



LAND ADJACENT TO 43 UPPER REDLANDS ROAD READING

ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT

for

MR
MOHAMMAD SAOOD

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. ACD Environmental have been instructed by Mr Mohammad Saood, to prepare the following report to ensure protection for all retained trees on the development site at Land Adjacent To 43 Upper Redlands Road, Reading. Implementation of the protection methods and other details within this report are integral to achieving this goal.
- 1.2. This report was revised (rev A) in March 2025 to reflect arboricultural impacts from an updated layout. This sees the additional removal of T1 ('C' category), and a significant reduction in new hard surfacing proposed within the RPA of T5 ('A' category) compared to the re-application layout.
- 1.3. This Method Statement is to be made available to all operatives on site during the construction process, so that they understand the scope and importance of the measures set out for tree protection.
- 1.4. For details of trees to be retained, and locations and types of special protection methods, reference should be made to the latest revision of the corresponding Tree Protection Plan (ref: PRI24678-03A), which should be displayed prominently on site for all staff to see.
- 1.5. To ensure accuracy and avoid future costly adjustments, the Tree Protection Fence and Ground Protection must be set out by a surveyor with all node points being marked clearly on site for the fencing contractor to work to. The AutoCAD version of the Tree Protection Plan is available on request.
- 1.6. The information contained within this Arboricultural Method Statement is in line with BS5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations'.
- 1.7. The controlling authority is Reading Borough Council who can be contacted at:
Address: Reading Borough Council, Planning, Reading Borough Council Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LU.
Email: plgadmin@reading.gov.uk
Telephone: 01189373787
- 1.8. Any questions relating to the content of this report should be directed in the first instance to: ACD Environmental, Unit 7, Godalming Business Centre, Woolsack Way, Godalming, GU7 1XW, 01483 425714, quoting the site address and report reference number.
- 1.9. The following abbreviations have been used throughout this document:
 - Root Protection Area – RPA.
 - Construction Exclusion Zone – CEZ.
 - Tree Protection Plan – TPP.
 - Tree Protection Fencing – TPF.

2. Phasing of Operations for Tree Protection

- 2.1. Implementation of tree protection measures on the site must be carried out in the following order:
- 1) Tree removals and tree surgery.
 - 2) Line of tree protection fence to be set out to node points by surveyor.
 - 3) Accurate erection of tree protection fence and ground protection.
 - 4) **Pre-commencement site meeting with project arboriculturist, Local Authority Tree Officer, site manager and groundworkers.**
 - 5) Site accessible to construction/demolition traffic.
 - 6) Demolition/site clearance.
 - 7) Re-alignment of the protection fencing as indicated on tree protection plan.
 - 8) Construction Phase.
 - 9) Removal of tree protection fencing.
 - 10) Remedial tree surgery (if required).
- 2.2. The above phasing must not be changed without approval from the project arboriculturist and agreement with the Council.

3. Site Supervision

- 3.1. The development process will be subject to arboricultural supervision where construction work inside the construction exclusion zone is required, and for the installation of any special detail (e.g., no-dig surface). Therefore, input and/or supervision from the project arboriculturist will be required at the following stages:
- 1) Tree removals and access facilitation pruning.
 - 2) Accurate erection of tree protection measures.
 - 3) Site meeting with project arboriculturist, Local Authority Tree Officer, site manager and groundworkers.
 - 4) Demolition/site clearance.
 - 5) Re-alignment of protective fencing.
 - 6) Excavation within retained RPAs.
- 3.2. Arboricultural supervision is to be carried out at all crucial stages throughout the development process to ensure detailed tasks are carried out as per the approved methodology, and during any other, unplanned incursions into protection areas, for whatever reason.
- 3.3. Supervision will usually require the arboriculturist to be present throughout the entire task, to ensure all arboricultural objectives are met. However, if the task is to take a long period of time or consist of repetitive tasks, provided that the arboriculturist is satisfied, and after an additional 'tool-box talk' the supervision may be reduced to telephone contact between the site foreman/contractor and arboriculturist, with photos supplied as requested.
- 3.4. The arboriculturist will keep a record of site visits and provide a record to the local authority accordingly.
- 3.5. No development or other operations shall take place except in complete accordance with the approved Arboricultural Method Statement. If satisfied this is the case, a signed certificate of compliance can be provided by the appointed arboriculturist to the local planning authority on completion and prior to the first occupation of the dwellings.

