



Tree Constraints Report for land off Atcherly Road, Lower Compton

Inspected and prepared by

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Site address

land off Atcherly Road
Lower Compton
Cherhill
Wiltshire
SN11 8QJ

Report reference

Nolands_TCR_112025

Project

Identification of
arboricultural constraints
to development

1.0 Instructions

- 1.1 Assured Trees are instructed to carry out a tree survey on a plot of land off Atcherly Road in Lower Compton (figures 1 and 2), in accordance with British Standard BS5837: 2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations*, identify the constraints of trees on the site and provide tree constraints information in the form of a plan and a tree survey schedule, to support the site design process prior to making a planning application to Wiltshire Council for development proposals on the site.

Site location:

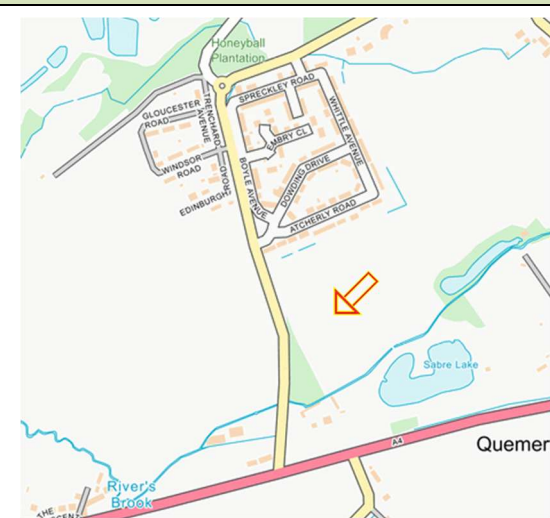


Figure 1: Site Location indicated by orange arrow
<https://www.streetmap.co.uk/>



Figure 2: Red line indicates approximate limits of site survey
<https://www.google.com/maps>

- 1.2 The tree survey was conducted by a qualified arboriculturalist in accordance with the guidelines contained within BS5837: 2012 *Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations* (**BS5837: 2012** hereafter).

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The survey area covers two agricultural fields separated by a post and wire fence located to the south of Atcherly Road in Lower Compton near Calne. The site is open and surrounded by field boundary hedgerows and trees. To the north is a housing estate, to the east is more agricultural land, the south site boundary is onto a small water course and to the west is an unnamed public road. To the south-west of the site is a small woodland containing the majority of trees on the site, there are further sporadic on and off-site trees adjacent to the north site boundary and within field boundary hedgerows to the east and west.

3.0 Statutory designations

- 3.1 A review of Wiltshire Council on-line resources¹ reveals that the site does not lie within the limits of a Conservation Area and that there is one tree in the woodland to the south-west of the site (figure 3) that is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), although there is no on-line information on species so it is not possible to know which tree is covered. T01 is the highest value tree in this area in terms of age, size and visual amenity so it is likely that T01 is the subject of the TPO however the circle in figure 3 is in the wrong place to indicate T01.



Figure 3: TPO indicated by green cross hatch.

- 3.2 Currently it is necessary to obtain consent from Wiltshire council to carry out works to the tree(s) subject of the TPO, consent is not required to carry out works to other trees on the site. Tree works that are included within arboricultural information supporting a consented planning application, and are necessary to facilitate development, are deemed to have consent and a separate TPO application is not necessary.
- 3.3 If tree removals are proposed on the site in excess of 5 cubic metres in volume in a calendar quarter (or 2 cubic metres if the timber is being sold), then a felling license may be required from the Forestry Commission².
- 3.4 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, afford statutory protection for listed species of flora and fauna including birds and bats which are likely to use trees for nests and roosts. It is essential that any tree works do not disturb a nesting bird, bat or bat roost. If there is potential for nesting birds or roosting bats to be using a tree scheduled for works then a qualified ecologist should be consulted and tree works timed and planned to avoid disturbance.

¹ <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/>

² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-felling-licence-when-you-need-to-apply>

4.0 Trees included in the survey

- 4.1 A total of twenty-one trees, three tree groups and four hedges were identified in the tree survey, and have been awarded category ratings in accordance with the BS5837:2012 cascade chart for tree quality assessment whereby a rating of **A**, **B**, **C** or **U** is allocated based on the condition of a tree or group of trees in its/their current surroundings, with **A** representing the higher quality trees, **B** the moderate quality, **C** the lower quality and **U** the trees that should be removed for arboricultural reasons. A full account of the tree survey methodology and categorisation criteria for surveyed trees is presented at appendix A.

