

Non material amendment to planning consent 2010/5099/P approved on appeal reference APP/X5210/A/11/2161172 as amended by 2014/2877/P

Summary and Recommendations

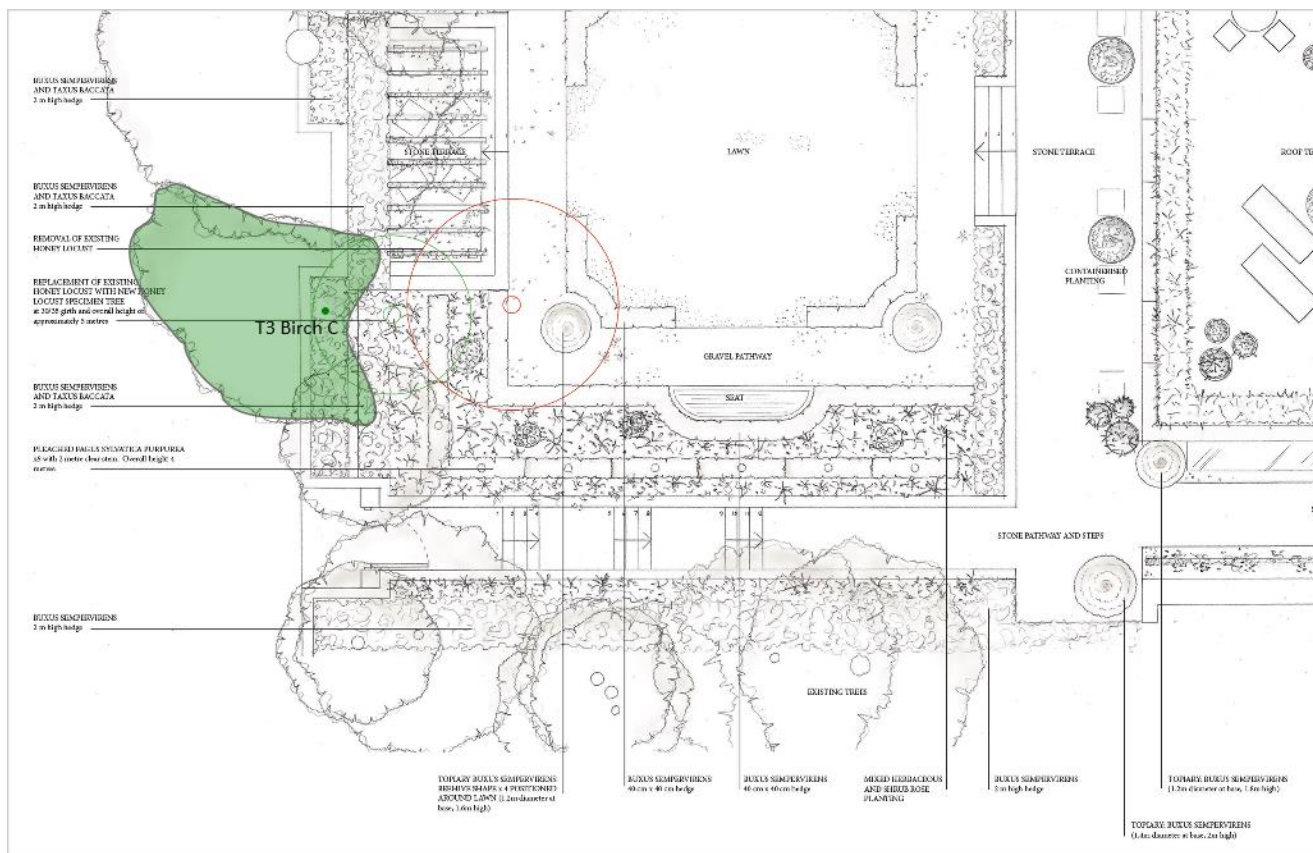
1. Having inspected the low quality birch tree T3 at the above site with due regard to the high risk of its failure as a result of the necessary reconstruction of the front retaining wall it is our finding that the tree should be removed under a non-material amendment to allow for the safe reconstruction of the wall. Replanting of one flowering cherry shown in location marked on plan **MD1** will compensate for the removal of T3 and retain the leafy façade of 18 Redington Road.

Background

2. Martin Dobson Associates were instructed by Tim Geary of BTP Group on the 29th April to carry out an inspection of a birch tree (T3, centre tree in the photograph below) close to the front boundary of 18 Redington Road, London, NW3 7RG. The birch T3 was designated for retention in planning consent 2010/5099/P approved on appeal reference APP/X5210/A/11/2161172 as amended by 2014/2877/P.



