

Arboricultural Method Statement

For construction works associated with

Stourhead Solar Project

On behalf of

Aardvark EM Ltd

Higher Ford
Wiveliscombe
Somerset
TA4 2RL

Inspected and prepared by

Ben Rose BSc(Hons) MSc DipArb(RFS) MICFor RCarborA
Chartered Arboriculturist
Arboricultural Association Registered Consultant

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background information

- 1.1.1 This Arboricultural Method Statement report supports a planning application, submitted by Aardvark EM Ltd, for constructing a new solar array on National Trust owned land at Stourhead.
- 1.1.2 I visited the site and carried out a tree survey on 16th May 2025. The survey was not constrained by weather conditions and considered all trees on and around the site.
- 1.1.3 Arboricultural advice was taken early in the planning process and no trees will need to be removed to enable the solar farm to be installed. All tree works necessary for the proposed development are listed in the schedule in Appendix 1. All permitted and approved tree work must be undertaken in accordance with BS3998:2010 *Recommendations for tree work*¹. Only qualified and insured tree surgeons should be employed.
- 1.1.4 A check of the Wiltshire Council online mapping system confirms that only trees immediately to the north of the site (G2) are within a Conservation Area and that none of the trees at the property are protected by a tree preservation order (TPO).

1.2 Instruction

- 1.2.1 Bosky Trees has been employed to advise on the project design and specify suitable measures to protect retained trees during construction.
- 1.2.2 This method statement provides details of how planned operations near trees will be carried out. However, arboricultural supervision will be required if any unforeseen construction activity is to take place within or adjacent to the root protection area (RPA) of any of the retained trees at the site (the RPAs are indicated on the Tree Protection Plan). This supervision must be carried out by a suitably qualified arboriculturist. It is recommended that the project arboriculturist and the local authority's arboricultural officer are informed of necessary works near trees as soon as they become apparent.

1.3 Contacts and responsibilities

- 1.3.1 **Project arboriculturist:** Ben Rose, Tel. 07872 609633; ben@boskytrees.co.uk
- 1.3.2 The project arboriculturist shall be responsible for independently monitoring the effectiveness of tree protection at regular intervals and report all findings in writing back to the client, the project site manager and the local planning authority. They may also be instructed to provide additional advice should unforeseen circumstances develop.
- 1.3.3 **Site manager:** TBC.
- 1.3.4 The site manager must be provided with a copy of this document and a copy should be kept available in the main site office for quick and easy reference. It is the site manager's responsibility to pass on the information in this document to all construction staff and site contractors.

¹ British Standards Institution (2010). *BS3998 Recommendations for tree work*. BSI: London.

- 1.3.5 The Arboricultural Method Statement must be used as a reference source for site operatives in order to guide tree-related aspects of the construction process. A precautionary approach is required.

