

Alderwood
Consulting Limited



**Arboricultural
Impact Assessment
in connection with development
at r/o 98 Station Road, Netley
SO31 5AF**

Prepared by
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 **Brief:** I have been instructed by Goodwill Homes Ltd to inspect the significant trees close to the proposed redevelopment at the r/o 98 Station Road, Netley Southampton SO31 5AF and to provide advice on the successful retention and incorporation of trees of amenity value within and closely adjacent to the proposals. In addition this report includes the following information in connection with the planning application:-
- a schedule of the relevant trees giving dimension data and an assessment of their condition; and
 - an assessment of the layout proposal with appropriate suggestions for reducing any impact on amenity.
- 1.2 **Proposed development:** The development proposed is the conversion of a PDR outbuilding to a single storey dwelling at r/o 98 Station Road, Netley with access to Station Road via the consented access for Plots 7-9 at 100 Station Road, Netley.
- 1.3 **Documents provided:** I have been provided with the 'Site Layout – Planning Issue' by Vaward Planning & Design, drawing no. P02 dated 07.01 21, based on the site survey and indicating the positions of trees on and adjacent to the site, with the proposed siting of the development. An annotated copy of this drawing with tree schedule numbering, tree root protection areas (RPAs) and indicating the location of special measures in respect of trees is attached as Plan AC1.
- 1.4 **Qualifications and experience:** I have based this report on my site observations and the provided information, and I have come to conclusions in the light of my experience. I have experience and qualifications in arboriculture, details of which are listed in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 **Tree constraints:** I have seen the map and First Schedule of the Eastleigh Borough Council TPO 474, with the map dated 03/07/2003. The map and First Schedule refer to one designation only and that is W1 relating to '*Land to the south of the Royal British Legion Club, Netley Abbey SU4608SW*'. Overlaying the TPO map on the Land Registry Title Plan for the 'Social Club' site suggests to me that the ash tree my T1 is not within the boundary of W1 of the TPO; that my T2 may be; and that my T3 probably is; and I have not seen persuasive evidence to clearly demonstrate otherwise. However, and notwithstanding the fact that the ash T1 appears not to be included in the TPO, the proposal is to retain the trees and consider them in the planning submissions as if they were formally protected. Where tree work is proposed for trees protected by

TPO, this report serves as an application for consent, with a planning permission being deemed consent for the proposed works. In any event this arboricultural impact assessment has been prepared in acknowledgement of the general planning principle that trees are a material consideration in the planning process, and in tacit acknowledgment of the Council's relevant tree policies.

- 1.6 **Brief planning history:** Two planning applications were made and withdrawn, one in 2020 planning ref: F/19/86987 and one in 2021 planning ref: F/21/89633. The 2020 application was for the '*Construction of 1no. two storey detached dwelling in rear garden with associated car parking and access through the approved development at 100 Station Road*'. The 2021 application was for the '*Subdivision of plot and conversion of existing single storey outbuilding in rear garden into 1no. three bed bungalow with associated car parking and amenity area*'. Both applications had comments from the Eastleigh Borough Council tree consultant. The principal arboricultural issue for the 2020 F/19/86987 application was dominance of trees over the proposed dwelling. For the 2021 F/21/89633 application, the main arboricultural issues were twofold; dominance and shading; and the effects on retained trees from the construction of the existing building. The issues of dominance, shading and pressure for tree work are addressed at Section 6 below. The issue of construction is addressed at paragraph 4.6 below.

2 SITE VISIT AND OBSERVATIONS

- 2.1 **Site visit:** I carried out an initial site visit on 27th January 2017 to collect tree information to complete the tree schedule information and again on 22nd July 2019 to add further tree details. I visited once more on 22nd March 2021. All my observations were from ground level without detailed investigations and I estimated all dimensions unless otherwise indicated. I did not have formal access to trees outside the boundaries and have confined observations of them to what was visible from within the property. The weather at the time of all inspections was dry and overcast with a light breeze and good visibility.
- 2.2 **Collection of data:** I inspected each significant tree and the numbering is indicated on the annotated site layout attached as Plan AC1. For each tree, I collected information as recommended in BS 5837:2012 – *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations*. I have recorded this information in the tree schedule at Appendix 2.
- 2.3 **Subjective assessment of trees:** The information collected at the site visits was used to prepare a tree schedule in line with the recommendations in BS 5837:2012. Trees are categorised on the basis of their suitability for retention on

a development site, and brief details of the reasons for each category allocation are provided. There are four categories, which are summarised below:

Category A: Trees of high quality and value

Category B: Trees of moderate quality and value

Category C: Trees of low quality and value

Category U: Trees unsuitable for retention, usually to be removed

- 2.4 **The root protection areas and location of protective fencing:** BS 5837:2012 gives recommendations for the areas of root protection to be equivalent to the area of a circle centred on the tree with a radius of least 12 times the trunk diameter. This distance is given for guidance for each tree in the tree schedule. In practice the siting of the specific protection measures may be different. The implication of the root protection area is that no significant disturbance should occur within it if the trees are to be successfully retained.

3 ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT APPRAISAL - TREES

- 3.1 **Overview:** The significant trees relating to the proposed development are three trees on land adjacent to the rear south end of the site. These are one ash tree and two sycamores, reasonable trees appearing to be in normal health and condition, although ash trees in the vicinity are beginning to show signs of ash die-back, a disease likely to affect up to 80% of the ash tree population. There are many trees further to the south, in an area of woodland that forms the southern backdrop to the site and to the residential development to the east of the site. This area of woodland on land to the south is useful for giving the larger development site definition and seclusion. The proposal is for these trees to be retained and protected during development.

4 ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT APPRAISAL - DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 **Preliminary matters:** There is an existing structure in place at the rear of 98 Station Road, and the work appropriate for 'redevelopment' is mainly to do with alterations and additions inside the structure. There are no additional construction issues flowing from these proposals relating to trees. The two main arboricultural issues are the effects of construction to date on retained trees; and post-occupancy pressures on trees. These matters will be considered below; and for the avoidance of doubt, the report will also step through the other matters normally associated with such development, looking at the relevant tree issues.

- 4.2 **Site access:** Site access will be by way of the access installed for plots 7, 8 and 9, all outside the RPAs of retained trees.
- 4.3 **Demolition and removal of structures:** There were and are no existing buildings within the RPAs of trees and proposed for removal. There will be no fires in connection with the redevelopment activities within 10m of the canopy of any retained tree, and no storage or mixing of harmful materials e.g. DERV fuel, concrete within 10m of the trunk of any retained tree. The combination of these measures with the temporary tree protective fencing will reduce any risk of damage to retained trees to an acceptable minimum.
- 4.4 **Existing surfaces:** There are no existing surfaces associated with the proposed redevelopment and within the RPAs of retained trees There will be no adverse effects on retained trees from proposals relating to existing surfacing.
- 4.5 **Construction of building as proposed:** The building as originally proposed was within the RPA of the ash T1. The default proposal was for the building to sit on a pile and beam foundation, which would have limited excavation to an acceptable level. With the underside of any ground beam no deeper than the existing ground level, or the level after the removal of the turf layer, the excavation into previously undisturbed ground would have been limited to the small augured holes for the pile or piers, limiting the risk of harm to trees to a small and acceptable extent.
- 4.6 **Construction of building actual:** The building as constructed is within the 15m RPA of the ash T1. The actual foundation method was to cantilever the structure where it extended into the RPA. 'Conventional' footings were installed up to the 15m RPA. A steel 'I' beam frame was anchored to the footings and the frame extended into the RPA, with no additional excavation. The rear southern portion of the structure, approximately one third of the length of the structure, effectively floats over the existing ground level, with no disturbance to the ground and no damage to roots within the RPA. A copy of the foundation design working drawing by fabrication specialists SEMCO is attached as Appendix 3. I have also been advised by the applicant that, notwithstanding the installation of the existing structure under permitted development, appropriate temporary tree protection measures were taken during construction. There is no evidence of harm to tree roots from the construction to date.
- 4.7 **Installation of new surfaces:** There are no new engineered surfaces proposed within the RPAs of retained trees and no significant risk to trees from issues relating to new surfaces.

