ARBORICULTURAL FILE NOTE 1: RESPONSE TO ENFORCEMENT MATTERS JULY 2025

27 Park Side, Little Paxton, St Neots PE19 6NW

11th July 2025
Client: Andrew Sincock

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1 Introduction

1.1 I am a Registered Consultant of the Arboricultural Association. (RC Licence No: RC202) and have worked as a consultant for over 20 years. I hold the Arboricultural Association's Technician's Certificate and the Royal Forestry Society's Professional Diploma, which is a level 6 qualification equivalent to an Honours degree.

1.2 I attended the site on 7th April 2025 to make an assessment of the current state of construction following the issue of an enforcement notice from Huntingdonshire District Council (**25/00073/ENTREE**).

1.3 Two main areas of action were noted:

- A plan for the safe removal of materials within the Root Protection Area of Oak 001.
- A plan for the remediation of soil damage and contamination

2 Removal of materials within Root Protection Area of Oak

2.1 A revised Tree Protection Plan and Arboricultural Method Statement has been produced (5825.Little Paxton.Sincock.TPP.Rev A - see Appendix A).

2.2 The proposal is to remove all building materials and clear any materials that might be considered contaminants before protecting the entire front area with either a double layer of plywood or a hired-in sheeting system.

2.3 A specific cement mixing area is shown, proposed to be formed with the use of an impervious membrane to avoid any materials containing cement to come into contact with the ground.

3 Soil damage and contamination

3.1 It has been assumed that the soil has been compacted because ground protection was not in place in accordance with the Approved Tree Protection Plan.

3.2 To investigate soil compaction, I used an 'Edelmann' type hand auger (see fig 1) to take samples from the upper region of the ground. These were taken in the front garden to the west of Oak 001 and in the rear garden and to the south of Sycamore 002 (see figs 2-4 below).

