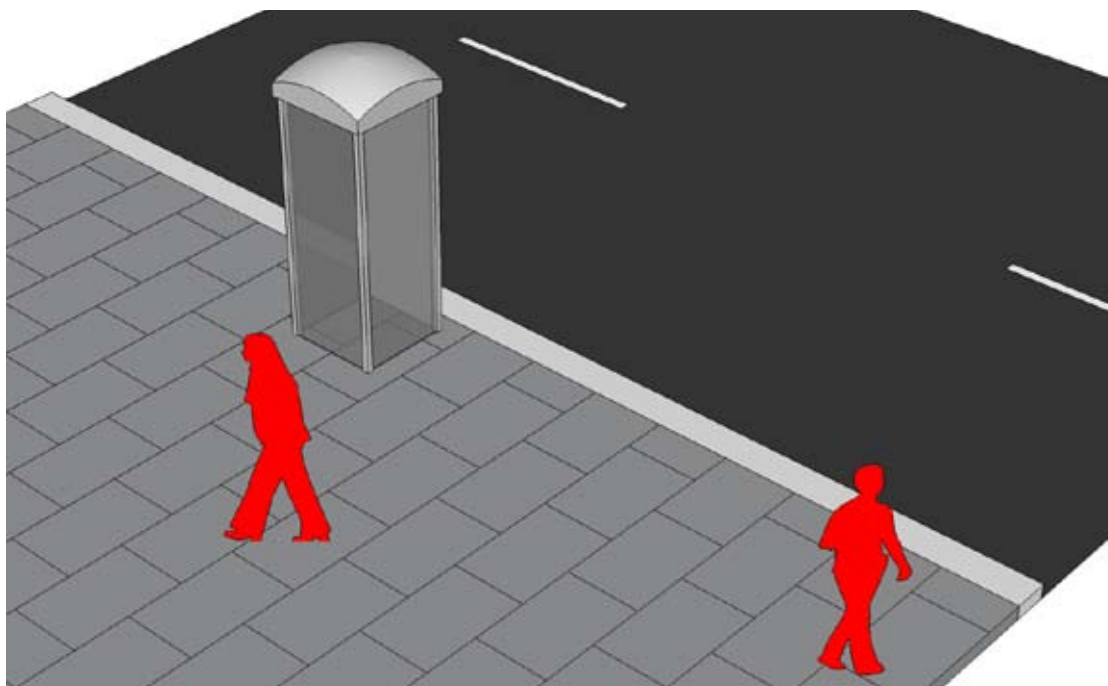


9.8 Telephone Kiosks

The use of telephone kiosks should follow the general principles of design and layout (refer to section 2.3.1).

The visual impact of standard telephone kiosks by incorporating two or more telephone units on an open sided pillar or integrating with other furniture elements such as bus shelters. When using an open sided pillar with a single unit, place it parallel with the road so that the person is more protected from traffic noise.



9.9 Public Toilets

The location of public toilets should follow the general principles of design and layout (refer to section 2.3.1) and the relevant strategy documents being currently prepared by LB Merton.

Because of their size, there are not many locations where public toilets can be satisfactory located. Only wide open areas of footway are acceptable, and even then the toilet must not:

- » Be unduly prominent within the streetscene;
- » Inappropriately obscure building frontages;;
- » Obscure sight lines.

Community Toilet Scheme

Over the past decade, Merton, along with most other London Boroughs, has closed all of its traditional public loos, with the exception of a few in parks, libraries and other municipal buildings such as cemeteries. There are other locations in the borough where facilities are used by front line staff, by informal agreement with the owner.

Merton is now trialling an innovative way of developing this idea, in partnership with local businesses. The community toilet scheme* provides an easy, accessible and popular way for residents and visitors to have access to clean, safe and well maintained toilet facilities. By offering businesses a small fee to open their facilities to the wider public without the need for a purchase, a wider network of well-signed community toilets can be provided.

The scheme is to be initially trialled within Mitcham Town Centre, with a review after six months. Depending on success and the availability of outside funding, it could be extended across the borough.

10 Signage

10.1 General Principles

The strategy for the signage should be to use the fewest number of signs, the smallest permissible signs and to minimise the use of illuminated signs (as opposed to reflective). Public safety should always underline all decision taking relating to traffic and pedestrian signage.

