



Justine Matchett
Lichfields,
The St Nicholas Building,
St Nicholas Street,
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1RF

Date: 7th February 2018.

Dear Justine,

Re: Proposed construction at Wallace House, Fitzroy Park, London.

As discussed the following is a summary of my opinion regarding the above proposed works and a recent investigation of root coverage within the construction area.

Crown Consultants Ltd have recently undertaken an examination of root coverage within the proposed construction area using an air-spade to remove surface soil and reveal the amount, size, and density etc of root tissue present. They proposed to undertake two trial excavations, one where the proposed structure is to be built, and a second along the boundary fence-line immediately adjacent to the tree. The second trial trench was not completed, with investigations taken barely below topsoil level and therefore providing little information; however root tissue was still located within the trench, and it would be expected to have been more significant at depth given its location.

The results and photographs of trial trench 1 shown within their accompanying report show a dense and quite characteristic coverage of root tissue within the trench that is typical of ground adjacent to a mature tree. They note a lack of rooting at a lower depth within this area, which may be due to historical root removal or damage being caused by the original pool house construction, but it is clear that considerable amounts of smaller diameter feeder roots are present.

Crown Consultants Ltd conclude that this lack of larger diameter root tissue at depth negates the possibility of any detrimental impact on tree health being caused by the development, although they then follow on to recommend tree pruning to mitigate for an impact.

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It is my opinion that the removal of this profitable root protection area and the dense network of surface and feeder roots that are abundantly clear from the photographs would, on the contrary, have a significant negative impact on tree health and condition. I would also further strongly disagree with the suggestion that pruning (in this case the proposed removal of 3 lower branches) will result in rebalancing of crown / root ratio (the pruning actually appears to amount to minor remedial crown-lifting over the proposed new structure). As previously noted this is merely further wounding to an already historically compromised mature tree.

To summarise: the proposals are in contravention of the guidance found within **BS5837:2012** '*Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*'; the construction is wholly within the recommended root protection area of a mature tree; and the trial trenches have shown considerable and fully functional root tissue is present that will be removed, with the ground closest to the tree being surface-hardened precluding any future significant root growth from becoming established. The tree has been subject to root restriction and damage on several sides and at several periods in the past and any further encroachment or loss of root function should be avoided.

I trust this assists but if you need any further information please just let me know.

Kind Regards



Andrew Elliott
Arboricultural Consultant