Inspection undertaken 8th September 2026 by: Arboricultural Consultant Kim Gifford

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Arboricultural Method Statement and Supervision Plan

Driveway lifting and relaying within the root protection area

Item	Recorded information
Site	46 Arthur Road, Wokingham RG41
Planning application	261334
Protected tree	Blue Atlas Cedar Cedrus atlantica var glauca
Tree Preservation Order	TPO 0714 1995
Document date	15 September 2026
Document status	Method statement for planning submission

This method provides a precautionary sequence for lifting and relaying the existing block-paved driveway where it falls within the Cedar root protection area. Existing levels and the sand laying course are to be retained. Work will proceed in small sections from protected access surfaces, with arboricultural supervision at the hold points stated below. The objective is to avoid excavation, soil compaction and avoidable root injury while restoring a stable, permeable block surface.

The method does not give blanket permission to sever roots. Any root pruning is a last-resort, supervised operation and remains subject to the scope of the planning approval and any separate consent required because the tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

Limitations and advisory notes

The findings and recommendations in this report reflect the condition of the trees and the circumstances observed on the date of inspection. The consultant cannot accept responsibility for events occurring after that date where they arise from changes, defects or other factors that were not apparent or reasonably identifiable at the time of the assessment.

Trees are living organisms and their condition can change in response to biological, environmental and site-related influences. Healthy trees, or parts of healthy trees, may fail in exceptional or unforeseen circumstances. These may include unusually high winds, severe storms, prolonged drought, waterlogging, lightning, landslip, subsidence, ground heave or other extreme events. The occurrence and effects of such events cannot be predicted reliably and fall outside the scope of this inspection.

No soil investigation or geotechnical analysis was undertaken. Underground conditions, root distribution, root damage, conflicts with buried services and other subsurface constraints were considered only where evidence was visible or otherwise apparent during the inspection.

Detailed background information concerning the site's history, hydrology, geology, previous land use or earlier construction activity was not available and has not been considered unless specifically stated in this report.

Where trees are located close to buildings, retaining walls or other structures, advice should be obtained from a suitably qualified structural engineer if there are concerns regarding foundations, structural interaction or ground movement.

Tree condition and associated risk may change over time. Reinspection should be arranged following a significant storm, a substantial change in site conditions or another event reasonably capable of affecting tree stability. Newly observed cracking, movement, root-plate disturbance, branch failure or rapid decline should prompt an earlier assessment.

Before undertaking tree work, the client or appointed contractor must establish whether the trees are subject to statutory protection. Where applicable, consent must be obtained from the Local Planning Authority. This includes trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order or situated within a conservation area. Other planning conditions, felling-license requirements and ecological constraints may also apply. Responsibility for obtaining all necessary permissions rests with the client unless agreed otherwise in writing.

Before work begins, appropriate checks should be undertaken for nesting birds, bats and other protected species.

1 Site and tree information

Item	Recorded information
Tree reference	T1
Species	Blue Atlas Cedar Cedrus atlantica var glauca
Protection	TPO 0714 1995 individual tree
Height	19 m
Crown spread	8 m
Stem diameter	850 mm measured at 1.3 m
RPA radius	10.20 m
RPA area	327 m2
Physiological condition	Fair
Structural condition	Previously reduced
Estimated remaining contribution	40 years
BS5837 category	B

1.1 Arboricultural context

The mature Cedar stands beside the paved frontage. The photographs show block paving across much of the area surrounding the tree and local displacement and unevenness in the driveway surface. The calculated circular RPA extends 10.20 m from the stem, so the driveway operation must be treated as work within an RPA unless an approved tree protection plan shows otherwise.

A separate tree-work recommendation has been recorded for an overall crown reduction of approximately 1 m to reduce wind sail. That work is outside the driveway operation and must not be undertaken under this method statement unless it is expressly included in a valid TPO consent or other lawful authorisation and carried out to the approved specification by a competent arborist.

1.2 Purpose and outcomes

- Lift the existing block pavers and edging systematically by hand without lowering formation levels.
- Retain the existing sand base wherever practicable and keep roots covered and moist.
- Use interlocked ground protection plates to spread pedestrian and light machinery loads over areas not protected by retained paving.
- Relay the surface progressively so no broad area of the RPA is left exposed or trafficked.
- Preserve permeable, air- and water-transmitting construction and minimise additional compaction.

