

## **ARBORICULTURALIST'S REPORT**

### **Terms of Reference**

- 1.1 This report was requested by Adrian Doyle, Avery Support Group Centre, 3 Cygnet Drive, Swan Valley, Northampton, NN4 9BS.
- 1.2 The instruction to carry out an inspection of trees at Hampstead Court Care Home, 48 Boundary Road, St Johns Wood, London, NW8 0HJ was received by email.
- 1.3 My report is to cover the species, age, dimensions, health, recommendations for any remedial work and suitability for retention in relation to any development that may take place and to include root protection areas for each tree.

### **Limitations**

- 2.1 The content of this report is valid for a period of three years from the date shown above.
- 2.2 The report is for the sole use of the client and its reproduction or use by anyone else is forbidden unless written consent is given by the author.
- 2.3 This is not a full arboricultural survey. This can be supplied but will be subject to a further fee. Any safety implications identified during the inspection are of course noted.
- 2.4 This is an arboricultural report and as such, no reliance should be placed on comments relating to buildings or soil data. My observations and comments are based upon experience with previous cases. I have no formal engineering qualifications.
- 2.5 No tree can ever be guaranteed to be 100% safe and even trees in good condition can suffer damage under normal conditions. Any tree can be hazardous due to decay or structural weakness, but the risk posed by that hazard is determined by its size and location in relation to the potential target. Frequent inspections can help to identify potential problems before they become acute and allow for intervention.

- 2.6 Trees are living organisms and even a mechanically perfect tree can be damaged or caused to fail. Inspection after extreme weather events is essential and professional advice should be sought whenever there is concern for a tree's condition.

### **The Site**

- 3.1 The site is an existing care home in north west London. There are trees along the highway frontage of the site.
- 3.2 I carried out the survey on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and collected data regarding trees and vegetation, including the species, age class, dimensions, condition and category for retention. Height data was gathered using a laser clinometer. DBH (diameter at breast height) was measured using a metric girthing tape. Age and condition were estimated by examining the trees.
- 3.3 My inspection was of a visual nature, using the principles of visual tree assessment and was carried out from ground level. I looked for signs of decay, disease, structural weakness, internal dysfunction and instability.

### **Trees & Development**

- 4.1 The integration of trees within a development relies heavily on careful planning when locating properties and retaining trees nearby. Provided these points are considered, a harmonious relationship between people, their houses and gardens and existing trees is possible.

- 4.2 The eight trees have been categorised according to Table 1 of BS5837 2012 Trees in relation to construction - Recommendations:

Category	No of Trees	Definition
A	None	Those of a high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40yrs
B	Six	Those of a moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20yrs
C	Two	Those of a low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10yrs, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm.
U	None	Those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 yrs.

- 4.3 Any development proposal should consider that trees identified as retention categories A, B or C are generally those that should be retained. However, category C trees will usually not be retained where they would impose significant constraint on development.
- 4.4 All retained trees must be protected with protective fencing in line with BS 5837 : 2012 at the distance specified for the Root Protection Areas in the attached schedule. The British Standard BS5837 : 2012 Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction gives clear guidance as to the Root Protection Area (RPA) using Table 2 of the document.
- 4.5 There are above ground constraints that may limit development close to trees. This includes the crown spread of the tree and, in some cases, it may be necessary to increase the extent of tree protection barriers to contain and thereby protect the spread of the crown. This consideration should also allow for future growth. Additional considerations are the obstruction of sunlight or daylight to the development.
- 4.6 BS5837 calls for Root Protection Areas to be shown on the plan accompanying the planning application. I have included the required data in the attached tree schedule and plan. For groups of trees, the data is an average for the trees within the group. However, you should be aware that Root Protection Areas will overlap considerably due to the proximity of the trees to each other within the group.

