Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)

Land off Todmorden Road, Littleborough, OL15 9EZ

Client; Mr Thomas Ramsden

Location; Land off Todmorden Road, Littleborough, OL15 9EZ

Report Brief; To provide a tree survey and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) in relation to trees situated adjacent to the subject site, along with a Tree Constraints Plan (TCP). A normal AIA would be done prior to work being undertaken but in this case the AIA has been requested by the Local Planning Authority for what is/are essentially retrospective planning applications. The applications relate to provision of a drop kerb to the highway, the removal of a mound/banking of earth, the erection of a fence and gate, and the deposition of soil and rubble elsewhere on the site. All shown on associated plan attached.

Discussion;

- The Planning applications are largely retrospective, given that most of the proposed work has already been undertaken except for the drop kerb.
- No trees are to be removed as part of this planning proposal.
- The nine trees included within the Tree survey are part of a larger group of approximately 30 sycamore trees.
- The trees included specifically within the trees survey are the only trees considered to in a position where they may be materially impacted by works.
- The remainder of the trees in the group, marked Group 1 on the attached plan are not considered to be in a position where they can be materially impacted.
- All of the trees within Group 1 fall into either Category C or U as defined in BS5837 2012 – having little individual merit, but having some merit as part of a group.
- The trees within Group 1 are thought to be within council ownership and are not thought to be subject to a Tree Preservation Order or situated within a Conservation Area. With no formal protected designation the landowner has a common law right to cut of any overhanging foliage and also to remove any roots that may encroach onto his property.
- The landowner has stated that it is not his intention to undertake any such works in accordance with common law, but that he would work with the Local Authority to ensure their ongoing health.
- The fence and gate have now been erected as per the attached plan and it clear that the trees in question have not been negatively impacted by this work.
- Likewise the banking/mound of earth has now also been removed and the ground level returned to its original state. It is clear also that this work has not negatively impacted on the trees, and may indeed have had a positive effect, in that the ground level having been returned to its original state thereby allowing tree roots to absorb oxygen, water and nutrients.
- There is some evidence of some minor root damage adjacent to trees T2 – T4 on attached plan. Whilst it is unclear exactly which tree or trees this damage is associated with the landowner has agreed to cut the damaged end of the roots cleanly and cover exposed roots with good quality topsoil.

- Where soil and rubble has been deposition to the east of Group 1 this has had only very limited to no effect upon the trees. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly because the land dropped away from group 1 quite steeply it is unlikely that tree roots would have been particularly prevalent in the area, and secondly because there is a natural root barrier along that boundary in the form of both an old stone wall and also some large York stone flags, set on edge along that boundary.
- In terms of the drop kerb which is yet to be approved or implemented. As the excavations for the drop kerb fall just inside the theoretical Root Protection Area of T1 and as such needs to be considered. However the encroachment into the RPA is so small, and with 90% of the RPA remaining completely in tact it is considered that offsetting the RPA in line with BS5837 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – recommendations 2012 section 5.3.1 (a) " can demonstrate that the tree/s can remain viable and that the area lost to encroachment can be compensated for elsewhere, contiguous with the RPA" which in this case it can.
- In all cases trees 1-9 have additional root protection area contiguous with the RPA as prescribed by BS 5837 and as such all root protection areas can be reduced as per section 5.3.1 (a) of the recommendations and all trees remain viable.

Conclusions and recommendations;

- The works that have been undertaken have had only very limited impact on the adjacent trees numbered 1-9 and Group 1 on attached plan.
- The removal of the large mound/banking of earth may well have had a beneficial effect on neighbouring trees.
- The erection of the fence and gates has not impacted negatively on the adjacent trees.
- The re-profiling of soil and rubble to the east of the group of trees has had little to no effect on the trees for the reasons described above.
- There is no likely benefit to the trees by reversing any of the works that have been undertaken.
- Where minor damage has been caused – adjacent to trees 2-4 this will be rectified as described earlier in the report.
- Whilst works for a drop kerb will encroach into the theoretical RPA this can be offset as described above with only very limited effect on the tree if any.
- All trees numbered 1-9 have large areas of contiguous RPA as described earlier and as such any minor incursions into the prescribed RPA can be offset in this area and as such the trees remain in good health and viable.
- The landowner agrees to retain the services of MMA Tree Consultancy throughout the course of the works and consult on any matters relating to works in or near the RPA.

Signed …- - MMA Tree Consultancy Dated - 29th October 2019

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