

Tel: (0118) 974 6000
Email: development.control@wokingham.gov.uk
Date: 23 September 2025
My ref: CY/TPO/1901/2022/251818



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mr Andre Dubourg
The Treeple Arborists Ltd
28 Westcotts Green
Warfield
Berkshire
RG42 3SG

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

Tel: (0118) 974 6000

Dear Mr Dubourg,

TREE PRESERVATION ORDER NUMBER: 1901/2022

APPLICATION NUMBER: 251818

SITE ADDRESS: WALDEN ACRES, WOKINGHAM ROAD, HURST, WOKINGHAM, BERKS, RG10 0RU

I am writing to you regarding your application to carry out works to protected tree(s), which was received and validated on the 29 July 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 Area 1 of TPO 1901/2022:

T1, Ash
- Fell.

Reasons stated for works:

The tree has recently lost 3 limbs in just over a month. One of the limbs failed over a power line and was hanging in it.

We have conducted a thorough assessment of this tree, and it appears to have badly included unions and excessive limb overextension. Also, when looking at the base, we can see that there are a lot of exposed roots due to the ditch culvert/ water run-off pipe. This is a cause for concern, as it would likely have an impact on the tree's structure and may also damage the pipes, potentially leading to flooding of the ditch. We would also be concerned that this tree could succumb to ash dieback in the future, as it seems to have a few signs of the disease already. Another worry is that it grows over a busy road (Wokingham Road) on a blind corner; if there were to be further limb failures, the traffic may not have the time to see a fallen limb in the road. As previously stated, it also has power lines that are directly underneath it, increasing the risk and urgency to do something about the tree that has already shed 3 major limbs.

The tree is also covered in ivy, meaning it has more of a sail for the wind to catch it, and to make matters worse, there is a large open field/farm land directly opposite, which allows the wind to continually batter the tree. There is also a gas main just below the tree that appears to travel underneath the tree (see pic Waden acres ash base roots and gas main). We would strongly recommend this tree be removed.

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 extent of the proposed work was apparent.

One of the reasons for the proposed tree removal was that exposed roots "may also damage the pipes, potentially leading to flooding of the ditch". No evidence was submitted to demonstrate that tree roots have yet caused any drainage problems.

It is stated in the application that "this tree could succumb to ash dieback in the future, as it seems to have a few signs of the disease already." Please note that the presence of Ash Dieback Disease alone is not sufficient to justify tree removal. As per the Forestry Commission and Tree Council guidance, the decision to fell an Ash tree should be based on the extent of canopy dieback (e.g., more than 50% crown decline), signs of structural instability, significant bark necrosis, or severe cracking. At the time of the Council's Tree Officer's inspection on 16 September 2025, the subject Ash tree had a full crown with minimal signs of Ash Dieback Disease.

The subject Ash tree is multi-stemmed and the lower trunks are obscured by ivy. Ground level inspection found no visual sign of significant defect or decay; there was also no sign of branch failure such as split unions. It is one of the few large trees in the immediate vicinity and is an important landscape feature in the area. Its removal will have a negative impact on the visual amenity of the area.

If there are concerns over the trees structural integrity the Council would welcome a further Tree Work Application supported by appropriate levels of arboricultural evidence i.e. full VTA, aerial inspection (with photographs of all bio-mechanical defects) and results of any internal decay detection investigations of the lower main stem and/or scaffold branches (i.e. Sonic Tomograph and/or Resistograph Drill) to justify the proposed reduction works.

Due to the reasons stated above the proposed works to T1 have been refused.

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

Approved Tree Work to Area 1 of TPO 1901/2022:

T1, Ash

- Crown reduction of the southwest quadrant to create 1.5m clearance to power line, and 5.2m vertical clearance over Wokingham Road
- Crown clean to remove any dead, diseased, or dysfunctional branches back to suitable growth points
- Sever ivy at tree base (exempt)

The consent is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The above works must be completed before **23 September 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 branches are taken back to a suitable growth points.
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.
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

cc. Applicant: Mr Ben Mansfield, Walden Acres, Wokingham Road, Hurst, RG10 0RU

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