- 4.7 Section 5.3.1 of BS 5837 also calls for the inclusion of shading caused by retained trees where they would cause unreasonable obstruction of sunlight or daylight to a development. This is represented by a segment with a radius from the centre of the stem equal to the height of the tree, drawn from north west to east, indicating the shadow pattern throughout the main part of the day.
- 4.8 The following appendices are attached to this report:
- A Retention Categories
  - B Root Protection Areas
  - C How tree roots can be damaged during construction
  - D How to avoid damage to trees during construction
- 4.9 Prior to commencing any arboricultural work to trees, it is essential to liaise with the Local Planning Authority as they may be protected by a Tree Preservation Order or within a Conservation Area.
- 4.10 Any arboricultural work should be carried out by a competent arborist in line with BS3998 British Standards for Tree Work. Should you require details of suitably qualified contractors, the Arboricultural Association maintains a list which is available by calling 01242 522 152 or via their website ([www.trees.org.uk](http://www.trees.org.uk)).
- 4.11 All wild birds, their young, eggs and active nests are protected under law and it is an offence to damage a nest intentionally while it is in use or being built. Non-urgent tree work or hedge cutting should not be undertaken during the bird nesting or breeding season (March to July, but depending on seasonal temperatures, some birds continue breeding into August and September).
- 4.12 All bats and their roosts are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Natural Habitats and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Where bats are suspected to be present, seek advice from a licensed bat specialist before carrying out any major tree work or hedge cutting.

Should you have any questions or require any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Hatton  
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**BHA Trees Ltd**

Arboricultural Consultants

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## **APPENDIX A            Tree Retention Categories**

- A.1      BS5837, the British Standards document for trees in relation to construction, gives guidelines for ensuring that trees on development sites are retained or removed according to their future potential to become an asset in harmony with the development or an object of resentment and a potential threat to public safety.
- A.2      The early assessment of a site can ensure that trees to be retained can be afforded adequate protection from the onset of construction right through to completion and long into the future.
- A.3      Planning conditions and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 can be used following a survey to enforce the adequate protection for these trees in accordance with BS5387.
- A.4      Care should be exercised over misplaced tree preservation. Attempts to retain too many or unsuitable trees on a site are liable to result in excessive pressure on the trees during development work and subsequent demands for their removal. The end result is usually fewer and less suitable trees than would be the case if proper planting, selection and conservation had been applied from the outset.
- A.5      Particular caution is needed over retention of large old trees which become enclosed in the new development. Such trees may be less resilient and more likely to die as a result of the development, and even if they survive in the short term, they may die long before the new buildings are obsolete and in this situation the felling and disposal of trees can be very difficult and extremely costly.
- A.6      Although existing trees should be retained wherever reasonable, unless such trees are well suited for incorporating within the new development, it may be preferable to favour new planting. New plantings can then be selected which are ideal for the situation and landscape.
- A.7      The tree survey carried out has assessed and given particular attention to:
  - 7.1      the health, vigour and condition of each tree
  - 7.2      the structural defects in each tree and its life expectancy
  - 7.3      the size and form of each tree and its suitability within the context of the site development
  - 7.4      the location of each tree relative to existing site features, e.g. its value as a screen or as a skyline feature
- A.8      On the basis of this assessment, trees are divided into one of the following categories:

**TREES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION**

Category A	Those of a high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40yrs	
Criteria Subcategories		
1 Mainly arboricultural values	2 Mainly landscape values	3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation
Trees that are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual, or essential components of groups, or of formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue)	Trees, groups or woodlands of particular visual importance as arboricultural and/or landscape features.	Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture).
To be indicated on plan: Light Green		

Category B	Those of a moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20yrs	
Criteria Subcategories		
1 Mainly arboricultural values	2 Mainly landscape values	3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation
Trees that might be included in the high category but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of remediable defects including unsympathetic past management and minor storm damage), such that they are unlikely to be suitable for retention beyond 40yrs; or trees lacking the special quality necessary to merit the category A designation.	Trees present in large number, usually as groups or woodlands, such that they attract a higher collective rating than they might as individuals; or trees occurring as collectives but situated so as to make little visual contribution to the wider locality.	Trees with material conservation or other cultural benefits.
To be indicated on plan: Mid Blue		