Signpost numbers should be kept to a minimum and avoided wherever possible, in order to reduce clutter. Signs should be:

- » Doubled-up on adjacent lamp columns or other existing posts;
- » Single post signs should be used to minimise footway obstructions, which can accommodate several sign plates;
- » Located on buildings walls or fence (after seeking permission from owners and where legally permissible);
- » Mounted back to back on posts. Where this isn't possible the back of the sign should be painted black;
- » Remove unnecessary or duplicated signs.

Particular care should be taken over the location of signs in the vicinity of Listed Buildings, Locally listed Buildings and Important Views.

10.2 Traffic Signage

Clearly adherence should be paid to statutory regulations in the provision of traffic related signage. However, the "Traffic Signs Regulations And General Directions 2002" provides guidance on location and size of signs, and should be interpreted flexibly with the principles of reduction of clutter in mind.

Consideration should be given to:

- » Incorporate permit holder and pay and display information on lamp or other existing posts (where legally permissible).
- » Locate signs at back of pavement if a high number of signs are required (to reduce "forest effect").
- » Locate ticket machines in a way that minimises impact on sensitive street frontages.
- » Where traffic speeds are slower use fewer and smaller signs.

Location	Borough wide
Principles for siting	Ideally combined onto lamp-posts and other vertical elements
	At the back of pavement if combining with lamp-posts is not possible, provided they are still visible, and do not obstruct buildings or entrances
	Signage should be sited on building facades or fences provided this is still visible and subject to consent from building owners and where legally permissible
Considerations	The aim should be to minimise the number of vertical poles by combining uses and signs onto shared poles

Colour	Poles should be polyester powder coated steel in RAL 7004 to match other furniture
	Poles which are placed in the footway should have a black visibility band at eye level



Example of combined pole usage

10.3 Pedestrian Signage

A set of criteria will ensure a consistent approach to help avoid unnecessary, repetitive or outsized signage. Signage should follow the principles being developed by TfL under its 'Legible London' initiative.

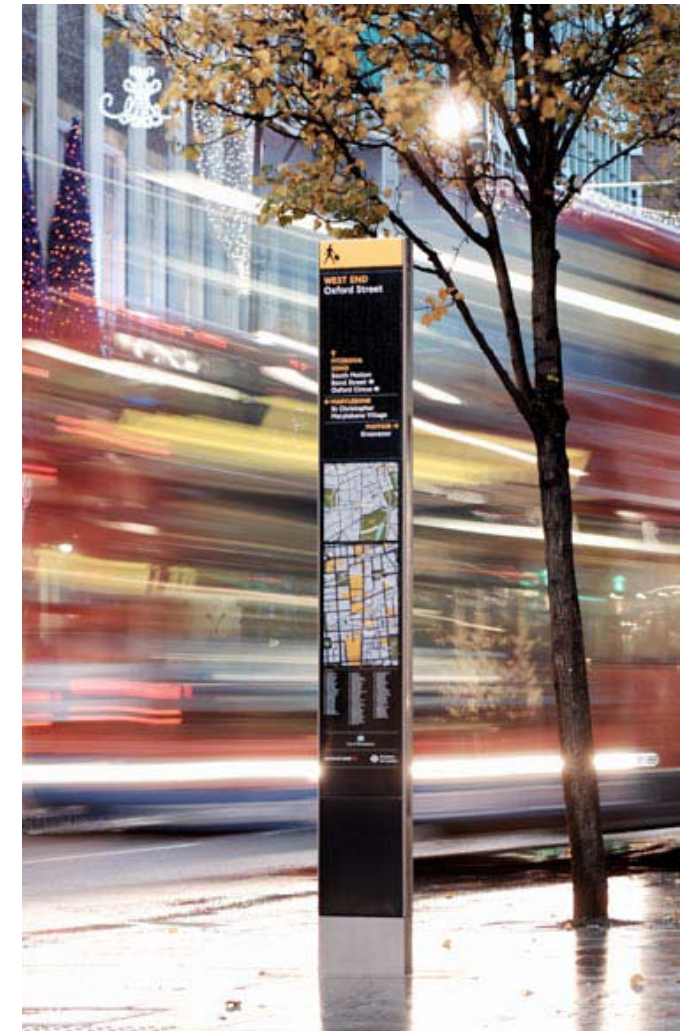
- » Signs should have a standard plate design and type size and show places of public importance.
- » Pedestrian direction signs erected on the TLRN must comply the traffic sign regulations and general directions, while considering the principles of minimising clutter.
- » The places where pedestrian/cycle routes cross the TLRN are some of the locations where signage is appropriate to aid legibility.
- » A consultation process should be set up between TfL and the Council to agree a common design for pedestrian signage on TLRN routes.



