SJA trees
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Land to the rear of 238 and 240 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead (250655): Arboricultural technical note for the installation of a close-boarded fence along the western site boundary

I have been instructed by Elivia Homes Ltd to review the potential effects of installing a 1.8m-high close-boarded fence along the western site boundary on the retained trees, and to provide a methodology to ensure that those trees are protected.

The proposed works involve removing the existing approximately 1.1m-high chain-link fence along the western boundary and replacing it with a standard 1.8m-high close-boarded fence supported by posts set in concrete. The replacement fence encroaches into the RPAs of 23 trees (nos. 62, 63, 67–69, 72–76, 84, 159, 165, 166 and 192–200) growing adjacent to the western site boundary.

The proposed fence will comprise 1.8m-wide panels, requiring concrete posts at 1.8m intervals. Each post hole will be 450mm deep and no more than 300mm wide. The resulting incursion is very limited, at 0.09m^2 per post. A maximum of ten posts is anticipated within the RPAs, giving a total incursion area of 0.9m^2. Subject to the works being carried out in accordance with the methodology below, the fence installation will not adversely affect the retained trees along the western boundary.

Methodology

1) Pre-commencement: before work starts, the fence alignment shall be set out on site and reviewed to ensure that it is adjusted around the trunks of trees on or immediately adjacent to the site boundary.
2) The tree protection fencing will need to be temporarily removed to provide access to the boundary. The arboricultural consultant will attend to ensure that no machinery or plant is used within the RPAs of retained trees.
3) Before work starts, the arboricultural consultant will provide a toolbox talk setting out the methodology and procedures. The consultant will remain on site to supervise the works for half a day and will then be available by telephone for the duration of the works. A brief completion visit will also be undertaken.
4) The existing chain-link mesh and fittings shall be dismantled by hand. Where extracting the existing posts could disturb roots, the posts shall be cut off at or just below ground level and shall not be pulled out mechanically within RPAs. Existing post foundations shall remain undisturbed unless their removal is specifically agreed by the arboricultural consultant.
5) New post locations shall be adjusted locally to avoid visible roots and existing post foundations and, where practicable, positioned outside RPAs. Within an RPA, each post hole shall be

excavated individually using hand tools only; no continuous trench shall be formed. If roots prevent a post from reaching the required position or depth, the hole shall not be enlarged and the post shall be relocated.

6) During excavation, fine roots shall, where practicable, be carefully worked around and retained. If a substantial root (greater than 25 mm in diameter) or a high concentration of roots is encountered, excavation shall stop and the post shall be relocated to avoid severing significant roots. Exposed roots shall be kept moist and covered as soon as practicable.
7) Posts will be set in concrete. Concrete shall be mixed outside RPAs and shall not be allowed to wash out or spill onto the soil within them. Each post hole within an RPA shall be lined with an impermeable barrier before concrete is placed, preventing uncured concrete from coming into contact with the surrounding soil or roots. Concrete shall be delivered to each hole in controlled quantities.
8) No tracked plant, spoil or material storage, fires or refuelling shall be permitted within RPAs.
9) Any damage to retained trees or protective measures shall be reported immediately. On completion, surplus materials and ground protection shall be removed carefully, and the tree protection measures shall be retained for the period required by the approved arboricultural documents.

Provided that the fence is installed in accordance with this methodology, using hand-excavated post holes, flexible post positioning and appropriate arboricultural oversight, the works can be completed without material harm to the retained trees or their rooting environments.

Yours sincerely

Finn Cullerne

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