	BS5837:2012 Category rating			
	A	B	C	U
Trees	3	6	12	0
Groups	0	2	1	0
Hedges	0	0	4	0

Table 1: Tree categorisation quantities in accordance with BS5837:2012

5.0 Root protection areas (RPAs)

- 5.1 Below ground constraints or Root Protection Areas (**RPAs**) for all trees on site have been calculated in accordance with BS5837:2012. 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 must be treated as a priority. The RPA does not represent the extent of the rooting area of a tree, roots are likely to extend beyond the calculated RPA.
- 5.2 The default position should be that structures are located outside the RPA's of retained trees however, where there is an overriding justification for construction within the RPA, technical solutions must be used that prevent damage to the tree. The RPAs have been plotted onto the Tree Constraints Plan as a circle centred on the base of each tree stem with a radius of 12 times the trees stem diameter measured at 1.5 metres above ground level.

6.0 Soil

- 6.1 Tree growth can cause differential movement in structures on shrinkable clay soils as moisture is removed from the soil during the growing season. A broad indication of soil type has been obtained using the British Geological Survey Data³ which indicates a bedrock geology of *Gault Formation – Mudstone*, therefore soil type should be confirmed by laboratory analysis and foundations near trees constructed in accordance with *NHBC chapter 4.2 building near trees*⁴ which provides details of technical requirements when building near trees on shrinkable clay soils.

³ <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>

⁴ <https://nhbc-standards.co.uk/4-foundations/4-2-building-near-trees/>

7.0 General adverse impacts of development

- 7.1 The most common below ground impact in a development scenario arises from the compaction of soil within the rooting area of a tree. Soil compaction prevents water ingress, creates poor drainage and reduces the availability of oxygen to roots resulting in impaired root growth or even root death. Soil compaction can arise through vehicle movements or through the storage of heavy materials on vulnerable ground such as grass.
- 7.2 Further below ground impacts arise through the severance of roots to construct foundations, install services or alter ground levels. To avoid compaction and/or root severance, construction activity must be excluded from the RPA of retained trees using robust physical barriers. If construction access is required within the RPA, barriers need to be set back and ground protection used to prevent soil compaction. Existing hard surfacing such as tarmac can be used as ground protection.
- 7.3 Development proposals should be designed to avoid the need for excavations into existing ground level, the raising of ground levels or any construction activity that could result in ground compaction, within the RPA of a retained tree.

8.0 Planning policy

- 8.1 Planning applications will be assessed against National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 12 December 2024)⁵ which states that:

Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

8.2 **Local planning policy:** includes Wiltshire Core Strategy - adopted 2015⁶:

Core Policy 52- Green infrastructure

Development shall make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire's green infrastructure network and shall ensure that suitable links to the network are provided and maintained. Where development is permitted developers will be required to:

- i. retain and enhance existing on site green infrastructure*
- ii. make provision for accessible open spaces in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Wiltshire Open Space Standards*
- iii. put measures in place to ensure appropriate long-term management of any green infrastructure directly related to the development*
- iv. provide appropriate contributions towards the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy*
- v. identify and provide opportunities to enhance and improve linkages between the natural and historic landscapes of Wiltshire.*

9.0 **Principal arboricultural constraints**

- 9.1 The principal arboricultural site component is the small woodland to the south-west comprising T01-T08. There were more trees in the woodland than are represented on the topographical site survey so the woodland was recorded as a group record (G02) and key trees that stand out from the group were recorded individually including a large oak (T01) which is arguably the most valuable tree on the site.
- 9.2 The edge trees to the north of the woodland (T08) and east (T04-T07 and H09) have been recorded as individuals so that an accurate Root Protection Area (**RPA**) can be represented on the tree constraints plan. The woodland has a high value in terms of visual amenity and biodiversity value, and any development proposals should avoid any impact in this area. Proposals that impact the trees in the woodland are likely to receive an objection from the Wiltshire Council arboricultural consultee.
- 9.3 There are several other high value oak trees surrounding the site including T17 on the north site boundary and trees 20 and 24 on the east site boundary. Proposals should ideally seek to avoid any construction within the RPAs of these high value trees.
- 9.3 G25 is an off-site tree group comprised of field maple, the stem diameters of the individual trees are relatively small so the group RPA does not extend significantly into the site but there is potential for an objection from the LPA if development is proposed close to this group due to the perception of risk, shading, leaf fall nuisance and future pressure to have trees removed from the site. Ideally significant separation should be allowed between G25 and any proposed dwellings.