2 GENERAL METHOD STATEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE TREE PROTECTION

- 2.1.1 Trees are vulnerable to root damage caused by ground disturbance, direct injury of the trunk or branches, environmental change, pests, and diseases. Construction work often exerts pressures on existing trees, and a tree that has taken many decades to reach maturity can be damaged irreparably in a few minutes by unwitting or negligent actions.
- 2.1.2 For this project, temporary fencing will be used during construction to protect the retained trees at the site. The extent of the tree protection fencing that will be required is shown on the Tree Protection Plan, TPP-1 (this is provided at the rear of the document). For effective tree protection it is crucial that the protective fencing is installed before any heavy plant machinery is used on the site. The fenced off areas will be construction exclusion zones.
- 2.1.3 Soil compaction quickly occurs if vehicles pass over an area of soil. Compaction may cause reduced infiltration rates of water, poor drainage, reduced availability of water, and reduced air and oxygen supply to roots. This leads to reduced root growth and as a result the health of the tree is impacted. Therefore, to ensure that soil compaction is avoided, it is very important that no vehicles enter the fenced-off areas during construction operations.
- 2.1.4 All construction staff should be made aware of the following restrictions that apply to the construction exclusion zone:
1. No excavation or raising of soil levels is permitted within the construction exclusion zones without written permission from the project arboriculturist.
 2. Site offices and staff welfare facilities must be located outside of the construction exclusion zones unless agreed with the local authority's arboricultural officer.
 3. No materials of any kind are to be stored within the construction exclusion zone.
 4. No utility trenches are to be routed through a construction exclusion zone without written permission from the local authority's arboricultural officer.
 5. Care must be taken when planning site operations to ensure that wide or tall loads, or plant with booms, jibs and counterweights can operate without coming into contact with retained trees. Branches may be tied back so that they are out of the way if necessary.
 6. Potential contaminants such as fuel, oils and chemicals must be stored on an impervious base within a bund able to contain at least 110% of the volume stored. Provision must also be made for any spillage or run off to be contained away from the protected area.
 7. Cement and concrete mixing must take place at least 10m from any trees, over a suitable hard surface to prevent soil contamination from spillage or washing out.
 8. Fires should be avoided, however if permitted by the site manager, they must not be lit in a position where heat could affect foliage or branches (at least 15m from the base of a tree would normally be sufficient).

3 SPECIFICATION FOR TREE PROTECTION FENCING

3.1 The location of tree protection fencing

- 3.1.1 The location of the tree protection fencing that will be required is shown on the tree protection plan, (this is provided at the rear of this document). **For effective tree protection it is crucial that the protective fencing is installed before any heavy plant machinery is used on the site.** The tree protection fencing must remain in place until the construction works have been completed (unless under arboricultural supervision). The fenced off areas will be construction exclusion zones.
- 3.1.2 Fencing (or other forms of barrier) must be fit for the purpose of excluding construction activity and appropriate to the degree and proximity of work taking place around the retained trees. Since this is a relatively small and short-term project it will not be necessary to install metal fencing supported by a scaffold framework (as detailed in Figure 2 of BS5837). Instead, it is proposed that Heras panels, cleft chestnut fencing, wire stock fencing, coloured plastic 'snow guard' fencing or simply coloured rope nailed to the top of wooden fence posts that have been driven into the ground would be suitable. In general, fences of this nature are about 1.2m high, and they can be installed on standard fenceposts that are hammered into the ground. Whatever fencing method is used it is crucial that the fence is pinned to the ground so that the fenceline cannot be moved by contractors during construction.



Figure 1: The tree protection fencing for this project could be as simple as coloured rope nailed to wooden fenceposts as shown in this image.

- 3.1.3 Once the barriers have been erected the areas of land within the construction exclusion zone should be regarded as sacrosanct, and should not be removed or altered without prior consultation with the project arboriculturist and, where necessary, approval from the local planning authority. All-weather notices should be attached to the fencing with words such as: 'Construction Exclusion Zone - No Access'. Throughout the construction period attention should be paid to ensure that barriers remain rigid and complete.
- 3.1.4 **Arboricultural supervision will be required whenever construction and development activity is to take place within a construction exclusion zone.** This supervision must be carried out by a suitably qualified arboriculturist.

4 ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF UNDERGROUND CABLES BENEATH HEDGES

- 4.1.1 It is proposed that directional drilling under two hedgerows (H2 & H3) is carried out to avoid impacts upon dormice identified within the existing hedgerow network. This methodology is also beneficial for the trees in the hedges because it will avoid disturbing the parts of the soil where tree roots are likely to be growing. The bore must be made at a minimum depth of 60cm below ground level so that tree roots are avoided.
- 4.1.2 The locations of the two points where the cables will be installed beneath hedges are identified on the Tree Protection Plan (TPP-1). When the directional drilling is carried out the trees in the woodland to the north (G2) will be protected using temporary fencing. It is crucial that this temporary fencing is installed before any ground works commence.
- 4.1.3 When it is time to carry out the drilling operation and install the cables the following procedure must be followed:
1. Install tree protection fencing.
 2. Establish working areas and access routes.
 3. Carry out drilling and installation of ducting/cables.
 4. Remove all equipment from work area.
 5. Remove the temporary tree protection fencing.