## TREES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION (continued)

Category C	Those of a low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10yrs, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm.	
Criteria Subcategories		
1 Mainly arboricultural values	2 Mainly landscape values	3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation
Unremarkable trees of very limited merit or such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories.	Trees present in groups or woodlands, but without this conferring on them significantly greater landscape value; and/or trees offering low or only temporary/transient landscape benefit.	Trees with no material conservation or other cultural value.
Note: Whilst C category trees will usually not be retained where they would impose a significant constraint on development, young trees with a stem diameter of less than 150mm should be considered for relocation.		
To be indicated on plan: Grey		

## TREES FOR REMOVAL

Category U	Those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 yrs.
Criteria	
Trees that have a serious, irremediable, structural defect, such that their early loss is expected due to collapse, including those that will become inviable after removal of other U category trees (i.e. where, for whatever reason, the loss of companion shelter cannot be mitigated by pruning).	
Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate and irreversible overall decline.	
Trees infected with pathogens of significance to health and/or safety of other trees nearby, or very low quality trees suppressing adjacent trees of better quality.	
Note: Category U trees can have existing or potential conservation value which might be desirable to preserve.	
To be indicated on plan: Dark Red	



## **APPENDIX B            Root Protection Areas (RPA's)**

- B1    For the roots to be retained undamaged, there must be no excavation, soil stripping or site grading within the RPA. Or in other words, NO DIGGING. This means that construction will have to be above the existing ground level.
- B2    In order to avoid damage to the roots or rooting environment of retained trees, the RPA should be plotted around each of the category A, B and C trees. This is a minimum area in square metres which should be left undisturbed around each retained tree.
- B3    The RPA for each tree, as determined in Table 2, should be plotted on the Tree Constraints Plan (TCP), taking full account of the following factors, as assessed by an arboriculturalist, which may change its shape but not reduce its area, whilst still providing adequate protection for the root system.
- B3.1    The likely tolerance of the tree to root disturbance or damage, based on factors such as species, age and condition and presence of other trees. For individual open grown trees only, it may be acceptable to offset the distance by up to 20% in one direction.
- B3.2    The morphology and disposition of the roots, when known to be influenced by past or existing site conditions (e.g. the presence of roads, structures and underground services).
- B3.3    The soil type and structure.
- B3.4    Topography and drainage.
- B3.5    Where any significant part of a tree's crown overhangs the provisional position of tree protection barriers, these parts may sustain damage during the construction period. In such cases, it may be necessary to increase the extent of tree protection barriers to contain and thereby protect the spread of the crown. Protection may also be achieved by access facilitation pruning. The need for such measures, including the precise extent of pruning, should be assessed by an arboriculturalist.
- B4    The guidelines for type and dimensions of protective barriers are given in BS 5837 2012, and are as follows:
- B4.1    Barriers should be fit for the purpose of excluding construction activity and appropriate to the degree and proximity of work taking place around the retained tree(s). On all sites, special attention should be paid to ensuring that barriers remain rigid and complete.
- B4.2    The default specification for protective barriers is a vertical and horizontal scaffold framework, well braced to resist impacts with welded mesh panes securely fixed onto this framework. The vertical tubes should be spaced at a maximum interval of 3m and driven securely into the ground.
- B4.3    Where site circumstances and associated risk allow, an alternative specification should be prepared by the arboriculturalist and agreed with the Local Planning Authority. For example, 2m tall welded mesh panels on rubber or concrete feet, stabilised on the inside and joined together using a minimum of two anti-tamper couplers, installed so they can only be removed from inside the fence.

