Arboricultural Consultant Site Visit

Company: SJ Stephens Associates Ltd	**Site:** The Black Horse
Consultant: Simon Stephens	**Visit Date:** 15th March 2024
Address: Savernake Barn Stokke Common Great Bedwyn Marlborough Wiltshire SN8 3LL	**Site Address:** The Black Horse Great Durnford Salisbury SP4 6AY
Representative: Catherine Fforde	**Site Representative:** John Snazell – Site Manager
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Purpose of Visit:
To carry out site inspection of trial trench within root protection area of horse chestnut tree

Meetings held while on site:
John Snazell – Site Manager

Background:

1) Planning permission has been received for the erection of a detached building comprising 6 x en-suite letting rooms and plant room (amendment to building approved as part of 21/01914/FUL), ref: PL/2021/11673. An application is now being made for the installation of underground Liquid Petroleum Gas vessels and associated works, ref: PL/2023/10144.

2) S J Stephens Associates were instructed by Spratley & Partners, on behalf of Mr Turner, to prepare an Arboricultural Impact Assessment to support the planning application. Following comments from the local authority tree officer, a trial trench has been excavated by hand digging within the root protection area of a tree in order to look for the presence of roots which could be affected by the proposed installation.

Discussion/Observations:

1) A trial trench has been excavated using hand tools, to a depth of 1m, within the root protection area of the horse chestnut, identified as T1, in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by S J Stephens Associates, dated 29.01.24. The trench is slightly further away from the boundary wall than the position shown on the Tree Protection Plan, ref: 1646-03, attached to this report. The alteration to the position was made to avoid undermining the wall structure. One section of the trench runs parallel to the boundary wall, running approximately east to west, and one section is at a 90º angle to the wall, running approximately southwards.

2) The excavated area shows a shallow soil layer over chalk/limestone. Roots have been found and are predominantly located in the soil layer.

3) One large root is extending to the south. The root is irregular in circumference but is approximately 8cm in diameter where it enters the excavated area. A number of smaller secondary roots branch off from the main root, with secondary roots extending into the proposed area for the installation of the gas tanks. The smaller roots are all less than 1cm in diameter, and are between 6.5m and 7.3m away from the stem of the tree.

4) Two roots are extending across the width of the trench, which runs parallel to the boundary wall; both roots are less than 25mm in diameter where they enter the trench. A number of smaller roots have been severed during the excavation works.

5) The proposed construction works for the installation of the tanks were discussed. The tanks are to be sited on a concrete slab, with slab located 2m below existing ground level. A gas dispersion wall is to be constructed to one side of the slab, running between the tanks and the roadside boundary. Excavation works will be carried out by working from the southern end of the area, reducing the ground to formation level for the slab.

6) The feasibility of the retention of the roots within the trench area was discussed. It was agreed that the roots could be safely retained, with the area outside the trench being excavated and, if required, the bottom of the trench, below the roots, being lowered to batter the sides down to the slab area.

7) Following installation of the gas tanks the area is to be backfilled. It was agreed that the top level around the roots, would be filled with imported topsoil to provide a suitable environment for roots to regenerate. The gas tank area will be enclosed by fencing once the installation works are complete.

8) It was agreed that the roots would be protected by wrapping in hessian and the trench covered with boards until such time as approval for the works has been agreed with the local authority tree officer.

Recommendations:

1) Following planning approval from the local planning authority the tree roots can be severed at the edge of the trench furthest away from the tree, where indicated by the red lines shown on the photos attached to this report. A sharp bladed tool must be used so that roots are cleanly cut. The hessian must be wrapped around the cut root ends. Hessian must be retained until the works are complete and area is ready to be backfilled.

2) The area for the gas tanks must be excavated by working away from the tree. If necessary the excavator bucket can be used below the retained roots to lower the bottom of the trench. A banksman must be present during these works to ensure that no contact is made with the tree roots.

3) Following the installation of the tanks, the area must be backfilled. Prior to backfilling, a root barrier membrane must be installed between the retained roots and the tank area, in accordance with the gas engineer's specification. In the area around the retained tree roots the upper level, in line with the existing soil profile, must be backfilled with good quality topsoil, supplied to BS3882:2015.

4) Tree protection fencing must then be erected around the area to prevent ground compaction during the remainder of the construction period.

5) When the permanent fenced enclosure is ready to be erected the tree protection fencing can be set aside. Post holes within the root protection area must be hand dug. The post holes must be lined with heavy duty polythene before concrete is poured to prevent the toxic effects on tree roots. Post holes must be located to avoid the retained roots in the trial trench.

Date of Next Visit: Only if required.