3. The birch was included as T3 in the approved Tree Survey and Arboricultural Method Assessment dated 6 September 2010 and was shown as being retained in the approved landscape drawing, an extract of which is shown below with the birch highlighted in green. The birch was classed as a category C tree of low quality with a calculated root protection area (RPA) of radius 1.4m. It is therefore considered to be of no particular importance and the amenity it affords could be replaced by planting of suitable advanced stock.



Structural review and recommendations made by MA engineers

4. We been informed that an inspection of the wall has been carried out by John McSweeney of Michael Alexander Consulting Engineers. His report to BTP Group is dated 1 June 2016 and the extract relevant to our report is reproduced below:

'The structural works have been completed successfully and the trees have been protected, however we have concerns over the stability of the existing front boundary wall.'

The front boundary wall of the property abuts the public pedestrian pavement and is a single brick wall (215mm wide), constructed from London Stock brickwork in cement mortar. The wall is approximately 1.0 metre high and currently retains the raised ground of the front garden, which rises steeply towards the main house.

Only recently has it been possible to carry out a close inspection of the construction of the wall, after the adjacent structural works (outside the root protection zone) had been completed.

It is evident that the wall is constructed on shallow mass concrete foundations, which are inadequate for a wall of this nature and the stability of the wall cannot be justified by calculation. The instability is compounded by the presence of the Birch Tree T3, which is in very close proximity to the rear of the wall, and at a raised level above the top of the wall.

Whereas the tree is relatively small, it is evident that it is leaning towards (and over) the pavement and we are concerned that, particularly when in full leaf, it will significantly exacerbate the instability of the wall and may cause a collapse.

On the basis of the above, we strongly recommend that the Birch Tree T3 is removed.'

5. On the basis of his inspection Mr McSweeney recommends that the birch should be removed as he has concerns that it will add to the instability of the wall as it develops in size.
6. It is our understanding that the property owners have been advised that reconstruction of the boundary wall will be necessary including suitable foundations to properly respond to the instability of the wall.

Tree Inspection

7. I attended on site on 05 May 2016. Construction works were underway at the time of my inspection and tree protection as set out in the approved arboricultural method statement was correctly in place. The birch tree was located in a construction exclusion zone behind secured Herras fencing.
8. The property is situated within the Redington Frognal Conservation Area (made on 01/02/1988).
9. The tree appeared healthy: leaf development occurring with the expected leaf density, size and colour for this time of year. It is however still classed as a category C tree of low quality.
10. The tree grows on an angle, leaning towards the wall and the pavement of Redington Road and with the canopy predominantly over the road (as can be seen in the landscape plan above).
11. During my site visit I was unable to gain access to the area to take an accurate measurement but I estimated that the distance between the tree's stem and the wall was approximately 800mm.

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

12. In order to reconstruct the wall to address the instability and to provide suitable new foundations a minimum of 500mm working space extending away from the site of the foundations is required for machinery together with space for operators. This would involve a significant encroachment within the tree's calculated RPA of 1.4m radius.
13. During the construction process machinery and workers would therefore need to operate within <500mm of the tree stem. There is no space available to install protective fencing or effective ground protection around the tree to prevent mechanical damage to the stem or to minimise soil compaction and root damage to the remainder of the RPA.
14. The tree does not have space surrounding the remainder of its RPA to compensate for the growth restrictions created by the construction process.
15. The tree is also likely to suffer detriment to its health as a result of root damage and disturbance within its RPA.

Recommendations

16. It is considered that the risk of failure of the tree as a result of the required reconstruction works is high.
17. It is recommended that birch T3 should be removed in order to enable the reconstruction to take place without creating a potentially dangerous tree which could, if it failed, cause injury to people and/or damage to vehicles.

18. A replacement flowering cherry tree (shown in green on Plan **MD1**) of 30/35 girth with a clear stem of approximately 2m and an overall height of approximately 5m will be included in the final landscaping plans. This will be planted at the front of the property to mitigate the loss of the birch. If the replacement is supplied as a container-grown tree it can be planted at any time of year (provided suitable irrigation is provided). Its location should be near to the original location of the birch T3 and careful consideration given to allow space for future root development without detriment to the building or surrounding structures.

Yours sincerely

Iain Waddell

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Martin Dobson Associates

Appendix MD1 Tree replacement location.

