



ARBORICULTURAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS

The
Director of Planning
London Borough of Camden
Camden Town Hall
Judd Street
WC1H 9JE

23rd August 2019

17 CROSS ROAD
TADWORTH
SURREY KT20 5ST

Tel.: (01737) 813058
E-mail: sja@sjatrees.co.uk

Directors: Simon R. M. Jones Dip. Arb. (RFS), FArborA., RCArborA. (Managing)
Frank P. S. Spooner BSc (Hons), MArborA, TechCert (ArborA)

Ref: SJA R16 19336-01

Dear Sirs,

**Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012, Regulation 16
The County of London (Hampstead No. 9) Tree Preservation Order, 1956
Application for Tree Works at Grove Lodge, Admirals Walk, Hampstead, NW3 2QG**

In short, this application is for the reduction in height of three protected lime trees (nos. 2-4), down to 10m, on the grounds of safety. We have been instructed to submit this application to prune these trees on behalf of the owner of the property. Submitted alongside this letter is a tree works plan we have produced to illustrate the location of the trees and further specify the proposed works.

This site is currently being re-developed pursuant to planning permission 2015/4485/P. We have been consulting on the arboricultural impacts of the re-development of this site since early 2014; our implications report (ref: SJA air 14042-04d) was submitted with the 2015 application. We have attended site many times, for various reasons, including more recently in a supervisory role during excavations alongside the southern boundary of the site in proximity to these lime trees.

Further to the planning implications, our client was served with a 'dangerous structure' notice by the highways authority on 10th June 2015. This notice required the partial demolition and rebuilding of the southern boundary wall, where it abuts Admirals Walk. The wall, acts as a retaining wall to a raised planter in which these trees are growing. Originally there were four trees in this location, but consent was granted for the removal of one of them (no. 1) in the 2015 planning application. Due to the activity of the trees' roots in this raised planter the wall was bowing out over the road, had several cracks in it and at risk of collapse into the road.

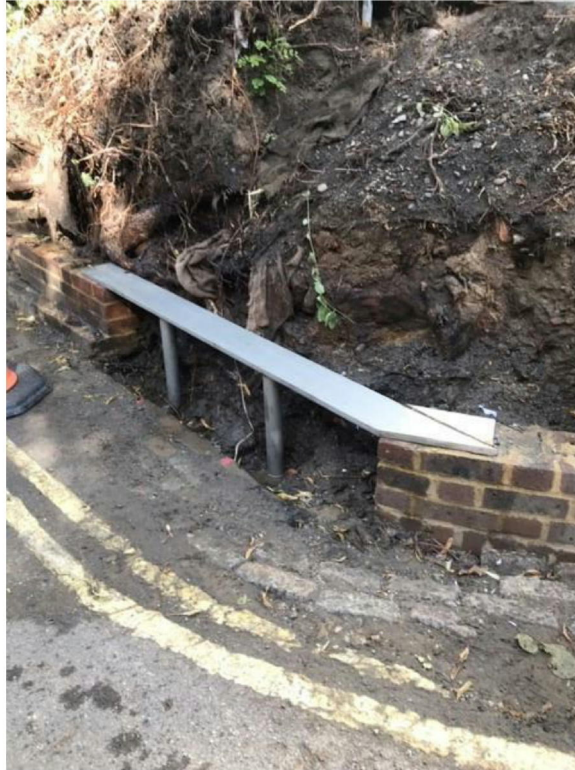
When asked to advise on the impacts of rebuilding the retaining wall, it was clear that there was a good chance that tree no. 2, at least, would sustain significant damage to major structural roots and that roots would need to be severed. Our recommendation was that the tree is likely to have to be removed.

As an aside, consent has previously been recommended by us and sought in the form of a s211 Notice (Ref: SJA s211 14042-01) (before we knew the trees were covered by a TPO) for the removal of the category 'U' tree no. 3. However, our client has been very clear in his intention that these trees are to be retained.

Therefore, alternative solutions have been sought, that allow for the retention of the trees whilst minimising any impact on their RPAs both during the re-development of the site and the re-building of the boundary wall next to Admirals Walk.

Nevertheless, some roots have been severed during the implementation of the approved works and tree no. 2's root bole has been left exposed for approximately three weeks whilst the wall is rebuilt. During this time, we attended site and cleared the roots of soil and other loose debris (using an air-spade) to allow a more detailed inspection. Indeed, there were roots that were clearly exerting direct pressure on the old wall and which could not be severed without causing the tree significant harm. Interestingly, there was evidence that roots from tree no. 2 had grafted with roots from the now removed tree no. 1; it was not clear how much of either root could be removed without harming the retained tree, and hence none were cut. Following our inspection, exposed roots have been covered in hessian sacking.

The solution, developed in conjunction with the project architects, engineers and contractors, is to install small diameter vertical piles in locations chosen by us which avoid significant roots, and weld a steel plate on top of these, onto which the wall can be built. The ground behind the wall will be reinstated but a compressible layer installed behind the new wall to minimise the risk of future direct pressure from the tree's roots. This is illustrated in the below photograph:



Photograph 1: showing structural solution to the repair of the wall

As previously stated, there is a clear intention for the trees to be retained but that an easier and more viable option would have been to seek consent for the removal of the tree. However, as the tree has sustained some damage and lost whatever structural support the old wall was providing, there is a risk of failure in high winds.

Therefore, we proposed the reduction of the trees to 10m in height to make the trees safer in high winds and afford them time to recover from this disruption and the disruption of the re-development. Pruning the canopy of a tree when roots are severed is common practice when transplanting trees in the nursery, it promotes vigorous growth of both roots and canopy, and the same principle applies here. As lime is such a vigorous species and can tolerate pruning and some degree of root severance and rooting environment disruption, there is no reason to suggest these trees will not tolerate these works.

In time, it is anticipated that the trees will be allowed to adapt to their new, post-development, environment and subject to further assessment may be allowed to regrow to their current proportions. It should be noted that the LPA instructed its own contractors to reduce these, privately owned, trees in 2015. It is understood


that this was a mistake on the LPA's behalf, believing the trees to be on highway land; however, it is clear that managing the trees as high pollards was the LPA's intention at that stage.

The currently proposed works are more significant than those carried out in 2015, the justification behind the need for the works, as set out above, is greater than it was then.

Whilst tree no. 2, closest to the re-construction of the wall, is likely to have sustained the most harm, the other trees have also had roots severed, in line with the approved plans. The proposed work is to be carried out to all three trees as they are growing in a group and should be managed equally. Reducing all three trees makes aerodynamic (and therefore safety) and aesthetic sense.

I trust the above is clear and provides sufficient clarification for the proposed works and the reasons for them. However, if further clarification is required please do let me know. I also trust the LPA is aware that if consent is not considered favourable then it could be held liable for any failure that occurs as a consequence of a decision to refuse consent for the proposed works for the 12 months following its decision.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Director and Associate Consultant.

Director and Associate Consultant

SJAtrees