

Symmetry Park, Bicester, Phase 3

Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Incorporating Tree Protection Measures)

Prepared by:

The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd

On behalf of:

Tritax Big Box Developments

November 2024

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Plan EDP 1: Tree Protection Plan (edp7480_d018a 26 November 2024 PDr/LTa)

Plan EDP 2: Tree Constraints Plan (edp7480_d003a 27 November 2024 PDr/LTa)

Section 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been prepared by The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) on behalf of Tritax Big Box Developments (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') in relation to the proposed development of Symmetry Park Bicester, Phase 3 (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').
- 1.2 It sets out the nature and extent of tree losses and provides mitigation and protection measures to ensure the viable long-term retention of retained trees in the context of the development proposals.

SITE CONTEXT

- 1.3 The Site is centred approximately at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) SP60692 20626. The local planning authority (LPA) is Cherwell District Council. The location and extents of the Site are illustrated on **Plan EDP 1**, and described in the material supporting the planning application, particularly the Design and Access Statement.
- 1.4 The Site measures 7.34 hectares (ha) and is located at the south-eastern edge of Bicester, Oxfordshire along the A41, adjacent to the completed Symmetry Park Phase 1 and 2 developments. It comprises arable fields, bordered by hedgerows, with a small group of farm buildings in the north-eastern corner. Other features on site include a small block of woodland in the south-east, and an area of tall forbs. The Site has been largely used for hay production and cattle grazing land. The Site is bounded by the A41 to the south, Symmetry Park Phase 1 and 2 to the west, a scrap metal yard to the east and arable land to the north.
- 1.5 The majority of the existing Symmetry Park site (which the Site is immediately adjacent to) is located in an area allocated for development in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011–2031 as a strategic allocation for employment development: Planning Policy Bicester 12: South East Bicester.
- 1.6 On 04 November 2024, Cherwell District Council published the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (Regulation 19) Proposed Submission Plan, this is due to go out for public consultation in December 2024. The Site is identified in the Proposed Submission Plan as an Employment Site Allocation (site area 45.80 hectares developable area of 30). The draft allocation is for employment uses E(g)(i)/(ii)/(iii)/B2/B8 floorspace Policy reference BIC E1 Land east of J9, M40, Bicester.
- 1.7 EDP has been providing advice on Arboricultural matters to the Applicant since the outset of the design process and in so doing, helping to ensure that the masterplan is as sensitive to its landscape context as possible.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.8 The primary aim of this AIA is to evaluate the impact of the proposed development on the existing tree stock. The assessment will identify which trees can be preserved and which will need to be removed. Additionally, it will propose mitigation measures, such as protective fencing, to ensure the safe and long-term preservation of any retained trees if the development proceeds.
- 1.9 This AIA utilises EDP's arboricultural constraints data from the Tree Constraints Plan (**Plan EDP 2**) and Tree Survey Schedule appended to this report, originally submitted with the Phase 2 application in 2020. A follow-up walkover survey conducted in August 2024 indicated that the tree stock remains unchanged, with the exception of the reclassification of Veteran tree **T14** (which will be retained as part of the development proposals) and modifications to the root protection areas (RPA) of trees **T42**, **T44**, and **T45** due to the presence of a significant wet ditch. These changes are illustrated on the Tree Protection Plan (**Plan EDP 1**).
- 1.10 Veteran tree **T14** will be retained as part of the development proposals, and has been afforded maximum protection in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and guidance from Natural England and the Forestry Commission. This protection is implemented through a buffer zone measuring 15 times the tree's stem diameter. The buffer zone is depicted in orange on **Plan EDP 1** and will be retained as semi-natural habitat.

Relevant Baseline Documents

- 1.11 EDP's Arboricultural Technical Note (edp4813_r002) is relevant to the provisions of this AIA and this AIA should be read in conjunction with it where applicable.
- 1.12 The following best practice guidance and informative standards are relevant to the provisions of the AIA and should be read in conjunction with the AIA where applicable:
 - BS 5837: 2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction Recommendations. BSI 2012; and
 - BS 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations, BSI 2010.

