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BS5837:2012 Arboricultural Survey Impact Assessment & Arboricultural Method Statement

**Site Address:
Orchards Paddock
Basingstoke Road
Swallowfield
Reading
RG7 1PT**

Robert Toll
HND Urban Forestry - ND Forestry - MArborA
Ref: RMT1128
Site inspection date: 20th May 2025
Date report published: 23rd October 2025
Prepared for Chris Dearing



PRO2239

Contents

Ref no.	Title	Page no.
	Title Page	
	Contact and Report Details	
	Contents	
1	Instruction	1
2	Introduction	1
	- Site description	1
	- Limitations	2
	- Legal restrictions	2
	- Tree survey	2
	- Canopy spreads	3
	- Root protection areas	3
3	Soil Assessment	4
4	Arboricultural Impact Assessment	5
	- Arboricultural impact assessment overview	5
	- Tree protection fencing	5
	- Ground protection	5
	- Sensitive demolition	5
	- Areas for site compounds, storage and mixing	6
	- Services	6
	- Conclusions	6
5	Arboricultural Method Statement	7
	- Pre-commencement meeting	7
	- Protective barriers/fencing	7
	- Warning signs	8
	- Ground protection within RPAs	8
	- Sensitive demolition within RPAs	9
	- Realignment of tree protection fencing for T10	9

Appendices

Appendix 1 – British Standard 5837:2012 tree categorisation chart	10
Appendix 2 – Tree survey schedule	11
Appendix 3 – Tree Constraints Plan – RMT1128 – TCP	14
Appendix 4 – Tree Protection Plan – RMT1128 – TPP	15
Appendix 5 – Arboricultural site supervision schedule	16
Appendix 6 – Site monitoring form	17
Appendix 7 – Qualifications and experience	18

1 Instructions

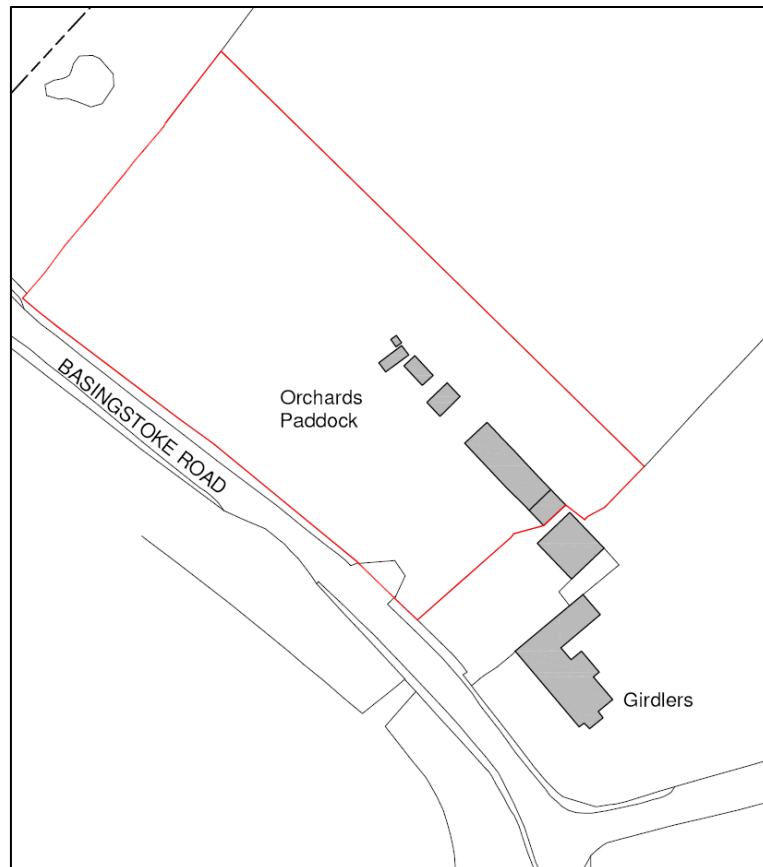
- 1.1 On the 4th April 2025 I was instructed on behalf of the client by Morse Webb Architects to undertake a survey of trees that are on or adjacent to Orchards Paddock, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading, RG7 1PT in accordance with *British Standard 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*.
- 1.2 I am a qualified arboriculturalist as it is detailed at **Appendix 7** and this report has been produced in support of a planning application to Wokingham Borough Council.

2 Introduction

Site Description

- 2.1 The site is a residential property which is accessed via gravel drive in the southern corner of the site. The drive is routed parallel to the south-eastern boundary where meets the house and attached garage which are located approximately centrally within the south-eastern half of the site. To the north-west of the house is a detached garage, greenhouse and dilapidated shed. To the south-west of the house is the gravel drive and then a grassed lawn. The north-western half of the site has a pond located centrally and surrounded by trees and grass. The proposal site focusses on the south-eastern half of the site.

