Land at Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood

Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Method Statement

September 2025

Client	Virtue Land Ltd
Job name	Land at Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood
Report title	Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Method Statement
File reference	22-1450-Report

	Name	**Position**	**Date**
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1 Introduction

1.1 Site Description

Land at Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood (the ''site'') is situated approximately quarter of a mile southeast of the centre of Ashurst Wood and is bound to the north by Hmmaerwood Road, to the east by residential dwellings, to the south by woodland and to the west by a residential dwelling.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) present on the site, and the site is not within a conservation area.

1.2 Proposed Works

The construction of twelve new dwellings with the associated access drive and car parking are proposed. Works that are likely to affect retained trees include the installation of hard surfaces and the movement of construction and delivery vehicles.

1.3 Aims of Study

To inform a planning application, Canopy Consultancy has been commissioned by Virtue Land Ltd to undertake a tree survey of the site, in accordance with British Standard (BS) 5837:2012 "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations".

The aim of this report is to present the results of the survey, including a Tree Survey Schedule (TSS), an Arboricultural Implications Assessment (AIA), and an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS). A Tree Protection Plan (TPP) has also been produced and accompanies this report as a separate drawing.

This report in no way constitutes a health and safety survey report. Where concerns for tree health and safety exist, the necessary and appropriate tree inspections should be carried out.

2 Methodology

The trees were inspected from ground level by consultant arboriculturist Neil Taylor on the 25th of October 2023. Measurements were taken in accordance with the recommendations set out in the BS 5837:2012. Canopy spreads were measured and plotted to the four compass points. Where direct access was not possible measurements have been estimated. The surveyed trees are colour coded on the accompanying tree survey drawing according to their relevant BS category.

The tree data collected is used to enable the current canopy spread of the surveyed trees and the Root Protection Area (RPA) to be plotted on the accompanying TPP. The RPA is defined by the formula in paragraph 4.6 from the BS 5837:2012 and may be refined by taking into account current on-site constraints to root activity such as buildings, earthworks and hard paving. This forms part of the design process for the proposed development.

3 Assessment

3.1 Tree Character Groups

The detailed results of the tree survey are provided in the TSS, in Appendix 1. In summary, the trees on the site are in a good condition and vary in terms of amenity value provided to the wider landscape. The trees can be divided into three distinct character groups as follows:

1. The first character group includes the large, mature trees found growing on the site's boundaries. The majority of the trees in this character are in a good condition and provide significant arboricultural amenity to the local area.

2. The second character group includes the medium sized, middle-aged trees found growing on the site's boundaries. The majority of the trees in this character group are in a reasonable condition and provide a degree of arboricultural amenity to the local area.

3. The third character group includes the smaller, young trees found growing across the site. The dominant species in this character group is cherry laurel (*Prununs laurocerasus*), and it covers the majority of the internal area of the site. The remaining trees in this character group are in a good condition but due to their size are of limited amenity value to the local area.

4 Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)

4.1 Methodology

The AIA uses the information obtained in the tree survey to identify areas where the proposed construction may be at odds with accepted standards, in terms of a tree's requirements for space in which to maintain existing roots and shoots, and space for future growth.

The quality and relative importance of each tree is illustrated as a coloured polygon. The colour used relates to the BS categories as follows: A - green, B - blue, C - grey and U - red (see accompanying drawing reference 22-1450-TPP). In general, the design process will try to retain A and B category trees. Proposed construction will therefore normally be excluded from the RPA of A and B category trees. Red trees are discounted as they are recommended for removal.

Details of the trees surveyed are given in the TSS (Appendix 1). The juxtaposition of the proposed development in relation to existing tree locations are shown on the accompanying TPP drawing, reference 22-1450-TPP.

The AIA considers existing site conditions and the effect that they may have on the development of the surveyed trees' root systems. Hard structures such as building and paved roads and paths can influence the root activity of trees by reducing the availability of both moisture and nutrients.

4.2 Assessment

Refer to the accompanying TPP, drawing, reference 22-1450-TPP, for the relationship between the proposed development and the trees on and adjacent to the site.

- The following trees will be removed for arboricultural reasons:

  T22, T26, T27, T29 and T32

- The following trees will be removed to enable the proposed development:

T2	to enable the construction of an access road.
T16	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T17	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T18	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T19	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T20	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T21	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T23	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T28	to enable the construction of a dwelling.

T31	to allow space for a garden.
T42	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T43	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T44	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T45	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
T49	to enable the construction of a footpath
T50	to enable the construction of an access road.
T51	to enable the construction of a car parking space.
T52	to enable the construction of a car parking space.
T53	to enable the construction of a car parking space.
T54	to enable the construction of a car parking space.
T55	to enable the construction of a car parking space.
Part of G2	to enable the construction of a dwellings.
G3	to enable the construction of a dwelling.
Part of G4	to enable the construction of a dwellings and access road.