Section 2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

- 2.1 This AIA has been prepared following Site-based observations, a desktop study of the baseline survey data and consideration of the Site Location Planning Boundary (**Appendix EDP 1**) which is overlaid onto the updated constraints plan. The resulting drawing, a Tree Protection Plan (**Plan EDP 1**) is found to the rear of this report.
- 2.2 This AIA recognises that construction activities pose a threat to subject trees if treated inappropriately and assesses the likely impacts of the proposals on the tree stock and where appropriate, provides mitigation with the view of achieving a harmonious relationship between the trees and the built form.
- 2.3 Assessment of the impact of the proposals has been determined following consideration of the constraints each surveyed item poses by virtue of its position, branch spread and designated RPA.
- 2.4 Consideration should be given to retaining all trees where possible. However, ultimately the removal of any tree is dependent on its proximity to the footprint of any proposal and associated landscaping.

TREE REMOVALS FOR REASONS OF SOUND ARBORICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

- 2.5 The BS 5837:2012 compliant survey identified a total of four category U items depicted on (**Plan EDP 1**), the condition of which was considered to be impaired to such an extent that they are unsuitable for retention and are therefore not included in the calculations to follow.
- 2.6 Off-site items remain outside of control of the development and require the landowners' consent prior to any works or removals.
- 2.7 Due to their condition, category U items often have ecological value and therefore any work to or removal of category U items require cross-referencing with the ecological assessment prior to any work or felling taking place.
- 2.8 If category U items are to be retained as an ecological asset, arboricultural advice should be sought to ensure this can be achieved.

ITEMS IMPACTED BY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

2.9 Assessment of the Site Layout (**Appendix EDP 2**) determines that nine items are impacted by the development proposals; these are detailed within **Table EDP 2.1**. Three items are category A of high quality, Three items are category B, of moderate quality; and three items are category C, of low quality.

Table EDP 2.1: Items Impacted by Development Proposals

Ref. Number	Species	Impact	Category Grading
T19	Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	Complete removal to facilitate development.	В
H25	Blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>) Hawthorn	Partial removal.	С
G38	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) Field Maple (Acer campestre)	Partial removal to facilitate development.	В
G40	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Elder (Sambucus nigra) English Elm (Ulmus procera) Hawthorn	Partial removal for drainage.	С
H46	Blackthorn Elder English Elm Hawthorn	Partial removal for main access point.	С
T47	English Oak	Minor encroachment into RPA. Excavation under direct supervision,	А
T48	English Oak	Minor encroachment into RPA. Excavation under direct supervision,	А
T49	English Oak	Minor encroachment into RPA. Excavation under direct supervision,	А
T51	English Oak	Minor encroachment into RPA.	В

SUMMARY OF TREE LOSSES AND RETENTION

2.10 A summary of the tree losses and retention based upon the Site Layout (**Appendix EDP 1**) is provided within **Table EDP 2.2**. In this context, the term 'affected' means encroachment into the RPA of a retained item.

Table EDP 2.2: Summary of Tree Losses and Retention

	Existing	Trees, Groups and Hedgerows Lost Due to Proposals	Trees, Groups and Hedgerows Affected by Proposals	Trees, Groups and Hedgerows Unaffected by Proposals
Category A	3	0	3	0
Category B	17	1	2	14
Category C	12	0	3	9
Totals	32	1	8	23

MITIGATION

- 2.11 There is a minor encroachment into the RPA of **T47**, **T48**, **T49**. **T51** and the partial removal of **G38**. However, to prevent any inadvertent damage to the RPAs of these items, hand-digging under an arboricultural watching brief is recommended. A suitably worded condition can secure this mitigation in order to minimise harm and ensure safe, long-term retention to trees.
- 2.12 Existing trees identified for retention on the appended Tree Protection Plan (**Plan EDP 1**) will continue to be managed in accordance with BS 5837:2012. Critically, this requires arboricultural review of any future emerging detailed design and the implementation of physical protection measures to safeguard the retained trees, including robust protection in the form of a barrier to BS 5837:2012 (**Appendix EDP 2**), during the construction phases. The importance of such matters cannot be overlooked if a successful outcome is to be ensured.

