

Statement to support Application for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission – Residential Development, Whalley Road Sabden.

To be read in conjunction with online submission sent 15/01/13 by Mr Stuart Chambers of LINKS Architecture Ltd.

This application is to seek approval to remove the sycamore tree reference T21 as detailed in the Bowland Tree Consultancy Ltd Arboricultural report in support of pre-commencement condition 10.

Following appointment as Principal contractor Globe Management have appointed RSK Land & Development Engineering Ltd and Link Architecture Ltd to develop the planning drawings to meet current building regulations, L.C.C Highways requirements, Level 3 of the code for sustainable homes and Liverpool Housing Trusts specification for Social housing.

During the initial stages of design we worked closely with our appointed Arboriculturalist - Bowland Tree Consultancy Ltd to assess the impact of the proposed development on the existing trees and to produce a management report to be submitted in support of pre-commencement condition 10. While every effort has been made to negate the removal of the tree including the use of driven piles instead of strip foundations the compact nature of the site and the sloped topography to the existing highway meant that works required to the rear of Block B would cause irreparable damage to the trees root system causing eventual dieback of the tree. Although a large established tree it has been categorised C1 and is in poor health therefore limiting its future value with a life expectancy of no longer than 10 to 20 years maximum. As a solution to the loss of screening caused by the felling of the tree Globe will replant trees in this location in addition to the approved planting scheme.

The matter is further complicated by the area immediately adjacent to the tree being infested with Japanese Knotweed. As required in planning condition 12 we have put together a proposal for the eradication of the knotweed with the preferred method being to 'dig and dump'. However, due to the proximity of the tree in an elevated position above the knotweed on the steep Highways embankment this option would not be possible. This would leave only a chemical treatment available which due to the possible uptake by the tree could not be as aggressive a chemical as would usually be used to kill the knotweed within the time constraints of the project. In this instance it would take until spring 2015 and result in a large area of the garden to the rear of plot 6 remaining untouched and fenced off until completion of the chemical treatment. This proposal is not acceptable to our client Liverpool Housing Trust as it does not allow for the formation of the garden as passed on the original planning drawing and could also be problematic for the tenant when seeking to purchase building insurance.

As shown on the original planning drawings and required by Liverpool Housing Trust there is to be an area of usable garden to the rear of the properties at a gradient of no greater than 1:20. Due to the close proximity of the rear of the dwellings to the existing Highways embankment, a series of retaining structures must be constructed parallel to the rear elevation, and must be designed in accordance with L.C.C highways specifications. We are currently working with David Leung from Highways to finalise the retaining structure scheme.

The retaining structures required to form the approved gardens and Highway retention would be within 3 m of tree T21, and would seriously compromise the root zone. The formation of the retaining structure would require the removal of the knot weed before excavation. Therefore, the only viable option to form the retaining structures, and to comply with the planning condition to remove the knot weed, would be to remove tree T21.

There are also problems with access to the rear of plot 6 as the approved scheme which shows an external flight of stairs leading to the Highways verge has had to be redesigned to meet the maximum rise and going as stipulated in approved document M. This has resulted in a dog legged staircase that turns through the area where the tree is currently situated.

The rear gardens and rear elevations to plots 5, 6 and 7 in Block B, which have the benefit of planning approval, will be shaded by the tree canopy. This will be detrimental to the occupants enjoyment of their gardens as little will grow and will considerably reduce natural daylight levels in the rooms with a

rear (north) facing aspect. Plot 6 will be severely affected by tree T21 in this respect as the canopy will be very close to the rear elevation and will extend over the entire rear garden. The shading of the rear of some of the dwellings by the tree could pose a serious concern for the health of the occupants as it will considerably reduce the available daylight in the properties.