- There will be no demolition within the RPA of a retained tree.
- The following trees will be affected by the construction of a new hard surface within the RPA:

  T1, T3, T4, T7, T8, T9, T10 and G2

  The new hard surface will be constructed in accordance with the 'no dig' principles outlined in The Arboricultural Association's Guidance Note 12 and utilise a cellular confinement system such as Cell Web as a subbase. Refer to Section 5.3 below for details.

  The hard surface within the RPA of T1 will be constructed prior to any further ground works so as to act as ground protection.

- The following trees will be affected by the construction of a bin store within the RPA:

  T1

  The hard surface will be installed in accordance with the 'no dig' principles outlined in Arboricultural Association Guidance Note and utilise a cellular confinement system such as Cell Web as a subbase. Refer to Section 5.3 below for details.

5 Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS)

5.1 Methodology

The AMS provides the means by which retained trees and hedges can be protected throughout the development.

The movement of demolition and construction machinery in close proximity to trees may cause compaction of the soil which affects the tree's ability to absorb moisture and nutrients. The RPAs of retained trees and hedges will be protected by a tree protection barrier as described in paragraph 5.5 below and shown on the accompanying TPP, drawing number 22-1450-TPP.

5.2 Demolition within the RPA of Retained Trees

There will be no demolition within the RPA of a retained tree.

5.3 Construction within the RPA of Retained Trees

Prior to construction commencing, the retained trees will be protected in accordance with the accompanying TPP, drawing number 22-1450-TPP.

Construction of Hard Surfaces

Construction of the new hard surface that is within the RPA of T1, T3, T4, T7, T8, T9, T10 and G2 will utilise a cellular confinement system such as Cell Web in order to minimise the excavations required. The new hard surface will be constructed on top of the existing ground level and no excavations will take place to level the ground. Guidance on the form of construction necessary to avoid root damage and loss is provided in the form of an extract of the Cell Web Product brochure for their cellular confinement system at Appendix 2. The installation of the hard surface should proceed in the following order:

- Lay geotextile membrane over the soil and pin into place
- Lay cellular confinement system (such as Cell Web) as specified by engineer and pin into place.
- Fill the cellular confinement system with a 'no fines' aggregate to engineer's specification Work must be carried out progressively so that any machinery used only moves on the laid surface.
- Install timber edging (if required) as specified by engineer
- Lay geotextile membrane over filled cellular confinement system.

- Lay wearing course as specified by landscape architect

Where the proposed new hard surface is to be installed on the existing soft landscape adjacent to an existing hard surface to be retained, allowances will be made for the increase in level which can be graded out by increasing the level of the retained hard surface.

Construction of Bin Store

The surfaces will comprise dry jointed slabs laid on top of a subbase installed as outlined above. The bin store will then be bolted to the new hard surface.

No materials or spoil is to be stored within the RPA of a retained tree.

In order to avoid damage to the retained trees the tree surgery and felling work identified in the accompanying tree survey schedule will be carried out prior to the occupation of the site by the building contractor. The work will be carried out in accordance with BS 3998:2010.

5.4 Services

The proposed locations of all service runs have not been finalised at this early stage. However, it is likely that some services will pass through the RPA of retained trees on and adjacent to the site. Any excavations within the RPA will be carried by hand in accordance with 'broken trenches' described in NJUG 4 Section 4, an extract of which can be found in Appendix 3. This will ensure that tree roots are not damaged during the installation of the service. All roots with a diameter of 25mm or more will be retailed, any roots with a diameter of less than 25mm will be pruned back to the edge of the trench with sharp secateurs.

5.5 Tree Protection

All trees that are to be retained on the site will be protected by the use of a tree protection barrier erected in the location shown on the accompanying TPP, drawing number 22-1450-TPP. The fence will consist of "Heras" type panels or similar braced at appropriate intervals and secured to keep in place. The tree protection barrier will be erected prior to the occupation of the site by the building contractor and will only be removed once the construction phase is complete.

Where specified on the accompanying TPP drawing, reference 22-1450-TPP, the ground between the new building and the tree protection barrier will be protected by geotextile fabric and side butting scaffold boards or thick plywood fit for purpose, on a compressible layer (e.g. 100mm layer of woodchip over a geotextile membrane). The ground protection will be left in place until the building works are complete.