4. Tree Protection Areas

- 4.1. Based on tree survey data, tree protection areas have been determined for every retained tree. These areas are designed to protect at least a functional minimum of tree root mass in order to ensure that the trees survive the construction process.
- 4.2. Review of the 'Tree Preservation Order Directory'¹ and Reading Councils 'Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal' report and corresponding plan², both available on the Local Authority's website, indicate that there are no TPOs active against any of the surveyed trees, however the site is located within a the 'Redlands Conservation Area'.
- 4.3. All works to trees within a Conservation Area (outside of those approved as part of a full planning approval) require a minimum 6-week notice submitted to the council in writing prior to commencement of the works.
- 4.4. It is the responsibility of everyone engaged in the construction process to respect the tree protection measures and observe the necessary precautions within and adjacent to them.

5. Restrictions Within Tree Protection Areas

- 5.1. Inside the exclusion area of the fencing, the following shall apply:
 - No mechanical excavation whatsoever.
 - No excavation by any other means without arboricultural site supervision.
 - No hand digging without a written method statement having first been approved by the project arboriculturist.
 - No lowering of levels for any purpose (except removal of grass sward using hand tools).
 - No storage of plant or materials.
 - No storage or handling of any chemical including cement washings.
 - No vehicular access.
 - No fire lighting.
- 5.2. In addition to the above, further precautions are necessary adjacent to trees:
 - No substances injurious to tree health, including fuels, oil, bitumen, cement (including cement washings), builders' sand, concrete mixing and other chemicals shall be stored or used within or directly adjacent to the protection area of retained trees.
 - No fire shall be lit such that flames come within 5m of tree foliage.

6. Site Storage, Parking and Welfare Facilities

- 6.1. The site will require provision for; site storage, contractor parking, welfare facilities, temporary services/drainage, material drop of points, etc.
- 6.2. No details of these provisions are available at the time of writing of this report.
- 6.3. None of the above provisions will be sited within RPAs of retained trees without the input or the project arboriculturist and the consent of the Local Authority.

¹ https://images.reading.gov.uk/2024/07/Tree-Preservation-Order-Directory-reformatted_080824.docx

² https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/Redlands_Full.pdf

7. Avoiding Damage to Stems and Branches

- 7.1. Care shall be taken when planning site operations in proximity of retained trees to ensure that wide or tall loads, or plant with booms, jibs and counterweights, can operate without coming into contact with retained trees. Such contact can result in serious injury to them and might make their safe retention impossible.
- 7.2. Consequently, any transit or traverse of plant in proximity of trees shall be conducted under the supervision of a banksman, to ensure that adequate clearance from trees is at all times maintained. In some circumstances, it may be impossible to achieve this without pruning works known as 'access facilitation pruning'.
- 7.3. Access facilitation pruning shall be kept to the barest minimum necessary to facilitate development and shall be carried out in strict accordance with the guidance below (Tree Surgery). Under no circumstances shall construction personnel undertake any tree pruning operations.

