

From: [Steve Massey](#)
To: [Chris Johnston](#)
Cc: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: SMD/2025/0007 - Knypersley Sports Club, Tunstall Rd, Knypersley
Date: 05 March 2025 16:53:40
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Chris

Comments as follows on this full application for erection of a replacement building for use as a children's nursery:

There is only one tree which is of any relevance and may be affected by the proposed development, as detailed in the applicant's Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) report. This is a large mature Sycamore situated within the line of, and partially surrounded by, the existing overall site boundary wall along the Tunstall Rd frontage. The tree is located c.12m north of the existing disused building, and is protected within Area A1 under TPO No. BU.1.

The Design and Access Statement (DAS) suggests that there would be no impact on this tree arising from the construction of the new (replacement) building as it would be outside the tree's Root Protection Area (RPA). This is certainly true with regard to the building, as demonstrated in the AIA report. I therefore have no objection to the construction (or proposed use) of the replacement building.

However, the AIA report also correctly identifies that a proposed new fence to the nursery's associated outdoor space would in part encroach within the RPA, a matter overlooked in the DAS. In fact the application plans show a proposed new 750mm high brickwork wall with 750mm timber fence above to the outdoor space boundary. Within the tree's RPA even relatively shallow trench excavation for a footing for the wall could potentially lead to cutting of roots, which would be likely to have adverse impact on the condition, and possibly also the stability, of the tree. In referring to just a fence, rather than a fence & wall combination, the AIA report suggests that intermittent fence posts, with post holes hand dug with some flexibility of precise positioning to avoid significant roots if encountered, would have minimal impact on the tree – I would agree with this assessment.

Therefore I would suggest seeking confirmation from the applicant/agent that the proposed wall & fence combination would, within the RPA at least, be replaced by a fence-only boundary treatment in accordance with the advice in the AIA report. Outside the RPA, a wall on continuous trench footing would have no significant impact on the tree and would be acceptable from this point of view. In practice, if both a fence and a wall & fence combination are to be used, it would make sense in design terms to construct a fence on intermittent posts between the tree stem and the north-east corner of the proposed building, with the wall & fence combination then continuing from there along the front (east) of the building and returning along the southern boundary.

On this basis and with such amendment confirmed, I would have no objection to the application overall.

The AIA suggests that specific tree protection measures would not be necessary in general and I would agree with this, in view of the existing hard surfacing within the application site extent of

the RPA and the intervening existing stone boundary wall and alcove between the tree and the site.

In anticipation of an amendment to omit the new boundary wall from within the tree RPA and construct a fenced-only boundary treatment here, and to avoid the imposition of pre-commencement conditions requiring submission of further details including Arboricultural Method Statement, I would suggest that the following condition be imposed in the event that planning permission is granted:

1. Within the Root Protection Area of the mature protected Sycamore tree situated approximately 12m north of the building hereby approved (as derived in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations* and as denoted in the Hamps Valley Ltd Arboricultural Impact Assessment report dated November 2024 submitted in support of the application), any removal of existing hard surfacing shall be carried out only using manual methods and hand tools, following initial break-up of the surface layer which may be undertaken using mechanical breaking equipment. Subsequently, all post holes within the Root Protection Area for the proposed new boundary fence to the garden area shall be excavated using only hand tools and where necessary adjusting precise post hole positions wherever possible to avoid damage to any significant tree roots encountered, to provide for retention in-situ and undamaged all woody roots of 2.5cm diameter or greater. Within the Root Protection Area all landscaping and finishing operations shall be carried out manually using hand tools only and there shall be no passage of vehicles across the exposed unmade ground following removal of existing hard surfacing.

Steve Massey Arboricultural Officer

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