5 AGENDA FOR ARBORICULTURAL SUPERVISION

- 5.1.1 There will be a pre-commencement site meeting between the project arboriculturist and the construction site manager. During this 'toolbox talk' the arboriculturist will explain how trees could potentially be damaged by construction works and discuss how such damage can be avoided, and the agreed methodology for the works will be fully explained. The toolbox talk will also provide an opportunity for the contractor to raise any issues with working methods or features that they think could potentially impact the retained trees. At this point the location and suitability of the tree protection fencing will be checked by the project arboriculturist. A record of this meeting will be produced by the arboriculturist and this will be supplied to the planning case officer.
- 5.1.2 Supervision by a suitably qualified arboriculturist will also be required if any unforeseen construction activity is to take place within the root protection area of any trees retained on or near the site. The project arboriculturist and the local authority's arboricultural officer should be informed of necessary works near trees as soon as they become apparent.

Appendix 1: Tree Schedule

Site: **Stourhead Solar Project**

Surveyor: **Ben Rose**

Date of Survey: **16th May 2025**



Tree Number	Tree Species	Height (m)	Number of Stems	Stem Ø (cm)	N - Radius (m)	S - Radius (m)	E - Radius (m)	W - Radius (m)	1st Branch (m)	Age Class	Overall Health	ULE (Years)	Tree Structural Condition & Site Notes	Recommended Management	Category
T9	Holly	5	1	10	0	3	1	1.5	0	SM	G	40+	Small tree surrounded by other shrubs.	No action required at present.	C1
T10	Hawthorn	5	2	21	1	3	3	2	2	M	G	40+	Past crown lift. No obvious significant defects.	No action required at present.	B1
T11	Dogwood	5	MS	21	3.5	4	3	4	1	M	G	40+	Low crown. No obvious significant defects.	No action required at present.	B1
T12	Beech	19	1	47	5.5	4	4	3.5	4	M	G	40+	Situated at the end of a row of similar trees. No obvious significant defects.	No action required at present.	B1
T13	Sycamore	16	1	50	3	7.5	3	4.5	3	M	F	20+	Lean towards the building. No obvious significant defects.	No action required at present.	B1
T14	Sycamore	15	2	42	3	6.5	3	3	3	M	F	20+	Arboreal ivy. Lean towards the building. No obvious significant defects.	No action required at present.	B1
T15	Sycamore	15	2	64	6	5.5	6	6	2	M	G	40+	Hedgerow tree. No obvious significant defects.	No action required at present.	B2

A key explaining each category is provided at the rear of the schedule

Appendix 1: Group Schedule

Site: Stourhead Solar Project

Surveyor: Ben Rose

Date of Survey: 16th May 2025



Group Number	Tree Species	Number in Group	Height (m)	Number of stems	Stem Ø (mm)	N - Radius (m)	S - Radius (m)	E - Radius (m)	W - Radius (m)	1st Branch	Age Class	Overall Health	ULE (Years)	Tree Structural Condition & Site Notes	Recommended Management	Category
G2	Broadleaf woodland	40+	20	1	55	5	5	5	5	3	M	G	40+	Woodland up to the brow of the hill.	No action required at present.	A2
G3	Beech and oak	7	19	1	50	4	4	4	4	3	M	G	40+	Double row of mature trees.	No action required at present.	A2

