

Planning Applications Committee

30 April 2025



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PROPOSED TREE WORK TO ONE COUNCIL BEECH TREE BETWEEN HADLEIGH RISE AND HARLECH AVENUE, READING
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee
Report author	Sarah Hanson, Natural Environment Officer
Lead councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Council priority	Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
Ward	Emmer Green
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To approve the proposed tree works subject to no substantive objections being received within the consultation period.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. To report to Committee on proposed work to one Beech tree on land between Harlech Avenue and Hadleigh Rise; that being T1 of TPO 60/14 (copy of TPO plan attached – Appendix 1).

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. Local Plan policy EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLANDS includes the aim for
'Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading's vegetation cover will be extended'.
- 2.2. The protection of Council trees where appropriate to do so contributes to this policy aim.
- 2.3. The Reading Borough Council adopted Tree Strategy (2021) sets 12 Objectives, which can be viewed here: [Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy, March 2021](#) . Appropriate management of Council, protected trees meets the aims of Objective 1.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The tree is located on a strip of Council land between Harlech Avenue and Hadleigh Rise in Caversham Park Village (to the rear of 3 Harlech Avenue). On 7 April 2025 an application was received from the

Arboricultural Contracts manager in Streetscene seeking consent for a 2m crown reduction of the Beech tree (application reference PL/25/0543). The reason for the pruning is cited as being '*to help alleviate complaints from local residents and Councillors for shade, overhang branches and debris the causing drain and guttering blockages and mess*'. An indication of the reduction can be seen in Appendix 2.

- 3.2. Complaints have been ongoing for a number of years relating to nuisance issues caused by the tree. Ward councillors Cllr Mitchell (on behalf of 6, 8, 10 & 12 Hadleigh Rise) and Cllr Daya Pal Singh (also on behalf of Hadleigh Rise residents) have requested that Streetscene prune the tree to alleviate the resident's concerns. The work proposed aims to alleviate the nuisance issues experienced by adjacent residents whilst not being harmful to the health or amenity value of the tree. It is understood that the residents do not wish to see the tree removed, only regularly pruned to address their concerns.
- 3.3. As the Council-maintained tree in question is subject to a Tree Preservation Order, a formal tree works application is required for the works to be approved.
- 3.4. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires applications for works to protected Council owned or maintained trees to be decided by a Committee of the Council which is not responsible for managing the land to which the application relates
- 3.5. Current Position - be mindful of the need to provide evidence to back up what the current position is and also for proposed changes what the effects are likely to be.
- 3.6. The law also requires a public notice to be displayed for at least 21 days giving details of the proposed works and contact details for any comments to be sent.
- 3.7. The works proposed are necessary in order to appropriately manage this tree to alleviate concerns. The proposed reduction will not have a significant detrimental impact on the health or amenity value of the tree. Subject to no substantive objections or comments being received as a result of the public notice, it is recommended that the works be approved

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. Trees within the Council's ownership improve the quality of its open spaces and provide multiple environment benefits, including improvement of air quality. The retention, planting and appropriate management of Council trees promotes a healthy environment in Reading.
- 4.2. The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:
 - Promote more equal communities in Reading
 - Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
 - Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint

- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
 - Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
- 4.3. In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:
- Putting residents first
 - Building on strong foundations
 - Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities
 - Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
 - Being proudly ambitious for Reading
- 4.4. Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website - [Council plan - Reading Borough Council](#). These priorities and the Council Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2. Trees have multiple environmental benefits that include flood alleviation, wildlife benefits, air pollution mitigation and air cooling. The proposed works are not expected to substantially impact the tree's contribution to these multiple environmental benefits, as the intention of the works is to enable the tree to be retained in preference to felling

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. A site Notice was placed adjacent to the Beech tree on 14 April 2025 and will be left for the required 21-day period until 5 May 2025. An update on any public comments received so far will be provided at Planning Applications Committee.
- 6.2. The application has also been available to view via Public Access

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. None required.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. None

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. Service and administration of Tree Preservation Orders falls under the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012.
- 9.2. Preparing, serving confirmation and contravention of TPO's are services dealt with by the Council's Legal Section.
- 9.3. Determination of applications affecting work to protected trees is delegated to officers except where the proposal has been submitted by or on behalf of the Council.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. None of this report. It is understood that works to the tree would be funded by the Council from existing budgets.

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. Once issued, tree work approvals last for a period of 2 years, i.e. must be carried out within that period. A Condition of consent will be attached to the works (if approved) limiting implementation to July-September or December-January to limit the detrimental impact on the health of the tree.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. Register of Tree Preservation Orders

Appendices

- 1. TPO plan of TPO 60/14**
- 2. Photographs**

Appendix 2 – Photographs



Indicative reduction