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Arboricultural Impact Assessment

- Tree Survey
- Tree Protection Plan
- Arboricultural Method Statement

For:-

A New Dwelling

At:-

Sandford Farm
Perimeter Road
Woodley
Berkshire
RG5 4TE

On behalf of:-

Colony Architects Ltd
250 South Oak Way
Green Park
Reading
RG2 6UG

Prepared by:

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Survey Date: 13th March 2023
Report Date: 27th February 2025
Project no: 235

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1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1** This Arboricultural Impact Assessment relates to the proposed construction of a new dwelling and bin/bike store at Sandford Farm. It has been instructed by Colony Architects, on behalf of the owner.
- 1.2** The tree survey was undertaken, and this report has been prepared, by Simon Stephens MA Oxon, Dip Arb (RFS), MArborA, C Env, MICFor a Registered Consultant with the Arboricultural Association, with over 20 years relevant experience.
- 1.3** The Arboricultural Method Statement is only preliminary at this stage. Once planning permission has been granted, a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement will be prepared before work on site starts to include details of drainage, services and contractor's facilities.
- 1.4** This survey and report have been prepared in accordance with recommendations provided in BS 5837:2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations.
- 1.5** Documentation supplied:
 - SJ Stephens Associates, Tree Constraints Plan, drawing no: 235-01
 - SJ Stephens Associates, Arboricultural Impact Assessment, dated 08-04-2024
 - Colony Architects, Proposed Ground Floor Plan: drawing no 306-03-002 rev6

2 SURVEY DETAILS AND SCOPE

- 2.1 The site survey included trees and shrubs, within influencing distance of the proposed development, with a stem diameter over 75mm at 1.5m height, located within the area shown on the Tree Protection Plan, included as Appendix A.
- 2.2 Tree inspection took place from ground level with the use of binoculars, sounding hammer and metal probe using the Visual Tree Assessment method (Mattheck & Breloer 1994). The presence and condition of bark and stem wounds, cavities, decay, fungal fruiting bodies and any structural defects that could increase the risk of structural failure were noted.
- 2.3 The suitability of trees for inclusion in the future development was considered, in particular considering the safe useful life expectancy, and sustainability, of trees on the site after development is completed.
- 2.4 Tree details have been added to the plan received, which is included as Appendix A. Tree locations have been taken from the topographical survey provided. Where not included on the topographical survey, they have been determined by measuring distances from features shown on the plan, using a laser measuring device. The following information was recorded for each tree, and is shown in the Tree Schedule included as Appendix B:
- **Number:** an identity number for each tree, prefixed with a "T", which cross references locations shown on the plan with the schedule in Appendix B. Where a number of trees, normally of the same species, are located close together and are similar in character and requirements, they have been treated as a Group under a single Number, prefixed with a "G".
 - **Species:** common name.
 - **Tree height:** approximate height in metres.
 - **Stem diameter:** diameter in millimetres, taken at 1.5m above ground. Where there are a number of stems, stem diameters are recorded in the condition column.
 - **Branch spread:** approximate spread in metres to N,S,E and W of the trunk. The approximate branch spread is drawn on the plan.
 - **Canopy clearance:** approximate height of the canopy above ground. Where a significant, low lateral branch is present, its height and direction of growth is included in the Condition column.
 - **Age class:** Young, Semi-mature, Early mature, Mature, Over-mature, Veteran.
 - **Condition:** features that affect the safe useful life expectancy and amenity of the tree, including the presence of decay or any physical defect.
 - **Management Recommendations:** recommendations to ensure the health and safety of the tree, within the future development.
 - **Estimated Remaining Contribution:** <10 years, 5-15 years, 10-20 years, 15-30 years, 20-40 years, >40 years.
 - **Category grading:** tree classification taken from BS 5837:2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction (see Appendix C for details), as follows:
 - Category U: Unsuitable for retention, trees with less than 10 years life expectancy, normally recommended for removal (Red)

