



ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Land to the East of Whitley Wood Rd
Mitford Close
Shinfield
Berks**

25th November 2024

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Scope

The purpose of this report is to provide Arboricultural advice in relation to identifying the constraints of trees on site and neighbouring land, to aid the project architect to design a scheme to work around constraints of the trees where possible and practical. Providing advice on how the trees could be impacted and the considerations relating to how a scheme will need to consider their constraints and potential impacts on any proposed layout.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief:

This report has been prepared at the request of Laura Nica Studio the project architect, to identify the constraints of the trees present on site and neighbouring land to assess how they could be impacted during works to redevelop the site. As well as providing an opinion as to whether the trees present could be considered as being existing when the area tree preservation order that was placed on the site was made in 1976.

1.2 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 and list the details in **Appendix 1**.

1.3 Documents and information provided:

A copy of TPO (tree preservation order) 97/ 1976.

A topographical plan of the site.

1.4 Relevant background information:

The site is included within the area outlined on the TPO 97/76.

Some trees are beyond the site boundaries and in third party ownership.

1.5 Scope of this report:

This report is only concerned with trees located on site and neighbouring land that could be impacted by construction works to implement the proposed layout, and the measures required to provide protection for them as best prescribed in the guidance of BS5837: 2012 'trees in relation to design, demolition and construction'. Any issues regarding construction methods etc. is outside the remit of an Arborist and remedy should be sought with suitably qualified persons, for example builder, engineer etc. For the purposes of this report an Arborist / Arboriculturalist is someone who through training and experience has the knowledge to assess trees and their condition in a competent manner. Trees with a dbh of less than 75mm have not been included as per the guidance in BS5837:2012 or species considered to be shrub specimens.

2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

2.1 Brief site description:

The site is a piece of land at the end of Milton close which is partially covered in close cut grass and the rest covered in dense vegetation. A culvert / drainage ditch transects the site adjacent to the southern boundary. The vegetation is very dense running adjacent to the northern, eastern and southern boundaries limiting access.

2.2 Condition of the trees:

The trees appear to have a healthy vigour with no signs of pests or diseases commonly associated with the species, apart from T2 which is mostly dead. Those in third party ownership could only be assessed as best they could from the confines of the site, and the remainder of the trees on site were assessed as best could be achieved given the lack of access due to dense vegetation.

A more detailed analysis of the trees can be found in **Appendix 3**.

2.3 Suitability of trees for location and management requirements at present:

In my opinion the trees could be considered suitable for the location, I am not aware of any conflict with the neighbouring properties or usage of the site as a result of the trees. The exception for this would be T2 which would be best removed in case it was to fail, and people were accessing the site. It would be prudent to clear the vegetation around the other trees to facilitate a more detailed inspection in case any faults are being obscured from view.

In general, no works are considered necessary apart from the removal of T2.

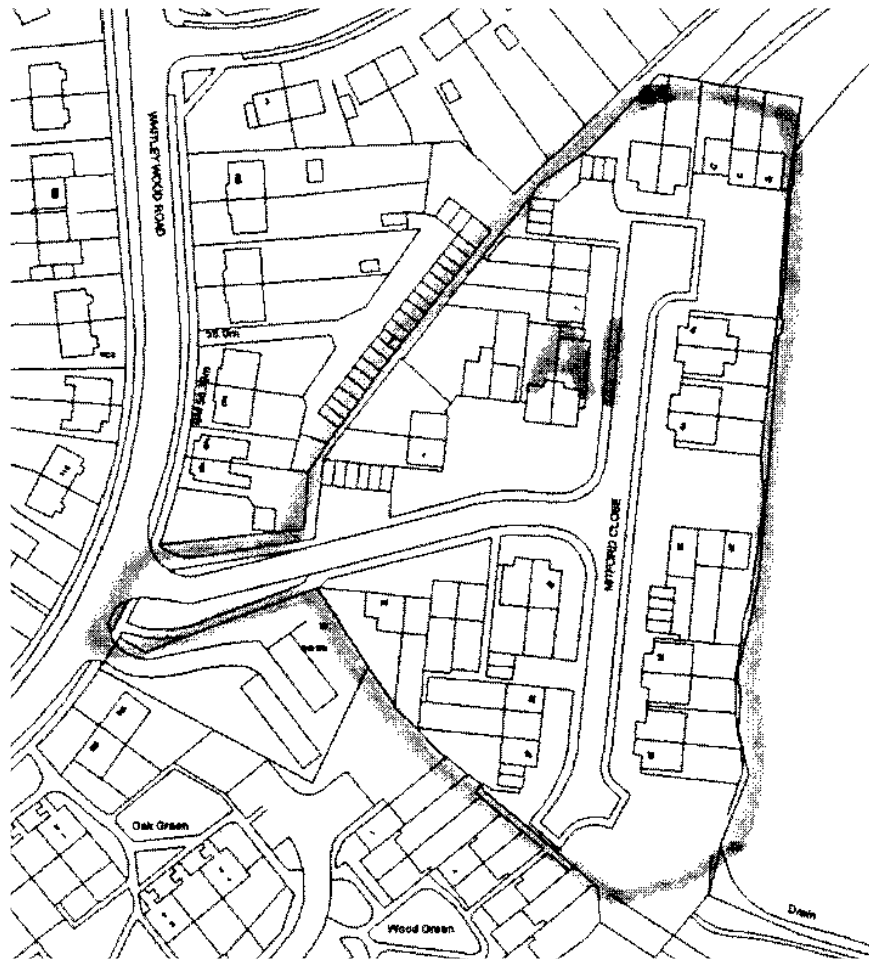
2.4 Potential effects of development on the trees:

To make this site usable for development purposes I do not consider it will be practical to retain any of the trees due to their position on site or the growth potential in relation to any that could be retained closer to the edges. The trees present are Sycamores, with some Elms and Poplar with in G1. These trees have the growth potential to reach heights in excess of 20m and crown spreads over 10m. So, retaining any towards the edges of the plot would mean as they mature, they would likely become over dominating features to any properties, including existing neighbouring properties and likely result in them being removed or harshly pruned.

In order to maximise the development potential of this site I would not consider it a practical option to try and retain any of the trees, but instead remove them but provide suitable space to plant new trees which would be more sustainable, provide more long term amenity and a more diverse habitat for wildlife. I would suggest that any new tree planting would be focused to the road frontage to offer the argument of enhancing the street scene and softening / screening the development. Because of the large trees beyond the boundary on the eastern side, these will potentially over dominate any garden spaces and planting trees under the canopy spreads of these trees would be futile and add to potential shading issues. Planting a native hedge along the rear boundary would offer a feature which would screen the security fencing and could be argued it is an enhancement to habitat and providing a green corridor for wildlife. This would need to be supported with an ecological report, but this reasoning would be a suitable planting option to add create value to the site long term. However, with removal of trees BNG (Biodiversity Net Gain)needs to be considered. Any calculations will likely try and retain trees to save on costs for offsetting, however from an arboricultural perspective, retention of these trees would not be completely feasible and not practical. Trees on the southern boundary could potentially be retained, but as discussed above, their long-term retention and indirect impact on site with shading and overbearing as they mature will likely be an issue.

The site is part of the TPO 97/ 1976, as shown in the image below shows the description of the species included in the order, and the plan shows the extent of the order. These are taken from the tree preservation order.

A1	-	The several trees of whatever species standing in the area numbered A1 on the map, to the east of Whitley Wood Road, Shinfield, to the south of Winton Road, Shinfield, to the west of Crossfields school, Shinfield and within Land Parcel No. 9170,
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The description only relates to several trees, and I would assume at the time of the order being placed these would have been mature, notable trees with significant visual amenity. The trees present on site in my opinion would not be included in this given their quality, size and that they were likely not present in 1976. This can be corroborated as being more likely to be the case with the screen shot from Google below showing the site practically cleared with the Conifers T1, T2 & T3 being present along with a handful of semi / early mature Sycamore / Elm to the southern end of the site. In my opinion the age of these trees would not make them as improbable to have been present when the order was placed and so not part of the TPO. This would need to be discussed and agreed with the local authority to avoid potential legal issue or disputes. There is a potential for the council to put a new TPO on this land to provide them time to properly assess the trees, but I consider this would be unfair given their quality and likely mutually suppressed growth as they mature. However, once a TPO is placed it can be difficult to argue against it as the council are effectively judge and jury in their own court. If they want the order to stand, they can confirm it and then removal of any trees will likely be allowed but with the requirement to replace. Planning consents can override a TPO but can be used as planning weight to refuse an application, especially if pressure from neighbouring properties is being applied. Despite such issues being able to be argued in an appeal, this is a lengthy process and will increase costs for the client. It would be better to have discussions with the planning department prior to express the views on the trees and try not to elicit an unreasonable new order being made.



This image is a screen shot from Google Street View from March 2009, showing the site relatively clear except for T1 – T3 and some Sycamores / Elm at the rear which would likely be T8 – T10 and G2. I do not consider these trees being of an age where they would have been present when the order was placed on the site, therefore it could be reasonably argued they are not part of the TPO.