- B4.4 “Protected Trees No Entry” signs should be affixed to every fourth panel. The barriers should remain in place until completion of the construction phase and removed only on the consent of the Local Planning Authority.
- B5 Where it has been agreed during the design stage, and shown on the tree protection plan, vehicular or pedestrian access for the construction operation may take place within the RPA. The possible effects of construction activity should be addressed by a combination of barriers and ground protection. The position of the barrier may be shown within the RPA at the edge of the agreed working zone but the soil structure beyond the barrier to the edge of the RPA should be protected with ground protection.
- B6 For pedestrian movements within the RPA, the installation of ground protection in the form of a single thickness of scaffold boards on top of a compressible layer laid onto a geotextile, or supported by scaffold, may be acceptable.
- B7 For wheeled or tracked construction traffic movements within the RPA, the ground protection should be designed by an engineer to accommodate the likely loading and may involve the use of proprietary systems or reinforced concrete slabs.

Figure 2 Default specification for protective barrier

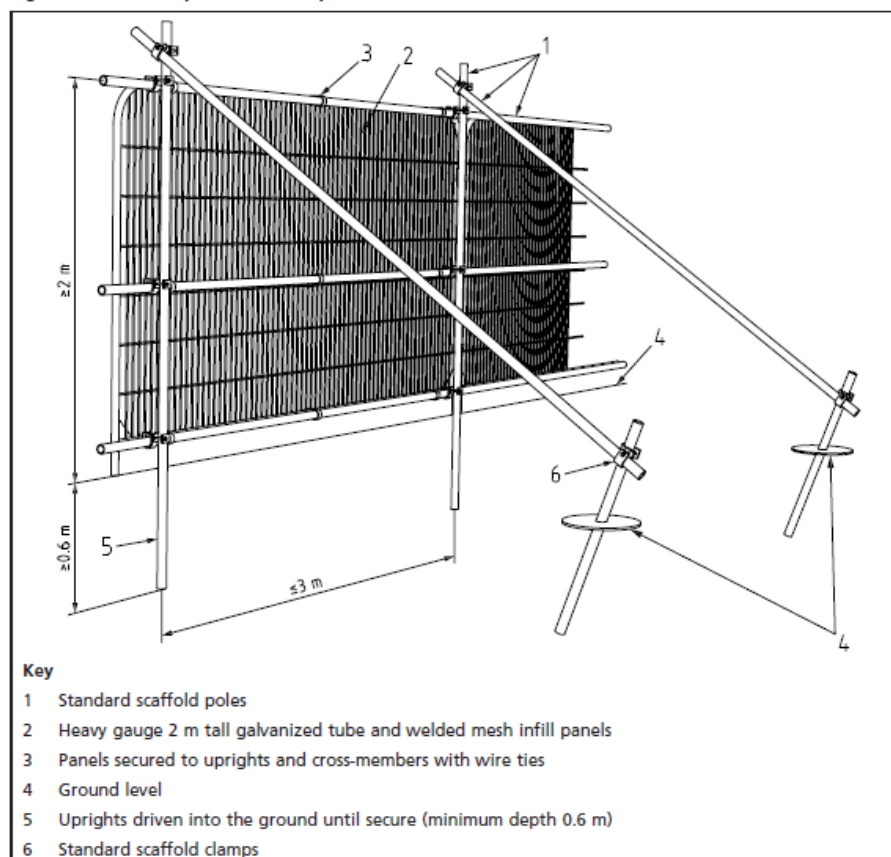
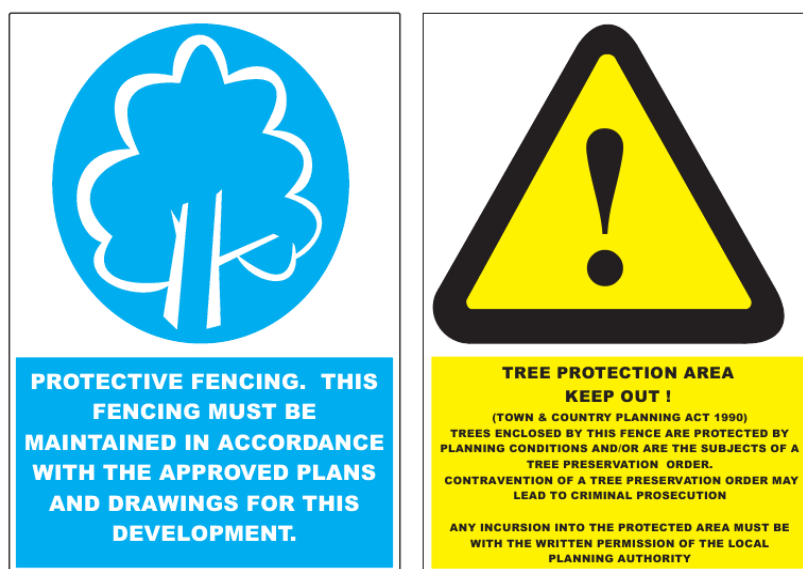
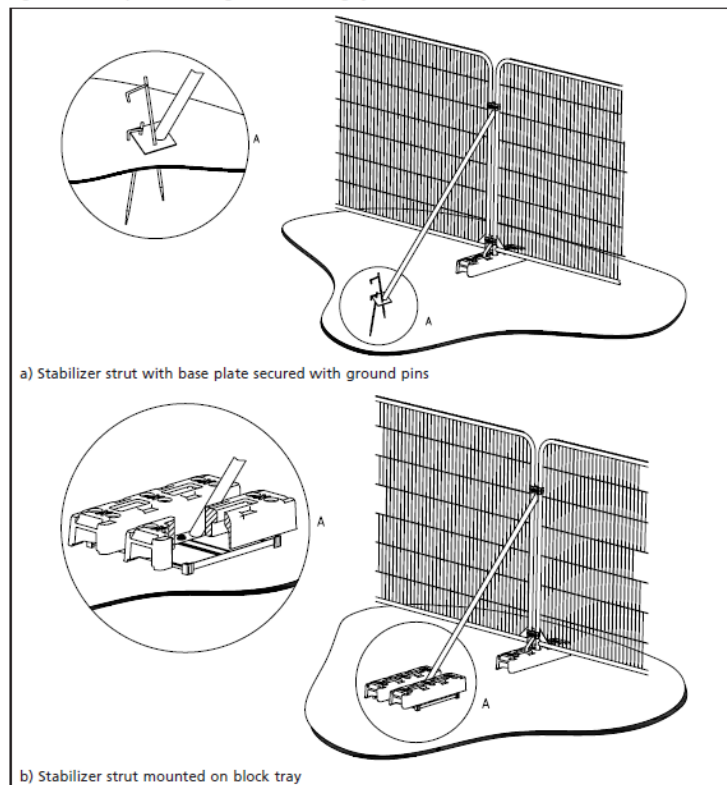


