Merewood
Arboricultural Consultancy Services

Arboricultural ASSOCIATION
Professional Member
No. PRO 1047

Arboricultural Implications Assessment for a proposed development at 71 London Road Wokingham RG40 1YA

Client: Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

Prepared by
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Date
12/12/2024



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Instruction

1.1.1 I am instructed by Christopher James Architecture on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council to undertake an Arboricultural Survey at 71 London Road Wokingham. I am also instructed to assess the likely impact of development proposals and produce an Arboricultural Method Statement detailing how hedges and trees shall be protected from the proposed construction activity.

1.1.2 The proposals are for the proposed erection of a two storey side extension and a single storey side/rear extension, plus associated landscaping, parking, installation of PV panels and bin storage to facilitate change of use for children's services providing rooms for young care leavers following demolition of the existing attached garage and single storey rear extension.

1.2 The Site

1.2.1 71 London Road Wokingham includes a pair of semi- detached houses with a single entrance driveway off London Road, leading to a parking area to the rear of the house. The property has a front garden and a larger rear garden partly given over to parking. The plot is more or less rectangular in shape.

1.2.2 The site is located to the east of Wokingham town centre. The property is bordered by London Road to the north side and by other residential properties on all other sides. The surrounding area is suburban, characterized by residential properties and small businesses.

1.2.3 The topography of the site is more or less level.

1.2.4 It has been established at the time of the survey that the trees on the site are not covered by a Tree Preservation Order nor are they located within a designated Conservation Area.. (search conducted on Wokingham Council website 12/12/24).

1.3 Survey date

1.3.1 The trees at 71 London Road Wokingham were surveyed on Tuesday, December 03, 2024.

1.4 Scope and Purpose of the report

1.4.1 The tree survey and assessment of existing trees has been carried out in accordance with guidance contained within British Standard B.S. 5837:2012 ‘Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations’ (hereafter referred to as B.S. 5837). The guidelines set out a structured assessment methodology to assist in determining which trees would be deemed either as being suitable or unsuitable for retention.

1.4.2 The purpose of this report therefore is therefore to firstly present the results of an assessment of the existing trees' arboricultural value, based on their current condition and quality and to secondly, provide an assessment of impact arising from the development of the site.

1.4.3 The report is designed to support a planning application for development proposals at the above site. The survey has therefore focused on any trees present within or bordering the site that may potentially be affected by the future proposals or will pose a constraint to any proposed development

1.5 Documents referred to

1.5.1 The tree survey and this report have been prepared with reference to the following documents:
The existing site plan
The proposed site layout plan
The schedule of tree constraints (appendix 1)
The plan of tree constraints
The Arboricultural Method Statement prepared by MACS dated 12/12/24 (see separate document)

2.0 Results

2.1 Results summary

2.1.1 Appendix 1 presents details of the individual trees and groups found during the assessment including heights, stem diameters and root protection areas (RPA's), crown spread (normally measured to cardinal points unless otherwise indicated), an indication of physiological and structural condition, age class, any appropriate management recommendations, estimated life expectancy and a BS5837 category of quality.

2.1.2 The survey has revealed that that of the 4 trees surveyed, 0 are category 'A'; 0 are category 'B'; 4 are category 'C' and 0 are category 'U'.

3.0 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

3.1 Overview of typical construction site activity

Development activity	Potential impact	Consequence	Mitigation
Delivery of materials to the site Plant machinery accessing the site	Soil compaction and erosion	Root damage and die back limiting the ability of the tree to take up water and nutrients	Create construction exclusion zones (CEZ's) by the erection of barrier fencing
Storage of materials on the site	Leachate from chemical based products contaminating soil	Roots die back and soil becomes contaminated inhibiting future root recovery	Provide a dedicated area for the storage of materials following delivery away from root protection areas.