The trees in third party land beyond the fence on the eastern boundary (T4, T5, T6 & T7) will need to be considered in any scheme and where their canopy and RPA (Root Protection Area) extends onto site, as this will present a constraint for any scheme. Especially T7 which has a large canopy spread and RPA into the site. There is a potential the local authority could put a TPO on these trees as they are more prominent and likely justify a TPO more than the trees on site and provide notable restrictions to any scheme to support a planning refusal. As well as how the trees could be impacted directly such as excavation works for foundations or landscaping the indirect impacts of these trees on a proposed layout need to be considered as well. Indirect impacts from the trees onto the site will be from shadow cast, leaf fall, potential roosting birds and mess not garden space etc. All elements which could result in future pressure from residents to have the trees harshly pruned back or removed. The council will be expecting this element to be considered and could use it as an argument to object to a planning proposal if it cannot be demonstrated these aspects will not constitute a notable issue. Given the current over hanging canopy of these trees and their future growth potential this could be difficult, unless it was cut back to the boundary prior, where it could then be argued scheduled reductions can take place to prevent the canopy overhanging the site. However, shadow cast to a certain extent will still be an issue, but showing less habitable rooms such as kitchens, bedrooms and toilets where light availability will not be such an issue on this elevation could be considered. Maybe parking or a turning head could be positioned along this part of the site to move any properties further from the trees to be less of an issue, also any shallow hard surface could be shown to use a 'No Dig' construction solution to reduce the need for extensive excavation in the RPA.

Any tree works undertaken will need to be done in accordance with BS3998:2010 and take into account all relevant wildlife legislation, along with confirming no other consents are required.

2.6 Proposed solutions to safeguard the trees to remain during construction works:

2.6.1 Protective fencing & Ground Protection

Protective fencing will have to be placed in locations to protect any trees if it is decided to try and retained any, and placed in suitable locations to ensure construction activities do not cause collision damage or are permitted access where the trees could be harmed. If access over the RPA of trees on site and off site, suitable ground protection will need to be in place to prevent soil compaction occurring.

2.6.2 Services

The location of any service trenches will need to be carefully thought out to avoid the RPA where possible. If this is not possible hand digging / air spade works will be used within the RPA with an arborist on site to supervise proceedings. Alternatively, trenchless techniques to install the services will be used and approved by the local authority.

2.6.3 Site facilities and material storage

Care will have to be taken to identify the type of materials required and the access of any machinery, vehicles or plant needed to move them, as these can cause collision damage to aerial parts of the trees as well as soil contamination or compaction if on soft ground. Prior to works starting on site the council will likely want to know how this aspect of the scheme will be addressed to ensure the trees are suitably protected and demonstrate how care and attention will be applied to protect the trees from direct and indirect construction activities. Storage or mixing of materials in the RPA will be avoided.

2.6.4 Works within RPA (Root Protection Area)

Where possible the installation of foundations or other deep excavation works should be placed outside the RPA. It maybe acceptable to put shallow surfacing such a paths or drives in the RPA if unavoidable, but the use of 'No dig' construction techniques will need to be considered. Any design should avoid placing structures in the RPA where possible, and if this is not possible have realistic construction methods to demonstrate how direct damage with roots or soil compaction will be handled.

2.6.5 Site supervision

As part of any scheme the local authority will likely want an audible program of arboricultural supervision to ensure any protection measures are understood, implemented and maintained. This will need to be considered in any tendering or build costs.

A record of all arboricultural related site meetings will be made, signed off and available for inspection by the local authority if required. Any personnel inducted on site will be made aware of the tree protection measures and will be responsible for their own actions in maintaining them and not breaching them in any way. Failure to do so could result in legal action taken against the person responsible and the site owner, including any financial remuneration involved.

2.6.6 Landscaping and site completion

Landscaping should be considered at the design stage to ensure there is sufficient and realistic space to allow new trees to be planted and have the space where they will not be removed by any future residents or managed in an unnatural manner. It may be given space constraints that under ground planting pits and trees with more fastigate crown habits are indicated as being used. The council will expect to see this aspect has been considered as part of the overall design and not left until the end. It will help strengthen a planning argument if suitable landscaping is indicated and highlighting how these aspects have been considered, and then suggesting details can be conditioned as part of a planning consent. This way it shows the council that new and appropriate landscaping can be implemented but saves the client on the costs of engaging a landscape architect prior when planning approval is not certain.

