



## SJ Stephens Associates

ARBORICULTURAL, LANDSCAPE & MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS



28<sup>th</sup> May 2019



**Re: Bay tree at 7 Canfield Gardens.**

I inspected the Bay tree, shown in the photos attached, on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

The tree is approximately 11.5m in height, with twin stems of 300 and 410mm and a crown spread of 8m. It has been reduced to approximately 7m in the past, but with a well shaped crown has now grown out. It is showing good vigour

The tree is growing immediately adjacent to a boundary brick wall in a raised bed, which is retained by a 1m wall of rendered breeze blocks. The boundary wall is leaning and there large cracks in the retaining wall to the bed.

There are two distinct threats from tree roots. Firstly, expansion of roots as they grow can cause lateral pressure. This, together with a possible build up of water pressure, through lack of seep holes in the wall, is likely to have caused the cracks in the retaining wall. If you decide to rebuild this wall it should be constructed a little further from the tree to allow tree roots, which are likely to grow along just inside the wall, to be protected from desiccation or from the toxic effects of cement, by covering with heavy duty polythene and completing the works and back filling, as quickly as possible.

Secondly, there is a possible risk from subsidence, where extraction of water by tree roots causes shrinkage of clay soils resulting in subsidence. There has been no sign of subsidence damage to the house to date and it is fairly unlikely that roots will have grown down beneath the retaining wall to foundation level. However, as a precaution, I suggest reducing the size of the tree and maintaining it at a smaller size. Although regular pruning will not generally solve a subsidence problem, it can help prevent one from occurring.

I suggest reducing the height of the tree by approximately 3m and reducing the crown spread by 1m-1.25m in all directions. Crown reduction must be to the standards of BS3998, removing branches to suitable forks and ensuring live growth is maintained around the periphery of the canopy.





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Since the site is within the South Hampstead Conservation Area, you have to notify Camden Council to allow them the opportunity of placing a Tree Preservation Order if they so wish. You can do this online, attaching a copy of this letter.

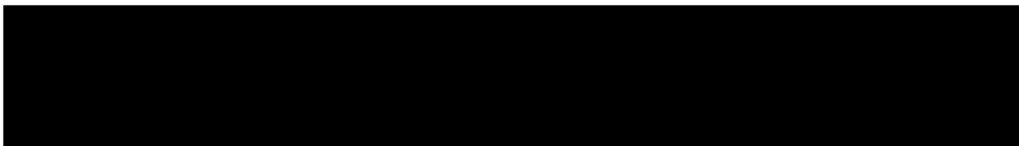
The tree work should be undertaken by a suitable experienced contractor, preferably an Arboricultural Association Approved Contractor (see [www.trees.org.uk](http://www.trees.org.uk)). Pruning of Bay trees is best undertaken in late spring/early summer, so sooner the better....

If you require any further advice, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,



**Simon Stephens**  
**Arboricultural Association Registered Consultant**  
**MA Oxon, Dip Arb(RFS), MArborA, CEnv, MICF**





Approximate crown shape  
after pruning

Stems of tree  
against boundary  
wall