- 4.8 **Services:** The site to the east is already serviced and this establishes the principle of services to the site and their maintenance and repair. Services for the existing structure run out to the existing access for the development to the east outside the RPAs of trees proposed for retention. There are no proposals for services within RPAs and no requirements for the special installation of services to take account of tree roots.
- 4.9 **Construction access:** The RPAs of retained trees did not and do not unduly affect construction access and provided that the proposed temporary fencing and ground protection are installed/retained, there will be no significant adverse effects on trees from construction access.
- 4.10 **Storage and movement of materials:** Materials will be delivered to the front north of the plot and moved from there by hand to the footprint of the dwelling. Materials will be mixed on the north side of the dwelling away from RPAs. There will be no adverse effects on the retained trees from the storage and movement of materials.
- 4.11 **Pruning – current development proposals:** The existing structure was installed without any significant pruning to the nearby trees. Previous application submissions noted that the *‘crown of the ash T1 and the sycamores T2 and T3 are some 3m above the existing ground level and minor pruning to raise the crowns would be useful. Raising the crowns to give a clearance above ground of up to 5m would not have a significant adverse effect on the health or amenity value of the trees. Such pruning would also have the useful effect of reducing the extent of the crowns towards the proposed dwelling. It would also be prudent and reasonable for dead wood and die-back to be removed, for safety; and in respect of the ash T1 and the risk of ash die-back, it would also set a benchmark for the assessment of the rate of the tree’s potential decline. The tree locations are shown on the attached plan AC1. The pruning works proposed would not have a significant adverse effect on the health or amenity value of the trees and would be in accordance with BS3998:2010 Tree Work - Recommendations. Issues relating to pruning are considered in more detail at Section 6 below.*

5 PROTECTIVE MEASURES

- 5.1 **Protective fencing:** Temporary tree protective fencing is proposed for the retained trees. Fencing locations will be as shown on plan AC1, effectively about 3m from the rear elevation of the existing building. Temporary fencing will be to the BS 5837:2012 section 6.2 recommendations i.e. preformed braced galvanised steel mesh panels (‘Heras’ or similar). It will be installed prior to the commencement of any development-related activity including ground works and retained at the location shown until construction is completed. It may be moved or removed only with notice to and consent from the Council.

- 5.2 **Ground protection:** Temporary ground protection is proposed as an adjunct to the temporary fencing. It will be installed at the locations indicated on plan AC1 i.e. between the temporary fencing and the rear elevation of the existing building. This temporary ground protection will allow pedestrian access for construction and the movement of small amounts of building materials. The ground protection will also act as a base for scaffolding if such access is required. The ground protection shall be as recommended in BS5837 i.e. it shall be scaffold planks, or plywood sheets at least 15mm thick, laid butt-jointed over a geotextile membrane installed on a layer of pulverised bark or similar laid on the existing ground surface i.e. with no significant excavation. The minimum areas where these measures apply are the protection zones as indicated on the attached plan AC1 by diamond hatching.

6 POST OCCUPANCY PRESSURES ON TREES

- 6.1 **Preliminary matters:** The two withdrawn applications both attracted tree consultant comments relating to dominance of the dwelling by trees; expanded for the second application to include references to shade and risk.
- 6.2 **Dominance:** The rear elevation of the existing structure is some 11m from the ash tree T1. The tree is estimated to be about 16m in height and with a crown spread to the north towards the building of about 10m. There is no doubt that the presence of the tree T1 is a significant feature of the rear south aspect from the rear amenity room and from the garden space. However, it is sufficiently distant from the building for it not to be unduly dominant. In any event, the issue of dominance is a subjective matter and for some potential occupants the presence of the tree will be a positive influence, providing seclusion and bringing the woodland character of the land to the south closer to the property.
- 6.3 **Shade:** The ash tree casts shade to the rear elevation of the structure and across the rear amenity space. Because the tree stands to the south, the potential for shading is principally a function of its height. With other trees, the ash has the potential to obscure direct sunlight to the rear elevation and amenity space for much of the day. The design of the structure has taken account of this, by providing extensive roof fenestration. This gives elevated ambient light levels within the structure, with the internal amenity spaces and habitable areas not solely reliant on direct sunlight to the rear elevation. The presence of trees is a clear and known factor for any potential occupant. It would clearly be unreasonable for an occupant to be installed in the dwelling expecting extensive pruning or felling to manage light to the rear elevation.