5.6 Site Monitoring and Supervision

The process of reporting to the client and LPA/Tree Officer will be by emailing the checklist form at Appendix 4. After the pre-commencement meeting with the site manager, site monitoring is to be at four-week intervals unless supervision of specialist construction activities is required. It will involve a site visit by the arboriculturist to ensure that the appropriate tree protection measures, as detailed in the approved drawings and method statements, are continually adhered to. The completed checklist will be sent to the LPA within 5 working days of the site visit.

6 Conclusion

Canopy Consultancy was commissioned by Virtue Land Ltd to carry out a tree survey at the site. The results of the survey indicate that the trees within the survey area vary considerably in terms of condition and contribution to the amenity of the wider landscape.

A total of twenty-one individual trees, one group of trees and part of two further groups will be removed to enable the proposed development. The majority of the trees to be removed are within the C category due to their size or structural condition. Five further trees will be removed for arboricultural reasons.

The proposed development of the site provides an opportunity to plant a number of new trees and hedges as part of a landscape scheme for the site. This will improve the age range and species diversity of the trees in the local area, as well as enhancing the tree cover on the site.

Through the specified tree protection measures and construction methodology, it will be possible to minimise the impact of the proposed development on the retained trees.

Overall, there are no known overriding arboricultural constraints which would prevent the proposed development from going ahead, subject to the protection measures and construction methodologies specified within this report being correctly implemented.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: Tree Survey Schedule

Project:	Land at Hammerwood Road, Ashurst							**BS 5837 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction- recommendations**			**Surveyed by**	NT			
Ref:	22-1450-TSS-A										**Weather**	Overcast			
Date:	25.10.23										**Tagged**	No			
Client:	Turnbull Land														
				Canopy Spread											
Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	DBH (mm)	N	E	S	W	Stems	Height of crown clearance	Age class	Physiological condition problems/comments	Structural condition	Preliminary management recommendations	Estimated remaining contribution years	BS category
T1	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	18	870	3	3	3	3	1	2	M	Good - Stem divides above 1.5m.	Good	None	20-40	B2
T2	Prunus lusitanica (Portuguese Laurel)	6	370	4	2	0	3	1	2	MA	Good	Fair - Poor shape & form.	None	10-20	C1
T3	Salix caprea (Goat Willow)	9	320	8	2	0	5	1	2	MA	Fair - Low vitality.	Fair - Poor shape & form.	None	10-20	C1
T4	Betula pendula (Silver Birch)	14	360	4	1	2	4	1	4	MA	Fair - Low vitality, possible drought stress	Good	None	10-20	C1
T5	Betula pendula (Silver Birch)	8	172	1	4	2	2	2	1	Y	Fair - Low vitality.	Fair - Stem divides at ground level.	None	10-20	C1
T6	X Cupressocyparis leylandii (Leyland Cypress)	11	310	1	3	2	1	1	2	MA	Good	Fair - Poor shape & form.	None	10-20	C1
T7	Tilia platyphyllos (Large-leaved Lime)	14	324	2	3	3	3	4	2	MA	Good	Fair - Multiple stems at ground level.	None	20-40	B2
T8	X Cupressocyparis leylandii (Leyland Cypress)	14	420	3	3	1	3	1	2	MA	Good	Good	None	20-40	C1
T9	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	12	427	4	5	4	4	3	1	MA	Good	Fair - Multiple stems at ground level.	None	20-40	B2
T10	Tilia X europaea (Common Lime)	18	700	4	4	5	4	2	2	M	Good - Ivy on tree.	Good	None	40+	A2

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Date:	25.10.23										**Tagged**	No			
Client:	Turnbull Land														
				Canopy Spread											
Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	DBH (mm)	N	E	S	W	Stems	Height of crown clearance	Age class	Physiological condition problems/comments	Structural condition	Preliminary management recommendations	Estimated remaining contribution years	BS category
T11	Tilia X europaea (Common Lime)	16	422	3	4	3	1	2	3	MA	Good - Unbalanced crown shape.	Good	None	20-40	B2
T12	Tilia X europaea (Common Lime)	18	573	4	4	3	4	4	2	M	Good	Good - - Multiple stems below 1.5m.	None	40+	B2
T13	Tilia X europaea (Common Lime)	18	400	0	2	7	3	1	3	MA	Good	Fair - Poor shape & form.	None	20-40	C1
T14	Tilia X europaea (Common Lime)	18	460	1	1	6	4	2	4	MA	Good	Good - Poor shape & form.	None	20-40	C1
T15	Tilia X europaea (Common Lime)	17	480	4	3	3	6	1	4	MA	Good - Ivy on tree.	Good - Stem divides below 1.5m.	None	40+	B2
T16	Ilex aquifolium (Holly)	16	350	3	2	4	3	1	1	M	Fair - Low vitality.	Good	None	10-20	C1
T17	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	15	450	4	3	1	1	1	1	MA	Fair - Declining.	Good	None	10-20	C1
T18	Taxus baccata (Yew)	9	477	3	4	4	1	5	2	MA	Fair - Declining.	Good	None	10-20	C1
T19	Salix caprea (Goat Willow)	7	200	3	2	2	3	1	3	MA	Good	Fair - Decay present on stem.	None	10-20	C1
T20	Salix caprea (Goat Willow)	11	336	0	4	6	1	2	1	MA	Good	Fair - partially failed at root	None	10-20	C1
T21	Salix caprea (Goat Willow)	12	410	4	2	3	5	1	3	MA	Fair - Low vitality.	Good	None	10-20	C1