- Category A: high quality trees, able to make a substantial contribution for at least 40 years, normally retained unless there is an over-riding reason for removal and appropriate mitigation. (Green)
- Category B: moderate quality trees, able to make a significant contribution for at least 20 years, normally retained. (Blue)
- Category B/C: an intermediate category between categories B and C (not specifically described in BS5837). Trees, which should be retained wherever possible, providing retention does not unreasonably constrain the layout. (Blue)
- Category C: low quality, in adequate condition to remain for at least 10 years, or young trees <150mm stem diameter. Trees which can be removed to allow the desired layout or new planting. (Grey)

For category A, B and C trees, a subcategory has been allocated, providing information on the reasons for selection of a specific category, as follows:

- Subcategory 1: mainly arboricultural values.
 - Subcategory 2: mainly landscape values.
 - Subcategory 3: mainly cultural values, including conservation.
- Trees have been classified irrespective of the possible proximity to future construction. The BS 5837 category is colour coded, as indicated above, on the plan included as Appendix A.
 - **Protection Distance:** the protection distance in metres required to provide the Root Protection Area recommended in BS 5837, assuming a circular area centred on the tree.
 - **Root Protection Area (RPA):** the area in m², as recommended in BS 5837, to provide sufficient rooting area to ensure tree survival and which, in most situations, should be fenced off to prevent root damage from construction activities.

3 SURVEY LIMITATIONS

- 3.1 No internal decay devices, or other invasive tools to assess tree condition, were used.
- 3.2 No soil excavation or root inspection was carried out.
- 3.3 This survey has not considered the effect that trees or vegetation may have on the structural integrity of future building through subsidence or heave.
- 3.4 The tree survey has been undertaken for planning purposes. Although any obvious structural defects have been noted, a Tree Hazard Assessment has not been carried out. Mature trees close to highly populated areas or public highways should normally be checked for safety annually, by a suitably qualified person.

4 LEGAL PROTECTION OF TREES

- 4.1.1 Wokingham Borough Council have a Tree Preservation Order (ref: 170/1980), of which area A4 covers all Oak, Willow and Thorn growing adjacent to Perimeter Road within the site. The site does not fall within a Conservation Area.
- 4.1.2 The presence of Planning Conditions currently attached to the site, was not checked.

5 ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT

5.1 Site Overview

- 5.1.1 The proposal is for the construction of a new dwelling and bin/bike store at Sandford Farm. The proposed site plan is included as Appendix E and is shown, along with tree details, on the Tree Protection Plan attached as Appendix A.
- 5.1.2 A new access and parking area will be created off Perimeter Road. This will be connected to the house by way of a timber board walk through the trees.
- 5.1.3 The site contains a number of early mature oak which are providing good landscape and conservation value.

5.2 Tree Work

- 5.2.1 Details of proposed tree works are included in the Tree Schedule included as Appendix B.
- 5.2.2 Two trees are proposed for removal, as detailed in section 6.1 below.
- 5.2.3 All tree work must be undertaken to the standards set out in BS 3998:2010 Tree work – Recommendations.

5.3 Root Protection Areas

- 5.3.1 Root Protection Areas are shown for all trees in the tree schedule attached as Appendix B. They are also shown, as circular areas centred on the trunk, on the Tree Protection Plan attached as Appendix A. This shows the distance that construction must normally be kept back from a tree, to provide the Root Protection Area recommended in BS 5837.

5.4 Tree Protection Fencing

5.4.1 Tree Protection Fencing must be erected where shown on the Tree Protection Plan, attached as Appendix A. This will provide full protection of the Root Protection Areas of all retained trees, other than for:-

- areas hatched in blue on the Tree Protection Plan, where No-Dig Construction must be used, as described in section 5.5 below, to protect underlying roots.
- areas shaded cyan on the Tree Protection Plan, indicating Ground Protection Areas, where roots must be protected, as described in section 5.6 below.
- areas cross hatched red on the Tree Protection Plan, where there will be excavation at the edge of Root Protection Areas, but where hand excavation must be used, as described in section 5.7, to minimise potential root damage.

