

Operational Guidance

Figure 1 – Tree Protection Zone

It is very easy to damage tree roots while carrying out your important work. All you have to do is ignore the guidance in this document and excavate a trench too close to a tree. This will result in most if not all of the roots in the area of the excavation being completely severed.

This will result in:

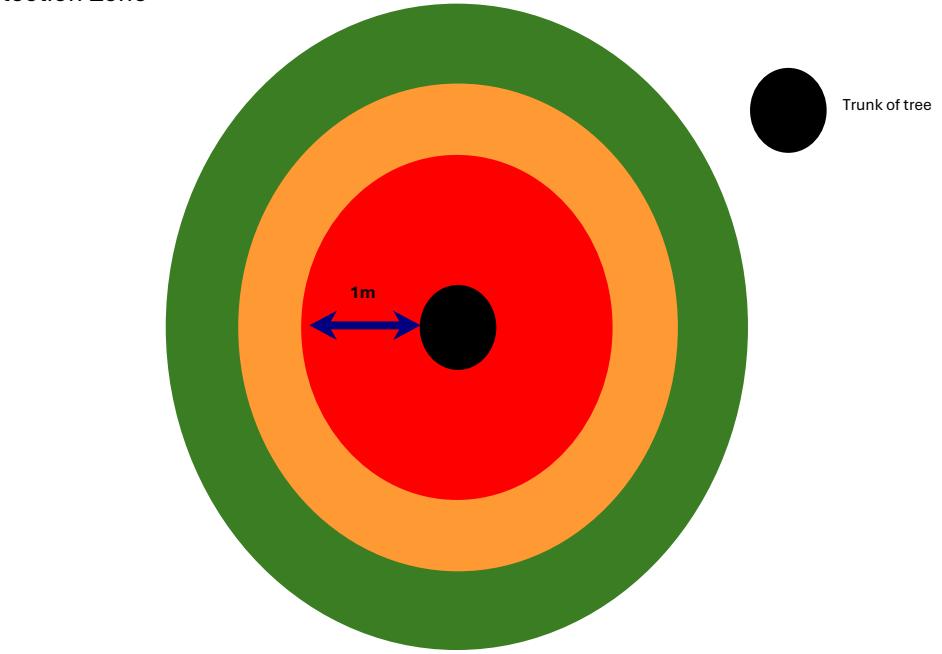
1. The tree dying
2. The tree falling over
3. Or both of these!

The outcome for you (either as the person who instructed the work or as the person who physically carried it out) could be:

1. Prosecution by the Local Authority if the tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or is within a Conservation Area (CA). The maximum fine for damaging or destroying a tree covered by a TPO or in a CA is **£20,000** in the Magistrate's Court. Really serious cases are usually heard at the Crown Court, where there is **no upper limit to a fine!**
2. Prosecution by the tree owner for criminal damage even if the tree is not covered by a TPO

The outcome for other people could be catastrophic if the tree that you damaged were to fall onto them or their property.

So, all you need to do to avoid any problems is to follow the guidelines in Figure 1



PROHIBITED ZONE – 1m from trunk. Excavations of any kind must not be undertaken within this zone unless full consultation with the local authority Arboriculturist is undertaken. Materials, plant and spoil must not be stored within this zone.

PRECAUTIONARY ZONE – 4 x tree circumference. Where excavations must be undertaken within this zone the use of mechanical excavation plant (other than Vacuum Excavation) should be prohibited. Precautions should be undertaken to protect any exposed roots. Materials, plant and spoil should not be stored within this zone. Seek Local Authority Arboriculturist (LAA) or independent professional.

PERMITTED ZONE – outside of the precautionary zone. Excavation works may be undertaken within this zone; however, caution must be applied and the use of mechanical plant limited. Any exposed roots should be protected.

Operative Guidance Handout (Cont'd)

This is how NOT to do it!

This tree was growing in a Conservation Area. A significant number of this tree roots that were severed by a contractor using a mini-digger within the Precautionary Zone.

The tree was declared unsafe and had to be felled.

The persons responsible for the damage were prosecuted by the Local Authority and fined.

Checklist

- Review Completed Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS)
- Know who the AMS Owner is
- Local Authority Arboriculturist (LAA)

