction is likely to stimulate reactive growth, leading to a denser crown and an increased need for future pruning interventions. This would be contrary to the long-term interests of the tree and inconsistent with the statutory duty to protect trees of amenity value.

While the Council accepts that limited crown lifting and the removal of deadwood and rubbing branches are reasonable and proportionate to address clearance and general tree management, the proposed reduction of all sides by 1.5m is considered unnecessary, not sufficiently justified, and likely to be harmful to the health, appearance, and long-term retention of the protected tree.

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 reduction of 1.5m on all sides 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 A1 of TPO 781/1996:

T1, Norway Maple:

- Crown lift to 3m and crown lift branches overhanging the highway to 5.5m
- Crown clean to remove dead, damaged and rubbing branches.

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **15 December 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'. The crown lift must only involve the tip reduction of minor tertiary and secondary branch ends to create some vertical lift of the tree canopy to 3m (5.5 over the road) above ground level and must avoid the removal of main structural branches and branches more than 40mm in diameter back to the main stem.
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,



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