Distribution of materials about the site	Damage to branches or bark due to careless handling	Wounding of the bark can lead to infection from wood decay pathogens	Erect barrier fencing that takes account of branch spread as well as roots
Foundation excavation for the walls	Severing of roots	Root damage and die back limiting the ability of the tree to take up water and nutrients. Crown die back Death of the tree	Where excavation is within the root protection areas (RPA's), use a lintel to bridge over roots if possible. Limit incursion as far as possible.
Mixing of cement, plaster, etc.	Leachate from chemical based products contaminating soil	Roots die back and soil becomes contaminated inhibiting future root recovery	Provide a dedicated area for mortar mixing (etc.) with a suitably thick plastic (impermeable) membrane to prevent chemicals leaching. Provide a spare reservoir of water close by to wash away spillages
Contractor parking	Soil compaction and erosion	Root damage and die back limiting the ability of the tree to take up water and nutrients	Provide dedicated area for contractor parking away from RPA's

3.2 Proposed tree works

3.2.1 The proposed development will include the removal of the category 'C' apple (T1) to facilitate the development.

3.2.2 There is no pruning work needed to facilitate the development.

3.3 Changes to soil levels

3.3.1 There are no other changes to soil levels proposed that would affect retained trees.

3.4 The Impact of Movement around the Site

3.4.1 The tree protection plan (see method statement) shows where fencing is to be erected prior to the commencement of works on the site.

3.4.2 The hedge at the front of the property is to be retained and fenced off using chestnut pale fencing. The main reason this type of fencing is to be used is because it would be impractical to erect Heras fencing supported on a scaffold frame in such a confined area, particularly as pedestrian access must be available at all times.

The erection of protective fencing barriers and the recommended type of barrier is addressed in the Arboricultural Method Statement – section 3.2.

3.5 The Impact of Demolition

3.5.1 The proposals require the demolition of the existing garage before other works can begin on the site. The movement of plant machinery and the movement of hardcore arisings to a suitable holding area has the potential to cause soil compaction and branch damage.

3.5.2 The tree protection plan (see method statement) shows that there is plenty of working space well away from any RPA's for machinery to operate and for materials to be stored ready for disposal or upcycling as needed.

3.6 The Impact of Excavations

3.6.1 The excavation of the proposed foundations for the new extensions are to take place outside the RPA's of any of the retained trees and will therefore have no effect on the wellbeing of those trees.

3.6.2 The proposed driveway and parking spaces to the rear will encroach onto the category 'C' pear tree (T2). The extent of the encroachment amounts to 11.4m^2 out of a total RPA of 49.26m^2, or 23%.

3.6.3 Whilst this encroachment is greater than would normally be acceptable, it is felt that it is still worth retaining the tree, despite it being only a category 'C' tree, on the premise that there is nothing to lose in trying to do so.

3.6.4 In support of this conclusion, it is noted that the tree has been pruned regularly in the past and has only a small crown, one that can be sustained by a smaller rooting area.

3.6.5 It is also considered that providing a specialist driveway surface such as a cellular confinement product would not be cost effective or rational given the limited benefit this tree offers.

3.7 The Impact of Construction Site Activities

3.7.1 The site working area will be established to the side and rear of the property. There is enough space to the rear of the site for this to be possible.

3.7.2 Deliveries will be made by means of the existing driveway. Materials are to be set down at the rear of the site where they can remain in situ until needed or moved to a more appropriate area or be brought under cover if necessary.

3.7.3 The driveway area at the rear of the site is to be used for the storage of cement and plaster bags hazardous chemicals and petrochemical products and will also provide a suitable area for mortar mixing in line with COSHH regulations to ensure there is no detrimental effect on trees.

The mixing of cement and cleaning of tools is addressed in the Arboricultural Method Statement – section 3.6.

3.8 The planting of new trees

3.8.1 The proposals include the planting of several small trees, suitable for this size of garden, as part of a contribution towards Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

3.8.2 The final selection of species is yet to be confirmed, but will be drawn from the table below that stipulates appropriate species and size of planting:

Species	Botanical name	Size to be planted	Notes
Apple	*Malus spp.* (various available)	Half standard (typically 8 -10 ltr pot size	Should have a clear stem of between 1.2 – 1.5m
Pear	*Pyrus spp.* (various available)	Half standard (typically 8 -10 ltr pot size	Should have a clear stem of between 1.2 – 1.5m
Apple	*Prunus domestica* (various available)	Half standard (typically 8 -10 ltr pot size	Should have a clear stem of between 1.2 – 1.5m
Flowering cherry	*Prunus japonica* (various available)	Standard (8 -10 cm girth)	
Mountain ash	*Sorbus aucuparia*	Standard (8 -10 cm girth)	
Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*	Standard (8 -10 cm girth)	Various cultivars also available

3.9 Issues to be addressed by the Method Statement

3.9.1 The Method Statement will address the following issues

- Installation of protective fencing
- Building site activities
- Cement mixing
- Tree planting

3.10 Summary

3.10.1 The proposed demolition and construction works can be undertaken with little impact to the retained trees. Provided the trees are fenced off in accordance with the tree protection plan (see method statement) there is no reason the proposals would affect the trees overall, notwithstanding the potential impact of the driveway on (T2).