⁶ <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/372/Wiltshire-Core-Strategy-adopted-2015/pdf/Wcs.pdf?m=637099399373530000>

10.0 Next stage for arboricultural input

10.1 This report contains information on the constraints presented by the trees on the site and is intended to assist the site design process, it is not intended for submission in support of a full site planning application. In support of a full site planning application Wiltshire Council will require an arboricultural report including the following components:

- Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) containing an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the trees on the site including any necessary tree removals, any impacts on retained trees and any impacts retained trees may have on the proposals post development.
- Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) – heads of terms- containing details of mitigation measures for any identified adverse impacts and a clear specification for all tree protection measures.
- Tree Protection Plan (TPP) with a clear illustration of all tree protection measures.

Appendix A: Tree survey methodology

The tree survey

A baseline tree survey is carried out by a qualified arboriculturalist, from ground level, in accordance with the methodology set out in *BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*.

The results of the tree survey are used to establish material constraints arising from existing trees and is intended to be used (along with any other relevant baseline data) to inform feasibility studies and design options. For this reason, the tree survey should be completed and made available to the design team independently of any specific proposals for the development of a site.

The tree survey will include all individual trees, tree groups, woodlands and hedges within influencing distance of the proposed development site. Trees will ordinarily be recorded as individuals but may be recorded as groups if there is no need to differentiate between the trees in the group.

The quality of each tree or group of trees is recorded by allocating it to one of four categories along with a sub-category in accordance with the *BS5837:2012* Cascade chart for tree quality assessment. A category rating of either A, B, C or U is allocated based on the condition of a tree or group of trees in its/their current surroundings. No consideration is given to any specific development proposal when allocating category ratings, category definitions are detailed below:

Category	Criteria
A	<i>Trees or groups which have high quality and value, are in good structural and physiological condition and are expected to have a useful life expectancy of at least another 40 years- indicated in green on the associated plans</i>
B	<i>Trees or groups which would be considered as category A trees but which are of lower value, poorer structural condition, or which are expected to have a useful life expectancy of a minimum of 20 years- indicated in blue on the associated plans</i>
C	<i>Trees or groups which are of low quality and value, trees currently in adequate condition to remain until new planting is established or are young trees with a stem diameter less than 150mm. Category C trees are expected to have a life expectancy of a minimum of 10 years- indicated in grey on the associated plans</i>
U	<i>Trees or groups in such a condition that any existing value would be lost within ten years and which should, in the current context, be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management- indicated in red on associated plans</i>

BS5837:2012 Tree categorisation criteria

Sub categories are awarded in accordance with the following criteria:

Sub category	Inclusion criteria
1	<i>Trees with arboricultural value</i>
2	<i>Trees with landscape value</i>
3	<i>Trees with cultural or conservation (ecological) value</i>

BS5837:2012 Tree sub-category criteria

Data for all trees, groups and hedges within influencing distance of the proposed development site is recorded in a tree survey schedule in accordance with *BS5837: 2012*. Trees are not physically tagged (unless we are instructed to do so) but are assigned individual numbers that are used to identify the tree, tree group, woodland or hedgerow throughout the report, within the Tree Survey Schedule and on the associated plans. The following information is collected for each tree in the survey:

Tree or group number; Single or group category; Common name of species; Height in metres; Number of stems; Stem diameter; Clearance of crown from ground level in metres; Crown spread in cardinal directions; Age class; Physiological condition; Structural condition; Estimated remaining contribution in years; Preliminary management recommendations; Tree categorisation; Radius in metres of the **Root Protection Area (RPA)**.

All measurements are taken using a stem diameter measuring tape, laser clinometer and laser distance measuring device. Where site constraints prevent the use of a measuring device the measurement is estimated and is suffixed with a '#' symbol in the tree survey schedule.

Root protection areas

Below ground constraints or Root Protection Areas (**RPAs**) for all trees included in the site survey are calculated in accordance with *BS5837:2012 4.6.1*. 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 should be treated as a priority, the RPA does not represent the entire root system of a tree.

The RPAs are plotted onto the associated plans as a circle centred on the base of each tree stem with a radius of 12 times the trees stem diameter measured at 1.5 metres above ground level. For tree groups the largest stem diameter in the group is used to set the RPA.

If deemed appropriate by the arboricultural surveyor the individual stem diameters of trees within a group may be taken in order to set an accurate group RPA boundary whilst still recording all trees within the group as a single group record.

BS5837:2012 4.6.2 requires that where pre-existing site conditions or other factors indicate that rooting has occurred asymmetrically the RPA should be modified to produce a polygon of an equivalent area. Any trees on site identified as requiring a modification to their RPA are indicated within the AIA.