8. Tree Protection Fencing

- 8.1. The Tree Protection Plan (see the latest revision of: PRI24678-03A) shows the alignment of Tree Protection Fencing (TPF), which is to be installed prior to any of the following taking place:
 - Demolition.
 - Plant and material delivery.
 - Soil stripping.
 - Utility installation.
 - Construction works.
 - Landscaping.
- 8.2. Stages for installation of TPF:
 - 1) Hand clearance of any vegetation to allow clear working access.
 - 2) Setting out of fencing points.
 - 3) Fencing erected.
 - 4) Site accessible to demolition/construction traffic.
- 8.3. To ensure accuracy and avoid future costly adjustments, the Tree Protection Fence must be set out by a surveyor with all node points being marked clearly on site for the fencing contractor to work to.
- 8.4. Tree protection fencing has been specified to be aligned at a minimum of 0.5m from all proposed surfacing and demolition, and a minimum of 1.5m from all proposed building construction.
- 8.5. Consideration has been given for the allowance of 3m length 'heras' panels to be installed onsite.
- 8.6. Once erected, all TPF will be regarded as sacrosanct, and will not be removed or altered without prior recommendation by the project arboriculturist and approval of the local planning authority.
- 8.7. The typical TPF construction is suitable for areas of high intensity development, and shall comprise of interlocking weld-mesh panels, well braced to resist impacts by attachment to scaffold uprights set firmly into the ground. A detailed specification can be found below and on the Tree Protection Plan.
- 8.8. Should any alternative method of barrier construction be proposed, the design should be approved by the local planning authority.

- 8.9. Once the exclusion zone has been protected by barriers and/or ground protection, construction work can commence.
- 8.10. All weather notices should be erected on the barriers (for example see figure below).



Figure 1: Tree protection sign (download from) <http://www.acdenvironmental.co.uk>

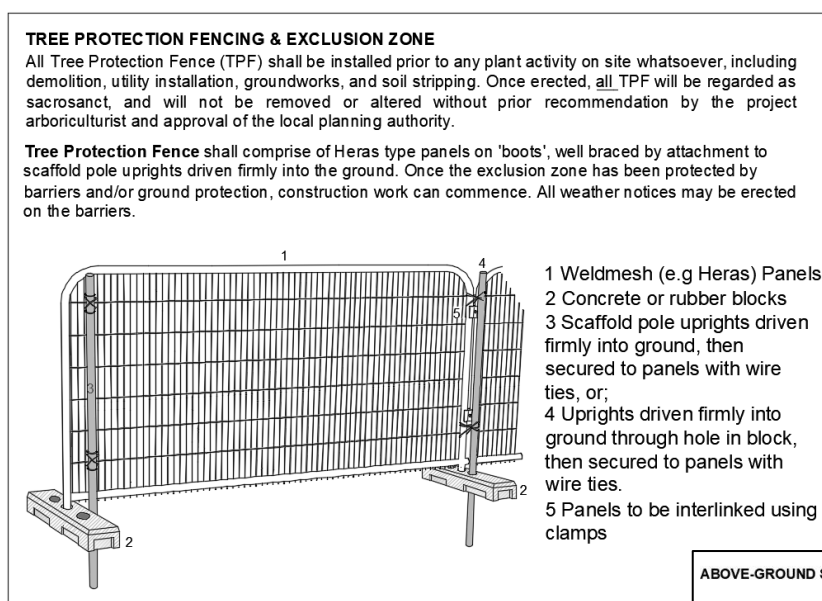
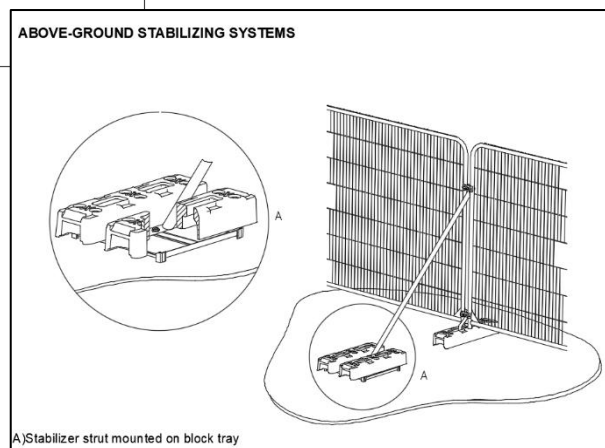


Figure 2: Adequate Tree Protection Fencing specification

Figure 3: Above ground stabilisation method for TPF where bracing cannot be secured into the ground (such as hard surfacing)



9. Tree Surgery and Removal

9.1. Those trees which are to be removed are shown with a red dashed canopy outline, and a red dashed 'X' through the emblem on the Tree Protection Plan ACD reference PRI24678-03A.