Figure 3 Examples of above-ground stabilizing systems



Available for download from: [www.aie.org.uk/download/pictures/avcc\\_sign.pdf](http://www.aie.org.uk/download/pictures/avcc_sign.pdf)

## **APPENDIX C                      How tree roots can be damaged during construction**

- C1 Construction close to trees can be enormously damaging and detrimental to the tree's health, often leading to death and eventual removal. Most trees that have been growing undisturbed on a site for many years will have developed an extensive root system with the roots growing where the soil conditions are most favourable. There will be a balance between the development of the crown (which demands water) and the roots (which supply it). Any sudden alteration in the soil conditions within the tree's rooting area (a circle of radius equal to the tree's height) will therefore upset this balance.
- C2 Root systems can be damaged by:
- Repeated passage of machinery, which will squeeze the soil, closing up the pores causing compaction, especially in the upper levels, and so reducing the amount of oxygen available to roots and preventing them from growing through the soil. Surviving roots may then not be able to grow through the compacted soil. It is essential therefore that all but the immediate area of the development is protected from construction operations by fencing as recommended in BS5837.
  - Placing soil or other materials over the roots of a tree, which will impede air movement into and out of the soil and consequently reduce the availability of oxygen to the roots.
  - The severance of a root, for example by trenching, which will destroy all parts of the root beyond that point. Even roots less than 10mm in diameter may be serving the fine roots over a wide area. The larger the root severed, the greater the impact on the tree.
  - Damage to the bark on the root. The bark protects the root from decay and is also essential for further root growth. It is loosely attached and easily damaged. If damage to the bark extends around the whole circumference, the root beyond that point will be killed.
  - Alterations in soil level. Lowering the level will strip out the mass of roots near the surface. Raising the levels will have the same effect as soil compaction.
  - Incorrect application of herbicide. There is frequently a need for operational land to be kept clear of weed growth for safety and as a fire precaution. Herbicides provide an efficient method of killing both herbaceous and woody weeds. There are several types of herbicide with different modes of action and persistence, the most attractive of which tend to be those that can be applied to the ground, usually as a granule and which remain active in the soil for long periods. The wide-ranging root system of a tree may extend into the operational land from adjoining properties and may absorb some types of herbicides which have been applied to the ground. Material absorbed in one part of the root system can kill the whole tree.
  - Spillage of oils or other harmful materials which leach into the soil, can also damage the root system. For instance, oil spilled into the soil is broken down by soil bacteria which deplete the oxygen and so asphyxiate the roots. Other materials may also have a direct toxic effect on roots.

## **APPENDIX D                    How to avoid damage to trees during construction**

The precautionary area of a tree can be defined as either the extent of the crown spread (the drip line), or half the tree's height on either side of the tree. For excavation within the precautionary area, the key points to remember are:

- D1    Do not excavate with machinery. Use trenchless techniques where possible. Otherwise dig only by hand. All excavations within the area below the crown must be carried out by hand, digging carefully around roots, retaining as many as possible.
- D2    Do not sever any tree roots over 25mm diameter, unless the council's Tree Officer agrees beforehand.
- D3    Where small tree roots are to be cut, this should be done cleanly, as with the pruning of branches, using secateurs or a handsaw. Make a clean cut and leave as small a wound as possible.
- D4    Roots exposed during construction should be kept moist and protected from frost and from drying out. If trenches are to be left open overnight, cover the roots with dry sacking. Remember to remove the sacking before backfilling.
- D5    Backfill the trench with an inert granular material and top soil mix. Compact the backfill with care around the retained roots. On non-highway sites backfill only with excavated soil.
- D6    Do not store spoil or building material, including chemicals and fuels within the tree's crown and make sure you do not contaminate tree roots and surrounding soils.
- D7    Do not lower or raise soil levels close to the tree.
- D8    Do not allow the passage of vehicles across the unprotected soil surface, especially when the soil is wet, as this will cause breakage of surface roots, soil compaction and consequently reduced soil aeration.
- D9    Construction materials must be permeable to allow gaseous exchange between the root system and the atmosphere and be constructed in line with current guidelines to avoid soil compaction.
- D10   Where car parking or roadways are to be constructed close to trees, it is essential that construction follows guidelines available in APN12 Arboricultural Practice Note issued by the Arboricultural Advisory and Information Service.

