



Mr J Gargett
Planning Services
Havant Borough Council
Civic Offices
HAVANT
PO9 2AX

My Ref: D1826AIAL2

5th June 2018

Dear Mr Gargett,

**RE: 109 LONDON ROAD, COWPLAIN, WATERLOOVILLE PO8 8XJ3
WORKS NEAR TREES**

I write in respect of the installation of surfacing and a concrete shed base on land at the north west end of the cul-de-sac of Arun Close, referred to in recent planning applications at 109 London Road. You have expressed concern about these installations and the potential adverse effects on nearby trees protected by tree preservation order (TPO). You wanted to see the matter investigated, with remedial works if and wherever deemed appropriate.

1. I made a site visit on 11th April 2018 and set out my observations, assessment and conclusions in my report ref: D1826AIA dated 30th April 2018. The report included a site plan my ref: Plan AC1 which indicated the location of the surfacing and the concrete base.
2. You felt that the report was reasonable as far as it went, but that it was based only on observations, with no examination or excavation of the surfacing or concrete base. You believed that such investigations were needed to properly assess the extent of any damage that might have occurred to the roots of the nearby trees. Accordingly, a site meeting was arranged.
3. The site meeting took place on 25th May 2018 with you and your colleague on behalf of Havant Borough Council, with Paul Bennett of Kalotec Ltd and myself for the applicant; and Mr J Garland for C&G Construction Ltd. You asked for preliminary investigation of the surfacing by the removal of pavements near the

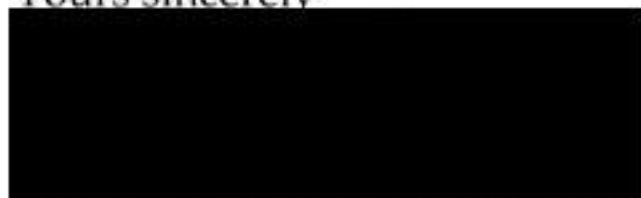
trees; and you were satisfied on examination that the surfacing had been installed on ground at the same level or higher than the ground near the trees i.e. without excavation. The pavements were dry laid on a sand bed, and you were satisfied that the surface was sufficiently permeable to allow water percolation and gaseous exchange. You believed that remedial measures such as taking up the surfacing and reinstating had the potential to exacerbate any damage that might have occurred, and concluded that, in the absence of clear evidence of harm, the pavement parking area could remain.

4. In respect of the concrete slab base, it was not practicable to carry out similar preliminary investigations and you had concerns about the method of installation and the impermeable character of the slab. Accordingly, you required the base to be taken up and removed and the ground made good, returning the site to the condition shown in the most recent planning permission.
5. The slab removal works were carried out on Friday 1st June. Photos 1-5 at Appendix 1 show progress. The slab was broken up using hand-held / hand-operated pneumatic chisels, working from on the slab, with the arisings removed by hand back onto the slab. Priority was given to that part of the slab near the boundary fence and trees, and a 50cm wide strip was removed, allowing investigation using hand tools to reveal the original ground level. I was present from the commencement to monitor the works and you made a site visit just before noon to carry out your own site examination. It was clear from the works to that point that the slab had been installed over the existing ground level with no additional excavation into previously undisturbed ground. Examination of other parts of the slab during removal indicated that this principle applied for the whole slab. There was no evidence of damage to tree roots by severance or abrasion.
6. Following your inspection and assessment, you concluded that the site operatives could continue to remove the slab using the method used to that point i.e. the slab broken up using hand-held / hand-operated pneumatic chisels, working from on the slab, with the arisings removed by hand back onto the slab and from there picked up by lorry grab, with no arisings stored on the grassed ground to the north of the slab. The ground was to be made good using good-quality top-soil and finished with turf or seeded. You were satisfied that there had been no undue compaction of the ground under the slab, and decompaction measures were not required. However, you required a method statement for the installation of the fence posts that would allow the erection of the fence effectively along what had been the north edge of the slab; and within tree root protection areas.

7. **Method statement in respect of fence posts:** The fence is to be similar to the fencing already installed i.e. close-boarded / 'larch-lap' panels set between concrete fence posts with 300mm gravel board at the base. The sockets for the posts will be excavated by hand using hand tools, not exceeding 250mm square and the posts will be set in dry mix, at the required (approx. 2m) intervals. All access shall be pedestrian, with no plant access onto grassed areas.
8. **Planting:** Although the evidence suggested no significant harm to retained trees, there was general agreement that the consequences of harm e.g. from compaction could take several growing seasons to become evident. In potential mitigation, a tree was proposed for the north east boundary of the grassed rear garden of the bungalow that is located adjacent to the north east side of the access. The tree should be a field maple (*Acer campestre*) of standard or heavy standard size planted in the next growing season (October 2018- March 2019), with the plant selection and planting in accordance with *BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations*.
9. **Conclusions:** Surfacing and a concrete slab had been installed within the root protection areas of trees protected by TPO without the Council's approval of the installation methods. Careful site investigation revealed no evidence of direct root damage, and suggested no significant harm from soil compaction. Remedial measures included the removal of the slab using an agreed and monitored method; the installation of fence posts using an agreed method; and the planting of a tree. In consideration of the investigation and the remedial/mitigation measures, the Council will not take formal action in respect of the tree protected by TPO, nor in respect of planning conditions relating to the slab and fence.