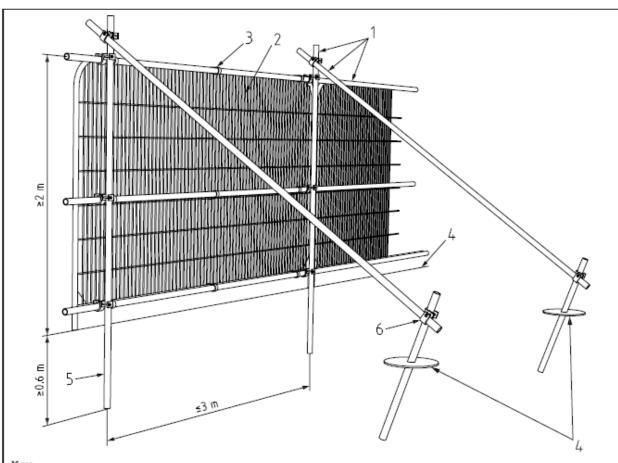
Section 3 Conclusions

- 3.1 The masterplanning of the development has incorporated arboricultural recommendations, leading to the loss of only one Category B item, and impacting two moderate-quality category B items and three low-quality Category C items. To ensure the succession of the existing maturing tree stock, significant new planting is recommended. This new planting aims to provide long-term sustainability within the landscape, enhance species diversity on the site, and contribute to the area's green infrastructure.
- 3.2 Existing trees identified for retention on the appended Tree Protection Plan (**Plan EDP 1**) will continue to be managed in accordance with BS 5837:2012. Critically, this requires arboricultural review of any alteration to the development layout and the implementation of physical protection measures to safeguard the retained trees, including robust protection in the form of a barrier to BS 5837:2012, during the demolition and construction phases. The importance of such matters cannot be overlooked if a successful outcome is to be ensured.
- 3.3 A suitably worded condition can secure any mitigation measures which would be required to minimise harm and ensure safe, long-term retention to trees.

Appendix EDP 1 Site Location Planning Boundary Drawing Number 4036-X3-100 PL02 Phase 3



Appendix EDP 2 Tree Protection Barrier on Scaffold 2.0m High (Extract from BS 5837:2012, Figure 2 'Protective Barrier')



Key

- 1 Standard scaffold poles
- 2 Heavy gauge 2 m tall galvanized 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

Appendix EDP 3 Tree Survey Schedule

Client: Tritax Symmerty Site: Symmetry Park Bicester, Phase 3 Date of 26 06 2024 Luke Tamblyn Consultant Survey:

raggeu	19/4				Branch S	Spread (m)				Weather				Estimated		
Sequential Reference No.	Species	Height (m)	Stem Diameter (mm)	North	East	South	West	Canopy Clearance (m)	Life Stage	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Comments / Notes	Recommendations	Remaining Contribution (Years)	Category Grading	Priority
T14	English Oak (Quercus robur)	12	1200	5	9	5	5	2	Veteran	Fair	Fair	Access to base - restricted. Growing out of hedgerow - all readings estimated. Wet ditch to east and north. Smothered in ivy. Dying back	No work recommendations	40+	A3	N/A
H15	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	1.5	Multi	2	2	2	2	0	Mature	Fair	Fair	N/A	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A
T16	Goat Willow (Salix caprea)	8	100	3	3	3	3	1	Early Mature	Fair	Poor	Growing out of hedgerow - all readings estimated. Included twin-stemmed union at base.	No work recommendations	10+	C1	N/A
T17	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	12	300	5	5	5	5	3	Early Mature	Poor	Fair	Access to base restricted - growing out of hedgerow. All readings estimated. Low vigour. Deadwood in crown. Ivy on stem.	No work recommendations	10+	C1	N/A
G18	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Goat Willow (Salix caprea)	10	150	2	2	2	2	1	Mature	Fair	Fair	Ivy on stem of goat willow.	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A
T19	Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	8	300	3	3	3	3	1	Mature	Fair	Fair	No defects noted.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
G20	Elder (Sambucus nigra)	8	150	2	2	2	2	1	Mature	Fair	Poor	Growing against barn. Inappropriate for retention.	No work recommendations	<10	U	N/A
G21	English Oak (Quercus robur) Goat Willow (Salix caprea) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna) Silver Birch (Betula pendula)	14	300	2	2	2	2	1	Mature	Fair	Fair	Discarded tyres and machinery parts within group.	No work recommendations	20+	B2	N/A
G22	Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna) Lombardy Poplar (Populus nigra 'Italica') Lawson Cypress (Chamaecyparis lawsoniana)	18	300	2	2	2	2	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Offsite group - all readings estimated.	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A
T23	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	600	7	3	7	7	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - growing out of hedgerow. Dry ditch to east. Smothered in ivy. Deadwood in crown. Pruned back hard over land to east.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
T24	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	800	8	6	8	8	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - growing out of hedgerow. Dry ditch to east. Smothered in ivy. Deadwood in crown.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
H25	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	2	Multi	2	2	2	2	0	Mature	Fair	Fair	Manged hedgerow.	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A
T26	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	600	7	4	4	5	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - growing out of hedgerow. Dry ditch to east. Ivy on stem. Deadwood in crown. Asymmetric crown - photographic growth away from adjacent ash. Historic pruning wounds of field to west and road to east.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
T27	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	14	500	3	3	7	3	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - growing out of hedgerow. Dry ditch to east. Ivy on stem. Deadwood in crown. Suspected stored coppice. Historic pruning wounds over road to east and field to west.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
T28	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	14	300	7	7	7	7	1	Mature	Fair	Fair	Ivy on stem. Multiple stems suspected growing out of same root stock.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
T29	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	14	600	8	8	8	8	1	Mature	Fair	Poor	Large tear wound on east of stem from 1m to 3m. Heartwood decaying.	No work recommendations	<10	U	N/A
G30	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) Elder (Sambucus nigra) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	10	200	2	2	2	2	1	Mature	Fair	Fair	Ivy on stems. Bramble at base.	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A
T31	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	12	500	5	5	5	5	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Road to south. Smothered in ivy.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
T32	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	12	600	4	5	6	5	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Road to south. Smothered in ivy. Deadwood in crown.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A
T33	English Oak (Quercus robur)	12	400	4	4	4	4	3	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Road to south. Smothered in ivy. High canopy.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A