3 CONCLUSIONS

- In my opinion the trees present on site were not present when the original order was placed in 1976. The Google earth image from 2009 shows the site mostly clear with a few semi mature trees present.
- To make this site viable for development I do not consider it practical to try and retain any trees given their growth potential in relation to the space available. It would be better to design a scheme to suitably accommodate new planting towards the front of the site to enhance the street scene and soften any development.
- The trees in third party ownership beyond the eastern boundary need to be considered in terms of how their canopy and RPA extends on the site. The indirect impact in terms of shadow cast, how any overhanging canopy could dominate on a scheme taking into account the issues this could create.
- Any protection measures and how this can realistically be implemented will also need to be considered as part of the design process and able to be shown this as being achievable in an arboricultural report.
- The scheme presents an excellent opportunity to have new trees and shrubs planted to offer long term amenity and wildlife benefit, which can be conditioned as part of a planning consent. I would suggest as part of a scheme an ecological and arboricultural approach is provided to show removal and replanting is the more practical and beneficial approach, for long term amenity and wildlife benefit. It is likely that credits off site will need to be purchased for BNG.

4 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Trees subject to statutory controls:

There is an area order which covers the site ref: 97/76, however given the age of the trees I do not consider these to have been at an age where they would have been present when the order was put on. This will need to be confirmed and agreed with the local authority to form a good working relationship and to prevent misunderstandings or contravention of protection legislation. This is an advisory for readers of this report and not meant as a confirmation as to the protection status of the trees commented on.

*Andrew Day HND Arb
For Andrew Day Arboricultural Consultancy Ltd.*

Brief qualifications and experience of Andrew Day

I hold a Higher National Diploma in Arboriculture. I have been working in the field of arboriculture for approximately 20 years, spending time as a contracting arborist undertaking all aspects of practical arboriculture both in the UK and Europe. I have also worked within local government as a tree officer working for a variety of local authorities. I have a broad experience of both the practical and theoretical aspects of arboriculture having worked within the public and private sector. I am currently a consulting arborist for Andrew Day Arboricultural Consultancy.

1. Qualifications:

Higher National Diploma in Arboriculture (1996)

NPTC (National Proficiency Training Council) units 20, 21 and 22

Lantra professional tree inspection certificate

2. Practical experience:

Prior to establishing my company, I worked for a private Arboriculture company for three years undertaking many practical aspects of Arboriculture. I moved on from this to become a local authority tree officer for five years, my duties included consultation on planning matters with regard to trees, advice to the general public, managing the council's tree stock and liaising with other professionals on Arboricultural related issues. I was approached by an established tree contracting and consulting company in Essex to develop and run the consultancy department as their principal consultant which I did for three years.

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Showing T1, T3 & G1



Showing T2



Showing T2 & G1



Showing T8, T9, T10 & G2

SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Explanatory Notes

Tree Survey

Tree Protection Method Statement and Protection Criteria

Informatives for protection fencing.

Arboricultural Considerations notice for site hut and inducted personnel.

Explanatory Notes

Measurements/estimates: All dimensions are measured unless access to them is not possible, then they are estimated.

Species: The species identification is based on visual observations and the common English name of what the tree appeared to be is listed first, with the botanical name after in brackets. In some instances, it may be difficult to identify a particular tree quickly and accurately without further detailed investigations. Where there is some doubt of the precise species of tree, it is indicated it with a '?' after the name in order to avoid delay in the production of the report. The botanical name is followed by the abbreviation sp if only the genus is known. The species listed for groups and hedges represent the main component and there may be other minor species not listed.

Height: Height is estimating height to the nearest metre.

Spread: The maximum crown spread is visually estimated to the nearest metre of the total crown spread diameter. It should be noted that the crown of some trees can be one side, however this usually indicated within the report.

Diameter: These figures relate to 1.5m above ground level and are recorded in centimetres. Estimate measurements are banded 0-10cm, 11-20, 21-30 etc. If appropriate, diameter is measure with a diameter tape. 'M' indicates trees or shrubs with multiple stems. 'AV' indicates average and is the average of two stems when dealing with twin stem trees.

Estimated Age: Age is assessed as **M** mature (last one third of life expectancy), **EM** early mature (one third to two thirds life expectancy), **SM** (one third life expectancy), and **Y** young (less than one third life expectancy).

FSB: First significant branch from ground level (direction shown on tree protection / constraints plan)

SULE: This is the estimated Safe Useful Life Expectancy of the tree. Trees can live longer than this value but can pose a risk to persons or property.