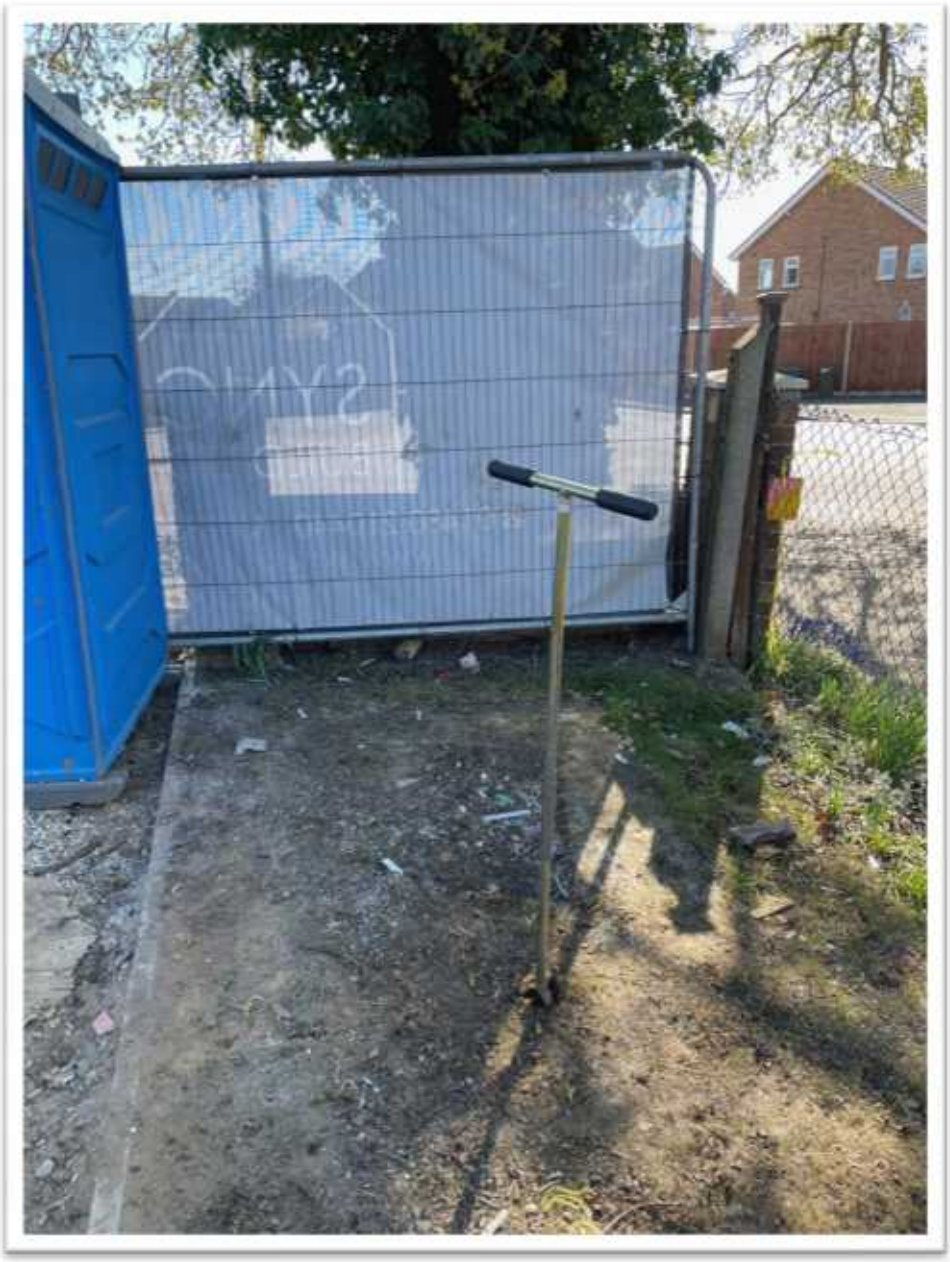


Fig 1. Picture showing the auger used

3.3 Fig 2 below shows the condition of the soil taken from near the Oak.



Fig 2. Picture showing core taken with well-structured sandy soil



Fig 3. Picture showing overall core spoil from near Oak 001



Fig 4. Picture showing overall core spoil taken from below the topsoil covering near Sycamore 003. Note well-structured sandy, gravelly soil

3.4 It has been assumed that the topsoil placed in the back garden will be detrimental to the trees. I found the depth of topsoil to be within an acceptable amount, within the range 50-100mm (see fig 5 below).



Fig 5. Picture showing borehole near Sycamore 003 with the depth of placed topsoil arrowed red (around 80mm). The fine roots seen are within the topsoil.

4 Discussion

4.1 I found no evidence of any significant contamination. There was some crystallised cement dust in the region of the soil sampling to the west of Oak 001 but this was fully hardened and therefore, inert. This can be carefully removed using a shovel and brush. In this situation, there is no requirement to decontaminate the ground (using sodium gluconate for example).

4.2 I found no evidence of compaction. The soil cores removed were well-structured and crumbled easily without any agitation. This is likely to be because the soil is sandy. For compaction to be an issue for tree root growth, the soil bulk density would need to be greater than 1.6g/cm^3. Although this was not tested, given the visual evidence, I do not consider it is necessary. I do not consider it necessary to implement a programme of decompaction using a 'Terravent' or similar.

4.3 The placement of topsoil over the original soil level is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the trees through causing asphyxiation. This is because the soil is sandy and the movement of gases is much better than in heavy clay soil (for example). In addition, the depth of material placed is unlikely to be significant, given the type of soil. Therefore, I do not consider it necessary to reduce the depth of the material placed.

5 Recommednations

5.1 Implement the physical protection and management principles written in the Arboricultural Method Statement on the revised Tree Protection Plan.

5.2 Ensure a copy of the Tree Protection Plan is available at all times on site.

5.3 Involve the Project Arboriculturalist in strict accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement.



Andrew Belson

RCArborA, DipArb RFS, Tech Cert (ArborA)

Appendix A

Revised Tree Protection Plan: 5825.Little Paxton.Sincock.AMS.Rev A follows

METHOD STATEMENT for TREE MANAGEMENT and PROTECTION

PURPOSE

This Arboricultural Method Statement describes how this part complete Consented development will be planned to avoid any damage to retained trees and address the concerns raised over recent operations that may have affected the trees.

