

Reply to Ecology Comments for O/23/96432 Land at Cobbett Way

Our ref: 8703 Cobbett Way

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Reviewed by: Alex Hannam MCIEEM

Date: 22.11.24

This technical note provides additional ecological information for the planning appeal at Cobbett Way, Botley for the outline planning application of up to 34 dwellings on the site (O/23/96432). The planning application has been refused with one of the reasons relating to ecology and the proximity of the access road to an area of lowland mixed deciduous woodland. This technical note provides information in support of the application and assesses the impacts of the access road on the lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

Impacts

The site at Cobbett Way, Botley is located to the north of a small area of lowland mixed deciduous woodland in Botley. The development will connect to the existing highways networks with an access road in the southeast corner of the site. This road is located approximately three metres from the edge of the woodland at its most narrow point. Eastleigh Borough Council refused planning permission and included a reason for refusal due to the following perceived impacts:

- Insufficient buffer with the priority habitat.
- Additional lighting impacts on the woodland.
- Absence of a 10-metre buffer required for impacts to priority habitat corridor.

These potential impacts are discussed further below.

Insufficient buffer

There is no recommended buffer established for areas of lowland mixed deciduous woodland. Ancient woodlands have a standardised buffer, but for other woodlands the buffer requirement size must be taken by analysing the potential impacts of a scheme. The development at Cobbett Way is a residential development with all houses and residential areas located a sufficient distance from the woodland to avoid any impacts from new housing adjacent to woodland, an aspect the LPA currently agrees with, and issues have only been raised about the location of the access road.

As the development is required to connect to an existing highway network a part of the access road must be located to within three metres of the woodland. This is due to the location of Cobbett Way and it is therefore not possible to design the scheme to avoid this aspect. The development design however has aimed to minimise this impact by diverting the road north away from the woodland, as it enters the site, and increasing the distance to the woodland as it leads to the houses.

In addition, the landscape plan for the site includes an extensive area of planting along the woodland edge to provide a natural edge to the woodland. The current edge of the woodland comprises an area of pasture grassland which is also used to deposit manure from the horses grazing in the field and to deposit waste.

The development is supported by an arboricultural impact assessment which details the Root Protection Zones (RPZs) of the major trees along the woodland edge (**Appendix A**, Barrell Plan Ref- 23088-2). The woodland edge is

considered to run along the boundary of the site with habitats within the site not indicative of woodland flora and comprising modified grassland areas. The access road falls outside the RPZs of all trees along the woodland edge (**Appendix B**).

Tree 6 is not considered part of the woodland as it is set apart, separated by a dilapidated building. Tree 6 will also be retained within the proposals with a small area of the access road falling within the RPZ of this tree. Works in this area will be completed in accordance with an arboricultural method statement and will likely incorporate no-dig practices with specific measures provided at the reserved matters stage as part of the detailed design. It should be noted that the tree officer at Eastleigh Council has not raised any concerns about the location of the road to the trees within the woodland.

Any impacts to the woodland from the access road would be limited to impacts during the construction of the road (and these can be mitigated) with any impacts once operational considered unlikely. As the RPZ zones of the trees will not be impacted by the construction of the road the only other avenue for impacts would be through pollution.

The development will include measures to ensure the neighbouring woodland area is protected from any construction pollution with the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, which can be conditioned as part of the planning permission. This will detail the measures to protect the woodland which will include the following and are also provided in the Supporting Statement (Ecosa 2024)–

- Erection of tree protection fencing in line with the arboricultural method statement along the woodland edge.
- Regular dampening down of the road to prevent impacts from dust.
- A toolbox talk to all contractors outlining the importance of the woodland and prohibiting access to the woodland.

Once operational the access road will not have any impacts to the retained woodland with no access points provided along this edge. The planting of scrub and a new hedgerow will prevent access to the woodland from the residents of the development. This area will include species with spines, such as hawthorn and blackthorn, to reinforce this boundary edge.

Additional lighting impacts

Another area of concern highlighted by the LPA is the potential impact of additional lighting associated with the development on the retained woodland. The site was subject to bat activity transects in 2023 which recorded a population of local importance on the site. This comprised of low levels of activity from largely light tolerant species, such as common and soprano pipistrelle, noctule and serotine bats. Low levels of activity from brown long-eared bats were recorded, which is a light sensitive species, but no other light sensitive species were present.

