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T1- ROOT PROTECTION AREA JUSTIFICATION

LAND OFF EDISFORD ROAD, CLITHEROE

Introduction

Further to the extensive discussions between the applicant, Blackburn Diocese Board of Finance, and the Local Planning Authority (LPA), this note is prepared to further inform the position adopted by the applicant in relation to the Root Protection Area (RPA) associated with T1 on the subject site.

This note has been prepared with expert input from Ken Linford, the consulting arborist on behalf of the applicant.

Background Summary

The trees on site were first inspected in 2006 by the applicant's arborist. Prior to pre-application discussions commencing for the site in 2010, the site the assessment was updated. Concern was raised at that time, as well as throughout the subsequent pre-application and application process, regarding the projected life span of T1 and its appropriateness within a residential context. As such, the initial proposal put forward by the applicant was to remove the tree and replace it with high quality, semi-mature planting elsewhere on the site.

The view taken by the LPA considers that T1 is worthy of retention and protection. The LPA have commissioned an independent report on its condition which suggested that the tree had good vitality and with appropriate reduction and maintenance should be retained and even be granted veteran status.

As part of the investigations into the stability of T1, the applicant commissioned a climbing inspection in June 2011 which suggested that the tree had a habit of losing limbs and would be a difficult tree to retain and veteranise in the future. This was particularly pertinent given that it would be set within a residential context, with an associated increase in both pedestrian and motorized movements with close proximity to the tree.

The photograph included with this submission shows the tree from the roadside and shows the cause of concern for the applicant.

Position at Application

Notwithstanding these concerns, and in recognition of the LPA's conviction that T1 is suitable for retention and incorporation into a residential development, the applicant undertook various



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remedial works to the tree (via consent of the application ref: 3/2011/0878) and has subsequently retained the tree within the proposed scheme.

Root Protection Areas

The scheme submitted shows the retention of T1, with a circular RPA of 15m that reflects the guidance set out in British Standard 5837 (2012). This provides a total area of 706 m².

Following submission, the LPA initially advised that a RPA of 16.2m (825m²) was required to the north of T1, to take account of the potential for a non-uniform spread of root growth, caused by the proximity of the stone boundary wall and Edisford Road to the south of T1 which could inhibit root spread in that direction and result in extended growth elsewhere.

BS 5837 provides guidance on this issue and indicates the area of protected ground that would be expected if one was to calculate the protection area if a trees root zone was limited in some way. As such, the applicant has accepted a 16.2m RPA in this instance and revised the proposed scheme accordingly.

Following that revision, the LPA have requested a further increase of the RPA for T1 to 19.5m in a northerly direction, again citing the potential constraints to root growth to the south of T1. This would extend into the area of existing hard-standing,

The applicant's arborist has revisited the site and has provided additional comment regarding the likelihood of extended root growth to the north of T1. These can be summarized as follows:

- The ground conditions surrounding T1 find that the topsoil of heavy loam is 350mm deep and on a clay and gravel subsoil.
- The old Scout Hut to the north is on an apron of hardcore and tarmac which shows few indications of root lift. As such, this area would be as unlikely a root zone as would the pavement and road to the south.
- The area of land within the site to the south and west of T1 is unconstrained and should be considered the most likely direction of root growth for T1.
- This area measures 1229 m² which is considerably more than the 825 m² required to equal the RPA of 16.2m. Indeed, this is beyond the RPA with a 19.5m diameter (1195m²)

Summary

Requiring a RPA of 19.5m to the north would only extend the root zone into the Scout Hut apron and hardstanding. There is no sign of root growth in this area and no reason to believe that the root growth is more likely to extend in this direction than it would in the direction of Edisford Road.

The retention of the areas to the south and west of the tree, as shown on the attached plan, retains an extensive area for potential root growth, beyond the requirements of the relevant British Standard. It also ensures that development is kept away from the area where the root growth of T1 is most likely to have spread.

The applicant therefore submits that a RPA of 16.2m is retained and should be considered robust both in relation to the relevant British Standard, but also the practical on-site constraints that are encountered.