2 Mandatory controls before work starts

1. **Approvals and documents.** The contractor and project arboriculturist shall confirm the approved drawings, tree protection plan, planning conditions and TPO position before mobilisation. This method and the 10.20 m RPA shall be included in the site briefing.
2. **Pre-start meeting.** The project arboriculturist, site manager and paving contractor shall agree the work direction, maximum open section, ground-plate route, storage areas, machinery limits and emergency contacts. Existing defects and the tree condition shall be photographed.
3. **Marking.** Mark the RPA boundary and a no-storage zone around the stem. Identify the first work bay and the route that will remain on intact paving or ground plates. No pins, stakes or anchors shall be driven into the RPA.
4. **Equipment.** Provide hand tools, rubber mallets, block lifters, narrow hand trowels, soft brushes, buckets, clean hessian, water spray, sharp bypass secateurs, a fine-toothed pruning saw and disinfectant suitable for pruning tools. Provide rigid interlocking ground protection plates rated by the supplier for the proposed plant and load.
5. **Plant restrictions.** Only pedestrian-operated or genuinely light machinery approved at the pre-start meeting may enter the RPA. Plant shall work from retained paving or plates. No tracked or wheeled plant shall travel directly on exposed sand, soil or roots. Refuelling, washing out and mixing cementitious materials are prohibited in the RPA.

2.1 Stop work conditions

Work shall stop and the project arboriculturist shall inspect before any further disturbance if a root over 25 mm diameter is encountered; if several roots form a dense mat; if a root appears structural, fused, buttress-like, decayed or under tension; if the required finished level cannot be achieved without excavation; if contamination or significant waterlogging occurs; or if plates rut, rock or cease to distribute loads. The arboriculturist may require a design change, bridging, local surface adjustment or written direction from the local planning authority. A root over 25 mm shall not be cut under this method without specific written agreement from the project arboriculturist and, where required, the local planning authority.

3 Progressive working method

6. **Establish protected access.** Keep vehicles and materials outside the RPA. Use the existing driveway as the initial load-spreading surface. Where paving has been lifted, place interlocked rigid plates over a clean, level sacrificial layer or retained sand as directed by the arboriculturist. Butt and lock plate edges so they cannot rock, pinch roots or create point loads.
7. **Work in small bays.** Divide the driveway into narrow bays, normally no more than approximately 2 m by 2 m or the area that can be lifted, inspected and made safe during the same working day. Open only one bay at a time unless the arboriculturist agrees otherwise. Work from the road or outer edge progressively toward the tree, never using exposed ground as a shortcut.
8. **Lift blocks by hand.** Remove edge blocks and pavers with block lifters and hand tools. Lift vertically where possible; do not lever against the stem, roots or adjacent soft ground. Stack blocks on pallets outside the RPA. If temporary storage inside the RPA is unavoidable, keep quantities minimal and place them only on a load-spreading platform agreed at the pre-start meeting.
9. **Retain the laying course.** Leave the existing sand bed in place. Remove only loose debris by hand or soft brush. No mechanical excavation, scraping bucket, rotavator, breaker, pressure jet or suction excavation shall be used unless separately specified and approved. Do not reduce levels to eliminate a root-related high point.
10. **Expose only what is necessary.** If a local root must be inspected, uncover it carefully with wooden or plastic hand tools and soft brushing under direct arboricultural supervision. Do not pull, bend or prise a root. Limit exposure time; shade and cover roots with clean damp hessian if relaying is not immediate. Prevent drying, frost and waterlogging.
11. **Resolve level conflicts.** First retain the root and adjust the laying course or finished surface locally. Accept a gentle local ramp or raise the paving where safe and compatible with drainage. Where practicable, bridge over the root with a suitable load-spreading detail so the paver does not bear directly on it. Do not encase roots in concrete or mortar.
12. **Relay immediately.** Top up only local deficiencies with clean compatible sharp sand; do not introduce fines or cement into the retained base. Bed and align blocks using hand tamping and rubber mallets beside roots. Maintain falls away from the stem and avoid creating channels that concentrate runoff at the trunk or neighbouring property.
13. **Compact cautiously.** Use hand consolidation in root-sensitive areas. Any small vibrating plate proposed elsewhere inside the RPA requires the arboriculturist's prior approval and shall operate only on a completed, stable paved surface, at the lowest effective setting and for the minimum passes. It shall not operate on exposed sand, soil or roots.
14. **Advance the protection.** Once the bay is stable, clean and photograph it, then move the plates forward onto the completed surface before opening the next bay. Plates shall be lifted and repositioned, not dragged across exposed surfaces. Continue until the driveway is complete.

4 Root encounter and pruning protocol

4.1 Decision sequence

15. **Avoid.** Retain the root and modify the surface level, block arrangement, edging or local support detail.
16. **Protect.** Where retention is possible, provide clearance so the finished construction does not abrade or load the root. Backfill voids around retained roots gently with clean compatible sand; do not force material beneath or compact directly over them.
17. **Assess.** The project arboriculturist shall identify root function, condition, diameter, orientation, distance from the stem and cumulative loss. Root diameter alone is not a sufficient safety test; location and structural significance govern the decision.
18. **Prune only if authorised.** Only roots whose removal is unavoidable and acceptable to the project arboriculturist may be pruned. Roots over 25 mm, clusters of smaller roots, and roots close to the trunk require stop work and specific written direction before any cut.