## Construction of driveway- Porous No Digs Method in accordance with APN 12

**Figure 5.** Diagram of a 'no-dig' method for constructing access drives and parking near to trees in order to minimise damage to tree roots. (*Not to scale*)

2009/05476/PA

1:5 = 25cm	1:200 = 10m
1:10 = 50cm	1:250 = 12.5m
1:20 = 100cm	1:500 = 25m
1:50 = 2.5m	1:1250 = 62.5m
1:100 = 5m	1:2500 = 125m

Edging Board

Retaining Peg

Nails

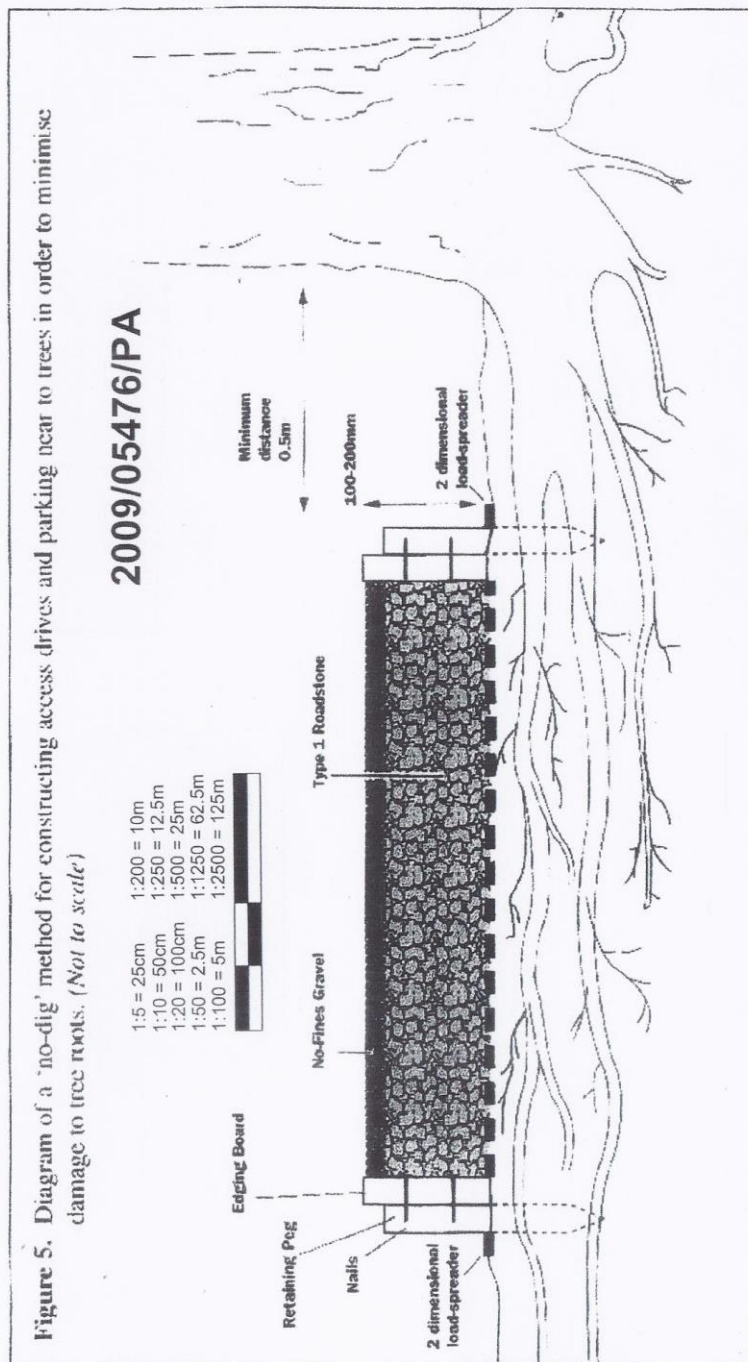
No-Fines Gravel

Type 1 Roadstone

Minimum distance 0.5m

100-200mm

2 dimensional load-spreader



\* For example, Tensar SS30, manufactured by Nelon Ltd, New Wellington Street, Blackburn, BB2 4PJ, UK.

† Care must be taken to select a herbicide which does not damage the roots of desirable vegetation that may be in the treated area. Always read the product label before use.

**GREENWAY**  
Landscape Architects

08C-007 - Porous Drive to APN 12: 2007/BS5837:2005