

Arboricultural Method Statement

Leigh Cottage, Cuckfield Road, Ansty, West Sussex RH17 5AL

1. Site & Project Details

- **Site Address:** Leigh Cottage, Cuckfield Road, Ansty, West Sussex RH17 5AL
 - **Local Authority:** Mid Sussex District Council
 - **Proposal:** Single-storey extension
 - **Relevant Trees:** Category B and C trees (as identified in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment)
 - **Prepared by:** Richard Ewen, Richard Ewen Architects
 - **Date:** 8th April 2026
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2. Objective

To ensure that excavation of a **1200 mm deep foundation trench** within or adjacent to Root Protection Areas (RPAs) is undertaken in a controlled manner that minimises damage to retained trees and maintains their long-term health and stability.

3. Pre-Commencement Requirements

3.1 Tree Protection Fencing

- Protective fencing shall be installed in accordance with BS5837 (Figure 2).
 - Fencing to comprise weldmesh panels secured to a scaffold framework.
 - Fencing to be erected prior to any works and retained for the duration of construction.
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3.2 Site Induction

- All contractors shall receive a **toolbox talk** prior to commencement.
- The induction will cover:
 - Tree protection measures
 - Root sensitivity
 - Procedures for working within RPAs

3.3 Ground Protection

Where access within Root Protection Areas (RPAs) is unavoidable, temporary ground protection shall be installed to prevent soil compaction and root damage, in accordance with BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction.

Ground protection shall comprise either:

Option A – Cellular Confinement System

- Proprietary cellular confinement system (e.g. Cellweb or similar approved)
 - Installed over a permeable geotextile membrane
 - Infilled with clean, angular stone (no fines)
 - Designed to accommodate anticipated loadings
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Option B – Timber Ground Protection System

- Compressible layer of **minimum 100 mm depth woodchip**
 - Overlaid with **structural plywood sheets (minimum 18–24 mm thickness)**
 - Sheets laid tight-butted to form a continuous surface
 - Supported on timber bearers where required to improve load distribution
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Load and Machinery Restrictions

- Ground protection designed for **pedestrian use and light tracked plant only**
- Permitted machinery:
 - Mini excavators up to **2 tonnes maximum gross weight**
 - Tracked only (no wheeled plant within RPAs)
- Maximum allowable **ground bearing pressure: $\leq 50 \text{ kN/m}^2$**

The following are strictly prohibited within RPAs:

- Heavy plant (>2 tonnes)
- Wheeled vehicles
- Skip lorries, concrete wagons, or delivery vehicles
- Storage of materials or spoil

Installation & Monitoring

- Ground protection shall be installed **prior to any access** into RPAs
 - To remain in place for the full duration of relevant works
 - Regular inspections to be undertaken by the site manager and arboriculturist
 - Any deformation, rutting, or displacement to be rectified immediately
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Additional Safeguards

- No tracking or turning of machinery outside protected routes
 - Machinery to operate on a **single defined access path** where feasible
 - Works within RPAs to be carried out in dry conditions where possible to reduce compaction risk
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4. Arboricultural Supervision

- A suitably qualified arboriculturist shall supervise all works within RPAs.
 - Supervision shall include:
 - Initial excavation
 - Exposure of significant roots
 - Root pruning operations
 - Foundation installation in root-sensitive areas
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5. Excavation Methodology

5.1 General Method

- Excavation of the 1200 mm trench shall be undertaken using:
 - Hand digging; and/or
 - Air spade (compressed air excavation)

Mechanical excavation within RPAs is not permitted unless agreed in writing and supervised by the arboriculturist.

5.2 Root Encounter Protocol

Roots <25 mm diameter

- May be pruned using sharp secateurs or a handsaw

Roots 25–50 mm diameter

- Prune only where unavoidable
- Cuts shall be clean and undertaken with appropriate tools

Roots >50 mm diameter

- Shall be retained wherever possible
 - If removal is unavoidable:
 - Approval required from the supervising arboriculturist
 - Alternative foundation solutions to be considered
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5.3 Root Protection During Works

- Exposed roots shall be:
 - Covered with damp hessian or similar material
 - Maintained in a moist condition
 - Roots shall not be left exposed overnight unless adequately protected
 - Excavations shall be backfilled as soon as practicable
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6. Foundation Design Considerations

Where significant roots are encountered, the following measures shall be implemented:

- Bridging over roots using lintels
- Adoption of pile and beam foundations where required
- Localised adjustment of trench alignment

Foundation design shall remain flexible to maximise root retention.

7. Backfilling

- Excavated soil shall be reused where suitable
 - Backfill shall be placed in layers and lightly compacted
 - No contamination with cement, fuel, or other harmful substances
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8. Prohibited Activities within RPAs

- No storage of materials or spoil
 - No mixing of cement or concrete
 - No fuel, oil, or chemical storage
 - No fires
 - No unauthorised changes in soil levels
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9. Post-Construction Monitoring

- Trees shall be monitored for signs of stress for a minimum of **two growing seasons**
 - Remedial measures (e.g. mulching, irrigation, pruning) shall be implemented if required
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10. Contingency Procedure

If unexpected roots or constraints are encountered:

- Works shall cease immediately in the affected area
 - The arboriculturist shall be notified
 - A revised methodology shall be agreed prior to recommencement
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11. Conclusion

This Arboricultural Method Statement provides a structured and compliant approach to safeguarding retained Category B and C trees during construction, in accordance with **BS5837:2012**, and is suitable for submission to Mid Sussex District Council.