Image 1 – Orchards Paddock, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading, RG7 1PT shown by an indicative red line



Limitations

- 2.2** I carried out the survey from ground level with the aid of a Bosch GLM 120 C Professional Laser Measure to measure distances, a Nikon Forestry Pro height measurer and diameter tape.
- 2.3** Prior to my visit I was supplied with a topographical survey showing the growing locations of the surveyed trees.
- 2.4** Trees T1, T2 and T5 have been annotated onto the plans to the best of the arboriculturalist's ability.
- 2.5** Measurements taken to calculate root protection areas and canopy spreads have been measured where possible. Where it has not been possible to access certain areas, dimensions have been estimated.
- 2.6** Where possible diameter measurements have been taken using a diameter tape at a height of 1.5m. Where it has not been possible to access the stems at 1.5m above ground level due to such things as dense Ivy, trees are offsite or trees are inaccessible, then an estimated measurement has been taken. All estimated measurements include the word "estimated" or the abbreviation "est" in the tree survey schedule shown at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.7** In some instances the diameter measurement has been taken at a height other than 1.5m due to such things as low fork unions. Where this has occurred, I have detailed this in the tree survey schedule shown at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.8** This report does not constitute a safety survey of the trees included within it. It is advised that if there are concerns regarding the risk posed by trees to persons and property then a tree condition inspection should be commissioned.

Legal Restrictions

- 2.9** I have not contacted the local planning authority (LPA) directly to ascertain whether the trees on or adjacent to the site are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) or if they are within a Conservation Order.
- 2.10** On the 22nd October 2025 I carried out a check on the Wokingham Borough Council online protected tree maps and they indicate that there is no statutory protection on any of the surveyed trees.
- 2.11** It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Rights of Way Act 2000 to disturb nesting birds or roosting/breeding bats. When carrying out tree work care should be taken to avoid disturbance. If necessary, advice should be taken to avoid disturbance. If necessary, advice may need to be sought from a qualified Ecologist.

Tree survey

- 2.12** I visited the site on the 13th May 2025 and surveyed a total of thirteen trees. The surveyed trees have been categorised in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 as shown at **Appendix 1** and the tree survey schedule can be seen at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.13** At the time of my survey one tree was considered to be category A and high value, three trees are considered to be category B and moderate value. The remaining trees are considered to be category C and low value.

Table 1 – Tree categorisations as BS5837:2012

Category A	Category B	Category C	Category U
T10	T8, T9, T12	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T11, T13	-

- 2.14** It was noted that there are other trees that are located on or adjacent to Orchards Paddock, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading, RG7 1PT but they have not been included within this report. This is because it is deemed that they are:
- far enough from the area proposed for development that they will not be affected;
 - they will be adequately protected by the tree protection measures afforded to the surveyed trees;
 - they are specimens of limited significance;

Canopy spreads

- 2.15** The canopy spreads have annotated on the tree constraints plan and tree protection plan at **Appendices 3 and 4**.

Root protection area (RPA) definition

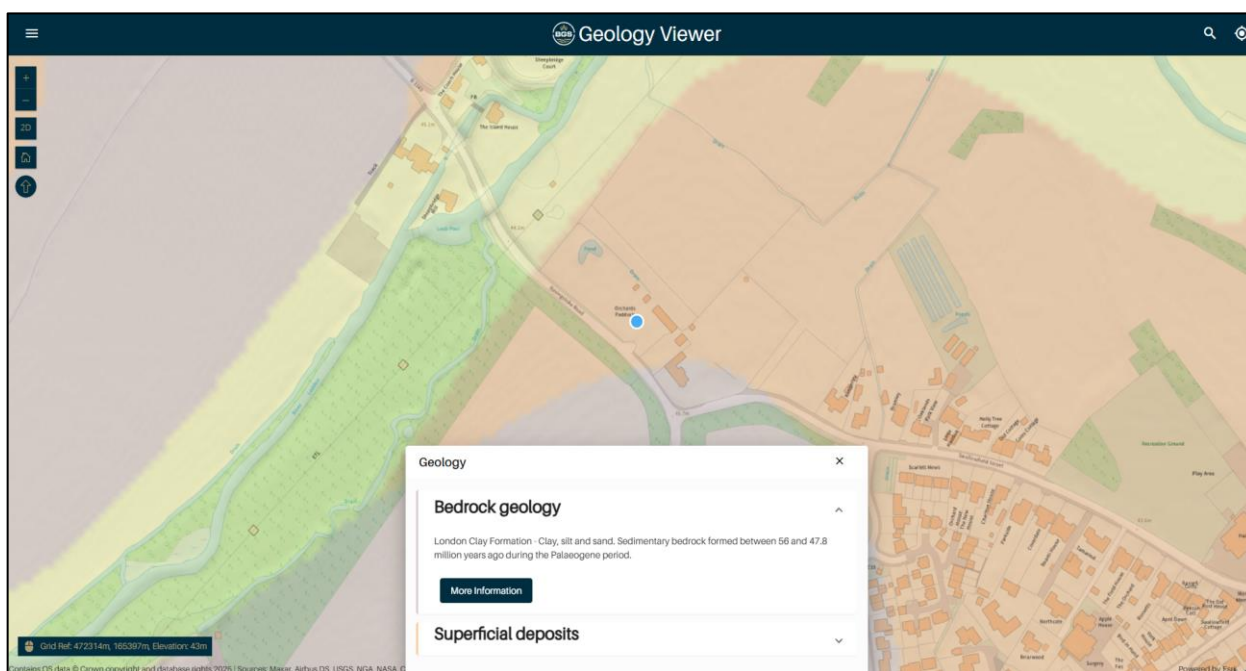
- 2.16** The RPA is a layout design tool indicating the minimum area around a tree deemed to contain sufficient roots and rooting volume to maintain the tree's viability and where the protection of the roots and soil structure are treated as a priority.