Legible London type directional signage



Legible London type orientation signage



Legible London type orientation signage

Location	Borough wide
Principles for siting	At key pedestrian decision and arrival points
Considerations	The level of information should be tailored to the situation. Maps should be provided at key pedestrian arrival points. Finger posts, at key decision points
	Posts for finger-post signs should be polyester powder coated in RAL 7004 with a black visibility band at eye level

11 Trees and Planting

11.1 Trees in An Urban Environment

Towns and cities are essentially artificial environments that have been developed by people in order to allow large communities to live and work together.

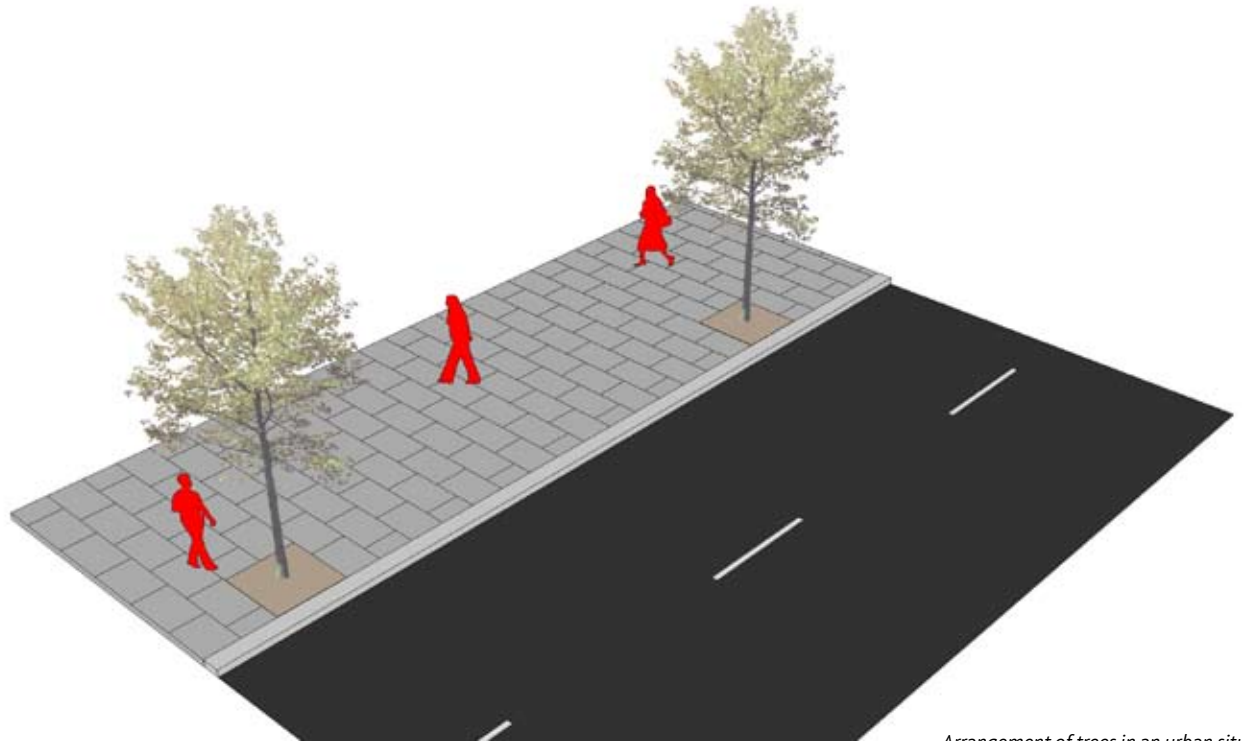
Today's concerns about the environment support the introduction of vegetation to our cities to help curb pollution and provide an ecological resource. Planting used in appropriate locations can help to ameliorate the effects of the climate by reducing wind speed and raising ambient temperature.

