



Site Guidance Note 1: Monitoring tree protection

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SGN 1: Summary guidance for site operatives

Administration

1. **Unauthorised damage to protected trees is a criminal offence and could lead to enforcement action.**
2. **Carry out supervision under the normal site risk assessment procedures and comply with the wider site safety rules.**

Monitoring framework

3. **Appoint a supervising arboriculturist to monitor tree protection.**
4. **The supervising arboriculturist, a developer's representative, and a local planning authority (LPA) representative, will attend a pre-commencement meeting before construction work starts.**
5. **The supervising arboriculturist will visit to check the tree protection.**
6. **Additionally, the supervising arboriculturist will visit, as necessary, to advise on emerging tree protection issues.**
7. **Circulate written records of monitoring to relevant parties.**

Important reminders

8. **Fencing and ground protection locations will not be altered without prior approval of the supervising arboriculturist.**
9. **Fencing and ground protection will not be removed at the end of construction without prior approval of the supervising arboriculturist.**

SGN 1: Explanatory notes and examples

Purpose

SGN 1 describes the practical requirements for monitoring tree protection throughout the construction process, based on the recommendations in BS 5837 (6.1, 6.2, & 6.3).



General principles and clarifications

A pre-commencement meeting will be held on site before any of the site clearance and construction work begins. This would normally be attended by the site manager, the supervising arboriculturist, and a LPA representative. If a LPA representative cannot attend, the supervising arboriculturist will inform the LPA in writing of the details of the meeting.

All tree protection measures described in the arboricultural method statement

will be fully discussed so that their implementation and sequencing are understood by all the parties. This will include agreeing the form and location of the most appropriate combination of fencing and ground protection to be used as barriers for the construction exclusion zone.

Any agreed clarifications or modifications to the consented details will be recorded and circulated to all parties in writing. This meeting is where

SGN 1: Explanatory notes and examples

the details of the programme of tree protection will be agreed and finalised, which will then form the basis of any supervision arrangements between the supervising arboriculturist and the developer.

Once the site is active, the supervising arboriculturist will visit at an interval agreed at the pre-commencement site meeting. This would normally be every two to four weeks for general supervision, but could be at a longer interval, if agreed between the parties. The supervision arrangement will be sufficiently flexible to allow the supervision of all sensitive works as they occur. The supervising arboriculturist's initial role is to liaise with the developer

and the LPA to ensure that protective measures are fit for purpose and in place before any works start on site. Once the site is working, that role will switch to monitoring compliance with arboricultural planning conditions and advising on any tree problems that arise or modifications that become necessary.

No agreed protective fencing or ground protection will be altered or removed without prior approval of the supervising arboriculturist. This particularly applies to removal at the end of the construction activity and the final landscaping because there is a high risk of inadvertent harm to trees during these finishing stages.

Technical reference

Due to copyright restrictions, the relevant British Standard clauses are summarised, not quoted, as follows:

- 1. BS 5837 (2012) Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations:** Clauses 6.1 (Arboricultural method statement), 6.2 (Barriers and ground protection), and 6.3 (Site monitoring), recommend:
 - 6.1.1 Adopt a precautionary approach towards tree protection and describe operations within RPAs in an arboricultural method statement to demonstrate that there is a minimal risk of adverse impact on trees.
 - 6.1.2 The arboricultural method statement should include an auditable system of arboricultural site monitoring, including a schedule of specific site events requiring input or supervision.
 - 6.2.1.3 The protected area is sacrosanct. Fencing and ground protection should not be removed or altered unless agreed by the supervising arboriculturist.
 - 6.3 There should be an auditable system of site monitoring for trees to be retained, which should extend to arboricultural supervision whenever construction activity could affect RPAs.