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CANOPYCONSULTANCY

				Canopy Spread											
Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	DBH (mm)	N	E	S	W	Stems	Height of crown clearance	Age class	Physiological condition problems/comments	Structural condition	Preliminary management recommendations	Estimated remaining contribution years	BS category
T22	Fraxinus excelsior (Ash)	18	708	7	7	4	6	2	2	M	Poor - Die back.	Fair	Remove	<10	U
T23	Taxus baccata (Yew)	10	547	4	3	7	2	5	2	MA	Fair - Declining.	Good	None	20-40	C1
T25	Betula pendula (Silver Birch)	17	320	1	2	3	2	1	3	MA	Fair - Low vitality.	Good	None	20-40	C1
T26	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	8	600	1	1	1	1	1	2	MA	Dead	Poor	Remove	0	U
T27	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	8	600	1	1	1	1	1	2	MA	Dead	Poor	Remove	0	U
T28	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	17	791	4	5	3	4	3	2	M	Good	Fair - Multiple stems above 1.5m.	None	10-20	C1
T29	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	17	360	1	2	2	2	1	1	MA	Dead	Fair	Remove	0	U
T31	Ilex aquifolium (Holly)	16	388	4	3	1	3	3	2	MA	Good	Fair - Multiple stems above 1.5m.	None	20-40	C1
T32	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	3	500	0	0	0	0	1	1	MA	Dead	Poor	Remove	0	U
T33	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	12	720	1	4	2	1	1	1	M	Fair - Off site.	Fair - shed stem	None	10-20	C1
T34	Betula pendula (Silver Birch)	16	344	3	5	6	2	2	2	MA	Good	Good	None	20-40	B2

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T35	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	9	450	4	2	4	4	1	2	MA	Fair - extemsive squirrel damage in crown	Good	None	20-40	C1
T36	Salix caprea (Goat Willow)	12	200	5	4	4	3	1	3	MA	Fair - Low vitality.	Good	None	10-20	C1
T37	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	17	1001	1	0	8	9	1	3	M	Good	Fair - Unbalanced crown shape.	None	40+	B2
T38	Ilex aquifolium (Holly)	12	250	2	2	2	2	2	3	MA	Good	Good	None	20-40	C1
T39	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	11	354	2	3	1	5	4	3	MA	Fair - Low vitality. Squirrel damage in crown.	Good	None	10-20	C1
T40	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	16	566	7	2	6	7	2	4	MA	Good	Good	None	40+	B2
T41	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	8	560	8	4	4	7	1	1	MA	Fair - Topped.	Good	None	20-40	B2
T42	Quercus ilex (Holm Oak)	12	460	1	1	7	7	1	2	MA	Good	Poor - Decay present at stem union and at base.	None	10-20	C1
T43	Fagus sylvatica (Beech)	17	600	2	6	7	4	1	4	MA	Good	Fair Poor shape & form. Decay present on stem. Squirrel damage in crown.	None	20-40	C1
T44	Quercus ilex (Holm Oak)	15	815	2	4	7	7	4	4	M	Good - Poor shape & form.	Good	None	20-40	C1

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T45	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	17	640	2	1	2	2	1	5	MA	Fair - Low vitality.	Fair - Stem divides below 1.5m, poor union	None	10-20	C1
T46	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	12	450	4	4	5	6	1	2	MA	Fair - Low vitality.	Good	None	40+	B2
T47	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	12	570	5	3	5	5	1	2	MA	Good	Good	None	40+	A2
T48	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	8	250	4	4	0	4	1	2	Y	Fair - Low vitality.	Fair - Poor shape & form.	None	10-20	C1
T49	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	14	320	5	1	3	5	1	4	MA	Good	Good	None	40+	B2
T50	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	15	559	2	2	2	2	2	2	M	Fair - Low vitality.	Fair - Stem divides below 1.5m.	None	10-20	C1
T51	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	15	480	5	1	4	4	1	4	MA	Good	Fair - Unbalanced crown shape.	None	20-40	B2
T52	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	12	460	3	3	2	3	1	5	MA	Fair - Low vitality.	Good	None	10-20	C1
T53	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	15	240	2	1	2	2	1	4	Y	Good	Fair - Spindly.	None	10-20	C1
T54	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	15	240	2	2	2	2	1	4	Y	Good	Fair - Spindly.	None	10-20	C1
T55	Quercus robur (Common Oak)	10	240	7	4	0	1	1	3	MA	Good	Fair - Poor shape & form.	None	10-20	C1