TEAM DETAILS

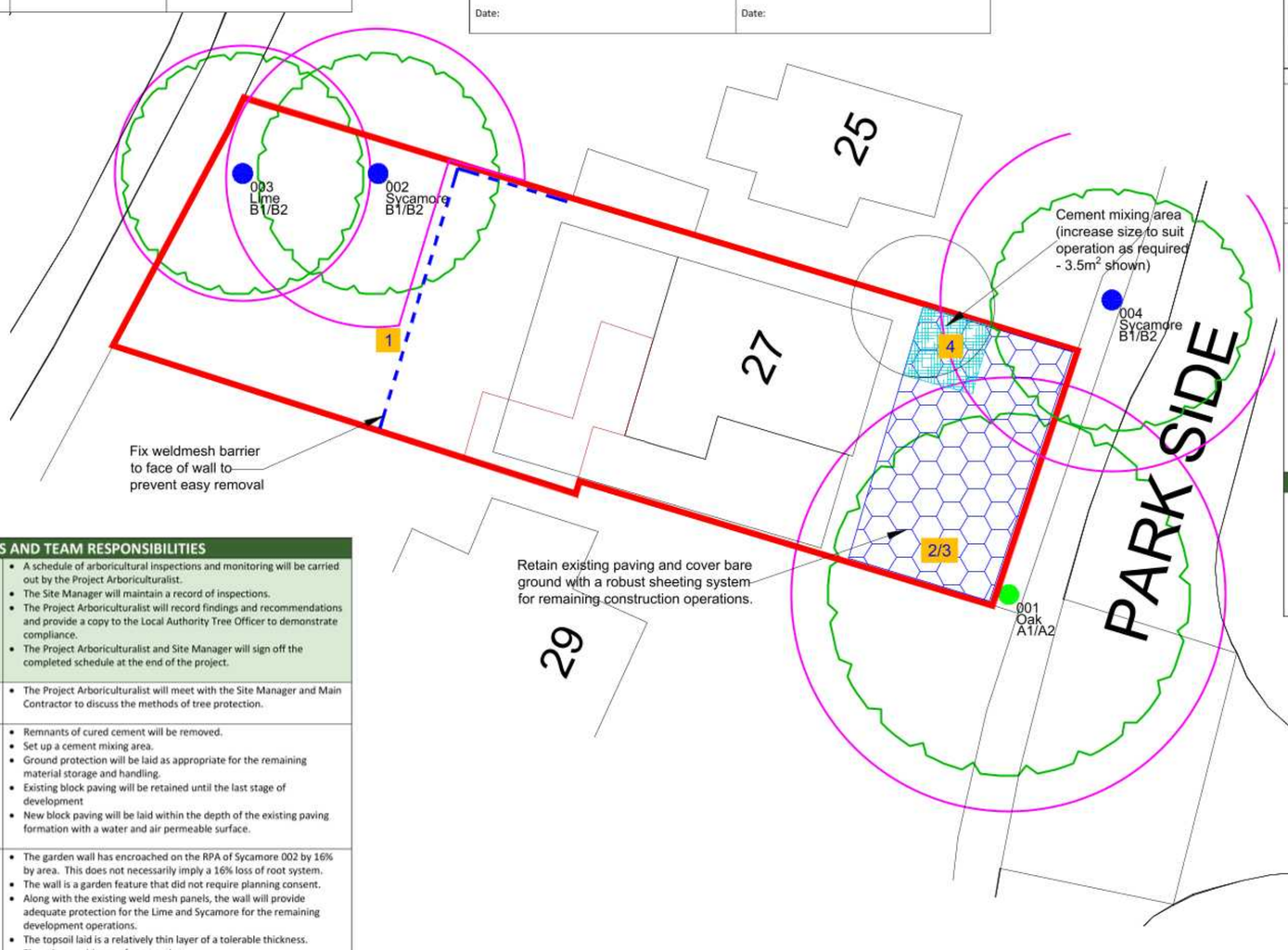
ROLE	NAME	EMAIL/ TELEPHONE
DEVELOPER	• Andrew Sincock	•
MAIN CONTRACTOR	•	•
SITE MANAGER	•	•
PROJECT ARBORICULTURALIST	• Andrew Belson	•
TREEWORK CONTRACTOR	•	•
LOCAL AUTHORITY TREE OFFICER	•	•
DESIGNER	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•
	•	•