5.4.2 Tree Protection Fencing must be from weldmesh panels, at least 2m high, securely fixed, with wire or scaffold clamps, to a rigid framework. This framework must be constructed from scaffold tubes with vertical tubes, at a maximum interval of 3m and driven into the ground at least 0.6m. The structure must be well braced to resist impacts, constructed as per Figure 2 of BS5837:2012, which is reproduced in Appendix D. Alternatively, weldmesh panels can be supported on blocks, providing the blocks are pinned to the ground with road pins, or similar, and the panels are braced, as per Figure 3 of BS5837:2012, which is also reproduced in Appendix D.

5.4.3 After erection of Tree Protection Fencing and installation of ground protection, 2 days notice must be given to the Local Planning Authority before construction, including any ground work, starts on site. Tree Protection Fencing must be maintained and retained for the duration of the works, or until such time as agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority

5.4.4 Weatherproof notices must be fixed to the Tree Protection Fencing, and maintained, stating:-

TREE PROTECTION AREA
KEEP OUT
TREES ENCLOSED BY THIS FENCE ARE PROTECTED BY PLANNING CONDITIONS
AND A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER
CONTRAVENTION OF A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER MAY LEAD TO CRIMINAL
PROSECUTION (TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990)
THE FOLLOWING MUST BE OBSERVED BY ALL PERSONS:

- The Protection Fence must not be moved
- No person or machine must enter the area
- No materials or spoil must be deposited
- No excavation must be permitted

ANY INCURSION INTO THE PROTECTED AREA MUST BE WITH THE WRITTEN
PERMISSION OF THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

- 5.4.5 Where alternative locations for Tree Protection Fencing are shown, it must initially be erected where indicated “C” on the drawing while the new dwelling is constructed, then moved to where indicated “L”, and ground protection laid, before landscaping and construction of the boardwalk starts.

5.5 No-Dig Construction Areas

- 5.5.1 No-Dig construction areas are shown shaded blue on the Tree Protection Plan indicating where No-Dig construction must be used for the timber boardwalk path.
- 5.5.2 Excavators, dumpers and other site traffic must not be allowed to track on the No-Dig areas until roots are protected by the No-Dig surfacing or unless ground protection panels are laid. No contractor vehicles or plant must therefore be allowed to access the site through the new access until either the No-Dig surfacing is completed, or until ground protection is laid.
- 5.5.3 The timber boardwalk path within No Dig Construction areas must be constructed above ground level, with timbers decking supported by small diameter screw piles. The screw pile locations must be kept as far from tree stems as possible. Trial holes must be dug to a depth of 0.9m at these locations and if tree roots over 25mm are found the position must be altered. Ground protection panels must be laid at the start of this operation and only removed as the timber boardwalk is completed.
- 5.5.4 Excavators, dumpers and other site traffic must not be allowed to track on the No-Dig areas until roots are protected by the No-Dig surfacing, or unless suitable ground protection has been laid. If access is required across No-Dig areas before the No-Dig surfacing is laid ground protection panels must be laid. Either Trakmats (supplied by the Marwood Group, www.marwoodgroup.co.uk), Groundtrax panels (see www.groundtrax.com), Ground-Guards, as supplied by Greentek (www.greentek.org.uk), or a similar approved product, must be used, laid on top of a compressible layer of sand or woodchips, laid onto a geotextile.

5.6 Ground Protection Areas

- 5.6.1 The Ground Protection Areas, which are shaded cyan on the Tree Protection Plan, contain soft areas where ground protection must be laid to protect any underlying roots. Trakmats, as supplied by either the Marwood Group, (www.marwoodgroup.co.uk) or Ground-Guards, (www.ground-guards.co.uk) or a similar approved product, must be used, laid on a compressible layer of sand or woodchips, laid onto a geotextile, with adjacent panels held together with connectors.

- 5.6.2 Ground protection must be laid before any construction starts on site and must be maintained in good condition until all construction operations have been completed. Ground protection must be fit for purpose and be replaced with an alternative product if panels start to move or any sign of ground compaction is seen.