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G1	Salix caprea (Goat Willow),Prunus lusitanica (Portuguese Laurel),Alnus glutinosa (Common Alder)	10	Varied							Y	Good - off site group of planted trees	Good	None	40+	C1
G2	Prunus laurocerasus (Cherry Laurel),Salix caprea (Goat Willow),Corylus avellana (Hazel),Crataegus monogyna (Hawthorn),Ilex aquifolium (Holly)	8	Varied							MA	Good - understorey group of predominately laurel	Good	None	20-40	C1
G3	Salix caprea (Goat Willow),Betula pendula (Silver Birch)	17	Varied							MA	Good - group of close grown individuals with spindly habits	Fair	None	20-40	C1

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Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	DBH (mm)	N	E	S	W	Stems	Height of crown clearance	Age class	Physiological condition problems/comments	Structural condition	Preliminary management recommendations	Estimated remaining contribution years	BS category
G4	Prunus laurocerasus (Cherry Laurel),Salix caprea (Goat Willow),Quercus robur (Common Oak),Ilex aquifolium (Holly),Betula pendula (Silver Birch),Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore),Corylus avellana (Hazel)	12	Varied							Y	Good - group of young trees, predominately laurel forming understorey beneath larger trees and populating historically open ground	Good	None	20-40	C1

Appendix 2: Extract from the Cell Web product brochure

CellWeb

Tree Root Protection System

CellWeb Tree Root Protection System provides a flexible and permeable solution for protecting tree roots while creating a strong stable surface for traffic.

With increased urbanisation and more redevelopments of existing properties, the need to be mindful of the impact on the surrounding environment is more important than ever.

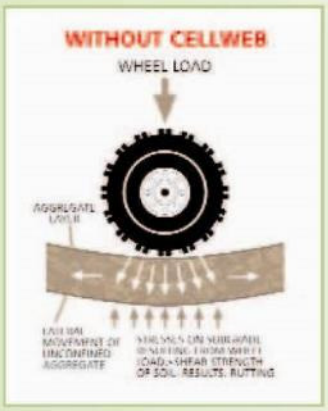
The demand for building site access, driveways and parking around existing trees can have a potentially fatal impact on the tree if carried out incorrectly. Tree preservation orders (TPO's) ensure that trees are not wilfully damaged. However the need for vehicle access over and around tree roots can still cause the following problems:

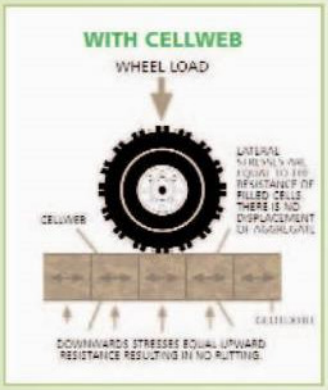
Problems:

- Compaction of subsoils (especially by construction traffic) causing oxygen and nutrient depletion
- Creating an impermeable surface that prevents water reaching the roots
- Changes in ground level and water table
- Damage caused during excavation
- Contamination of the subsoil

By using CellWeb Tree Root Protection System you can avoid these problems and ensure the tree's long-term future. BS 5837:1991 (revised 2005) and APN 1 provide information for the protection of trees during the construction process, and CellWeb is a well-established solution that conforms to these guidelines.

Product features

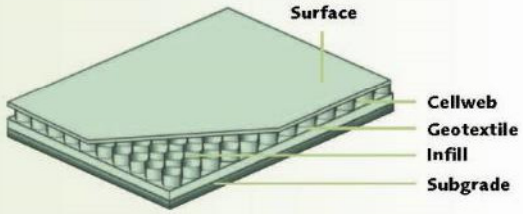




Cellweb's patented design with its unique cellular structure and perforated cell walls reduces the vertical load pressure on tree roots and prevents damage. With clean granular materials as infill, air and moisture can reach the roots to encourage healthy growth.

With no-dig solutions being the preferred option of most Arboricultural Consultants and Tree Officers, CellWeb is ideal as only the surface vegetation need be removed. As well as avoiding disruption to the roots this reduces installation time and saves money.