The new development will not require any street lighting and any impacts from lighting on the woodland would solely be in relation to the movement of traffic, with all houses located a considerable distance from the woodland.

The landscape proposals include screening along the woodland edge with the provision of scrub planting. The access road will also be lined with a native hedgerow which will help to further screen the woodland from the movement of traffic. The addition of traffic along this road will result in intermittent lighting over short periods of time as the cars move along the road, which is unlikely to result in any significant disturbance to nocturnal wildlife which utilise the woodland. The screening by the hedging and scrub planting will reduce this impact further, with car headlights low in height and focused predominantly on the road. This will mitigate any impact from this type of lighting.

There will be no further additional lighting within ten metres of the woodland edge. The mitigation provided within the ecological reports (MM Ecology 2023), which includes no additional light spill of over 1 lux on the woodland

edge, will be followed during the detailed design stage of the application. A lighting strategy can be secured as a condition of the planning application to ensure the measures outlined in the bat activity report (MM Ecology 2023) are met at the detailed design stage at reserve matters.

Provision of a 10-metre buffer

The LPA ecologist has requested that a 10-metre buffer is provided with the woodland due to it being functionally linked to a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) to the south. This link is provided by a tributary of the River Hamble. This buffer has been requested to protect the priority habitat corridor. As stated previously no guidance is set for woodland buffers, where woodland is not ancient, and the requirements must be assessed on likely impacts. As detailed above the construction of an access road within 10 metres of the woodland edge will not result in any impacts to the woodland or any of the nearby SINC habitats. All residential units, which have wider zones of influences due to the actions of the residents from garden waste and extending gardens, are all located beyond 10 metres.

The landscape design of the scheme includes the provision of additional native planting along the woodland edge to enhance this green corridor and provide additional habitat. The wider landscape strategy will include additional enhancements with the provision of wildflower grassland areas to provide enhanced foraging opportunities along this green corridor. The land adjacent to the woodland will be handed to the council on completion of the development ensuring the long-term management of these areas. The exact details for future management and prescriptions along this edge will be developed with the relevant stakeholders as part of the detailed application stage.

Conclusions

When assessing the routes of impacts to the woodland from the scheme at Cobbett Way it can be concluded that with the mitigation included within the landscape plan and arboricultural information provided, that there will be no significant impacts to the retained lowland mixed deciduous woodland, either during construction or once operational. This should therefore not form a reason for refusal for the planning application.

References

Barrell Tree Consultancy (2023) Tree Protection Plan, Barrell Plan Ref: 23088-2

Ecosa (2024) Land West of Cobbett Way, Botley, Southampton, Hampshire – Ecological Support Summary Report

MM Ecology (2023) Land off Cobbett Way, Botley, Southampton – Bat Activity Surveys

Appendix A: Tree Protection Plan

Tree protection plan
Location of trees, categorisation & protection/management proposals

Land at Broad Oak, Botley, Southampton,
Hampshire SO30 2EU

Barrell Plan Ref: 23088-2



barrell
TREE CONSULTANCY

Permission is granted to scale from this drawing for Local Authority Planning Approval purposes relating to tree protection measures only. Where applicable this drawing is to be read in conjunction with the arboricultural report. This drawing is the copyright of Barrell Tree Consultancy 2023 ©

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BS category A Trees of high quality



BS category B Trees of moderate quality



BS category C Trees of low quality



BS category U Trees unsuitable for retention



Trees to be removed



Estimated tree positions not included on original land survey and/or adjusted crown spreads



Protective barrier/fencing



Construction exclusion zone (CEZ)



Construction exclusion zone protected by ground protection



Root protection area (RPA) boundaries for category A and B trees



Root protection area (RPA) boundaries for category C trees

Attention LPA Tree Officer - if you would like a 'to scale' printed version of this plan please contact us on 01425 651470 or email 'enquiries@barrelltreecare.co.uk'



SGN 1 Monitoring tree protection



- Always:**
- ✓ have a pre-commencement meeting with the tree consultant before development starts
 - ✓ use the tree consultant to regularly check that protection remains fit for purpose
 - ✓ use the tree consultant to supervise work in RPAs
 - ✓ keep a written record of supervision