5.7 Hand Dig Areas

- 5.7.1 The Hand Dig trenches at the corners of new buildings, shown cross-hatched red on the Tree Protection Plan, must be dug to formation level, or a depth of 1m, by hand, neatly severing any roots found, using secateurs or a hand saw. Any further excavation required, either to a greater depth or further from the trees, can be carried out with an excavator, since it is unlikely that significant live roots will be found.
- 5.7.2 Heavy-duty polythene must be used to line the side of the trench adjacent to the trees, before concrete is poured, to avoid the toxic effects of cement on tree roots.
- 5.7.3 On no account must use of an excavator be used in the top 1m of the Hand Dig areas, which would rip roots and cause unnecessary damage
- 5.7.4 The location for the service trench is shown cross hatched red on the Tree Protection Plan. This trench must be hand dug, retaining all roots greater than 25mm diameter and as many smaller roots as possible. Either hand tools or an air spade can be used. The services must then be threaded between any roots, before backfilling the trench with the excavated soil. If the location of roots makes this impossible, the retained arboricultural consultant must inspect and advise. The trench must be left open for as short a time as possible, with any exposed roots covered with hessian to prevent desiccation or frosting.

5.8 General measures

- 5.8.1 No construction activity whatsoever, including routing of underground services, storage of materials or on-site parking, must be allowed within Root Protection Areas, other than that specifically described above.
- 5.8.2 No mixing of cement, or concrete, or storage of fuel must take place within 10m of retained trees, nor in any position where the slope of the ground could lead to contamination of the Root Protection Area.
- 5.8.3 Fires must not be lit in a position where their flames could extend to within 10m of foliage, branches or trunk.

- 5.8.4 Landscape works carried out within Root Protection Areas must be undertaken with great care so as not to damage shallow roots. Tractor mounted rotovators or other heavy mechanical cultivation must not be used within the Root Protection Areas.
- 5.8.5 A copy of the Tree Protection Plan must be kept on site and must be fully understood by the Site Agent.

5.9 Bat roosts

- 5.9.1 The current legislation makes it a criminal offence to disturb, damage or destroy any bat roost or hibernation area. Contractors must be reminded of their responsibilities and should contact the relevant authorities if any signs of bats are found.

5.10 Birds

- 5.10.1 The current legislation makes it a criminal offence to disturb nesting birds. The nesting season is generally assumed to be from 1st March to 31st July, however this can vary depending on species and location. During these months a careful inspection must be made before work commences and works must be postponed if active nests are found.

5.11 Arboricultural Supervision

- 5.11.1 A qualified Arboricultural Consultant must be retained during the period of construction to carry out the following:
- to meet with/ liaise with the contractor, prior to construction starting on site, to ensure this Arboricultural Method Statement is fully understood and can be complied with in full. If any revisions are required, a revised Arboricultural Method Statement must be approved by the Local Planning Authority, prior to construction or demolition starting on site.
 - to inspect Tree Protection Fencing and ground protection, prior to construction or groundwork starting on site.
 - as necessary, to advise on any issues at the request of the local planning authority, the developer, architect or contractor.

The details of each site visit must be recorded using a site visit proforma, with copies circulated to the contractor, developer and the local authority Tree Officer.

6 ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 The following trees / tree groups, categorized as per BS 5837 (see Appendix C for details), are proposed for removal:

- Category C – low quality:
 - T34 – a 2m elder
- Category U: T17f, a dead elm.

6.2 No trees of any significance are proposed for removal and protection measures have been specified to protect the Root Protection Area of all retained trees.

6.3 Protection measures have been specified to protect the Root Protection Area of all retained trees, other than for:-

- T5, where there will be excavation within approximately 2.8m², or 1% of the Root Protection Area.
- T14, where there will be excavation within approximately 6.6m², or 3.5% of the Root Protection Area.

In addition, the service trench will cut across the edge of the Root Protection Areas of both these trees, however this will be carried out without severing larger roots. This minimal incursion into the Root Protection Areas is not expected to have a significant effect on the health of these trees.