3.10.2 Provision is also being made for the planting of new trees to contribute to the future biodiversity of the site and to provide a valuable amenity to residents.

Simon Hawkins Dip Arb L6 (ABC), ND Arb, MArborA

Appendix 1 - Tree Survey Methodology

1. The ground level survey of the trees has been carried out in accordance with the criteria set out in Chapter 4 of B.S 5837. The survey has recorded information relating to all those trees within the site and those adjacent to the site which may be of influence on the proposals.
2. The purpose of this report is to modify the recommendation found in the tree constraints schedule for the future use of this site. Where applicable, trees with significant defects have been highlighted and appropriate remedial works have been recommended. However, this report should not be seen as a substitute for a full *Safety Survey* or *Management Plan* which are specifically designed to minimise risk and liability associated with the responsibility for trees. No climbed inspections or specialist decay detection were undertaken.
3. Evaluation of tree condition within the assessment applies to the date of survey and cannot be assumed to remain unchanged. It may be necessary to review these within 12 months in accordance with sound arboricultural practice as recommended by the National Trees Safety Group guidance 'Common Sense Risk Management for Trees'.
4. Trees have been divided into one of four categories based on Table 1 of B.S.5837, '*Cascade chart for tree quality assessment'*. For a tree to qualify under any given category it should fall within the scope of that category's definition.

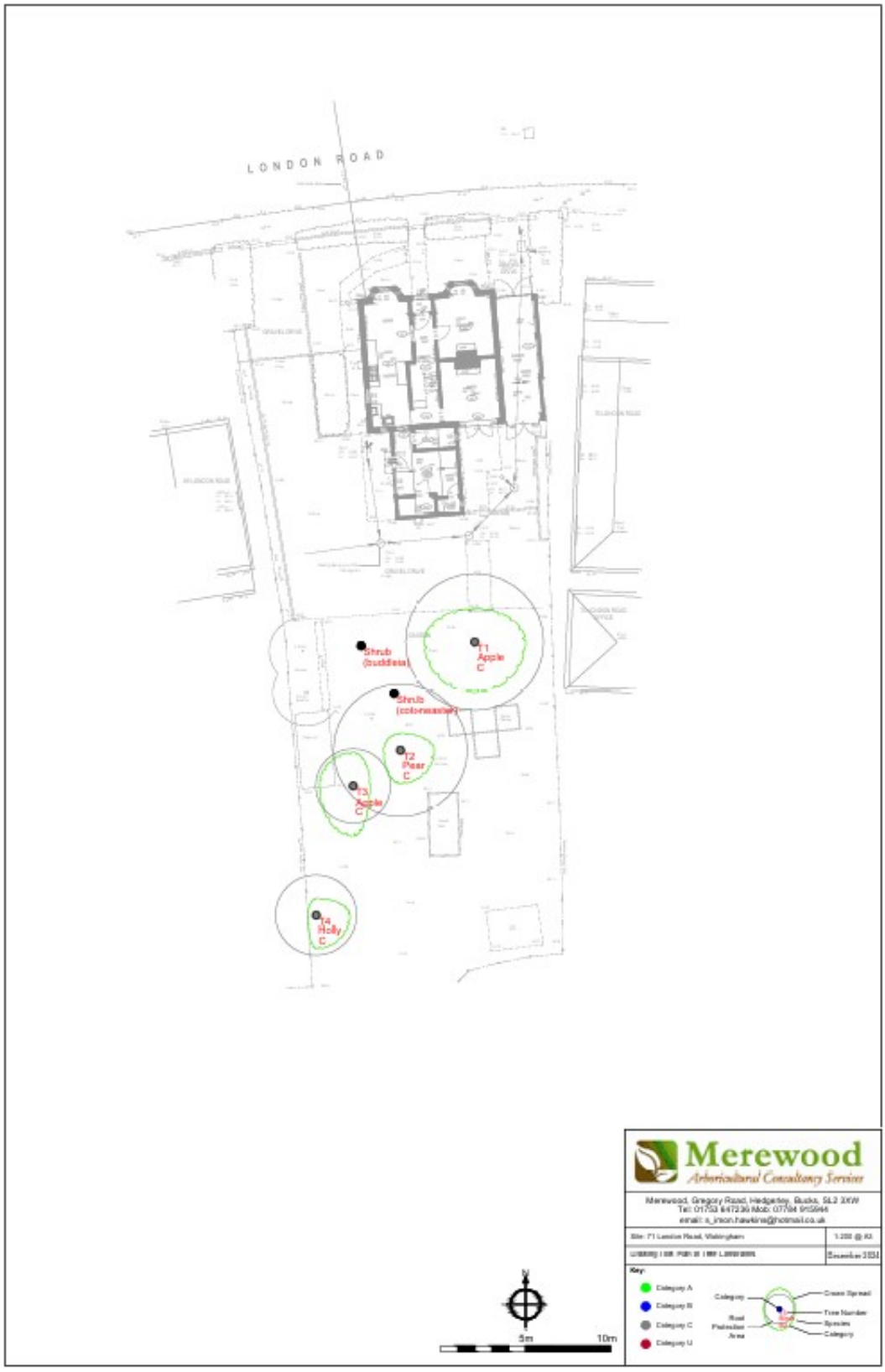
Category U - Red	Trees in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years.
Category A - Green	**Those trees of the highest quality and value**: in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution (a minimum of 40 years is suggested).
Category B - Blue	**Trees of moderate to high quality and value**: in such a condition as to be able to make a significant contribution (a minimum of 20 years is suggested).
Category C - Grey	**Trees of low quality and value**: currently in adequate condition to remain until new planting could be established (a minimum of 10 years is suggested), or young trees with a stem diameter of below 150mm
Subcategory 1 concerns mainly arboricultural values, how good a specimen is in terms of form and physiological condition; the value of a tree as a component in a group or in a formal or semi-formal arboricultural feature such as an avenue.	
Subcategory 2 concerns mainly landscape values and considers the importance of a tree or group of trees as an arboricultural or landscape feature. Trees present in larger numbers, such as woodlands for example may attract a higher rating than they would as individuals because of their collective value.	
Subcategory 3 concerns mainly cultural values including conservation, historical, commemorative, or other value such as veteran or wood pasture.	