- 6.4 **Risk:** There is no evidence to suggest that the ash tree T1 and the nearby smaller sycamores represent an undue risk or are anything other than normal examples of the species. There is no apparent justification for tree works based on the management of perceived risk.
- 6.5 **Pressure for tree works:** For trees protected by TPO, anyone may make an application for tree work consent at any time. However, central government guidance as followed by most Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) is that the application for tree work consent should be supported by relevant and sufficient evidence. LPAs are able to resist and refuse unreasonable and unsupported applications and would reasonably expect to be supported in such decisions at appeal. So the fact that there may be tree work applications is not in itself a supportable reason for refusing this planning application.
- 6.6 **Consequences of tree work:** Just because there may be tree work applications does not mean that any work at all is objectionable. Central government guidance is that if proposed works will not have an adverse effect on the health of a tree or its amenity value e.g. the works would not be visible from a public place, the LPA should grant consent. So there are potentially works that would be acceptable and would get consent; and there would be no significant harm to amenity.
- 6.7 **Tree works:** Turning to the possible range of tree work applications, they could be considered in four categories – felling, crown height reduction, crown thinning and crown lifting / crown spread reduction.
- 6.7.1 **Felling:** The LPA would reasonably expect substantial levels of evidence in support of a felling application for a tree of amenity value. For the ash tree T1, there is no persuasive evidence to support a felling application, in terms of health, condition, effects on structures and the LPA could reasonably refuse such an application.
- 6.7.2 **Crown height reduction:** As for felling, the LPA would expect substantial levels of evidence in support of an application for height reduction. Such work typically has a significant adverse effect on the amenity value of a tree and brings significant adverse health risks. Few LPAs grant consent for such works; and most appeals against such decisions would be refused.
- 6.7.3 **Crown thinning:** This is a highly ineffectual pruning measure, bringing no significant benefits to tree owners and bringing an element of risk of harm to a tree. There is rarely any justification for such work; although at a modest level it would not have a significant adverse effect on the amenity value of a tree.

- 6.7.4 **Crown lifting/ crown spread reduction:** Crown lifting i.e., pruning to increase the distance between the ground and the lowest parts of the crown can often bring benefits to an applicant without significant adverse effects on the health or amenity value of a tree. Crown lifting can improve access to amenity open space, it can improve ambient light levels and allow some sky view; and it can reduce perceptions of dominance. Particularly for trees distant from roads and public aspects, such works would normally be unnoticeable, would not diminish a tree's amenity value and should be granted consent. The reduction in spread of lower branches may also bring similar benefits and without adverse amenity consequences. For the ash T1, crown lifting to 5m and reducing the extent of lower branches towards the structure would be reasonable, with no adverse amenity or tree health consequences and should therefore be acceptable pruning works.
- 6.8 **Tree ownership:** In addition to the constraints on tree works applied by the TPO, the trees here are all on land outside the ownership of the potential occupants. There may normally be opportunities at common law for the management of overhanging branches, but with the TPO, such works would need a TPO tree work application. In the event that the LPA gave consent for tree works, the consent of the tree owners would still be needed if such works required access within the tree owners property into trees; and for any works that required access into the owners land.
- 6.9 **Effects on trees post occupancy:** The location and character of the proposal has been achieved in consideration of all the site factors including the presence of trees. The structure is, like the approved dwellings on plots 7, 8 and 9, a structure for which trees have some potential to be influential. The layout has taken this into account, with the separation of the rear elevation of the dwelling from the nearest tree of about 11m. Trees and vegetation to the south will provide useful screening between the dwelling and the adjacent properties to the south and south west. It will be in the interests of the new occupants to retain the trees in order to retain seclusion and privacy. In consideration of the matters set out in the preceding paragraphs in Section 6, the development will not bring significant new pressures on trees and the Council will be able to resist unreasonable applications for tree work, with such decisions likely to be supported at appeal.

7 CONSENT CONDITIONS

- 7.1 **Conditions:** In tree terms the proposals include elements that have the potential to affect retained trees e.g. the installation of temporary tree protection measures. In these circumstances it would be reasonable for any additional

details that the Council requires to be submitted post-consent, as determined by the Council and defined in appropriate conditions.

- 7.2 **Arboricultural method statement heads of terms:** The recommendation in BS 5837:2012 is that where details might need to be submitted to allow for changes that might occur after planning permission has been granted, heads of terms for an arboricultural method statement (AMS) would be appropriate. That is appropriate for sites with a range of arboricultural protection measures and methods to be determined. Here the issues are reasonably straightforward and may not warrant a full AMS, but simply submissions to comply with any reasonable and relevant conditions.