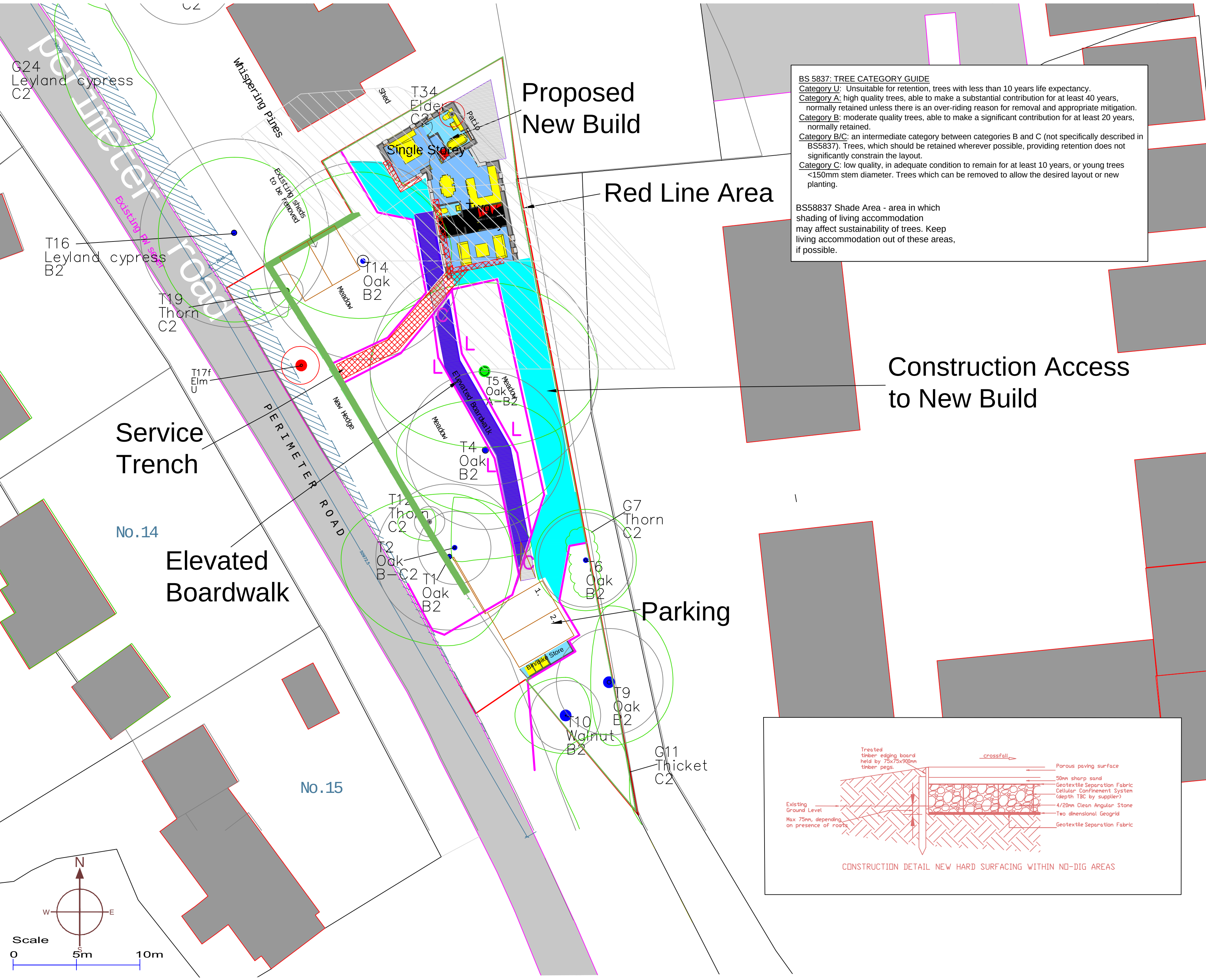
6.4 Although preservation of Root Protection Areas is deemed to protect tree roots, in some cases buildings may need to be set further back to ensure the future sustainability of trees. If buildings are too close to trees, future occupiers may be likely to seek the reduction, or removal of trees, if they are cutting out excessive sunlight or providing a claustrophobic or threatening environment.

6.5 Section 5.2.2 of BS 5837:2012 states that “an indication of potential direct obstruction of sunlight can be illustrated by plotting a segment with a radius from the centre of the stem equal to the height of the tree, drawn from due North West to due East, indicating the shadow pattern through the main part of the day.” Shading patterns for key trees have been shown on the plan. This shows that the new dwelling will be shaded by the oak trees apart from when the sun is overhead. However, the oak trees will be a key feature of this property and are protected by a Tree preservation Order. It is therefore likely that it will be purchased by owners who view the trees as a major asset rather than a problem. There will be an area of lawn to the south of T14 which will not be shaded.