4.2 Cutting technique

- Expose enough of the root to identify sound tissue and a suitable cutting position. Support the root so it is not torn or pulled during cutting.
- Use a clean, sharp bypass tool for small roots or a sharp fine-toothed pruning saw for larger authorised roots. Disinfect tools before work and between suspect diseased roots.
- Make one clean cut at right angles to the root axis, back to sound undamaged tissue and as close as practicable to the unavoidable conflict. Do not crush, hack, split, strip bark or leave a ragged end.
- Do not apply wound paint, sealant, concrete or chemical treatment. Record the cut and cover promptly with clean compatible sand or soil so the cut does not dry out.
- If a root tears unexpectedly, stop. The arboriculturist shall expose the damaged portion and, where appropriate and authorised, make a clean corrective cut to sound tissue while minimising additional loss.

4.3 Edging

Remove existing edging by hand in short sections. New or reset edging shall avoid continuous concrete haunching within the RPA wherever a root conflict would result. Use the existing detail where feasible, or an approved pin-free, surface-supported or discontinuous detail that preserves roots and permeability. No excavation for deeper kerbs or footings is permitted under this method.

5 Arboricultural supervision plan

Hold point	Attendance	Inspection and decision	Record
HP1	Before mobilisation	Confirm approvals, RPA, access, plate specification, plant, bay size, storage, drainage and briefing. Authorise start only when controls are in place.	Briefing sheet and photos
HP2	Start of first bay	Directly supervise initial lifting and sand retention; confirm method is workable and calibrate the maximum bay size.	Site note and photos
HP3	Each material root encounter	Inspect any root over 25 mm, root cluster, structural root or unexpected damage. Decide retain, bridge, modify, seek approval or authorised prune.	Root log and written instruction
HP4	Representative checks and changes of phase	Check plate stability, ground condition, moisture protection, work quality, storage and compliance before plates advance. Frequency may reduce only after the method is demonstrably established.	Visit record
HP5	Before covering supervised roots	Approve any root treatment, photograph cuts with scale, confirm clean backfill and ensure roots have not dried.	Root log and photos
HP6	Completion	Inspect surface, levels, permeability, drainage, trunk clearance, removal of protection and site cleanliness. Record departures and remedial action.	Completion certificate or report

5.1 Authority and communication

The project arboriculturist has authority to stop work affecting the tree and to require a safer sequence or design adjustment. The site manager shall keep the current method statement on site, ensure all operatives receive a briefing, and contact the arboriculturist before passing a hold point. Verbal directions affecting roots shall be confirmed in the site record before covering work.

5.2 Minimum records Date, weather, personnel and area worked.

- Bay number and direction of progression, with before and after photographs.
- Ground protection type and condition; machinery used and where it operated.
- For each root: location, approximate distance from stem, diameter, depth, orientation, condition, action and reason; include a scale in photographs.
- Any stop-work event, design change, local planning authority direction and corrective action.

6 Surface performance and tree protection outcome

Relaying the existing blocks on the retained sand laying course avoids wholesale excavation and the introduction of a new heavily compacted sub-base. The joints between blocks and the granular laying course can continue to admit water and permit gaseous exchange, provided they are not sealed with impermeable mortar, resin or other non-approved material. Local top-up material should be clean, compatible and free-draining, and jointing should use a permeable aggregate compatible with the existing construction.

The progressive bay sequence limits the area exposed at any one time and restores the protective paved surface promptly. Rigid plates distribute loads while work advances, reducing point loading and trafficking of the substrate. Hand tamping near roots, restricted machinery and retention of existing levels minimise additional compaction. Together, these measures maintain the rooting substrate in a condition that supports normal oxygen and moisture movement and gives the Cedar the best practical opportunity to continue healthy growth.

These benefits depend on continued permeability and good maintenance. The completed driveway shall not be sealed with an impermeable coating. Depressions, rocking blocks or renewed heave shall be addressed by lifting and local adjustment rather than cutting further roots. Salts, oils, cement washings and herbicides shall not be stored or discharged beneath the crown or within the RPA.

7 Completion criteria

- No excavation below the existing sand formation and no unapproved root pruning.
- No construction material, spoil or contamination left within the RPA.
- Pavers stable, with safe gradual transitions over retained roots and no direct hard bearing on them.
- Permeable joints and retained granular substrate; drainage does not pond at the stem or concentrate runoff.
- All root encounters and supervisory decisions recorded; completion inspection signed by the project arboriculturist.