Dry

Weather

Sequential Reference Number -T - Individual specimen; G - Group, Trees that form cohesive arboricultural features either aerodynamically, visually or culturally; H - Linear group of specimens that form a hedge or boundary; W - A larger group or area of trees that should be regarded as a single woodland unit.

Species -Common English names are used wherever possible for simplicity.

N/A

Tagged

Height -An approximation of height (in metres) is provided for the highest point of the tree.

Stem Diameter - This is the measurement of stem diameter in millimetres taken in accordance with Annex C of BS5837:2012. # - estimated

Branch Spread -This is taken at four cardinal points, with a stated value in metres to enable an accurate representation of the crown

First Significant Branch -Height of first significant branch and direction of growth e.g. 2.4 N, measured from adjacent ground level.

Existing Height Above Ground Level -An approximation of height (in metres) of crown clearance above adjacent ground level. Life Stage -There are five classes to which trees are assigned: Young; Early Mature; Mature; Over Mature; Veteran.

Physiological Condition -An indication of the tree's physiological condition is represented and classed as good, fair, poor or dead, this is informed by the following: Canopy Density: It should be taken that, unless otherwise stated with each individual entry, the canopy density of the trees is typical of the species; and Leaf Size and Colouration: It should be taken that, unless otherwise stated with each individual entry, leaf size and colouration is typical of the species.

Preliminary Management Recommendations -These are made on the basis of optimising the life expectancy of site trees, given their current situation and that which may result from the development proposals. The survey process pays particular attention to implications for life and/or property, defects recorded under the structural condition have the necessary mitigation measures proposed within this section of the schedule

Estimated Remaining Contribution - The definitions of the terms used are as follows and describe the estimated length of time (in years) over which the tree can be expected to make a safe contribution to local amenity: Less than 10; 10+; 20+; and 40+.

Category Grading -Trees have been assigned 'U' or Category Grading 'A' to 'C' in accordance with the Cascade Chart given in BS5837:2012

Tree Works Priority Codes -Priority codes from 1 to 3 have been given for trees requiring work. The definition of the codes used is as follows: Priority 1: Work that should be undertaken urgently due to the identification of a potential hazard; Priority 2: Work that should be undertaken prior to any works commencing on site; and Priority 3: Work that should be undertaken following the completion of the development.

