

Planning Applications Committee

7 October 2026



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	FELLING OF ONE OAK TREE REAR OF 26 WINTERBERRY WAY, 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	Caversham Heights
Recommendations	The Committee is asked: 1. To approve the proposed tree work subject to no substantive objections being received.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. To report to Committee on the proposed felling of one Council Oak tree rear of 26 Winterberry Way - T6026 of TPO 333 (map extracts provided in 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 Oak tree is located on Council land to the rear of 26 Winterberry Way. A recent inspection of the Oak advised the following:

07N6: *Large fungal fruiting body (Laetiporus sulphureus) seen at approx 5m whilst on Winterberry way. Fungus is growing on the main stem directly below cavity and included union with high likelihood of catastrophic limb failure resulting in significant potential for large sections of tree to fail into garden or building due to close proximity. Additionally a large wound on east side from lightning strike compounding issue.*

Given the findings, a tree works application was submitted and received on 17 September 2026 – reference PL/26/1238 – seeking approval to fell the tree. The proposal is to leave a 5m monolith (trunk) for wildlife, rather than felling to ground level.

- 3.2 For information, a second Oak (ID:0GHZ) nearby was identified as being dead and notice of felling has been provided. Formal approval is not required in this case. Again, a monolith (3m) is being left for wildlife value.
- 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 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.
- 3.6 The works proposed are necessary in order to appropriately manage the risk the tree presents to the adjacent residents. The consultation period would come to an end after the Committee meeting, but given the safety issues presented by the condition of the tree it is not considered appropriate to wait until the November meeting of PAC. Subject to no substantive objections 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 sustainable and healthy environment in Reading and helps to reduce its carbon footprint, one of the five priorities of the Council Plan 2025/28.

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 replacement planting overall represents a net gain in tree number hence contributed to the Council's aims.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. A site Notice was placed outside 26 Winterberry Way on 18 September 2026 and left for the required 21-day period, i.e. until 12 October 2026.
- 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. No implications identified.

8. Health Implications

- 8.1 Trees have significant benefits for both physical and mental health, but on this occasion the condition of the tree presents a risk to the health and safety of residents.

9. Other Relevant Considerations

- 9.1. None

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1. 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.
- 10.2. Preparing, serving confirmation and contravention of TPO's are services dealt with by the Council's Legal Section.
- 10.3. 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.

11. Financial Implications

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

12. Timetable for Implementation

- 12.1. Once issued, tree work approvals last for a period of 2 years, i.e. must be carried out within that period.

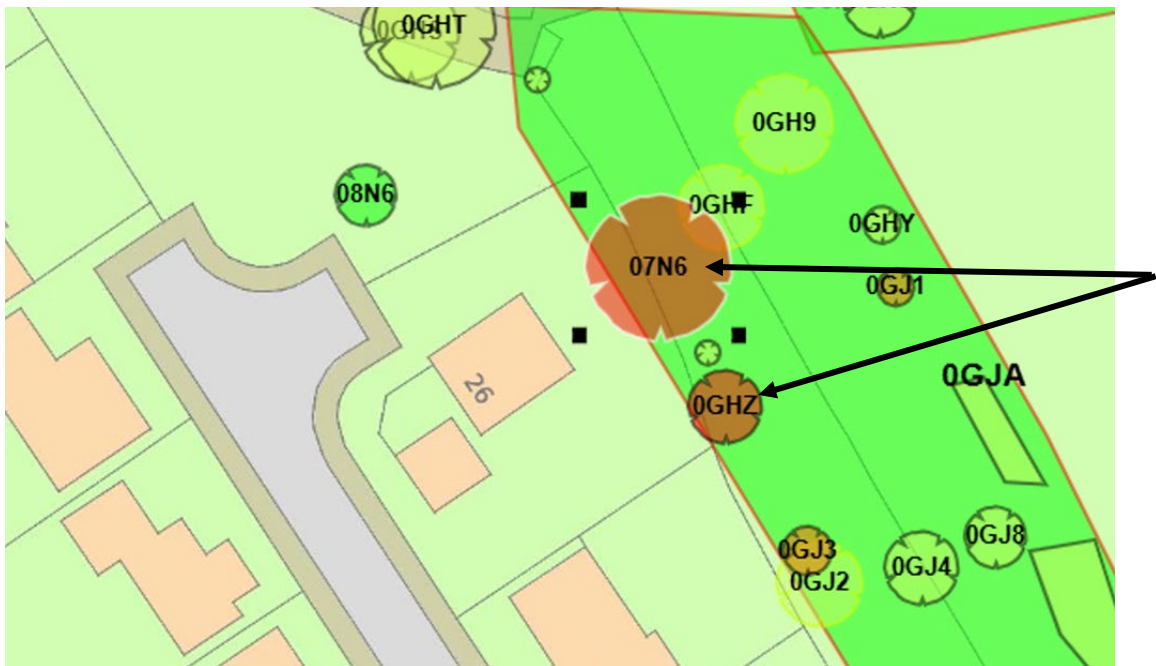
13. Background Papers

- 13.1. Register of Tree Preservation Orders

Appendices

1. iShare extract showing protected trees & Location Plan from Arbortrack
2. Photograph

Appendix 1 – iShare extract & Location Plan from Arbortrack



Appendix 2



T6026 / 07NG