(British Standard 5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations – The British Standard Institute 2012).

3 Soil Assessment

- 3.1** The soil assessment is necessary to establish whether the soil on the proposal site is shrinkable. Tree roots and those of other vegetation have the potential to extract moisture from shrinkable soils such as clay, making the soil expand and contract as the soil desiccates and re-hydrates. Where new structures are proposed on shrinkable soils and close to trees, foundations will need to be sufficiently deepened or able to withstand to minimise the risk of indirect damage to foundations.
- 3.2** No soil assessments have been provided however a check the British Geological Survey gives the soil type as London Clay Formation - Clay, silt and sand. This means that the underlying soil is shrinkable and as such foundations will need to be deepened. If further assessments are undertaken that show that there is shrinkable clay, then foundations must be designed in accordance with the guidance within the National House Building Council's Standards Chapter 4.2 Building near trees.

Figure 1 – The British Geological Survey indicates that the soil make up at Orchards Paddock, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading, RG7 1PT is shrinkable London Clay Formation - Clay, silt and sand.



4 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Arboricultural Impact Assessment overview

- 4.1** The arboricultural impact assessment assesses the direct and indirect effects of the proposed design on trees that are growing or adjacent to the site. Where appropriate mitigation will be recommended to prevent or minimise harm and details mitigation as appropriate. Consideration will be given to the practicality of the design and the viability of tree retention.

Tree protection fencing

- 4.2** Tree protection fencing will be required throughout the construction process to restrict construction access within the RPAs of trees T1 – T13. The areas to be protected by the tree protection fencing can be seen as blue lines on the accompanying Tree Protection Plan at **Appendix 4**.
- 4.3** Tree protection fencing will consist of 1.8m high wire mesh panels placed in rubber blocks. The panels will be securely bolted together to prevent movement and a backstay must be attached to each panel to prevent movement and resist impacts. Un-braced weld mesh panels on unsecured rubber or concrete feet will not be used as these are not resistant to impact and are too easily removed by site operatives.
- 4.4** A notice will be attached to the fencing which says 'Tree Protection Area. Keep Out!'.

Ground protection

- 4.5** It has been stated above, the RPA is a sacrosanct area of ground where encroachment by construction activities should be avoided wherever possible. In the case of tree T10, there will be a requirement for construction access within its RPA throughout development. Where it is considered that the construction working space or temporary access is justified within the RPA, this will be facilitated by a set-back in the alignment of the tree protection barrier and suitable ground protection will be installed. Areas to be protected with ground protection have been shown as orange hatching at **Appendix 4**.
- 4.6** In all cases the objective should be to avoid compaction of the soil, which can arise from the single passage of a heavy vehicle or continual pedestrian movement over the same area, especially in wet conditions. Compaction of the soil can impair root development and function leading to a decline in the physiological and structural condition of the tree.

Sensitive demolition

- 4.7** It is proposed to remove the garden shed, greenhouse and brick foundations for a small tank which partially overlap with the RPA of T10. To avoid damaging roots and compacting soil, foundations must be broken up sensitively and the walls of the structures removed out of the RPA.

Areas for site compounds, storage and mixing

- 4.8** Site compounds will be located away from trees wherever possible and ideally 2m from any protective barriers.
- 4.9** On this occasion it is proposed to utilise the proposed drive for the site compound, storage and mixing as shown at **Appendix 4**.

Services

- 4.10** The proposed layout of incoming (water, gas and electricity) and outgoing (foul sewer) services is not yet established but they should be installed outside root protection areas. If it is necessary for a trench to be dug through an RPA a specific method statement will be required which will need to specify that the trench will be hand dug and that care will be taken to preserve all roots encountered which are larger than 25 mm diameter.
- 4.11** There is considered to be adequate room for new services to be constructed without requiring trenches that pass-through RPAs.