SGN 2 Fencing protected trees



- Always:**
- ✓ install protection before development starts
 - ✓ make sure protection is fit for purpose, i.e. it prevents damage to trees and soil
 - ✓ keep protection in place until there is no risk to trees
 - ✓ get written permission to move or remove any protection



SGN 3 Ground protection



- Always:**
- ✓ install protection before development starts
 - ✓ make sure protection is fit for purpose, i.e. it prevents damage to trees and soil
 - ✓ keep protection in place until there is no risk to trees
 - ✓ get written permission to move or remove any protection



SGN 4 Pollution control



- Always:**
- ✓ keep toxic products away from RPAs



SGN 11 Installing services in RPAs



- Always:**
- ✓ use the tree consultant to supervise work in RPAs
 - ✓ select the least damaging option when installing services, so prioritise trenchless, over broken trench over continuous trench
 - ✓ hand-dig trenches if trenchless is not feasible



SGN 12 Landscaping in RPAs



- Always:**
- ✓ use the tree consultant to supervise work in RPAs
 - ✓ avoid raising ground levels within 1m of the trunks of retained trees



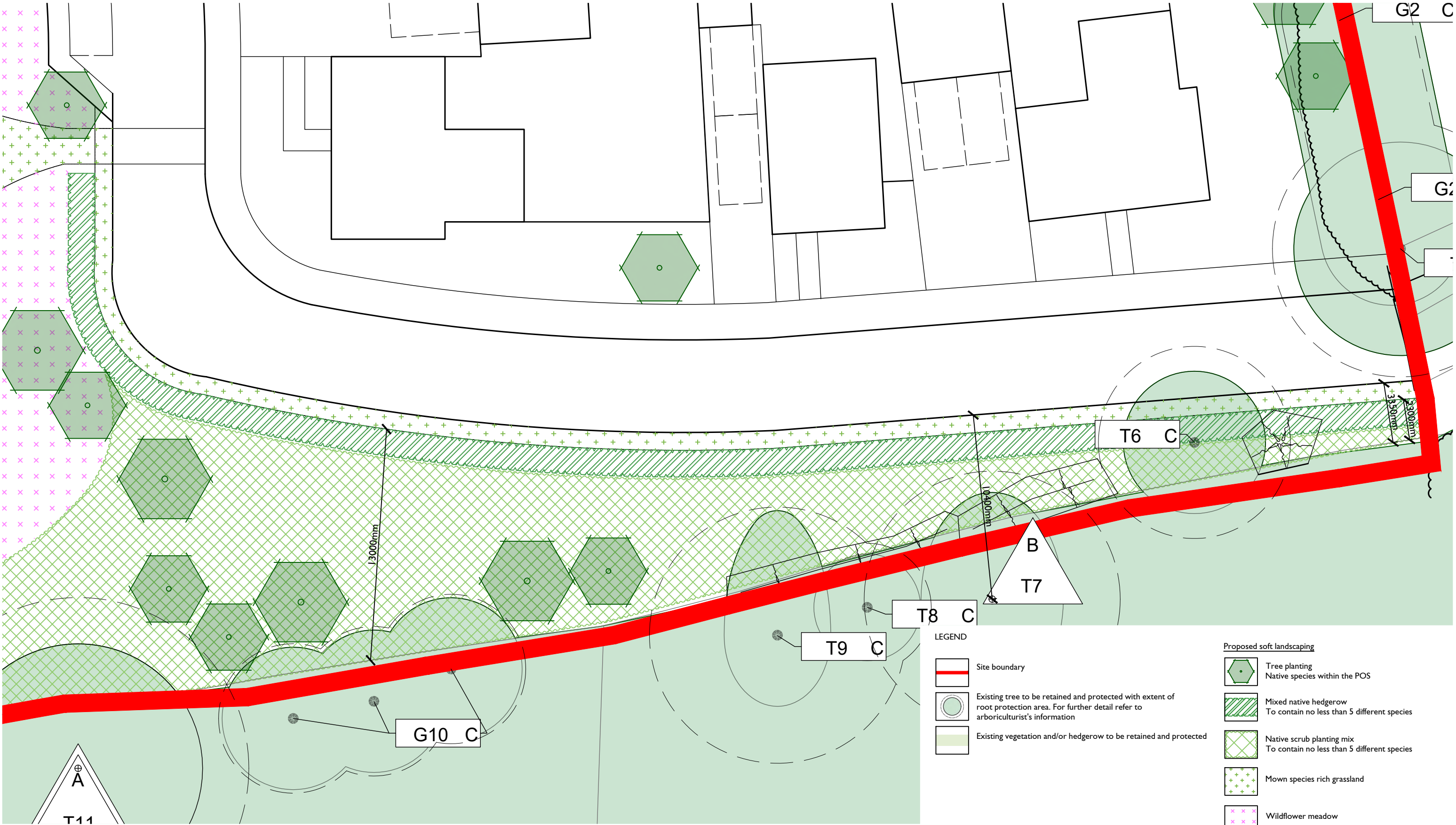
How to use plan

More detailed guidance on each Site Guidance Note (SGN) can be found in a printed hard copy compilation of all the SGNs, **Manual for Managing Trees On Development Sites version 3.0**, issued to the Site Manager at the pre-commencement site meeting (**Note:** This should be retained on site throughout the duration of works). Additionally, an electronic pdf compilation of all the SGNs, was submitted with this drawing to the local planning authority and the client. Alternatively, a pdf of each SGN can be downloaded by:

1. clicking the image links in the electronic pdf version of this plan;
2. holding a mobile phone QR (Quick Response) code reader over the QR code in the paper version of this plan; or,
3. visiting our website at <https://www.barrelltreecare.co.uk/resources/technical-guidance>

Tree No	Species	Category	RPA Radius	Tree Works
All retained trees & hedges				Carry out safety check and lift over site to 3-4 m as necessary.
T1	Sycamore	C	7.2	Fell
G2	Cypress	C	3.6	Fell selected parts
T3	Cypress	C	3	
T4	Copper beech	B	4.5	
T5	Cypress	C	4.2	
T6	Oak	C	5.4	
T7	Oak	B	7.2	
T8	Hawthorn	C	3.6	
T9	Ash	C	7.2	
G10	Hawthorn, Hazel	C	4.2	
T11	Oak	A	9.6	
G12	Oak, Ash	C	3.6	
T13	Hawthorn	C	3.6	
G14	Sweet chestnut	C	4.2	
T15	Hawthorn	C	4.8	
G16	Hawthorn, Hazel	C	3	
T17	Sweet chestnut	C	4.2	
T18	Oak	B	5.1	
T19	Oak	A	10.8	
T20	Oak	B	10.2	
T21	Hawthorn	C	2.4	
T22	Oak	C	6.6	
T23	Oak	C	3.3	
T24	Ash	C	10.2	
G25	Hawthorn, Ash	C	3.6	
T26	Oak	C	3.3	
T27	Oak	C	9.6	
T28	Hawthorn	C	3.6	
T29	Oak	B	3.3	
T30	Oak	A	12	
T31	Oak	A	9.3	
T32	Goat willow	C	3.6	
T33	Oak	A	12.6	
T34	Oak	A	10.5	
T35	Hawthorn	C	2.4	
T36	Hawthorn	C	2.4	
T37	Oak	C	4.8	
T38	Red oak	B	4.2	
H39	Beech	C	1.2	
T40	Birch	C	2.1	
T41	Birch	U	1.8	
T42	Horse chestnut	C	3.6	
T43	Oak	C	2.1	
T44	Ash	U	2.4	
T45	Goat willow	C	3.6	
T46	Birch	U	5.1	
T47	Birch	C	4.2	
T48	Oak	C	4.2	
T49	Oak	C	4.2	
T50	Sycamore	B	7.2	

Appendix B: Access Road Map and RPZ Zones



Drawn by : AE Checked by : JM

Scale @ A3:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10m

Scale 1:200

NORTH

Date: 05.08.2024

Rev	Date	Drawn	Checked
E	15.11.24	AE	JM

RPA's added

Drg No: GLS_090_104_1310 Rev: E

Project: Land off Cobbett Way Botley

Title: Illustrative Landscape Detail Site Entrance

Client: THE MULBERRY INVESTMENTS PENSION SCHEME