What's more CellWeb also cuts down the depth required for the sub base – in most cases by 50% for further cost savings. CellWeb also significantly reduces surface rutting, increasing the long-term performance of the finished surface.



Using CellWeb for tree root protection gives you these benefits:

- Reduced depth of excavation required
- Preventing the compaction of subsoils
- Preventing oxygen and nutrient depletion
- Environmentally sound
- Quick, easy and cost-effective installation
- Free technical support available

CellWeb gives you the cost-effectiveness you need at the same time as helping to preserve trees.

Geosynthetics Ltd is a leading dis

Please call
01455 617 139
or email sales@geosyn.co.uk
for further information.

Wide product range

Large stock holding

Next day delivery

Access road for the National Lake District Parks Authority.

Site before construction pictured above.

CellWeb during installation.

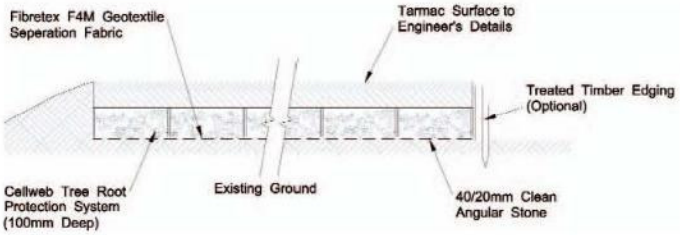
Final surfacing.

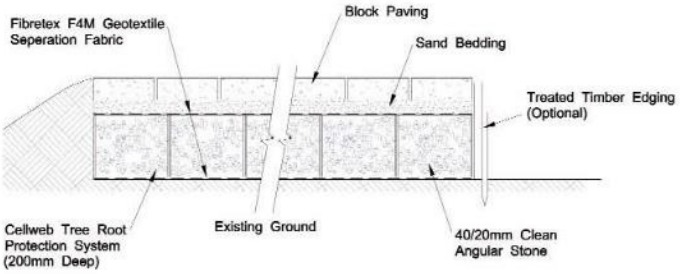
Final surfacing

The CellWeb Tree Root Protection is totally confined within the clean stone sub base, therefore you can choose whichever surface materials are most appropriate for your installation. Some materials are more suitable than others and serious consideration should be given to the porosity of the surface for continued healthy growth of the tree. An ideal surfacing are DuoBlocks: a grass reinforcement and gravel retention system. Geosynthetics can supply these systems for a visually attractive surface that also has the advantage of being fully porous.

Loose or bonded gravels can be used as an alternative hard landscaping and CellWeb can also be used with block paviors whose porous joints will permit moisture and air transfer to the roots. Where planning allows, porous asphalt is yet another possible surfacing treatment.

Call our sales office on 01455 617 139 for more information.





Appendix 3: Section 4, extracted from NJUG 4

4. HOW TO AVOID DAMAGE TO TREES

This section gives general guidance on methods of work to minimise damage to trees. The local authority (or for privately owned trees, the owner or their agent), should be consulted at an early stage prior to the commencement of any works. This will reduce the potential for future conflict between trees and apparatus.

4.1 Below Ground

Wherever trees are present, precautions should be taken to minimise damage to their root systems. As the shape of the root system is unpredictable, there should be control and supervision of any works, particularly if this involves excavating through the surface 600mm, where the majority of roots develop.

4.1.1 **Fine Roots**
Fine roots are vulnerable to desiccation once they are exposed to the air. Larger roots have a bark layer which provides some protection against desiccation and temperature change. The greatest risk to these roots occurs when there are rapid fluctuations in air temperature around them e.g. frost and extremes of heat. It is therefore important to protect exposed roots where a trench is to be left open overnight where there is a risk of frost. In winter, before leaving the site at the end of the day, the exposed roots should be wrapped with dry sacking. This sacking must be removed before the trench is backfilled.

4.1.2 **Precautions**
The precautions referred to in this section are applicable to any excavations or other works occurring within the Prohibited or Precautionary Zones as illustrated in Figure 1 – 'Tree Protection Zone'.

4.1.3 **Realignment**
Whenever possible apparatus should always be diverted or re-aligned outside the Prohibited or Precautionary Zones. Under no circumstances can machinery be used to excavate open trenches within the Prohibited Zone.

The appropriate method of working within the Precautionary Zone should be determined in consultation with the local authority (or for privately owned trees the owner or their agent) and may depend on the following circumstances;

- the scope of the works (e.g. one-off repair or part of an extensive operation)
- degree of urgency (e.g. for restoration of supplies)
- knowledge of location of other apparatus
- soil conditions
- age, condition, quality and life expectancy of the tree

Where works are required for the laying or maintenance of any apparatus within the Prohibited or Precautionary Zones there are various techniques available to minimise damage.