INSPECTION AND MONITORING SCHEDULE

KEY EVENT	ARBORICULTURAL ACTIVITY	TIMING	DATE COMPLETED	SITE MANAGER'S SIGNATURE
Tree protection measures	Inspect barriers and ground protection by video call	Before construction recommences		
Check barriers and signage	Ongoing site responsibility	During construction		
Construction of driveway	Monitoring and supervision	During construction		
Remove barriers	Inspect trees and specify remedial work.	Post construction		
ADDITIONAL				

Post-completion all arboricultural works can be signed off below:

Arboricultural Consultant:	Site Manager:
Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:



SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITIES AND TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

THROUGHOUT:		• A schedule of arboricultural inspections and monitoring will be carried out by the Project Arboriculturalist. • The Site Manager will maintain a record of inspections. • The Project Arboriculturalist will record findings and recommendations and provide a copy to the Local Authority Tree Officer to demonstrate compliance. • The Project Arboriculturalist and Site Manager will sign off the completed schedule at the end of the project.
RE-COMMENCEMENT SITE MEETING		• The Project Arboriculturalist will meet with the Site Manager and Main Contractor to discuss the methods of tree protection.
CONSTRUCTION	FRONT AREA Issues: • Possible contamination • Materials storage	• Remnants of cured cement will be removed. • Set up a cement mixing area. • Ground protection will be laid as appropriate for the remaining material storage and handling. • Existing block paving will be retained until the last stage of development • New block paving will be laid within the depth of the existing paving formation with a water and air permeable surface.
	REAR AREA Issues: • Impact of garden wall • Preparation for turfing, including the laying of topsoil • Barrier location	• The garden wall has encroached on the RPA of Sycamore 002 by 16% by area. This does not necessarily imply a 16% loss of root system. • The wall is a garden feature that did not require planning consent. • Along with the existing weld mesh panels, the wall will provide adequate protection for the Lime and Sycamore for the remaining development operations. • The topsoil laid is a relatively thin layer of a tolerable thickness. • There is no evidence of compaction.
POST-CONSTRUCTION		• Once the main construction activities are complete the protective barriers and any ground protection will be removed before landscaping work begins. • The Project Arboriculturalist will inspect the trees on and adjacent to the site and identify any remedial works that might be required. • A schedule of works will be produced (where necessary) and circulated to the Local Authority Arboriculturalist for approval. • The Tree Work Contractor will implement the works. • The Project Arboriculturalist will sign off the works and produce a Completion Certificate to the Local Authority Arboriculturalist.

STAGE 1 ENABLING WORKS

NO.	MATERIALS	NOTES
1	Weldmesh panels on offset support blocks with lateral struts	The existing weldmesh barriers will be maintained on their current line where shown by the dashed blue lines on the Tree Protection Plan (see notes on barriers below)
2	Plywood sheets or a hired-in ground protection sheeting system	Ground at the front of the site will be protected by a combination of existing paving and/or a double-layer of (minimum 16mm) plywood sheeting before any further construction operation or any materials are brought on site. The area for ground protection is shown by the blue hexagonal hatch on the drawing.
3	Cellular confinement geoweb and no-fines aggregate	To construct the front drive, the area denoted by the blue hexagonal hatch will be paved within the depth of the existing block paving, its base and sub-base. The new sub-base will be constructed with the use of a cellular confinement system and finished with a water and air permeable surface. (see Notes on construction of access and parking bays below)
4	Impervious sheeting such as DPM or butyl rubber	For any remaining operations that require the mixing of materials that contain cement, a catchment area will be set up to prevent any water or cement-based products from coming into contact with the ground.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF SITE MANAGEMENT FOR TREE PROTECTION

- No fires will be lit on site
- No storage or discharge of materials unless on the prepared ground protection.
- The mixing of cement and dispensing of fuel or chemicals will only be carried out within the designated area.
- Any damage that occurs to the trees during construction will be rectified to BS3998: 2010.
- Trees must not be used as anchor points for winching or for supporting wires/cables.