A key explaining each category is provided at the rear of the schedule

Appendix 1: Hedge Schedule

Site: **Stourhead Solar Project**

Surveyor: **Ben Rose**

Date of Survey: **16th May 2025**



Hedge Number	Tree Species	Height (m)	No. of Stems	Stem Ø (cm)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Age Class	Overall Health	ULE (Years)	Condition & Notes	Recommended Management	Category
H2	Field maple, dogwood and hawthorn	2	MS	3	1.5	85	SM	G	40+	Young hedge with no signs of past management.	No action required at present.	C1
H3	Sycamore, grey willow, hawthorn, blackthorn and elder	4	MS	12	3.5	65	M	G	40+	Dense hedge with no signs of recent management.	No action required at present.	C2
H4	Hazel, hawthorn, field maple, dogwood and elder	6	MS	15	6	215	M	G	40+	Dense hedge with no signs of recent management.	Cut back the northern part of the hedge to make space for the new surface.	B2
H5	Hawthorn	5	MS	12	2	265	EM	G	40+	Sides are regularly flailed.	No action required at present.	C2
H6	Hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, dogwood and elder	5	MS	15	6	220	M	G	40+	Dense hedge with no signs of recent management.	No action required at present.	B2
H7	Hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, sycamore, goat willow and elder	6	MS	15	6	205	M	G	40+	Dense hedge with no signs of recent management. 3m gap for footpath in eastern end.	Cut back the eastern end to remove the obstruction of the existing access.	B3

A key explaining each category is provided at the rear of the schedule

Tree Schedule - KEY

Tree/Group/Hedge Number

Tree, tree-groups or hedges have been allocated a number for the purpose of this survey. Numbers within the Tree Schedule relate to those marked on the Tree Removal Plan and Tree Protection Plan drawings.

Trees protected by a tree preservation order (TPO) are highlighted by grey colouration in the tree schedule.

Species

Common names are listed.

Number in Group

Number of trees within a group. A group of trees may comprise of more than one species.

Height (m)

All heights are estimated in metres.

Number of Stems

The number of stems is either 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or MS (multi-stemmed). This feature influences how the area of the recommended root protection area is calculated.

Stem or Combined Diameter (cm)

Single stem diameters are measured at 1.5m with a diameter tape. The combined stem diameters for trees with up to five stems and trees with more than five stems (MS) trees are calculated in accordance with the guidance.

Crown Spread Radius (m)

The crown radius from tree trunk to crown limit identified at the four cardinal points (N, S, E and W) in order to allow presentation of the above ground constraints on the Tree Protection Plan.

Measurements are approximate and recorded to the nearest half metre.

1st Branch (m)

This is a record of the height of the lowest branch. This is useful when planning access routes or considering if pruning will be required to site new features under a tree crown.

Age Class

(Y) Young, (SM) Semi-Mature, (EM) Early-Mature, (M) Mature, (FM) Fully-Mature or (V) Veteran.

Overall Health

An overall assessment of the physiological condition of the tree recorded as (G) Good, (F) Fair, (P) Poor, (D) Dead.

ULE (Years)

Useful Life Expectancy. Anticipated future contribution to amenity, in years.

Tree Structural Condition & Site Notes

Observations on the form of the tree, condition and structural integrity.

Site notes are detailed when relevant to the growth conditions or rooting constraints.