8 SUMMARIES

- 8.1 **Summary of control during development:** In order to minimise any adverse effects on the retained trees identified, I advise that:-

- Temporary tree protective fencing is installed at appropriate locations before commencement of development and is retained until the completion of development
- Tree protective fencing may be moved only with the consent of the Council
- Temporary ground protection is installed at appropriate locations before commencement of development and is retained until the completion of development
- Ground protection may be moved only with the consent of the Council
- There will be no fires within 10m of the canopy of any retained tree, and no storage or mixing of harmful materials e.g. DERV fuel, concrete within 10m of the trunk of any retained tree

- 8.2 **Summary of the impact on local amenity:** This layout retains the significant trees adjacent to the site, with scope for proper provisions for their protection during development. If adequate precautions to protect the retained trees are implemented as recommended in this report and as may reasonably be required by consent conditions, the overall impact of the proposal on local amenity will be very low. The proposals also take proper account of potential pressures for pruning and felling post-occupancy. The Council could properly refuse consent for inappropriate works and could expect to be supported in such decisions at appeal. These submissions demonstrate that it is reasonably practicable to develop in accordance with the proposals for the submitted scheme without

significant harm to retained trees. Any additional information required for reassurance can reasonably be required by way of conditions attached to the planning permission. There are therefore no supportable or reasonable grounds for refusing permission in terms of trees.



Jonathan Fulcher **DipArb FArborA**

Appendix 1

Brief qualifications and experience of Jonathan Fulcher

1. **Qualifications:** I hold the City and Guilds Certificate in Arboriculture, and the Royal Forestry Society's Professional Diploma in Arboriculture, which is one of the premier qualifications within the Arboricultural Profession. I am also a Registered Consultant of the Arboricultural Association.
2. **Practical experience:** I have worked in local government tree management for over twenty years. After cutting my teeth as an arborist at London Borough of Redbridge, I moved to London Borough of Islington where I supervised direct works for three years. I joined New Forest District Council in 1987, where I made and administered Tree Preservation Orders and advised on arboricultural issues relating to planning applications. In 1991, I moved to Poole Borough Council as Senior Arboricultural Officer, leading a small professional team providing a comprehensive arboricultural service to the Council. Duties included arboricultural consultancy on major development proposals, acting as arboricultural witness at Public Inquiries and setting and running tree work contracts. I joined Barrell Treecare as a self-employed arboricultural consultant in March 1998, leaving in early 2003 to become a fully independent consultant. My clients include local and national development companies, schools, public utilities and Local Planning Authorities. From 2003-2008 I was also one of a small number of arboricultural consultants appointed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for the determination of Tree Preservation Order application appeals. This function was transferred to the Planning Inspectorate in 2008, when I was appointed as a contracted Inspector for Tree Preservation Order application and High Hedge appeals, serving until 2016.
3. **Continuing professional development:** I am a Fellow of the Arboricultural Association by examination, and have served the Association as a member of their Local Authority Committee, including one year as committee chair. I have been co-organiser of national seminars on Tree Strategies and Tree Preservation Order Enforcement, and given papers and chaired sessions at the Association's annual conferences. I am currently a member of the Association's Consultants Working Party. I keep professionally current through professional reading, subscription to professional journals and by regular attendance at seminars and conferences.

Appendix 2
Plot 10, Netley Social Club, Netley
Tree Schedule and Explanatory Notes

Tree No	Species	Height (m)	Trunk Diameter (cm)	Crown spread towards site (m)	Crown height above ground	Life stage	General observations	Estimated contribution in years	BS 5837 cat	Root protection distance (m)
T1	Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	16	133	10	3	M	Three stems from ground level	20+	B	15.0
T2	Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	15	48	6	3	EM	Slightly one sided, minor suppression	20+	B	5.7
T3	Sycamore	14	41	5	3	EM	Slightly one sided, minor suppression	20+	B	4.8