9.2. The following surgery works are to be carried out:

Tree number	Species	Operation
T1	Holly	Remove to ground level. Grind out remaining stump.
T2	Pear	Remove to ground level. Grind out remaining stump.
G9	Sycamore/Ash	Remove stems from group as shown on Tree Protection Plan to ground level to facilitate removal of 'bunker' feature.

9.3. All trees to be removed are indicated on the Tree Protection Plan.

9.4. Further to the above list of tree works, the following Access Facilitation Pruning will be subject to all trees as required throughout the development:

Tree number	Operation
All Trees	Lift lower crowns overhanging proposed pedestrian surfaces to 3.5m.
All Trees	Lift lower crowns overhanging proposed vehicular surfaces to 5.5m.
All Trees	Reduce crowns to allow 1.5m clearance from proposed building footprints.
All Trees	Remove deadwood over 25mm ^Ø from crowns.

9.4.1. Access Facilitation Pruning is described in BS5837:2012 section 3.1 as “one-off tree pruning operation, the nature and effects of which are without significant adverse impact on tree physiology or amenity value, which is directly necessary to provide access for operations on site”.

9.5. All access Facilitation Pruning must be conducted to no more than the bare minimum required to allow adequate working room and continuation of development.

9.6. Works to offsite trees must not pass the boundary line without the prior consent of the relevant tree owner.

9.7. Access to offsite land to carry out works to trees must not be gained without prior consent of the relevant landowner.

9.8. All works to trees located within a Conservation area (excluding those works approved as part of a full planning approval) must give 6weeks prior notice to the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement.

9.9. If any further tree surgery works are required, a proposed specification will be submitted to, and approved by the Local Planning Authority before any works are carried out.

9.10. All work will be carried out in accordance with BS 3998:2010 Recommendations for Tree Work, industry best practice and in line with any works already agreed with the Council.

9.11. The tree surgery contractor is responsible for carrying out any relevant health and safety risk assessment, and insurance, prior to any work being carried out.

- 9.12. The statutory protection afforded by the Wildlife and Countryside Act and Countryside and Rights of Way Act will be adhered to. If further advice is required, particularly if bats are discovered during tree work, it will be obtained from Natural England or other competent persons and recommendations adhered to.
- 9.13. The stumps of any trees removed from within the Construction Exclusion Zone or the RPAs of retained trees will be either; cut flush to ground level and left in situ or ground out using a stump grinder. They will not be winched out.
- 9.14. All operations shall be carefully carried out to avoid damage to the trees being treated or neighbouring trees. No trees to be retained shall be used for anchorage or winching purposes.

10. Ground Protection

- 10.1. The recommended specification for adequate Ground Protection as per BS5837:2012 section 6.2.3.3 is specified below. Any alternative specification to be installed must be capable of supporting the expected loads and avoiding rutting, compaction and damage to the soil. As advised in BS5837:2012 section 6.2.3:
- 10.2. New temporary ground protection should be capable of supporting any traffic entering or using the site without being distorted or causing compaction of underlying soil. The ground protection might comprise one of the following:
- a)** for pedestrian movements only, a single thickness of scaffold boards placed either on top of a driven scaffold frame, so as to form a suspended walkway, or on top of a compression-resistant layer (e.g., 100 mm depth of woodchip), laid onto a geotextile membrane.
 - b)** for pedestrian-operated plant up to a gross weight of 2 t, proprietary, inter-linked ground protection boards placed on top of a compression-resistant layer (e.g., 150 mm depth of woodchip), laid onto a geotextile membrane.
 - c)** for wheeled or tracked construction traffic exceeding 2 t gross weight, an alternative system (e.g., proprietary systems or pre-cast reinforced concrete slabs) to an engineering specification designed in conjunction with arboricultural advice, to accommodate the likely loading to which it will be subjected.
- 10.3. Stages for ground protection installation³:

No plant machinery to be used in the area of ground protection for whatever reason

- 1) Discuss procedure with project arboriculturist.
- 2) Dismantle primary TPF and re-erect in secondary location as shown on TPP.
- 3) Any shrubs, saplings or trees to be removed, are to be cut, or ground out to just below ground level rather than grubbed or winched out, which can damage roots of retained trees.
- 4) Lay woven geotextile over existing ground surface by hand.
- 5) Cover the area with compressible layer, woodchip for example, using hand tools only.
- 6) Cover compressible layer with side butting scaffold boards or plywood boards.
- 7) Confirm surface is acceptable for use with project arboriculturist.
- 8) Area ready for construction access.

³For protection from foot traffic only

10.4. To ensure accuracy and avoid future costly adjustments, the Ground Protection must be set out by a surveyor with all node points being marked clearly on site for the fencing contractor to work to.

10.5. There is to be no-excavation within ground protection area whatsoever. This includes installation of services and associated utilities.

11. Soft Landscaping within RPA

11.1. All landscaping and associated ground preparation within exclusion zones will be carried out sensitively to ensure root damage is mitigated as much as is practicable. At no time is any heavy plant to be used within any protected area. Removal of existing vegetation will be carried out by hand; turf may be removed using a mechanical turf stripper or by hand.

12. Turfing

12.1. Stages for turfing gardens and open spaces:

No plant machinery⁴ to be used in the area for whatever reason

- 1) Remove TPF to allow access to area.
- 2) Do not reduce any high spots or excavate in any way.
- 3) Existing poor-quality turf may be removed with a turf stripper.
- 4) Use good quality topsoil to level any low-lying areas and hollows and provide a fine tilth to lay turf on. This imported soil must not result in a level increase of more than 100mm in any area.
- 5) Import turves by hand in wheelbarrow.
- 6) Lay turves as required.

13. Planting

13.1. Should the soil be compacted or have a poor structure which may hinder the development of any new planting, soil decompaction techniques may be used upon consultation with the project arboriculturist.

13.2. Stages for planting within tree protection areas:

No plant machinery to be used in the area for whatever reason

- 1) Remove TPF to allow access to area.
- 2) Remove existing vegetation by hand, turf may be removed using a mechanical turf stripper.
- 3) Do not reduce any high spots or excavate in any way.
- 4) Import good quality topsoil by hand (with wheelbarrow) into area.
- 5) Level to a depth of no more than 100mm with hand tools.
- 6) Dig individual planting pits for each plant by hand (including hedging which must not be trench planted).
- 7) Any mulch should also be imported and spread by hand.

13.3. No works will be carried out within any protected areas if the soil moisture is of a level likely to allow compaction to occur.

⁴ Including rotovators

14. Sensitive Excavation within RPAs

14.1. All areas of required sensitive excavation (including an allowance for working room) are indicated on the corresponding Tree Protection Plan

14.2. Stages of excavation within RPAs:

- 1) Contact project arboriculturist to hold pre-start site meeting, 'toolbox talk' and supervise the operation.
- 2) Remove TPF to allow access to area (if required).
- 3) Identify sensitive area to be excavated (mark out with spray or pegs if required)
- 4) Where realistically feasible excavated using hand-tools only with additional use of an air-spade as required.
- 5) For more significant excavations or dense soils, use of a digger with a no-tines bucket may be used under close supervision from the project arboriculturist.
- 6) If roots 25mm $\varnothing$ or over are found during excavation, clear by hand around them, ensuring they are not damaged, and cover with damp material (e.g. hessian) and keep moist until backfilled.
- 7) Roots under 25mm $\varnothing$ may be severed as required to implement the required excavation.
- 8) Significant roots may only be severed following assessment and approval by the project arboriculturist - including a photographic record made of roots prior to pruning to be used for reference if required at a later date.
- 9) Roots severance should proceed as below:
 - a. Cleanly sever roots with bypass secateurs, loppers or pull cut saw at right angles to root.
 - b. Avoid tearing or ripping the root.
 - c. Backfill as soon as possible to cover cut root ends.