6.6 Provided the recommendations in this report are followed, the arboricultural impact of these proposals is considered acceptable. A detailed Arboricultural Method Statement will be prepared for approval prior to work starting on site.

7 REFERENCES

- *BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations.*
- *BS3998:2010 Tree Work. Recommendations.*
- *Common sense risk management of trees (FCMS024). Published by the National Tree Safety Group (www.ntsgroup.org.uk)*
- *The use of Cellular Confinement systems near Trees: a guide to good practice Arboricultural Association Guidance Note 12.*



BS 5837: TREE CATEGORY GUIDE
Category U: Unsuitable for retention, trees with less than 10 years life expectancy.
Category A: high quality trees, able to make a substantial contribution for at least 40 years, normally retained unless there is an over-riding reason for removal and appropriate mitigation.
Category B: moderate quality trees, able to make a significant contribution for at least 20 years, normally retained.
Category B/C: an intermediate category between categories B and C (not specifically described in BS5837). Trees, which should be retained wherever possible, providing retention does not significantly constrain the layout.
Category C: low quality, in adequate condition to remain for at least 10 years, or young trees <150mm stem diameter. Trees which can be removed to allow the desired layout or new planting.

BS58837 Shade Area - area in which shading of living accommodation may affect sustainability of trees. Keep living accommodation out of these areas, if possible.

Key

- Category R
- Category A
- Category B
- Category C
- Crown spread: retained trees
- Trees For Removal
- Root Protection Area
- Tree Protection Fence
- location: landscaping
- location: construction
- No-Dig Construction
- Ground Protection Area
- Hand Dig Area
- BS5837 Tree Shade

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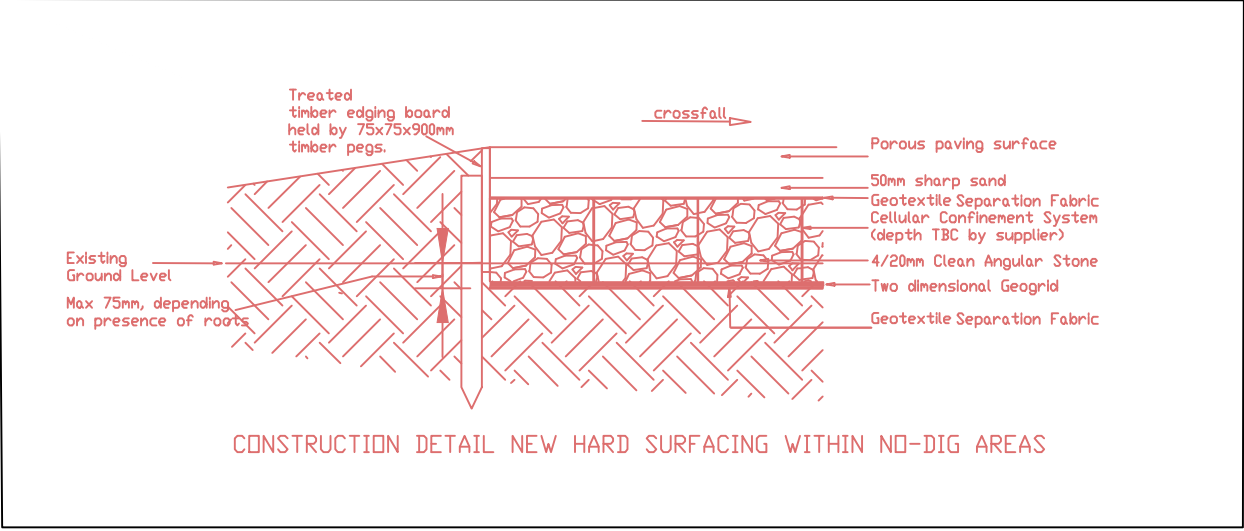
JOB TITLE
LAND ADJ. SANDFORD FARM COTTAGE
BEGGARS HILL ROAD
WOKINGHAM

