



Tree Related Structural Concerns at Residential Property

RSC24111501

Friday 15 November 2024

Mrs M Crofts

45 Rectory Lane, Thurnscoe, Rotherham S63 0RS

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INTRODUCTION

My client is Mrs Margaret Crofts, a retired lady of mature age having reached her senior years. Mrs Crofts owns and resides at 45 Rectory Lane in the village of Thurnscoe, in the Dearne North Ward of the Barnsley Metropolitan Borough. This property comprises a detached bungalow with a single detached garage to the rear side together with front and rear gardens. The garage is of a typical masonry construction consisting of 1/2 brick walls to the sides and rear strengthened by internal pier buttresses and a flat roof. An up-and-over door is fitted to the front and a personnel door together with a window to the garden side elevation.

An ordinary watercourse forms the rear boundary of the property and Mrs Crofts enjoys riparian rights and responsibilities of the same. The property was built c.1978 and was purchased new by the current owner. It is likely that the dwelling house and garage were constructed just prior to the introduction of the more stringent building regulations of the late 1970's. The buildings were erected before the fundamental building regulation changes brought about by

The Building Act of 1984.

With respect to the underlying ground, the Dearne area of Barnsley typically has a natural stiff clay subsoil and clayey topsoil.

Situated on the bank of the watercourse and within the curtilage of the premises is a Sycamore Tree. My client understands that said tree benefits from a Tree Protection Order. Mrs Crofts is, and has been for many years, concerned regarding the size of this tree with respect to it's proximity to her garage, home and rear paved patio area. My client has the following concerns:

1) That the has out grown it's environs.

2) When in foliage, significantly restricts the natural daylight within her rear garden.

3) Has and is continuing to impact the foundation of the garage causing movement and structural damage.

4) Has and is continuing to cause uplifting to her paved patio area causing potential trip hazards.

The purpose of this report is to

supplement any planning application with respect to proposed works to the tree that may be made by, or on behalf of, my client.

I inspected the site on Friday 15 November, 2024. My findings together with photographs and measurements taken are set out below:

Photo 1 showing the Sycamore Tree in question.



Photo 2

The Sycamore Tree own by my client is in the foreground. Located behind the fence on the bank of a watercourse. The tree's relative position to the garage can be seen. A 2nd tree own by a neighbour can be seen behind the garage.



Photo 3

As commentary to Photo 2 above.



Photo 4

The garage wall from outside. Settlement cracking has occurred to the brickwork jointing of the single skin (1/2 brick thick) garage wall and this has been recently pointed on the outside of the garage wall. The distance from the tree at this point was measured at 6.9m.



Photo 5

Commentary as Photo 4.



Photo 6

The garage wall from outside. The movement has also resulted in bricks shearing (blue arrow).



Photo 7

The garage wall from inside. The settlement cracking to the wall can be clearly seen.



Photo 8

Commentary as Photo 7.



Photo 9

Settlement movement cracking of brickwork joints and shear crack to brick (blue arrow).



Photo 10

Commentary as Photo 7.



Photo 11

Commentary as Photo 7.



Photo 12

The cracking extends over an horizontal distance of around 900mm.



Photo 13

Commentary as Photo 12.



Photo 14

The roots from the tree are causing paved patio area to be raised upwards causing potential trip hazards. My elderly client is concerned for her wellbeing when in this area of her garden.



Photo 15

Commentary as Photo 14.



Photo 16

Commentary as Photo 14.

The tree roots have caused the patio to become very uneven.

CONCLUSION

A) There is evidence of movement having occurred to the garage resulting in settlement cracking to the jointing of the brickwork structure and shearing of some masonry. This is type of cracking is typical to settlement caused by heave and shrinkage of clay subsoils, as are generally present in this locality. The location of a tree within close proximity to a structure, as in this instance, is often a significant contributory factor; the roots can cause a desiccation of the subsoil in times of drought.

B) A tree root at surface level was observed within the rear lawn area. There are signs of vertical movement to the paved patio area which might be attributed to some extent to the tree roots. My inspection was non-intrusive, however, so no paving was taken up to verify this. My client's concerns over tripping and taking a fall do seem well founded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following actions are recommended in order of preference :

a) The removal of the primary factor that has caused structural movement and is likely to continue to do so. That is, that consideration be given to allowing the tree to be felled. Should the tree remain and continue to flourish, then the likelihood of further settlement to the premises cannot be discounted.

b) Should the above not be permitted, then a reduction to the crown of the tree to reduce its impact on the environs. It should be noted, however, that such pruning might stimulate new growth that could potentially lead to exacerbation of any settlement.