RPR: Radius of root protection area around the tree /group

RPA: Root protection area for tree or group

BS 5837 2012 - On the basis of this assessment, trees can be divided into one of the following categories:

A - Trees whose retention is most desirable, High category

B - Trees where is desirable, Moderate category

C - Trees which could be retained, Low category

U - Trees that cannot realistically be retained; Fell category

Tag	Name	Age	Diameter	Height	Crown Hgt	FSB Hgt	Crown Spread (N S E W) (m)				Life Exp	Recommendations	Category	RPR	RPA
T1	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	EM	200	10(2)	2(N)	2	2	2	2	2	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail. Clear around base and reinspect.	C2	2.4	18.1
T2	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	EM	200	10(2)	2(N)	2	2	2	2	2	20+	Mostly dead, remove.	U	2.4	18.1
T3	Chamaecyparis lawsoniana (Lawson Cypress)	M	350	12(1)	2(N)	1	2	2	2	2	20+	No works required at present.	C1	4.2	55.42
T4	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	M	550	15(3)	3(N)	3	8	5	2	3	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail and located in third party ownership.	C1	6.6	136.87
T5	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	M	550	15(6)	6(S)	6	2	4	6	3	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail and located in third party ownership.	C1	6.6	136.87
T6	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	EM	150	15(3)	3(N)	3	6	1	3	5	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail and located in third party ownership.	C2	1.8	10.18
T7	Populus alba (White Poplar)	M	1212	20(8)	8(N)	8	8	8	8	8	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail and located in third party ownership.	C2	14.54	664.26

Tag	Name	Age	Diameter	Height	Crown Hgt	FSB Hgt	Crown Spread (N S E W) (m)				Life Exp	Recommendations	Category	RPR	RPA
G1	Populus alba (White Poplar), Ulmus glabra (Wych Elm)	M	500	12(1)	1(N)	1	3	3	3	3	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail. Clear around base and reinspect.	C3	6	113.11
T8	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	EM	346	10(2)	2(N)	2	1	3	3	3	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail. Clear around base and reinspect.	C2	4.15	54.11
T9	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	EM	354	15(2)	2(N)	2	5	5	4	2	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail. Clear around base and reinspect.	C2	4.25	56.75
T10	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	EM	200	15(8)	8(S)	8	4	2	5	3	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail. Clear around base and reinspect.	C2	2.4	18.1
G2	Acer pseudoplatanus (Sycamore)	EM	200	15(3)	3(E)	3	4	4	4	4	20+	Dense vegetation limiting inspection detail. Clear around base and reinspect.	C2	2.4	18.1

Site Personnel Contact Information

As far as I am aware the only personnel associated with this site at the time of writing this report is the project architect. Table 1 shows the contact details of the project architect who is to be contacted if any enquires relating to this project need answering.

Table 1

Name	Relation to Site	Contact Details
Laura Nica	Project Architect	+44 (0) 741 3176 181

LIMITATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

LIMITATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Unless specifically mentioned the report will only be concerned with ground inspections. No below ground inspections will be carried out without prior confirmation from the client that such works should be undertaken. This report is for the purposes of identifying the constraints of trees in relation to development and not a health and safety assessment of the trees. A cursory assessment of the trees health and condition will be recorded, but this is not to be taken as a detailed assessment of its structural condition, health, and management recommendations in relation to this. A separate tree inspection regime focusing on these aspects will need to be undertaken if this is required.

The validity, accuracy and findings of this report will be directly related to the accuracy of the information made available during the inspection process. No checking of independent data will be undertaken, Andrew Day Arboricultural Consultancy will not be responsible for the recommendations within this report where essential data are not made available or are inaccurate.

This report will remain valid for one year from the date of inspection but will become invalid if any tree works not recommended within the report are undertaken, soil levels around the trees are altered in any way and if any building works which were not disclosed during the inspection are undertaken. If extreme weather changes occur such as heavy winds, snow etc., the trees will need to be re-inspected to ensure their condition has not been affected or has altered from the initial inspection details obtained.

If any of the above occurs, then it is strongly recommended that a new tree inspection is carried out.

It will be appreciated, and deemed to be accepted by the client that the formulation of the recommendations for the management of the trees will be guided by the following:

1. The need to avoid reasonably foreseeable damage.
2. The arboricultural considerations – Tree safety, good Arboricultural practise and aesthetics.

The client is deemed to have accepted the limitation placed on the recommendations by the sources quoted in the attached report. Where time constraints or the client limits sources, this may lead to an incomplete quantification of the risk.

TREE CONSTRAINTS PLAN

(This plan is for reference only; please refer to the separate A3 plan for scaling if required)