Trees also create attractive soft relief in these extensive built up areas and add a dimension of human scale. Street trees are very popular with the general public.

In such a controlled environment trees can be seen as an anomaly, differing significantly from the built environment in that they do not remain static but continue to grow. This can cause a conflict in development when trees are seen as a threat to the built form or when there's a problem in reconciling tree planting with other needs associated with the infrastructure required in modern cities: roads, street lighting, CCTV cameras, utility services and shop frontages amongst others.

However, the **benefits** of trees are numerous and should be recognised. They

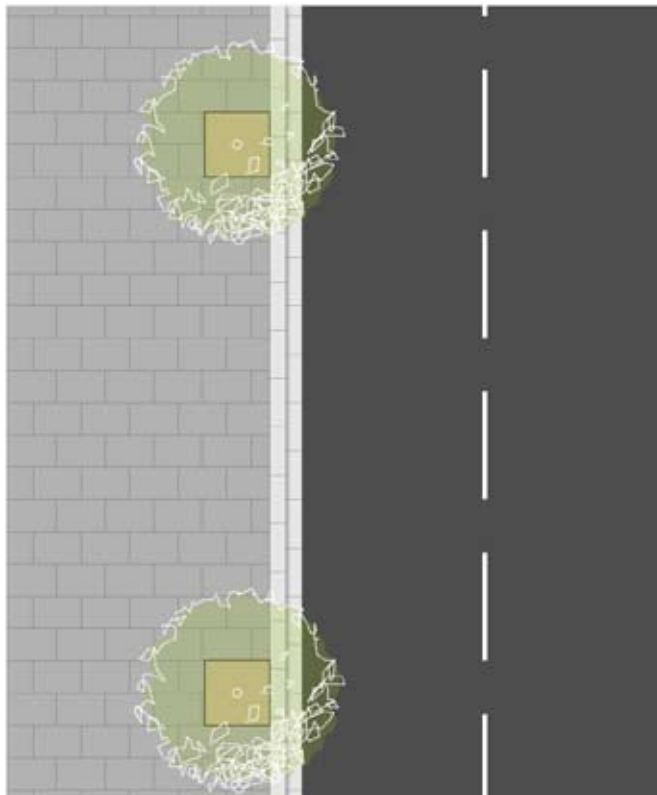
- » Improve air quality, by filtering pollution and airborne dust and converting carbon dioxide into oxygen;
- » Reduce temperature extremes and generate breezes;
- » Act as a screen, increasing privacy in residential roads and gardens and absorb traffic noise in built-up areas;
- » Provide a buffer between the footway and the carriageway;
- » Provide shade;
- » Soften the built form;
- » Provide food and nesting sites for birds, other animals and insects, thus increasing the nature conservation value of an area;
- » Provide displays of colour throughout the year;
- » Can have a high visual impact, with low maintenance requirements;
- » Provide many psychological and health benefits, acting as buffers between the stresses of modern urban living;
- » Increase local property values (a survey of estate agent's windows will always show more expensive properties in "tree-lined streets").



Arrangement of trees in an urban situation



Permeable gravel tree surround



Plan showing arrangement of trees in an urban situation

Trees can have some **disadvantages** if care is not taken in selecting the species to be planted and proper tree management is not carried out:

- » Large leaves can block drains and guttering, provide dense shade in summer and a slip hazard in autumn;
- » Large, pulpy fruits may cause mess and a slip hazard on footpaths, if not cleared;
- » Aggressive root action from nearby trees can cause kerb and footway damage creating an uneven and hazardous surface;
- » Excessive suckering occurs from the base of certain species of trees, which can result in partially blocked pavements and can hinder pedestrian movement;
- » Trees requiring high levels of water may also contribute to structural damage in nearby properties;
- » Honeydew, produced by aphids feeding on the leaves, drips on parked cars, footpaths and house windows;
- » Excessive shading can be caused where inappropriate trees are planted or allowed to grow in inappropriate locations.

