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To: Mr D. Howard
Netherleigh
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Lancashire
LA1 5EF

Dear Mr Howard

PLANNING APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT A HOUSE AT SUNNYHILL, LANCASTER – TREES

Thank you for asking me to meet you at Sunnyhill last week and copying to me the correspondence with Lancaster City Council (LCC). LCC have requested the following additional information about the protection of the trees during the development phase:

1. the actions that will be taken to protect roots exposed by excavations to install the load bearing surface adjacent to T1, T10 and T11;
2. how damage and desiccation of tree roots will be prevented during excavation works;
3. the erection of the tree protective barrier; and
4. arboricultural supervision of work that may affect trees.

Before I discuss the requested information I will provide an updated assessment of T1, yew. When my colleague Alistair Hearn first inspected this tree it was covered in ivy and surrounded by shrubs, as it was when the Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate visited the site. Alistair noted in his report that there were some bark wounds that were starting to decay between 1.5 and 2.5m on the north-west. He assessed these to have 'Minor' significance. Removing the ivy has exposed this part of the tree's trunk to reveal a 2m high by 30cm wide decaying canker. The stem at this point is flattened and the weight of crown above it is biased to the west (please see the attached photographs). I consider that this canker is the most likely point at which the tree would fail during a windstorm and the failed part would land on the proposed drive, roadside pavement and road. I consider that this defect is significant and consequently, using the guidance contained in BS 5837 (2005), I have assessed its retention category to be R rather than B1 as in our initial report. BS 5837 (2005) recommends that trees in retention categories A and B should be material considerations whereas those in C and R should not be. It also recommends that those assessed to be in retention category R should be removed prior to the commencement of the development process. I recommend that this tree should be removed or, if you'd like to keep it, its crown should be significantly reduced by 4-5m; this will dramatically alter its appearance. Whatever your decision about whether to remove this tree or reduce and retain it I consider that this tree shouldn't affect the LPA's decision about whether or not to grant consent for your proposals.

1. Actions to protect roots

I note that the existing ground levels, except for a small ridge of soil near T1, are suitable for installing the load bearing road sub-base without requiring further excavations. I suggest that the ridge of soil near T1 should be excavated with a pneumatic air lance such as a Soil Pick or Airspade. Excavations should take place to such an extent as to allow exposed roots to be

bent to below the level of the load bearing sub-base. Once excavated they should be bent to the required level, covered with soil and weighed down. When the sub-base is to be laid the weights should be removed and the three dimensional cellular confinement material installed as recommended by its manufacturer.

2. Preventing exposed roots from drying out

Other than the situation discussed above no excavations are expected within the RPAs of retained trees. If excavations are required an Arboricultural Consultant will assess the situation, prepare a method statement that will be submitted to the LPA, and no work will take place until it has the approval of the LPA.

3. Erection of tree protective barrier

The tree protection barrier will be erected prior to the commencement of the development phase and will stay in place until after it has been completed. Once the tree protective barrier has been erected the LPA will be informed and no work will take place until they have approved it in writing. If the tree protective barrier has to be moved during the construction phase an Arboricultural Consultant will be instructed to specify its location and, once erected, the LPA will be informed and no work will take place until its new location has been approved.

4. Arboricultural supervision

Arboricultural supervision will take place at key stages in the development process and their observations will be reported to the LPA:

1. the erection and re-location of the tree protection barriers;
2. the planning of the underground services;
3. excavation of trenches for the underground services;
4. the installation of the load bearing drive sub-base;
5. the completion of the development phase prior to the dismantling of the tree protection fence; and
6. any other activities that take place closer than 1m from the edge of the RPA of a retained tree or 3m of its canopy.

With regard to the installation of the load-bearing drive sub-base it will be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

I trust that the contents of this letter will provide all the information that the LPA require. Please ask them to contact me directly if they would like to discuss it.

Yours sincerely



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