Conclusions

- 4.12** I visited Orchards Paddock, Basingstoke Road, Swallowfield, Reading, RG7 1PT on the 13th May 2025 and surveyed a total of thirteen trees in accordance with BS5837: 2012.
- 4.13** At the time of my survey one tree was considered to be category A and high value, three trees were considered to be category B and moderate value. The remaining trees were considered to be category C and low value, except for one which was dead.
- 4.14** All trees were categorised in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 as shown at **Appendix 1**.
- 4.15** The development will not require the removal or pruning of any trees.
- 4.16** The trees to be retained will be protected during development and methods for ensuring their protection have been described.
- 4.17** The development is sympathetic to the leafy character of the area.

5 Arboricultural Method Statement

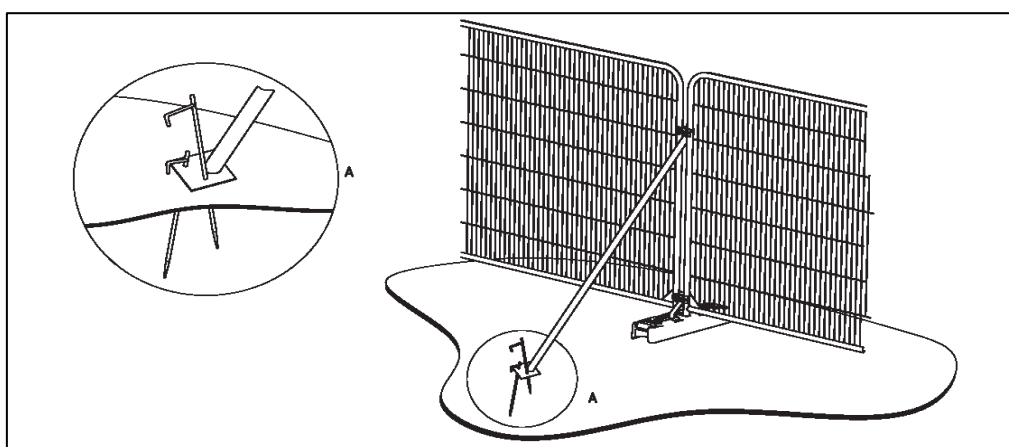
Pre-commencement meeting

- 5.1 Prior to the commencement of development all tree protection will be erected and a site meeting will be held between the appointed building contractors, the appointed arboriculturalist and local authority Tree Officer as it is stipulated at **Appendix 5**. This meeting is necessary to agree that the position of the tree protection is correct.

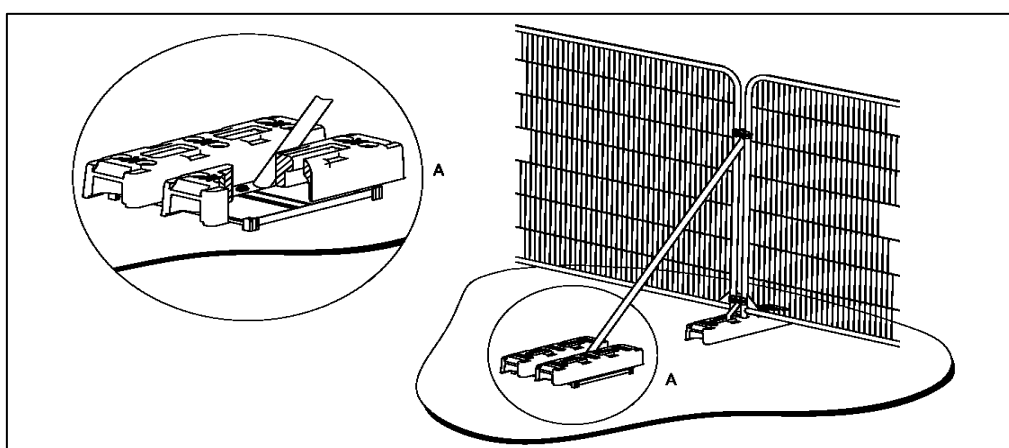
Protective barriers/fencing

- 5.2 All tree protection barriers will be erected in the positions shown in **Appendix 4** and in accordance with the specifications detailed in Figures 2 and 3.

Figures 2 and 3 – Examples of above-ground stabilizing systems



a) Stabilizer strut with base plate secured with ground pins



b) Stabilizer strut mounted on block tray

Image taken from British Standard 5837:2012 – Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations.

Warning signs

- 5.3 All weather notices will be attached to the tree protection fencing.

Figure 4 – Examples of tree protection warning sign



Ground protection within RPAs

- 5.4 Ground protection will be laid in the areas shown by orange hatching at **Appendix 4**.
- 5.5 A permeable geotextile such as Terram will be laid and onto this will be placed treated timber (100 mm x 80 mm) at spacings of no more than 1m. The area between the timber bearers will be filled with a compressible material such as woodchips and will then be covered by 20 mm thick marine ply which will be screwed down onto the timber (Figures 5 and 6). The plywood may need to be coated with a non-slip paint.