Acceptable techniques in order of preference are;

a) Trenchless
Wherever possible trenchless techniques should be used. The launch and reception pits should be located outside the Prohibited or Precautionary Zones.
In order to avoid damage to roots by percussive boring techniques it is recommended that the depth of run should be below 600mm. Techniques involving external lubrication of the equipment with materials other than water (e.g. oil, bentonite, etc.) must not be used when working within the Prohibited Zone. Lubricating materials other than water may be used within the Precautionary Zone following consultation and by agreement.

b) Broken Trench - Hand-dug
This technique combines hand dug trench sections with trenchless techniques if excavation is unavoidable. Excavation should be limited to where there is clear access around and below the roots. The trench is excavated by hand with precautions taken as for continuous trenching as in (c) below. Open sections of the trench should only be long enough to allow access for linking to the next section. The length of sections will be determined by local conditions, especially soil texture and cohesiveness, as well as the practical needs for access. In all cases the open sections should be kept as short as possible and outside of the Prohibited Zone.

c) Continuous Trench - Hand-dug
The use of this method must be considered only as a last resort if works are to be undertaken by agreement within the Prohibited Zone. The objective being to retain as many undamaged roots as possible.

Hand digging within the Prohibited or Precautionary zones must be undertaken with great care requiring closer supervision than normal operations.

After careful removal of the hard surface material digging must proceed with hand tools. Clumps of roots less than 25mm in diameter (including fibrous roots) should be retained in situ without damage. Throughout the excavation works great care should be taken to protect the bark around the roots.

All roots greater than 25mm diameter should be preserved and worked around. These roots must not be severed without first consulting the owner of the tree or the local authority tree officer / arboriculturist. If after consultation severance is unavoidable, roots must be cut back using a sharp tool to leave the smallest wound.

4.1.5 **Backfilling**

- Any reinstatement of street works in the United Kingdom must comply with the relevant national legislation (see: **Volume 6 – 'Legislation and Bibliography'**). In England this relates to the requirements of the code of practice – 'Specification for the Reinstatement of Openings in Highways' approved under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. Without prejudice to the requirements relating to the specification of materials and the standards of workmanship, backfilling should be carefully carried out to avoid direct damage to roots and excessive compaction of the soil around them.

- The backfill should, where possible, include the placement of an inert granular material mixed with top soil or sharp sand (not builder's sand) around the roots. This should allow the soil to be compacted for resurfacing without damage to the roots securing a local aerated zone enabling the root to survive in the longer term.

- Backfilling outside the constructed highway limits should be carried out using the excavated soil. This should not be compacted but lightly "tamped" and usually left slightly proud of the surrounding surface to allow natural settlement. Other materials should not be incorporated into the backfill.

4.1.6 **Additional Precautions near Trees**

- Movement of heavy mechanical plant (excavators etc.) must not be undertaken within the Prohibited Zone and should be avoided within the Precautionary Zone, except on existing hard surfaces, in order to prevent unnecessary compaction of the soil. This is particularly important on soils with a high proportion of clay. Spoil or material must not be stored within the Prohibited Zone and should be avoided within the Precautionary Zone.

- Where it is absolutely necessary to use mechanical plant within the Precautionary Zone care should be taken to avoid impact damage to the trunk and branches. A tree must not be used as an end-stop for paving slabs or other materials nor for security chaining of mechanical plant. If the trunk or branches of a tree are damaged in any way advice should be sought from the local authority tree officer / arboriculturist.

See TABLE 1 –'Prevention of Damage to Trees Below Ground' below for summary details regarding causes and types of damage to trees and the implications of the damage and the necessary precautions to be taken to avoid damage.