5. RPA's of single stemmed trees are calculated according to the following formula:
   RPA radius = 12 x stem diameter (measured at 1.5m above ground level)
6. Where a tree has more than one stem, the equivalent single stem diameter is usually recorded. This is calculated by adding the squares of the stems and then finding the square root of the total. The radius of the RPA is then calculated by multiplying the equivalent stem diameter by 12 (ref B.S. 5837:2012 para 4.6.1). Where access is restricted an estimate of the stem diameter is provided and this is indicated in the appropriate column.

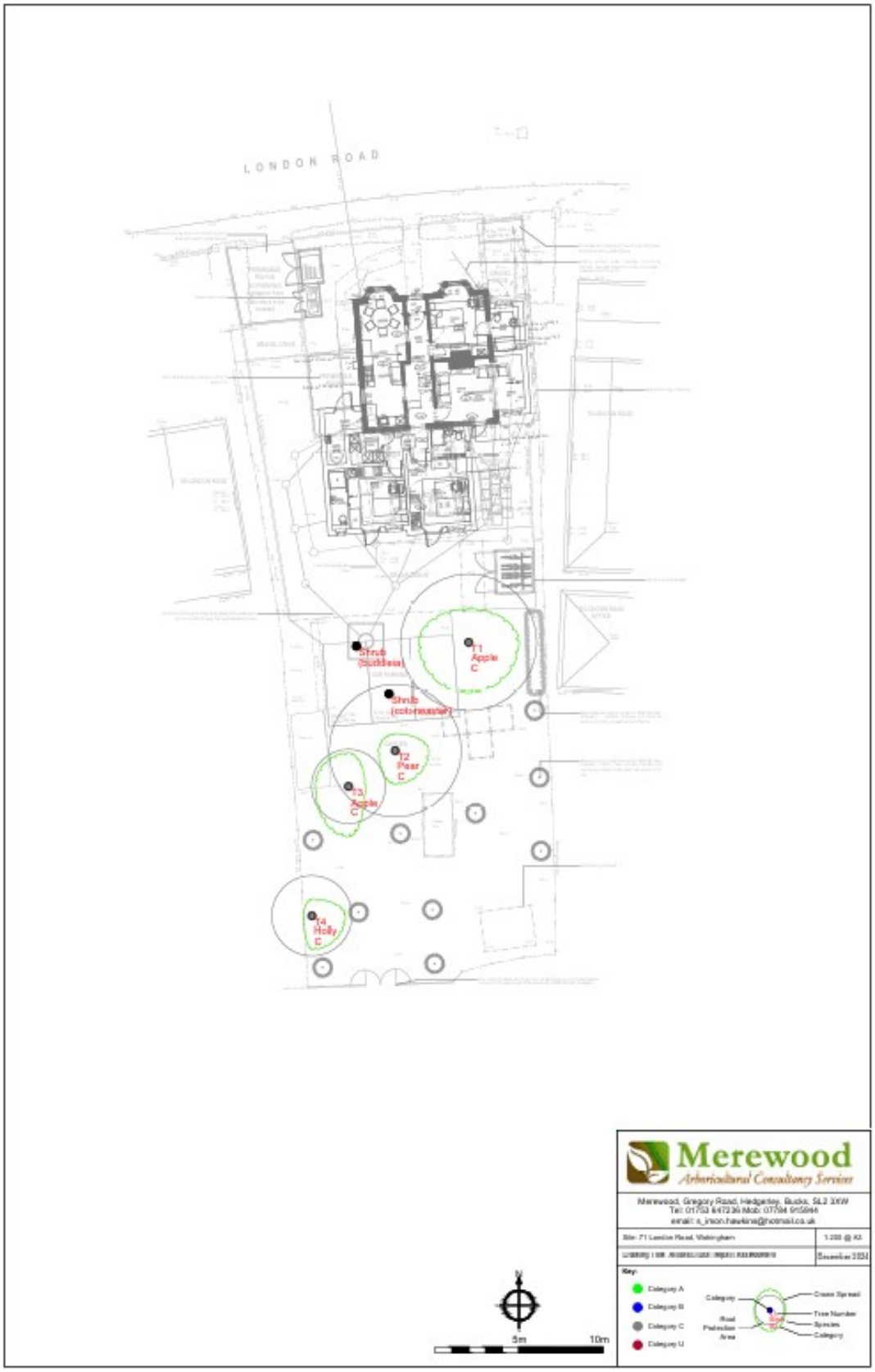
Appendix 2
Schedule of tree constraints

Tree no	Species	Height	Stem diameter	Crown spread				Physiological condition	Structural condition	Age	Observations/ Management recommendations	Life expectancy	Category
				North	South	East	West						
T1	Apple	10	340	2	3	3	3	F	F	M	Extensive bark damage on north side of stem	20 - 40	C
T2	Pear	9	330	1	2	2	1	G	G	M		40+	C
T3	Apple	5	120 140	2	3	1	2	F	F	M		20 - 40	C
T4	Holly	11	200	1	2	2	0.5	G	G	M		40+	C

Appendix 3
Plan of Tree Constraints



Appendix 4
Impact Assessment Plan



Appendix 5
Qualifications and experience

- I am Simon Hawkins, proprietor of Merewood Arboricultural Consultancy Services.

- I hold the Level 6 Professional Diploma in Arboriculture. This is the highest level of award in the industry.

- I hold the National Diploma in Arboriculture which I attained in 1987. I have studied and practised Arboriculture for over 30 years, during which time I have been involved with both the private and public sector.

- I hold the LANTRA award for professional tree inspections

- I hold professional member status of the Arboricultural Association (M. Arbor A.), recognised as a higher vocational level within the industry.

- I have undertaken an intensive course in the principles and application of VTA Visual Tree Assessment. I have been assessed and found to have attained the advanced level of technical competence of a VTA Practitioner with Elite Training.

- I have over 18 years' experience working in the public sector, during which time I have dealt with all aspects of trees and development in the town planning context, within the inner city; in a greater London Borough; and in the Green Belt. Typically, I have worked with planners, developers, architects and other professionals in the construction industry in which I provide advice and assistance in dealing with arboricultural matters.

- I have appeared at numerous appeals, informal hearings and public enquiries to make formal representations. I have also appeared as an expert witness in court with regard to breaches of a Tree Preservations Order.