Figure 5 – Specification for ply board ground protection

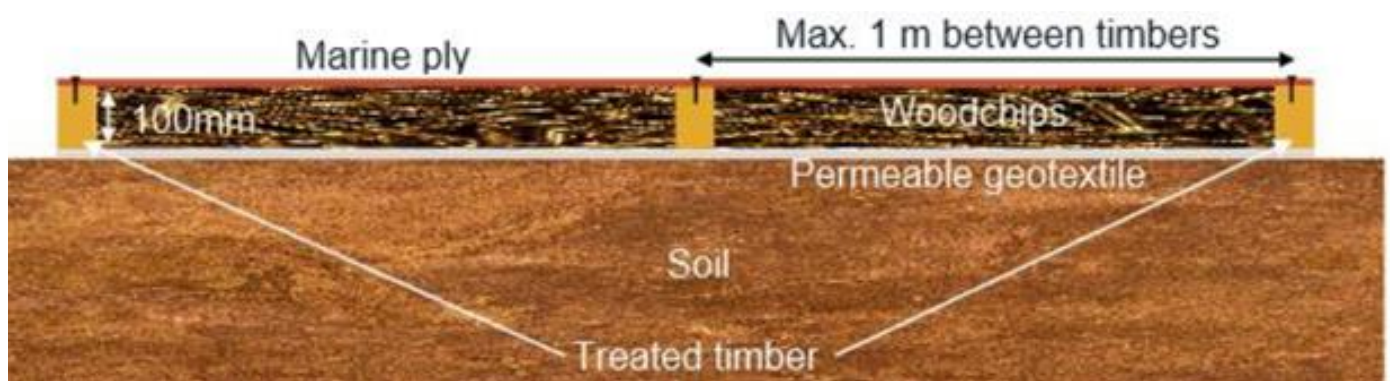


Figure 6 – Plywood sheeting used as ground protection



5.6 Development can commence in accordance with the planning consent.

Sensitive demolition

5.7 The areas to be subject to sensitive demolition are shown as light blue hatching at **Appendix 4**.

5.8 The walls of the greenhouse and garden shed will be unbolted and removed from the RPA.

5.9 The brick foundation for the tank surfaces will be broken up by hand tools and pneumatic devices and carefully extracted away from the RPA. If roots are exposed, they will be covered with damp hessian to protect them from rapid temperature changes. Damage to roots must be avoided, including the outer bark layer.

5.10 Where the area is to be returned to soft landscaping, a layer of good quality topsoil will be laid over the area.

Realignment of tree protection fencing for T10

5.11 Following removal of the greenhouse, garden shed and tank foundation, the tree protection will be realigned with the dashed blue lines shown at **Appendix 4**. Photos will be taken and forwarded to the LPA to confirm compliance.

5.12 Following completion of all development the tree protection can be dismantled to allow landscaping works to take place.

Appendix 1 – British Standard 5837:2012 tree categorisation chart

TREES UNSUITABLE FOR RETENTION				
CATEGORY AND DEFINITIONS	CRITERIA			IDENTIFICATION ON PLAN
Category U Those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years	• Trees that have a serious, irremediable, structural defect, such that their early loss is expected due to collapse, including those that will become unviable after removal of other category U trees (e.g. where, for whatever reason, the loss of companion shelter cannot be mitigated by pruning). • Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate, and irreversible overall decline. • Trees infected with pathogens of significance to the health and/or safety of other trees nearby, or very low quality trees suppressing adjacent trees of better quality. <i>NOTE Category U trees can have existing or potential conservation value which it might be desirable to preserve; see 4.5 of BS5837:2012</i>			RED  RGB 127.000.000
TREES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION				
CATEGORY AND DEFINITIONS	CRITERIA - SUBCATEGORIES			IDENTIFICATION ON PLAN
	1 Mainly arboricultural values	2 Mainly landscape values	3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation	
Category A Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years	Trees that are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual; or those that are essential components of groups or formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue).	Trees, groups or woodlands of particular visual importance as arboricultural and/or landscape features.	Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture)	LIGHT GREEN  RGB 000.255.000
Category B Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years	Trees that might be included in category A, but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of significant though remediable defects, including unsympathetic past management and storm damage), such that they are unlikely to be suitable for retention for beyond 40 years; or trees lacking the special quality necessary to merit the category A designation.	Trees present in numbers, usually growing as groups or woodlands, such that they attract a higher collective rating than they might as individuals; or trees occurring as collectives but situated so as to make little visual contribution to the wider locality.	Trees with material conservation or other cultural value	MID BLUE  RGB 000.000.255
Category C Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150 mm	Unremarkable trees of very limited merit or such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories.	Trees present in groups or woodlands, but without this conferring on them significantly greater collective landscape value; and/or trees offering low or only temporary/transient landscape benefits.	Trees with no material conservation or other cultural value.	GREY  RGB 091.091.091

