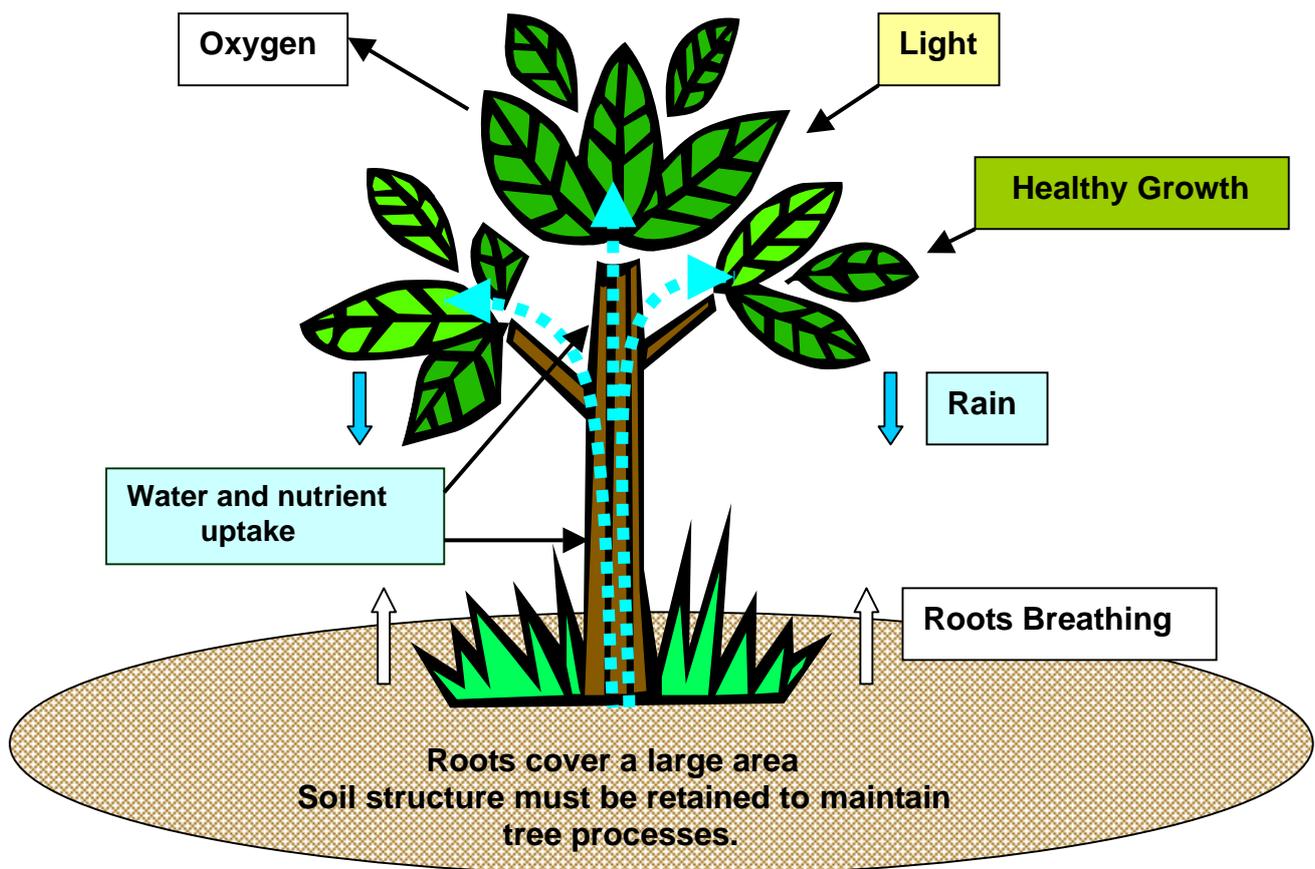


PROTECTION OF TREES

Guidance Note 13 Development Sites

Trees on and adjacent to development sites, need physical protection during site clearance, development and landscape operations. Conditions attached to planning permissions require protection to be in place prior to work commencing.

In order to implement effective tree protection, it is important to understand the basic process of a tree and how these maintain healthy growth.



On development sites there are many ways in which trees can be damaged. Common types of damage and their effects are:

ROOT DAMAGE

Excavation by machinery, changes in levels and ground compaction from vehicle movements and storage of materials can reduce root aeration and water/nutrient uptake.

Implications

Causes deterioration in the condition of trees and can cause premature death. Trees can have extensive resources which they can survive off, in some cases for many years. However in such cases, a tree that could have lived for hundreds of years may only survive a decade. Root damage can generally be identified by the condition of the crown of a tree; deterioration of leaf size, colour and loss of foliage. The

amenities of the property can therefore be affected and the tree may be rendered unsafe.

FIRE DAMAGE

Fire can damage all tree parts including roots near to the surface. Preferably there should be no fires on site, however where there is, they should be located well away from trees taking the prevailing wind into consideration.

PROTECTION

Most tree roots can be found in the top 600mm (24-25 inches) of the soil, therefore it is essential to protect the root zones of trees from disturbance. To prevent damage the most practical solution is to ensure that an adequate area around the tree is protected from disturbance by the erection of protective fencing. Tree protective fencing must be robust, in order to withstand impact and to prevent it from being easily moved. Signs can be attached to fencing, informing of its purpose, commenting for example; 'Tree Protection Area, Keep Out, No Storage'.

Trees require space and the extent of this area will depend on the individual size, condition and location of the tree. The following rule of thumb can be used: Erect protective fencing at a radial distance equal to 12 x the diameter of the stem, which should be measured at approximately 1.5m above ground level. Where this is not possible, for example multi stemmed trees, the diameter measurement should be made just above the root flare, and the fencing erected at a radial distance equal to 10 x that diameter. Where the branch spread extends beyond the root protection area, it would be prudent to erect fencing further out to ensure that the crown of the tree is effectively protected.

It is recommended that a suitably qualified tree professional is commissioned to advise and oversee all measures concerning trees, which should as a minimum standard comply with BS5837:2005 *or as amended* (Trees in relation to construction – Recommendations).

Developers, Agents, Contractors and Sub-Contractors should be fully aware of tree protection measures and the penalties associated with breaching them. Tree protective fencing should stay in place throughout; site clearance, construction and landscape operations. Trees may well be protected by Tree Preservation Orders, planning conditions and/or be sited within Conservation Areas. The Council actively monitors sites to ensure statutory control is not breached and that conditions are complied with. Where breaches occur formal enforcement action may be considered necessary. Penalties can carry a fine up to £20,000 within a Magistrates Court with the possibility of greater fines being imposed in a Crown Court.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Wealden Design Guide

BS5837:2005 *or as amended* (Trees in relation to construction – Recommendations).

NJUG Guidelines Services in Proximity to Trees. November 2007.

NHBC Standards Chapter 4.2 Buildings near Trees. April 2003