DRAWING TITLE
TREE PROTECTION PLAN

DRAWING NUMBER	REV
235-02	F

REVISIONS

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN BY
1:200atA2	FEB 25	sjss



Tree/ Group No.	Species	Height (m)	Stem Diam. at 1.5m (mm)	Branch Spread (m)				Crown Clearance (m)	Age Class	Condition	Management Recommendations	Estimated Remaining Contribution (years)	BS 5837 Category Grading	Protect- ion Distance (m)	Tree Protect. Area (m2)
				N	W	S	E								
T1	Oak	14.5	480	5	7	5	8.5	2	Early mature	Major limb lost to northeast at 4.0m - callusing.		20-40	B2	5.8	104
T2	Oak	12.5	240	4	1	6	0	2	Early mature	Leaning to northeast. Suppressed by T1.		20-40	B-C2	2.9	26
T4	Oak	13.0	520	4	5	6	7	3.0	Early mature	Asymmetric crown. Reasonable vigour.	Remove low epicormic growth for new path.	20-40	B2	6.2	122
T5	Oak	15.0	750	7	6	9	9	1.8	Mature	Twin stem from 1.6m- reasonable union. Nylon rope embedded. Attractive crown shape. Good vigour. Minor deadwood, of up to 75mm diameter.	Minor pruning to clear new building	>40	A-B2	9.0	254
T6	Oak	11.5	310	4	4	4	4	3.5	Early mature	Main stem bifurcates at 3.0m, but reasonable union.		20-40	B2	3.7	43
G7	Thorn	3.0-3.5	50-100					0.7	Early mature	Six stems growing.		10-20	C2	1.2	5
T9	Oak	10.0	350	6	5	5	1.5	1.6	Early mature	Leaning to east, over boundary fence. Can develop. Bat boxes.	Adapt fence so not in contact with stem.	>40	B2	4.2	55
T10	Walnut	12.0	230	3	3	2	4	2	Young	Slight lean to north, but can develop into a good quality tree.		>40	B2	2.8	24
G11	Thicket	2.0-3.0	25-100					0.1	Mature	Impenetrable thicket of bramble, dead trees, elder and blackthorn.		10-20	C2	1.2	5
T12	Thorn	5.5	100	1	1.5	0.5	2.5	2.5	Young	Leaning to west, over boundary fence. Good form and structure. Becoming engulfed in ivy.		10-20	C2	1.2	5
T14	Oak	14.0	650	7	4.5	7	7	2	Mature	Four stems from base - 420,270,390,130mm diameter. Chain and fence post embedded at base. Good over all crown shape. Good vigour. Occasional minor deadwood.	Minor pruning to provide 1m clearance to roof line	20-40	B2	7.8	191
T16	Leyland cypress	18.0	620	6	7	6	6	1.8	Mature	Growing rapidly .		15-30	B2	7.4	174
T17f	Elm	9.5	200	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	Dead	Dead. Growing just outside site.	Remove.	<10	U	2.4	18
T19	Thorn	5.0	110	0	2	0	3	3	Mature	Low vigour.		5-15	C2	1.3	5
T34	Elder	2.0	150	1	1	1	1	0.5	Mature		Remove for new building.	5-15	C2	1.8	10