Appendix 2 - Tree survey schedule

agl:above ground level – c:circa – gl:ground level

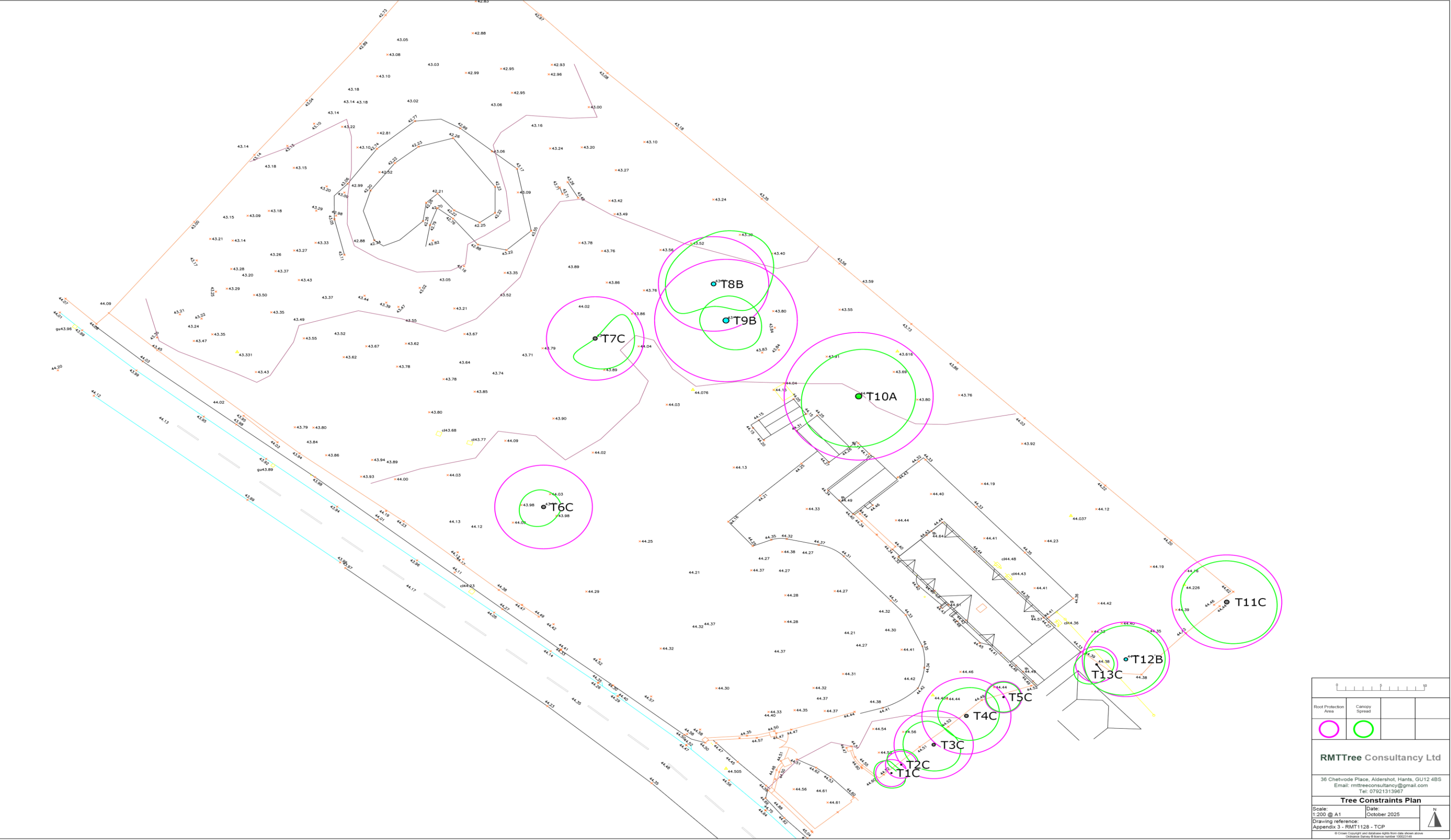
Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	Trunk dia. at 1.5m	Canopy Spread	Crown Height (m)	Age Class	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Comments/ Recommendations	Useful Life Expect	BS5837 grade	Root Protection Area	
												Radius	RPA Area
T1	Lawson Cypress (<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>)	6m	150mm est	NE1m SE2m SW2m NW2m	2m	Young	Good	Good	Off-site tree. Unremarkable tree.	10+	C	1.8m	10.2m ²
T2	Lawson Cypress (<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>)	6m	150mm est	NE2m SE2m SW1m NW2m	1.5m	Young	Good	Good	Off-site tree. Unremarkable tree.	10+	C	1.8m	10.2m ²
T3	Lawson Cypress (<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>)	11m	200mm 200mm 250mm est	NE2.5m SE3.5m SW3.5m NW3.5m	2m	Early mature	Good	Good	Off-site tree. Unremarkable tree.	10+	C	4.5m	64.5m ²
T4	Lawson Cypress (<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>)	13m	300mm est 300mm est	NE4m SE3.5m SW3m NW3.5m	2m	Early mature	Good	Good	Off-site tree. Unremarkable tree.	10+	C	5.1m	81.4m ²
T5	Lawson Cypress (<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>)	6m	175mm est	NE2m SE2m SW2m NW2m	1.5m	Young	Fair	Good	Off-site tree. Unremarkable tree, Fair vitality demonstrated by less than normal foliage density.	10+	C	2.1m	13.9m ²
T6	Apple (<i>Malus sp.</i>)	6m	465mm	NE2m SE2m SW3m NW2.5m	2m	Mature	Good	Fair	Opening c200mm dia with cavity formation on north-western side of main stem at 2m; opening c100mm dia with cavity formation on north-eastern side of the main stem at 1.6m. Pollarded.	10+	C	5.6m	97.8m ²

Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	Trunk dia. at 1.5m	Canopy Spread	Crown Height (m)	Age Class	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Comments/ Recommendations	Useful Life Expect	BS5837 grade	Root Protection Area	
												Radius	RPA Area
T7	Douglas Fir (<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>)	18m	464mm	NE4.5m SE4.5m SW3.5m NW0m	3m	Mature	Good	Fair	Tall but unremarkable tree. Co-dominant form with adjacent tree. Kinks in main stem at 13m and 7m are consistent with historical loss of the central leader.	10+	C	5.6m	97.4m ²
T8	White Willow (<i>Salix alba</i>)	18m	526mm	NE8m SE5m S3m SW5.5m NW5.5m	2m	Mature	Good	Good	Slight co-dominance with adjacent tree.	20+	B	6.3m	125.2m ²
T9	Douglas Fir (<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>)	21m	680mm	NE3.5m SE4.5m SW3m NW3m	3m	Mature	Good	Good		20+	B	8.2m	209.2m ²
T10	White Willow (<i>Salix alba</i>)	21m	710mm	NE6.5m SE6.5m SW7m NW6m	2m	Mature	Good	Good		20+	A	8.5m	228.0m ²
T11	Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	13m	200mm est	NE2m SE2m SW3m NW2m	5m	Young	Good	Good	Vegetation impedes survey. Unremarkable tree. Co-dominant form with adjacent tree.	10+	C	2.4m	18.1m ²

Tree No.	Species	Height (m)	Trunk dia. at 1.5m	Canopy Spread	Crown Height (m)	Age Class	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Comments/ Recommendations	Useful Life Expect	BS5837 grade	Root Protection Area	
												Radius	RPA Area
T12	Small-Leafed Lime (<i>Tilia cordata</i>)	15m	415mm	NE4.5m SE4.5m SW5m NW4.5m	1m	Early mature	Good	Good	Vegetation impedes survey.	20+	B	5.0m	77.9m ²
T13	Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	12m	300mm 350mm 250mm est	NE5.5m SE6m SW5m NW5.5m	2m	Early mature	Good	Good	Off-site tree. Unremarkable tree.	10+	C	6.3m	124.4m ²