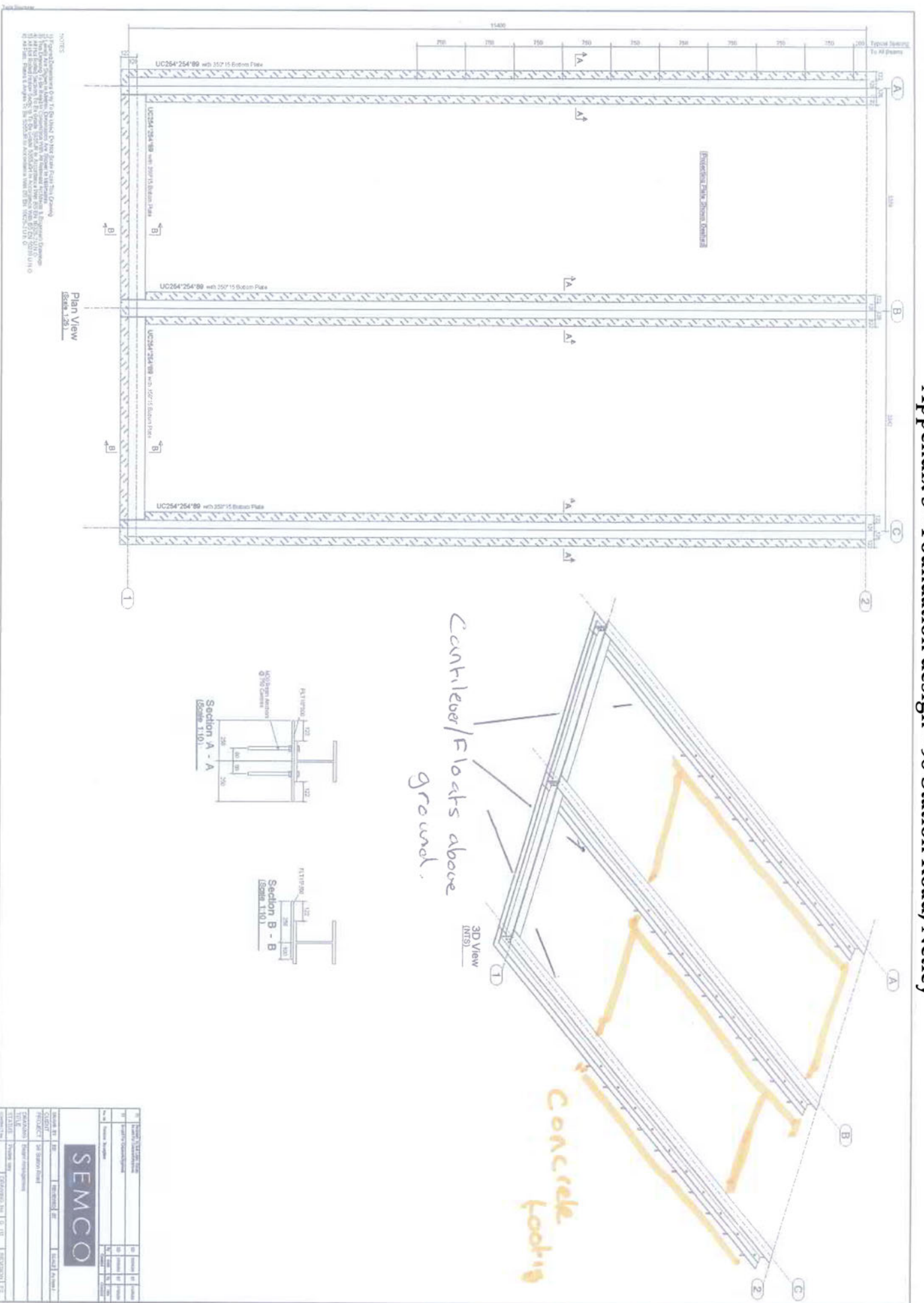
Appendix 2
Plot 10, Netley Social Club, Netley
Tree Schedule and Explanatory Notes

Explanatory Notes

•		Abbreviations:
	m	: Metre
	nm	: Not measured
	>	: Greater than
	<	: Less than

- **Species:** Species identification is based on visual observations.
- **Height:** Height is estimated to the nearest metre.
- **Trunk diameter:** Trunk diameter for accessible trees has been measured with a diameter tape and recorded in centimetres.
- **Crown spread:** For trees on the site margins, the crown spread towards the site is estimated.
- **Crown height above ground:** The height of the crown clearance above the ground over the site is estimated to the nearest 0.5m.
- **Life stage:** The life stage categories correspond to the classes given in BS 5837:2012, which are Young (Y), Semi-mature (SM), Early Mature (EM), Mature (M) and Over-mature (OM). There are no over mature or veteran trees included in the schedule.
- **General observations:** These comment on the health and physiological and structural condition of the tree, with management recommendations where appropriate.
- **Estimated contribution in years:** <10, 10+, 20+, 40+, as advised in BS 5837:2012.
- **BS 5837 category:** As advised in BS 5837:2012. This grading is based on the estimated remaining contribution in years i.e. A - more than 40; B - 20-40; C - 10-20; U - less than 10.
- **Root protection area:** The area of root protection should be equivalent to the area of a circle centred on the tree with a radius of least 12 times the trunk diameter. This column gives the radius of such a circle; the distance may not be the same as the distance for protective fencing.