A new strategy for tree planting in the LB Merton is being prepared by the Council for the whole borough. Please refer to that document for more detailed policies on the planting, care and choice of trees.

This section refers to trees, shrubs and low level planting located on the footways and other areas that are part of the public realm, managed either by the council or by TfL (TLRN roads).

Tree Selection

Some of the factor to be taken into account when selecting trees are:

- » Scale and form: select trees which will have, at maturity, the largest size suitable to be in proportion with the scale

of streets and spaces where they will be planted, so that they are used as a space forming element and complement buildings and don't obscure key visual lines. They should also be used when the urban fabric of the street is disjointed as a linking and unifying element. All selected trees planted along footways and roads must have a min 2.2m clear stem.

- » Trees and building lines: new trees are best located away from building frontages. The trees need to be close enough to the kerb edge to accommodate an unobstructed passageway as exemplified in section 2.3.1. At the same time sufficient distance should be kept to protect trees from damage from higher vehicles. Trees should also be considered where there is a setback in the building line or in pedestrianised areas;
- » Trees and Sight lines: Care should be taken not to obscure lighting, signs or important views.
- » Kerb build-outs: they can provide appropriate planting sites away from services, in areas that were formerly carriageways, and building frontages. As in the previous clause, consideration will have to be given to the scale and species of tree to be planted to prevent damage from higher vehicles.
- » Utilities and other underground services: undertake a full assessment of the location of underground services before planting new ones. Root barriers only to be used when trees are in close proximity of structures.
- » Maintenance and other issues: take into account tree impact on visibility and sight lines, potential for subsidence, leaf sizes and potential for root damage to pavements, pipes and other structures. Responsibilities for further maintenance should be established prior to planting.

11 Trees and Planting

In all instances, tree planting should be functional as well as aesthetic, with the range of species limited and the planting principles bold and simple. A change in species should only be used to highlight junctions, special urban features or buildings, or to define routes and spaces.

When “replacing” trees in the public realm seek the advice of a tree officer as the principle should be in terms of “Canopy Cover” rather than numbers. However, the Council will endeavour to protect its mature trees and to seek strong reasons for the need of their removal.

Also, a opportunistic planting approach should be sought and promoted where the planting area is maximised by using all available and suitable areas for planting trees, shrubs and low-level planting.

Tree Specification

So, when specifying and planting trees consideration should be given to:

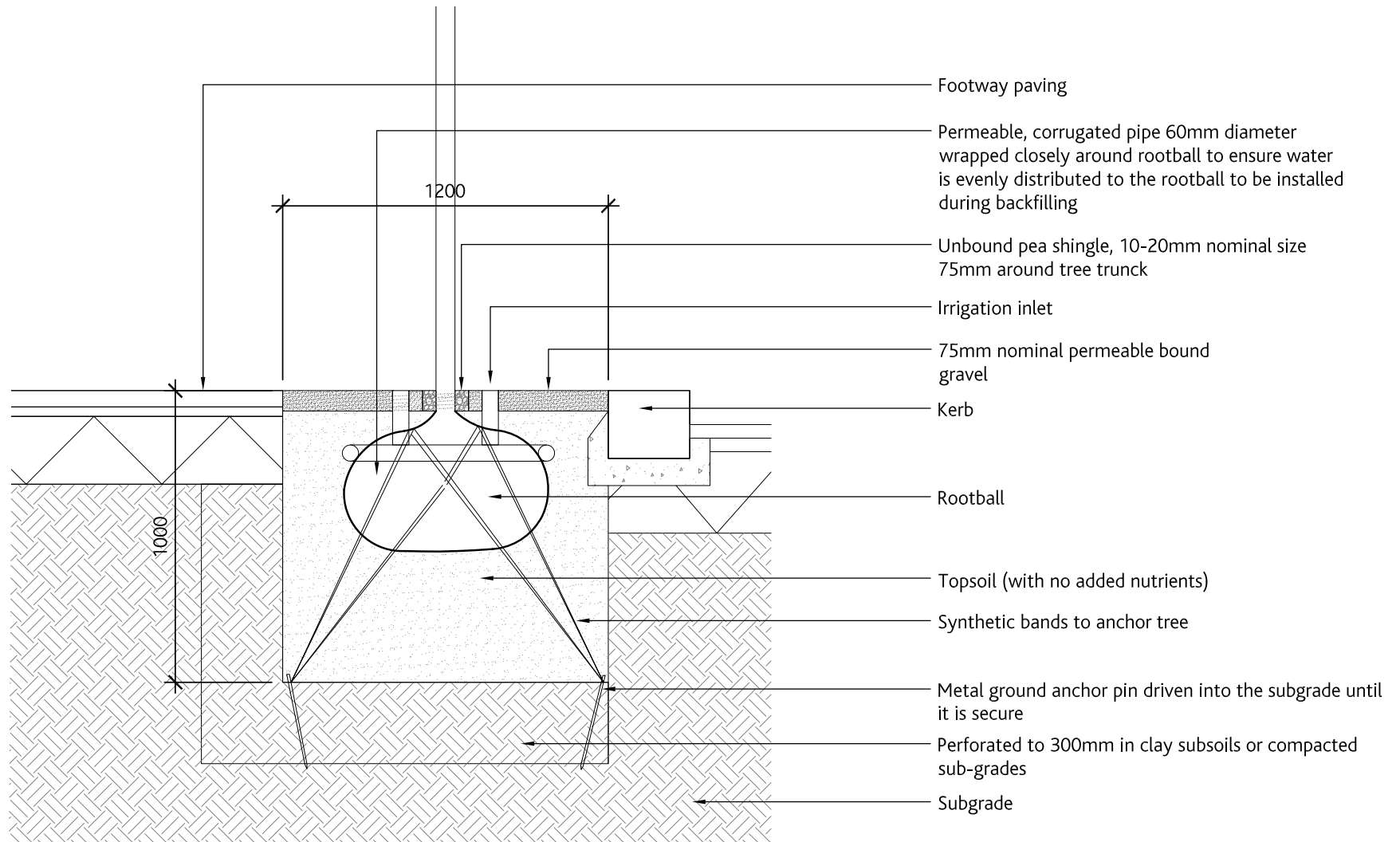
- » Tree pits should be constructed as large as possible, given the constraints of the site. They should be a minimum of 1200x1200mm, with at least 900mm depth. On narrower road they can be 1000x1400mm, orientated along the kerb. Aeration, irrigation and drainage should be taken into account when specifying. The detail for the surface of pits should be a permeable layer of bound gravel, to match the colour of the adjacent pavement.
- » Tree support and protection, under general circumstances, should be made by underground guying. However, in exceptional circumstances where the tree is very vulnerable, the use of double stake systems with a cross bar could help to protect the tree. Do not use tree grilles.

- » Tree size will be defined by the Street Tree Strategy being prepared by the council. They should, however, have a 20-25 cm minimum girth and a 2.2m clear stem.

Exceptions:

Narrow streets, with insufficient space along the footway.