8 Responsibilities

Item	Recorded information
Client or principal contractor	Appoint competent contractors and a suitably qualified project arboriculturist; provide approved documents; ensure planning and TPO requirements are met.
Site manager	Brief operatives, maintain exclusion and storage controls, call hold points, stop work when required, and retain records.
Paving contractor	Follow the bay sequence; use approved tools and plant; protect the substrate and roots; report every root encounter before alteration.
Project arboriculturist	Attend hold points, assess roots and protection, issue written directions, maintain the supervision record and inspect completion.

Appendix A Photographic record



Photograph 1 Mature Cedar beside the block-paved driveway



Photograph 2 Existing block surface with local displacement and unevenness

Appendix B Protection evidence and site record templates

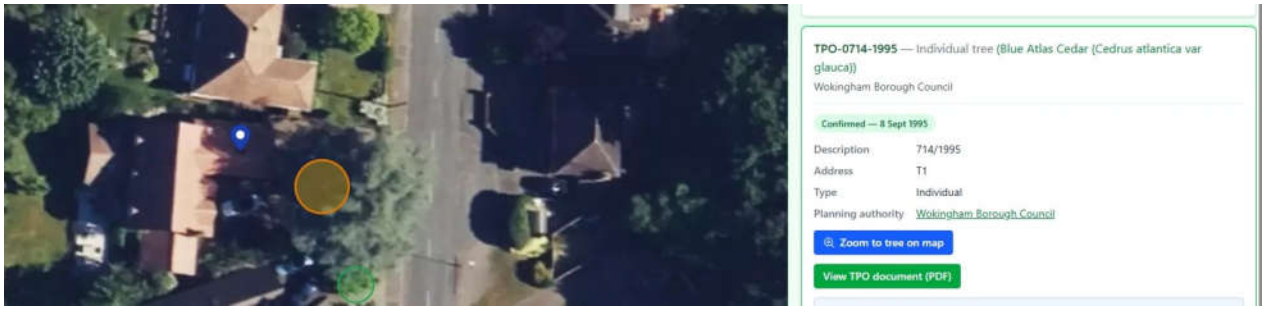

Figure 1 Supplied mapping evidence identifying the protected Blue Atlas Cedar under TPO 0714 1995

Pre-start and completion sign off

Project arboriculturist _____

Qualification and company _____

Pre-start date and signature _____

Completion date and signature _____

Root encounter record

Date and bay	Root details	Decision and authority	Photograph reference

Consultant Mr Kim Gifford: Profile :

Arboricultural Consultant Kim Gifford

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Prior to starting GTS Kim Gifford completed a 4-year apprenticeship in 1972 with the Royal Parks at Hampton Court Palace acquired City and Guilds Horticulture and Arboriculture. In addition to these qualifications Kim Gifford continued his professional development by attending seminars, conferences, studying for the professional diploma and foundation degree in Arboriculture. Further work experience during pre-business period included sub-contracting for Arb. Companies. Work as a lead Arborist for London Borough of Ealing and Arborist in Berlin Germany.

Kim Gifford t/a Gifford Tree Service started trading as a sole trader in 1980 and in 1985 became a partnership. The company specialises in all aspects of Arboriculture. From 2007 Kim Gifford now again trades as a sole trader in his own right. In 1988 Kim Gifford became an approved contractor with Arboricultural Association after a comprehensive assessment and reassessments in 2002/2007 Kim Gifford served on committees of the Arboricultural Association for 10 years and became the National Chairman of the Arboricultural Association in 2001. Kim Gifford is now an honorary member of the Arboricultural Association.

Kim Gifford personally undertakes Picus sonic decay tests for local authorities and other Arboricultural contractors all over the Southern area of England. Kim Gifford owns the Picus equipment treetesting.com for 23 years and completed over 4000 tests, so he has considerable experience in the analysis of tomographic images. He provides this service to complement other consultant reports; this is combined with my 48 years' knowledge in Arboriculture.

The whole Picus system has been updated and maintained to the recent Picus manufacture improvements. 2020 Upgraded to Picus 3 & Q74 Expert software plus Resistograph Micro drill IML Resi PD400 Pro software.

Kim Gifford has undertaken many Tree Surveys including Mortgage reports and BS5837 surveys to meet planning authorities' requirements during development proposals plus Tree Preservation applications and planning inspectorate appeals.

Kim Gifford was certificated recently by Lantra training awards with Professional Tree Inspection Certificate 30th November 2013 and Arboricultural Association Certificate BS5837 – Advanced Tree Assessment for Planning 4th May 2016.

Kim Gifford also provides quotations for recommended works, Risk Methods Statements, Health & Safety Policies, Site Specific procedures operation supervision and management services.