APPENDIX A

T3
Horse chestnut
A2

T2
Horse chestnut
B2

T1
Horse chestnut
A2

1.5m

6.1m

4.0m

Underground
LPG tanks

Footprint of
previous
building

T30
Willow

Ground protection panels to be laid before starting trench excavation

Trench to be excavated by hand (can use an air spade) to a depth of 1m, retaining all roots >25mm diameter and as many smaller roots as possible.

On completion supply photos to Tree Officer or, if requested, invite to inspect to gain approval.

Wrap all exposed roots in hessian.

Key

- Category U
- Category A
- Category B
- Category C
- Crown spread: retained trees
- Trees For Removal
- Root Protection Area
- Tree Protection Fence
- location: landscaping
- location: construction
- Ground Protection Area
- Hand Dig Area
- No-Dig Construction

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JOB TITLE
THE BLACK HORSE

DRAWING TITLE
TRIAL TRENCH DETAILS

DRAWING NUMBER	REV
1646–03	

REVISIONS

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN BY
1:NTS at A2	FEB 24	sjss

The Black Horse



Trench parallel with boundary wall.

Small roots to be severed at edge of trench furthest away from tree where indicated by a red line.

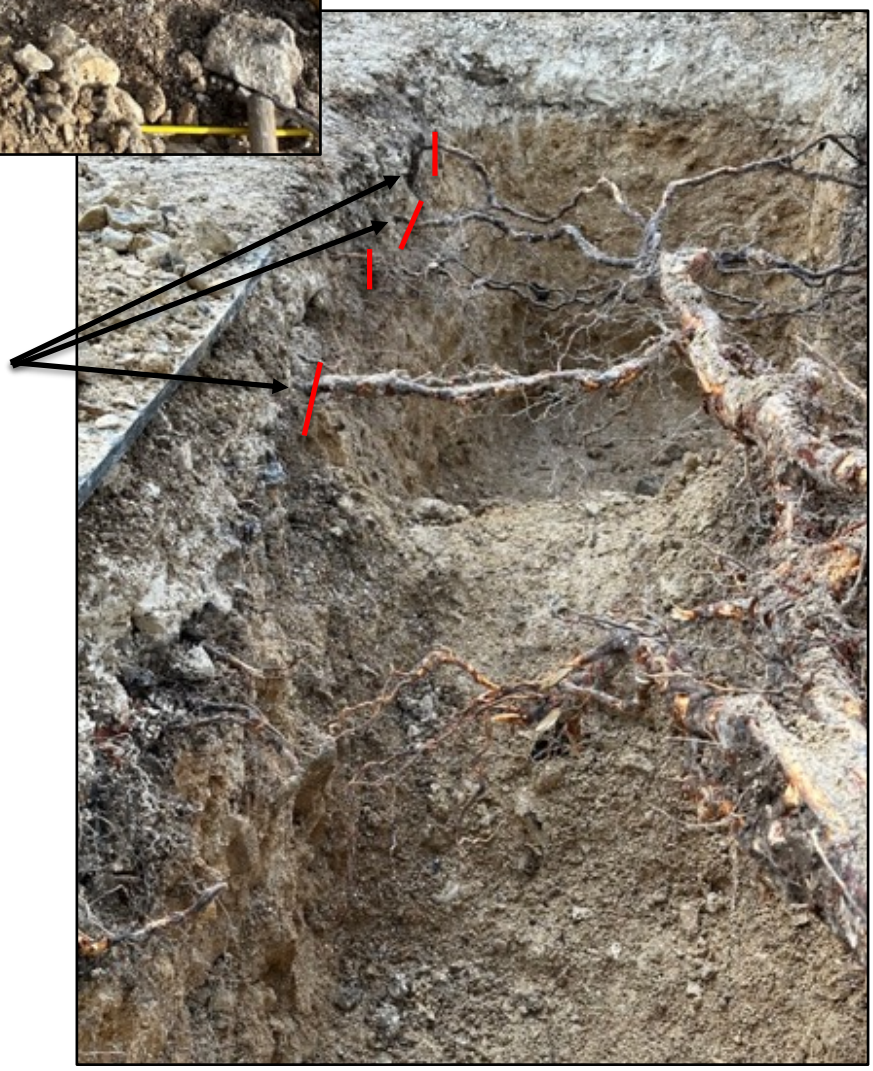
One root of 2cm diameter, to be severed where indicated by a red line. Cut point will be approx. 6.4m from the tree stem.

Close up of area shown in above photo at corner of trench. Small roots of less than 1cm diameter, to be severed, approx. 5.1m from the tree stem.





Trench at 90º to the wall.
Large root running along length of trench and branching to the sides at approx. 7.3m from the tree stem



Roots to be severed at trench edge where indicated by a red line. All less than 1cm in diameter. Roots are located between 6.5m and 7.3m away from the tree stem.





Roots covered in hessian by the contractor following the site visit.