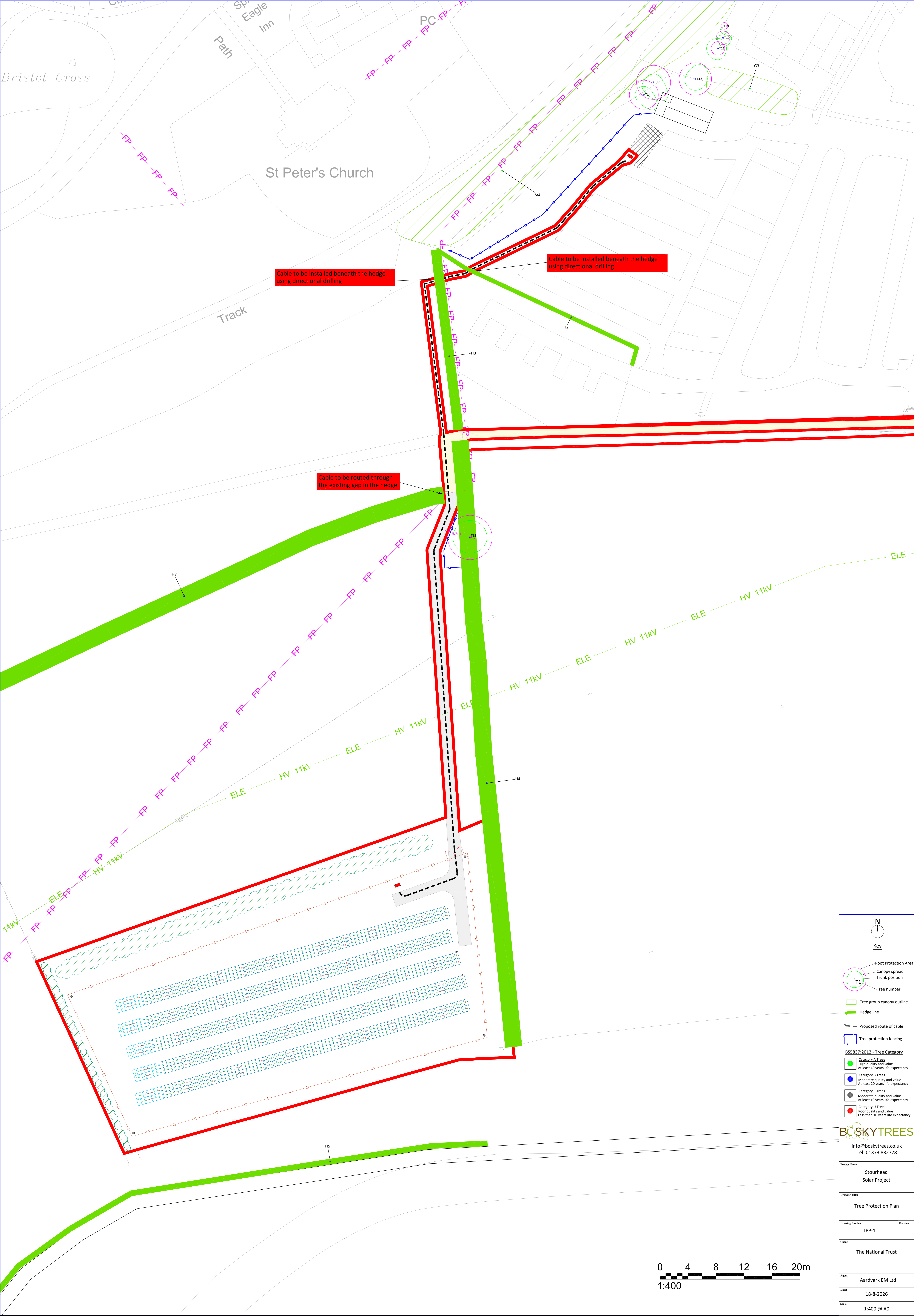
Management Recommendations

Recommended tree surgery works to be carried out prior to construction. Terminology used is based on guidance detailed in BS3998:2010 – Recommendations for tree work¹.

Category

Tree category as defined within BS5837:2012. Categories A (high quality), B (moderate quality) and C (low quality) are trees that should be considered for retention. Category U trees are unsuitable for retention.

¹ British Standards Institution (2010). BS3998 - Recommendations for Tree Work. BSI, London.



Key

Root Protection Area

Canopy spread

Trunk position

Tree number

Tree group canopy outline

Hedge line

Proposed route of cable

Tree protection fencing

BS5837:2012 - Tree Category

Category A Trees

High quality and value

At least 40 years life-expectancy

Category B Trees

Moderate quality and value

At least 20 years life-expectancy

Category C Trees

Moderate quality and value

At least 10 years life-expectancy

Category U Trees

Poor quality and value

Less than 10 years life-expectancy

BC SKY TREES

info@boskytrees.co.uk

Tel: 01373 832778

Project Name:

Stourhead Solar Project

Drawing Title:

Tree Protection Plan

Drawing Number:

TPP-1

Revision

Client:

The National Trust

Agent:

Aardvark EM Ltd

Date:

18-8-2026

Scale:

1:400 @ A0

0

4

8

12

16

20m

1:400