BARRIERS

- Weather-proof notices stating: 'PROTECTED AREA – DO NOT ENTER' to be erected on barriers not less than 5m apart. (example on plan)
- Barriers will remain in place until the end of the main construction period.

SUITABLE HIRED-IN GROUND PROTECTION SYSTEMS

- LIVE (formerly Eve) provide Trakway access systems in timber, aluminium or plastic for a variety of potential loads. See http://www.livetrakway.com for more details or call 08700 76 76 76).
- Alternatively, Ground-Guards provide a range of ground protection mats from lightweight to heavy-duty. See http://www.ground-guards.co.uk for more details or call 0113 267 6000).

INSTALLATION OF SERVICES

- The default location for any trenching for the installation of services or other excavations for soakaways etc. will be located at least 1m from the radial extent of the RPAs drawn.
- Any further excavations for services inside Root Protection Areas will be carried out under arboricultural supervision.
- Any roots found will be worked around where practical.
- Any damaged roots will be pruned back to a suitable union by the Project Arboriculturalist using a sharp hand saw or by-pass secateurs.

CONSTRUCTION OF DRIVEWAY

- Once all materials handling and mixing of products containing cement has finished, the ground protection sheeting will be removed.
- The area for paving will be excavated no deeper than the cumulative depth of the existing block paving, to include the sand bed and any sub-base.
- A filter membrane such as 'Terram 1000' will be laid over the excavated area.
- A cellular confinement geoweb of 150mm profile will be laid over the membrane. Options include. Options include:
  - The Geoweb® Tree Root Protection System offered by Greenfix UK (see http://greenfix.co.uk for more details or call 01608 666027).
  - Cellweb® Tree Root Protection (TRP) from Geosynthetics Limited (see http://www.geosyn.co.uk or call 01455 617 139)
- The driveway edgings will be formed with timber edging boards supported by driven stakes.
- The cellular confinement system will be backfilled with 20-40mm no-fines graded stone and compacted, adding more aggregate as necessary to bring to level.
- The prepared surface will be finished in accordance with the Approved Materials at the end of the main construction phase

POST CONSTRUCTION

- Once all the construction and hard landscaping works are completed and all plant and machinery has been taken off site, the protective barriers and ground protection will be removed before landscaping work begins.
- Soil cultivation within the previously protected zones will be carried out by hand only. No machine cultivation will take place within these zones whatsoever.
- Planting within the previously protected zones will be carried out by hand using hand tools only.
- Retained trees will be re-inspected post-development by a qualified arboriculturalist and any works arising carried out within the time limits specified.

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NOTES Based on block plan 1152

The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

KEY

- ROOT PROTECTION AREA
- CANOPY OUTLINE - INDIVIDUAL TREE
- IMMOVEABLE WELD MESH BARRIER
- AREA PROTECTED WITH ROBUST SHEETING UNTIL THE END OF THE MAIN CONSTRUCTION PHASE THEN SURFACED WITHIN DEPTH OF PREVIOUS BLOCK PAVING WITH GEOWEB SUB-BASE
- INDICATIVE CEMENT MIXING AREA TO BE CONSTRUCTED WITH IMPERVIOUS SHEETING

0 5 10 15 20 25
METRES

Rev	Description	Date
A	Sycamore 004 added	11.07.25

Purpose of Issue
Planning

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Drawing Title
ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT AND TREE PROTECTION PLAN

Drawn	Checked	Reviewed	Date
AMB	--	--	11/07/2025
Job No. 5825	Scale 1:200	Sheet Size A2	Revision A

Drawing Number
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