Appendix 3 - Foundation design - 98 Station Road, Netley



PLANNING ISSUE



Plan AC1

Tree Protection Plan for Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Proposed redevelopment at 98 Station Road, Netley Abbey

Report Ref: D2124A1A

Location of trees with tree schedule numbering indicating location of BS 5837:2012 section 6.2 tree protective fencing and ground protection



Location of trees indicating species, BS5837 category and BS5837 root protection area



Location of temporary fencing and protected areas

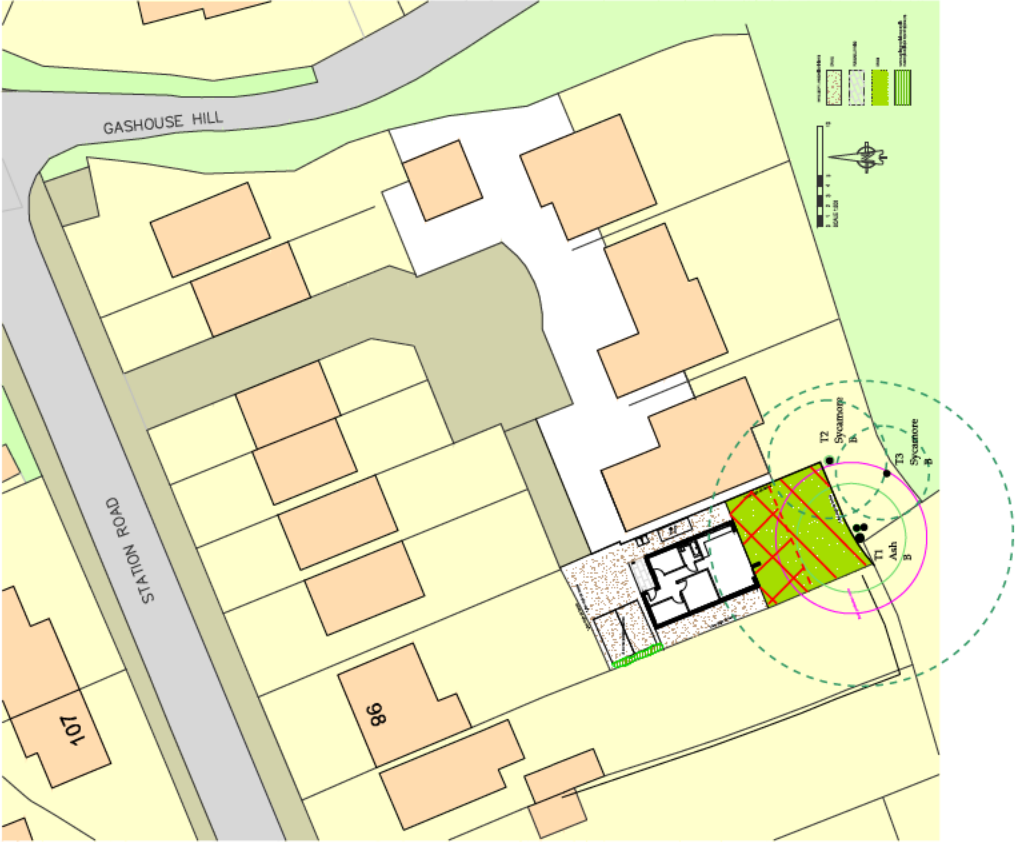


Location of BS 5837 temporary ground protection

The original of this drawing was produced in colour. A monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

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Revision

Date

VAWARD

planning & design

Client: Goodwill Homes Ltd

Project: Conversion of a PDR outbuilding to a Single storey Dwelling at the rear of 98 Station Road, Netley

Drawing Title: Site layout

Scale: 1:500

Date: 07.01.21

Drawing No: PD2

Drawn: VAW

Checked:

Revision:

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