I trust that this is a reasonably accurate record of events, but if there are errors or omissions, and you would like to discuss any of these points, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely



Jonathan Fulcher DipArb FARborA

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Photo 1: Concrete slab base prior to the start of removal works

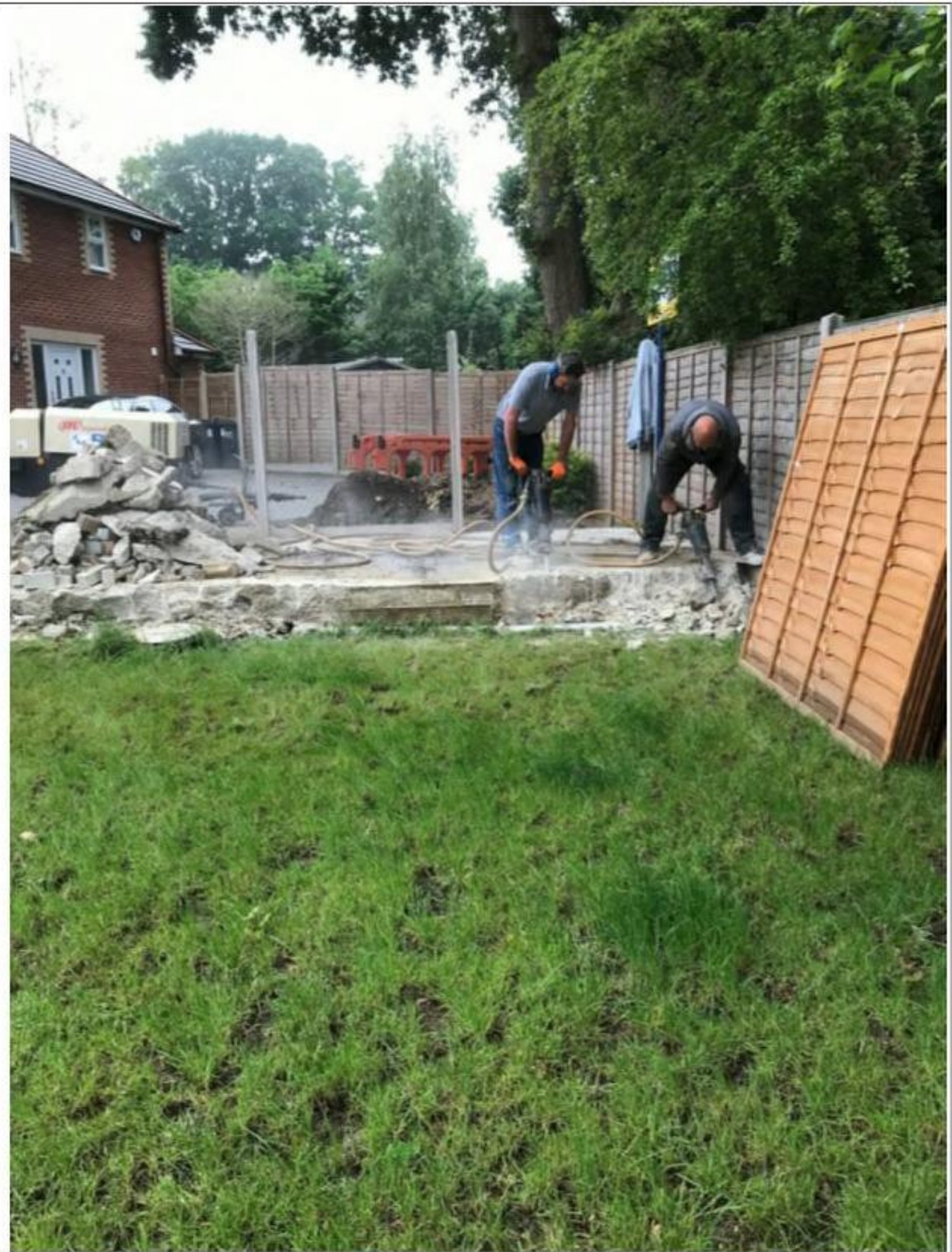


Photo 2: Breaking up concrete slab base using hand-held pneumatic chisels and working from the slab



Photo 3: Concrete slab base partly broken up, with arisings beginning to be stacked on remaining part of slab



Photo 4: Arisings from the breaking up of the concrete base slab being removed by hand close to boundary fence and trees to investigate potential direct root damage



Photo 5: Removal of concrete base slab and arisings close to boundary fence to reveal original ground level