14.3. If for whatever reason, the project arboriculturist feels that a tree's stability has been compromised during the excavation operation, then the LPA shall be contacted, and the arboricultural officer (or appropriate landscape officer) notified. A decision can then be made as to the best way forward.

15. Installation of underground services within RPAs

15.1. If for whatever reason installation within RPAs is required, the project arboriculturist and local authority must be notified prior to any tree protection barrier removal and the following details adhered to.

15.2. Stages for installing services within tree protection areas:

No plant machinery to be used in the area for whatever reason

- 1) Contact project arboriculturist to hold pre-start site meeting and 'toolbox' talk before starting work.
- 2) Remove just enough tree protection fencing to allow access to area and facilitate trenching.
- 3) Remove any surface vegetation or existing hard surfaces using hand tools.
- 4) Excavate the trench using hand tools only, keeping to minimum dimensions required.
- 5) Roots below 25mm should preferably be retained, however if required can be cut cleanly using secateurs or hand saw.
- 6) Roots over 25mm diameter will be retained and kept damp by covering with hessian (re-wetted as required).

- 7) Feed in services.
- 8) Back fill trench with 200-300mm depth of excavated soil, or a mixture of excavated and imported top-soil (to BS3882:2015), firming down with heels.
- 9) Repeat step 7 until trench is filled.
- 10) Re-erect tree protection fencing as per approved plan.

15.3. An alternative to the method of excavation above, for trenching within RPA's, is by using an 'air-spade' or similar. This tool utilises compressed air to remove soil from around tree roots causing minimal damage and can be run off a typical site compressor. ACD can provide details of contractors supplying air-spade services if required.

15.4. Alternatively, trenchless technology such as thrust boring can be used in some instances and is particularly effective as it can pass directly under the tree, at a depth which is likely to avoid almost all impact on roots of the subject tree. As no access/thrust pits will be located within the RPAs of the subject trees, the need for arboricultural supervision is limited.

15.5. Reference can be made to National Joint Utilities Group Publication Volume 4 (NJUG Vol 4) for guidance, but any approach must be approved by the project arboriculturist.

16. Demolition Close to Trees

16.1. All TPF to be installed as per approved Tree Protection Plan prior to any plant arriving on site.

16.2. Sensitive demolition will occur under supervision from the project arboriculturist.

16.3. Stages for demolition within tree protection areas:

No plant machinery to be sited on any exposed rooting area

- 1) Contact project arboriculturist to hold pre-start site meeting and 'toolbox' talk before starting work.
- 2) Dismantle any fencing to allow work to proceed.
- 3) Buildings and features to be folded in on themselves, and away from retained trees.
- 4) Removal debris by hand, or with plant machinery not located on any exposed rooting area.
- 5) Floors/foundations to be broken up with handheld breaker and pieces removed by hand. Slab floors can be lifted carefully by machinery if appropriate.
- 6) Underlying ground levels to be retained. No excavation to occur.
- 7) Any exposed roots and surrounding newly exposed areas to be covered with up to 100mm of topsoil, from elsewhere on site, or imported topsoil (to BS3882:1984). Soil may be placed in area by plant but must be spread by hand.
- 8) Tree protection fencing to be erected in final position as shown on plan.

16.4. No reduction in levels of the underlying soil surface will occur.

16.5. At no point is any heavy machinery permitted within the RPA.

16.6. Contamination of the soil by fuel and lubricant leaks must be avoided at all cost. If such a situation arises the project arboriculturist must be notified to assess the situation and prescribe remedial measures.