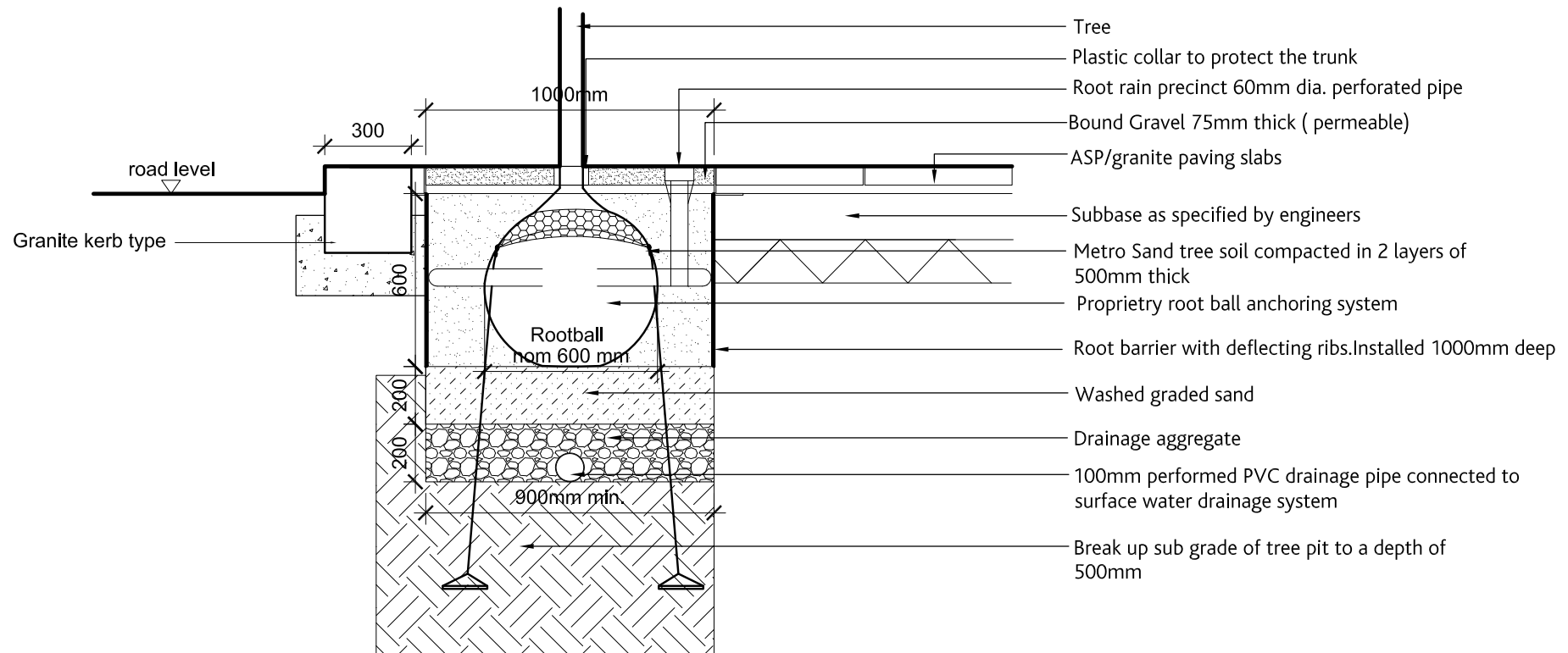
11.2 Tree pit detail in Hard Paving



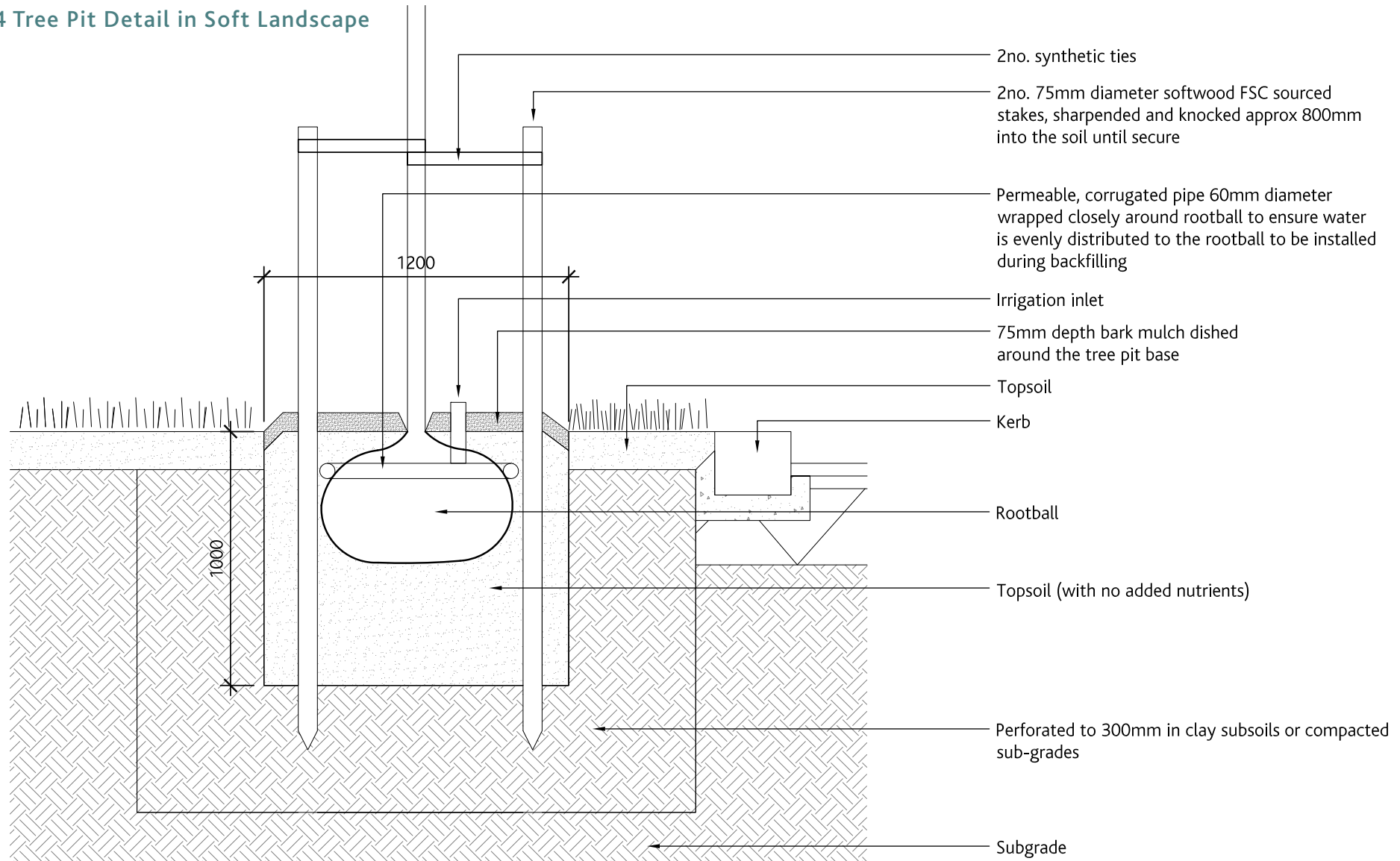
11 Trees and Planting

11.3 Tree pit detail in Hard Paving - Narrow sites

This detail is to be used where only a 1m zone exists for tree planting. This is on streets 3-4m wide. If trees are planted in a line they can be placed in a continuous trench to aid root growth.



11.4 Tree Pit Detail in Soft Landscape



11 Trees and Planting

11.5 Shrubs

Shrubs can be used in order to soften otherwise hard urban street environments. The principles for when, where and how to plant shrubs are as follows:

- » Shrub planting should only ever be considered if there is absolute commitment to ongoing maintenance, including regular litter picking, watering (if necessary), weeding, pruning, thinning and replacing dead plants. In particular shrub areas hold litter and can become extremely unsightly unless regularly and frequently tended. If there is no such commitment then use either grass or paved surfaces.
- » Shrubs should not be used merely to infill otherwise unused space within the highway. Instead consideration should be given to specific site-related aesthetic benefits that might flow from shrubs being planted and to the impact on views within the street.
- » Shrubs may be considered as an alternative to tree planting, if underground services prohibit tree planting.
- » Shrub planting needs to be of significant scale to have impact within a street.
- » Any shrub planting should ensure that there is sufficient space around the planted area to allow for easy and unobstructed pedestrian movement.
- » Shrubs should be planted in drifts of the same species (minimum of 5 plants), in order to have impact.
- » In general the shrub planting area should be located adjacent to the back edge of the footway, rather than between the footway and the carriageway. This is for reasons of:
 - Visibility and personal safety and security;
 - Avoid the problems of winter salt distribution affecting plant health;
 - Litter accumulation and litter removal are more difficult in locations immediately adjacent to the carriageway.
- » Shrub planting schemes should always take account of community safety/ security considerations, by maintaining clear lines of visibility, and avoidance of hidden nooks and crannies etc.
- » Shrubs should as a general rule not be planted within central “islands” within the carriageway as the problem of litter accumulation and litter removal are more difficult in these situations.
- » Shrubs should not be planted within raised brick planting chambers, instead planted areas should be flush with the surrounding spaces, and if necessary protected by knee rails.
- » Areas of shrub planting should be edged by a pre-cast concrete or a timber edging strip in order to reduce drainage (of possibly contaminated water) from the highway to the planting surface, in order to protect the plants. The upper surface of the edging strip should be 50 mm above the surrounding footway surface.