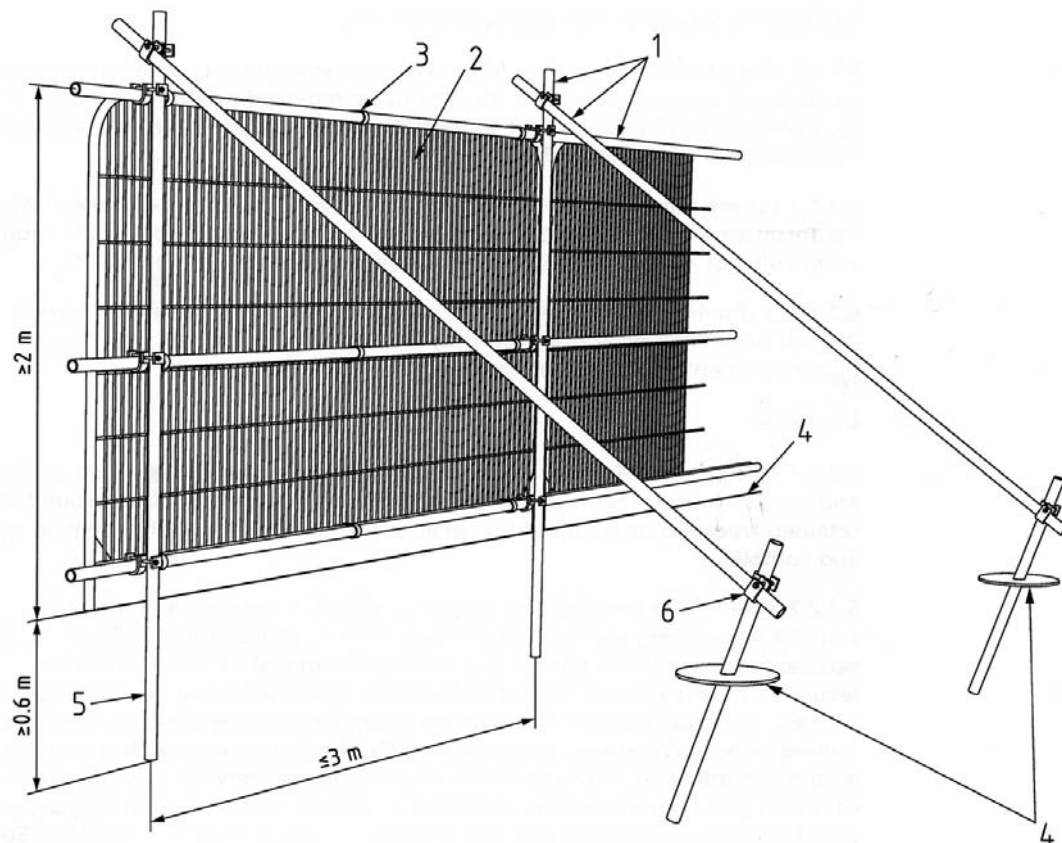
BS 5837:2012, Table 1 Cascade chart for tree quality assessment

Category and definition	Criteria (including subcategories where appropriate)			Identification on plan
Trees unsuitable for retention (see Note)				
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 4.5.7.</i>			Canopy coloured red
	1 Mainly arboricultural qualities	2 Mainly landscape qualities	3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation	
Trees to be considered for retention				
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)	Canopy coloured green
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	Canopy coloured blue
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	Canopy coloured grey

Figure 2

Key

- 1 Standard scaffold poles
- 2 Heavy gauge 2 m galvanised tube and welded mesh infill panels
- 3 Panels secured to uprights and cross-members with wire ties
- 4 Ground level
- 5 Uprights driven into the ground until secure (minimum depth 0.6 m)
- 6 Standard scaffold clamps



Examples of above-ground stabilising systems

Figure 3a

Stabiliser strut with base plate secured with ground pins

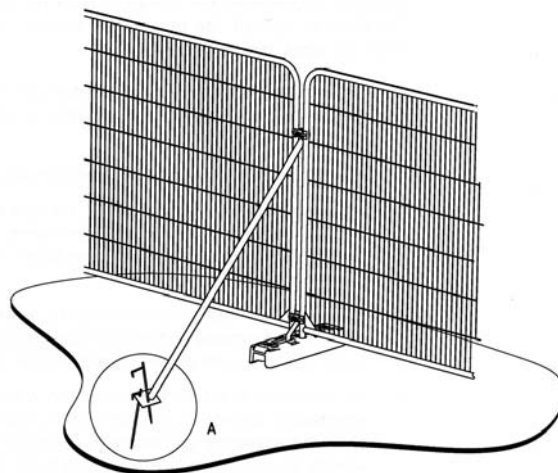
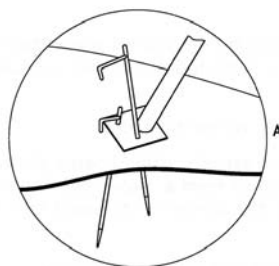


Figure 3b

Stabiliser strut mounted on block tray