17. Hard Surface Removal

17.1. No hard surface removal within RPAs will occur without arboricultural supervision.

17.2. Stages for hard surface removal within tree protection areas:

No plant machinery to be sited on any exposed rooting area

- 1) Contact project arboriculturist to hold pre-start site meeting and 'toolbox' talk before starting work.
 - 2) Dismantle fencing as required to access area.
 - 3) Plant machinery to run only on existing hard surfaces with consent from arboriculturist.
 - 4) Plant may be used to carefully peel up existing tarmac and concrete.
 - 5) Other surfaces are to be removed by hand (paving etc.).
 - 6) Where any subbase is not likely to contain roots, and only on approval from project arboriculturist, it may also be carefully removed.
 - 7) Underlying ground levels to be retained. No excavation to occur.
 - 8) Any exposed roots⁵ and surrounding newly exposed areas to be covered with up to 100mm of topsoil, from elsewhere on site, or imported topsoil (to BS3882:1984). Soil may be placed in area by plant but must be spread by hand.
 - 9) Tree protection fencing to be erected in final position as shown on plan.
- 17.3. If the area around the retained trees is to be left following the removal of the existing hard surface, before a new hard surface is laid or soft landscaping implemented, then the line of protective fencing MUST be correctly re-established immediately the hard surface removal work has been completed.
- 17.4. If, for whatever reason there is a delay before the area is left exposed prior to awaiting a new surface, then a temporary surface must be implemented, or the area fenced off.

18. Resurfacing/Repair of Existing Roads

- 18.1. Tree protection measures will remain in place until work commences and when removed all personnel to be working within the area are to be made aware of the extent and nature of the area.
- 18.2. All work within protected areas to be supervised at all times by project arboriculturist.
- 18.3. Stages for repair/replacement of existing hard surface within tree protection areas:

No plant machinery to be sited on any exposed rooting area

- 1) Contact project arboriculturist to hold pre-start site meeting and 'toolbox' talk before starting work.
- 2) Remove TPF to allow access to area.
- 3) Plant machinery to run only on existing tarmac surface.
- 4) Plant may be used to carefully peel up existing tarmac.
- 5) Other hard landscape features are to be removed by hand (paving etc.) or carefully lifted with plant.
- 6) Sub-base to be retained.
- 7) Sub-base to be enhanced if required.
- 8) New tarmac surface to be installed.

⁵Should any roots over 25mm diameter, have grown above the final soil level and be a hindrance to any new surface installation, their removal will only be carried out under arboricultural supervision and with the approval of the LPA.

18.4. Should any roots over 25mm diameter be encountered during deconstruction of the old profile, their removal will only be carried out under arboricultural supervision and with the approval of the LPA.

18.5. Any new kerbing must be installed within the current hard construction profile.

18.6. No new excavation closer to the tree will be permitted.

19. Installation of Boundary Wall Within Protected Areas

19.1. Stages for installing wooden fence posts:

No plant machinery to be used in the area for whatever reason

- 1) Contact project arboriculturist to hold pre-start site meeting and 'toolbox' talk before starting work.
- 2) Remove TPF to allow access to area.
- 3) Dig foundation holes using hand tools, avoiding damage to the protective bark covering larger roots. Roots smaller than 25mm diameter may be pruned back using either secateurs or a hand saw, leaving a clean cut.
- 4) Damage or severance of roots above 25mm diameter must be avoided. If roots of this size are discovered, the hole should be relocated where feasible.
- 5) Line hole with non-porous lining, for example durable polythene bag.
- 6) Fill hole with concrete to ground level.
- 7) Trim polythene to ground level.
- 8) Connecting wall sections to be built using a bespoke foundation design as per the product specification.

Henry Pinn *Arb L4 (ABC)*
Senior Arboriculturist

28 October 2024

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