TABLE 1 - Prevention of Damage to Trees Below Ground

Causes of Damage	Type of Damage	Implications to Tree	Precautions
Trenching, mechanical digging etc.	Root severance	• The tree may fall over • Death of the root beyond the point of damage • Potential risk of infection of the tree The larger the root the greater the impact on the tree.	Hand excavate only within the Precautionary Zone. Work carefully around roots. Do not cut roots over 25mm in diameter without referring to the local authority tree officer. For roots less than 25mm in diameter use a sharp tool and make a clean cut leaving as small a wound as possible.
Trenching, mechanical digging, top soil surface removal etc.	Root bark damage	• The tree may fall over • If the damage circles the root it will cause the death of the root beyond that point • Potential risk of infection of the tree The larger the root the greater the impact on the tree.	Do not use mechanical machinery to strip the top soil within the Precautionary Zone. Hand excavate only within the Precautionary Zone. Work carefully around roots. Do not cut roots over 25mm in diameter without referring to the local authority tree officer. For roots less than 25mm use a sharp tool and make a clean cut leaving as small a wound as possible.
Vehicle movement and plant use. Material storage within the precautionary area.	Soil compaction & water saturation	Restricts or prevents passage of gaseous diffusion through soil, the roots are asphyxiated and killed affecting the whole tree.	Prevent all vehicle movement, plant use or material storage within the Precautionary Zone.
Top-soil scouring, excavation or banking up.	Alterations in soil level causing compaction or exposure of roots.	Lowering levels strips out the mass of roots over a wide area. Raising soil levels asphyxiates roots and has the same effect as soil compaction.	Avoid altering or disturbing soil levels within the Precautionary Zone.
Use of herbicides.	Poisoning of the tree via root absorption	• Death of the whole tree • Death of individual branches Damage to leaves and shoots.	The selection and application of herbicides must be undertaken by a competent person in accordance with COSHH regulations.
Spillage of oils or other materials.	Contamination of soil	Toxic and asphyxiation effects of chemicals, oils, building materials (cement, plaster, additives etc.) on the root system can kill the tree.	Never store oils, chemicals or building materials within the Precautionary Zone or within the branch spread of a tree, which ever is the greater.
Placement or replacement of underground apparatus.	Various	Death of all or part of the tree.	Effective planning and liaison with local authority tree officer, taking into consideration the position of trees, and their future growth potential and management

4.2 Above Ground

4.2.1 Damage by Pruning

Trees (including shrubs and hedges) can be damaged by inappropriate or excessive pruning. Reference should be made to the Energy Networks Association (ENA) document "Engineering Technical Report 136 Vegetation Management near Electricity Equipment – Principles of Good Practice" (see section 8 – 'Other Useful Publications') or appropriate company specific documentation for guidance on pruning.

See TABLE 2 – 'Prevention of Damage to Trees Above Ground' below for summary details regarding causes and types of damage to trees and the implications of the damage and the necessary precautions to be taken to avoid damage.

TABLE 2 - Prevention of Damage to Trees Above Ground

Causes of Damage	Type of Damage	Implications for the Tree	Precautions
Impact by vehicle or plant Physical attachment of signs or hoardings to the trunk Storage of materials at base of tree Rubbing by winch or pulling cables	Bark bruising, bark removal, damage to the wood, damage to buttress roots, abrasion to trunk	Wounding with the potential for infection ultimately resulting in death of all or part of the tree. Structural failure of the tree	Surround the trunk with protective free-standing barrier. Exclude vehicles, plant or material storage from the Precautionary Zone. Ensure sufficient clearance of cables or ropes.
Impact by vehicle or plant Rubbing by overhead cables	Bark damage to branches, breakage and splitting of branches, abrasion to branches	Structural failure of the branch. Wounding or loss of a branch with the potential for infection ultimately resulting in death of all or part of the branch or tree.	Exclude vehicles, plant or material storage from the Precautionary Zone. Ensure sufficient clearance of cables or ropes. All pruning should be carried out in accordance with BS3998 *(prune affected branches to give appropriate clearance from cables)*
Inappropriate siting of overhead apparatus, such as CCTV, lighting fixtures and communications masts and dishes.	Inappropriate pruning, unnecessary tree removal	Severely pruning tree to acquire line of sight signal for communications dish etc.	Effective planning and liaison with local authority tree officer / arboriculturist, taking into consideration the position of trees, and their future growth potential and management.
Lack of forethought in design and location of apparatus and services entries on new developments	Complete tree removal	The tree is removed unnecessarily	Agree the location and installation of services at the design stage. Consideration should be given to the creation of dedicated service routes wherever possible.
Use of herbicides	Poisoning of the tree via absorption through bark, leaves and shoots	Death of the whole tree, death of individual branches, damage to leaves and shoots	The selection and application of herbicides must be undertaken by a competent person in accordance with COSHH regulations.

Appendix 4: Programme of Site Monitoring

Land at Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood
Site Monitoring Form

To be completed by the named arboriculturist and emailed to the client and tree officer at the completion of each operation.

Arboriculturist……

Client……

Project Manager……

Tree Officer……

(The above to be filled in with names and contact numbers)

OPERATION	TIMING	DATE	COMMENTS
Pre-commencement meeting or contact with project/site manager.	Before any works or pre-works on site, including storage of materials		
Site visit to check tree protection barrier is as specified and in the correct location	Before construction begins on site		
Spot check of 'no dig' construction of access road within the RPA of T1	Before ground works		
Spot check of 'no dig' construction of remaining hard surfaces within the RPA	During landscape phase		
Completion of development	Once all construction activity has been completed		