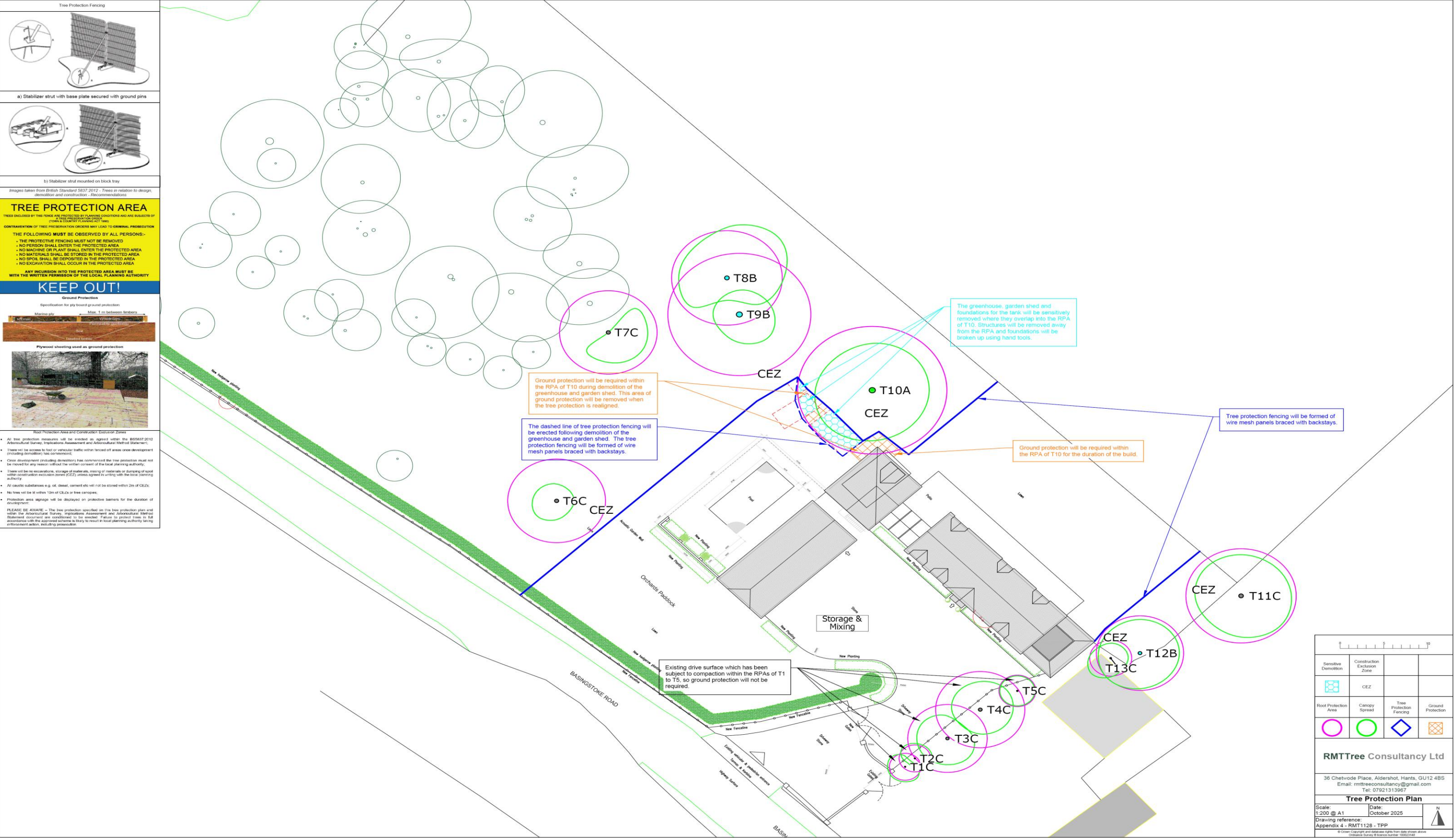
Appendix 3 – Tree Constraints Plan – RMT1128 – TCP

Tree constraints plan (TCP) showing retained trees, tree numbers, root protection areas (magenta circles/polygons) and canopy spreads (green lines). The plan has been provided separately as a PDF at a scale of 1: 200 @ A1.



Appendix 4 – Tree Protection Plan – RMT1128 – TPP

Tree protection plan (TPP) showing retained trees, tree numbers, root protection areas (magenta circles/polygons) and canopy spreads (green lines). The location of protective fencing is shown as blue lines, ground protection as orange hatching and sensitive demolition as light blue hatching. The plan has been provided separately as a PDF at a scale of 1: 200 @ A1.



Appendix 5 – Arboricultural site supervision schedule

Activity	Supervision Required
Pre-commencement meeting between the local authority arboricultural officer, the appointed arboriculturalist and the appointed building contractor.	✓
At any time that there are conflict issues with the agreed tree protection.	✓

Following every visit the appointed arboriculturalist will fill out the site monitoring form which is shown at **Appendix 6** and this will be forwarded to the LPA.

Appendix 6 – Site monitoring form

RMTTree Consultancy Ltd 			
Site monitoring form			
Date of visit		Site	
Consultant in attendance			
Observations/status of tree protection/comments:			
Recommendations (if necessary):			
Date of next visit		Signature	

Appendix 7 – Qualifications and experience

Robert Toll has been working with trees since 2004 when he completed his studies.

In 2000 he began his studies at Riseholme College, Lincoln where achieved a pass with merit in Forestry at National Diploma level. In 2002 he attended Moulton College in Northampton where he gained a Level Five Higher National Diploma in Urban Forestry with merit.

In 2004 Robert began work as a temporary tree inspector at Northampton Borough Council, undertaking inspections of trees in response to enquiries from the public. After 4 months Robert took up a permanent tree inspector role at Coventry City Council which predominantly involved undertaking safety inspections of trees on school sites.

In 2006 Robert moved to Warwick District Council to take up a temporary post of Tree Protection Officer which involved reviewing old area tree preservation orders and identifying those trees which were considered worthy of protection under new specific orders. He also streamlined the council procedure for making new tree preservation orders, cutting the time from making to serving from up to 2 weeks to within 2 hours.

In 2008 Robert moved to Hart District Council, Hampshire to take up the role of Tree Officer within the planning department. This role included determining works trees applications, commenting on planning proposals, liaising with the public and providing arboricultural advice to other departments within the Council.

Between 2014 and 2016 Robert took up the role of Tree Officer at Elmbridge Borough Council, Surrey, once again carrying out tasks such as determining works trees applications, commenting on planning proposals and liaising with the public. While at Elmbridge Borough Council he passed the Arboricultural Association's Professional Tree Inspection course.

Robert is a professional member of the Arboricultural Association.