						Branch S	Branch Spread (m)								Estimated		
Sequential Reference No.	Species	Height (m)	Stem Diameter (mm)	North	East	South	West	Canopy Clearance (m)	Life Stage	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Comments / Notes	Recommendations	Remaining Contribution (Years)	Category Grading	Priority	
T34	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	700	7	8	6	5	3	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Road to south. Ivy and deadwood in crown. High canopy.	No work recommendations	40+	A1	N/A	
T35	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	600	7	1	7	8	3	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Road to south. Ivy and deadwood in crown. Asymmetric crown - phototropism; suppressed by adjacent oak.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A	
T36	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	900	6	8	6	8	3	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Road to south. Deadwood in crown. Smothered in ivy.	No work recommendations	40+	A1	N/A	
T37	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	8	300	3	3	3	3	2	Early Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - growing out of hedgerow. Ivy on stem.	No work recommendations	10+	C1	N/A	
G38	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) Field Maple (Acer campestre)	12	400	2	2	2	2	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Ivy on stems.	No work recommendations	20+	B2	N/A	
G39	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior) Crack Willow (Salix fragilis) English Oak (Quercus robur) Field Maple (Acer campestre)	14	500	2	2	2	2	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. Ivy on stems. Crack willow has open cavity at old pollard knuckle.	No work recommendations	20+	B2	N/A	
G40	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Elder (Sambucus nigra) English Elm (Ulmus procera) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	6	150	2	2	2	2	0	Mature	Fair	Fair	Lapsed hedgerow.	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A	
T41	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	12	75	4	4	4	4	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Stored coppice. Growing out of hedge - access restricted. Wet ditch to east.	No work recommendations	10+	C1	N/A	
T42	English Oak (Quercus robur)	12	500	5	5	5	5	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - growing out of hedgerow. All readings estimated. Wet ditch to east.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A	
H43	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Elder (Sambucus nigra) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	2	Multi	2	2	2	2	0	Mature	Fair	Fair	Wet ditch to east.	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A	
T44	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	10	400	5	5	5	5	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Growing out of hedgerow - access to base restricted. All readings estimated. Wet ditch to east.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A	
T45	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	800	6	7	6	8	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - all readings estimated. Wet ditch to east.	No work recommendations	20+	B1	N/A	
H46	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Elder (Sambucus nigra) English Elm (Ulmus procera) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	2	Multi	2	2	2	2	0	Mature	Fair	Fair	Flailed hedge. Wet ditch to east.	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A	
T47	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	900	8	6	6	6	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - all readings estimated. Growing out of hedgerow. Deadwood in crown.	No work recommendations	40+	A1	N/A	
T48	English Oak (Quercus robur)	16	1000	9	8	8	8	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - all readings estimated. Growing out of hedgerow. Deadwood in crown. Codominant stems - union at 2m.	No work recommendations	40+	A1	N/A	
T49	English Oak (Quercus robur)	14	900	7	9	7	8	2	Mature	Fair	Fair	Access to base restricted - all readings estimated. Growing out of hedgerow. Deadwood in crown. Tear out wound at 5m east.	No work recommendations	40+	A1	N/A	
H50	Blackthorn (Prunus spinosa) Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	2	Multi	3	3	3	3	0	Mature	Fair	Fair	Wet ditch through middle	No work recommendations	10+	C2	N/A	

Sequential Reference Number -T - Individual specimen; G - Group, Trees that form cohesive arboricultural features either aerodynamically, visually or culturally; H - Linear group of specimens that form a hedge or boundary; W - A larger group or area of trees that should be regarded as a single woodland unit.

Species -Common English names are used wherever possible for simplicity.

Height -An approximation of height (in metres) is provided for the highest point of the tree.

Stem Diameter - This is the measurement of stem diameter in millimetres taken in accordance with Annex C of BS5837:2012. # - estimated

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First Significant Branch -Height of first significant branch and direction of growth e.g. 2.4 N, measured from adjacent ground level. Existing Height Above Ground Level -An approximation of height (in metres) of crown clearance above adjacent ground level.

Life Stage -There are five classes to which trees are assigned: Young; Early Mature; Mature; Over Mature; Veteran.

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Preliminary Management Recommendations -These are made on the basis of optimising the life expectancy of site trees, given their current situation and that which may result from the development proposals. The survey process pays particular attention to implications for life and/or property; defects recorded under the structural condition have the necessary mitigation measures proposed within this section of the schedule.

Estimated Remaining Contribution - The definitions of the terms used are as follows and describe the estimated length of time (in years) over which the tree can be expected to make a safe contribution to local amenity: Less than 10; 10+; 20+; and 40+.

Category Grading -Trees have been assigned 'U' or Category Grading 'A' to 'C' in accordance with the Cascade Chart given in BS5837:2012

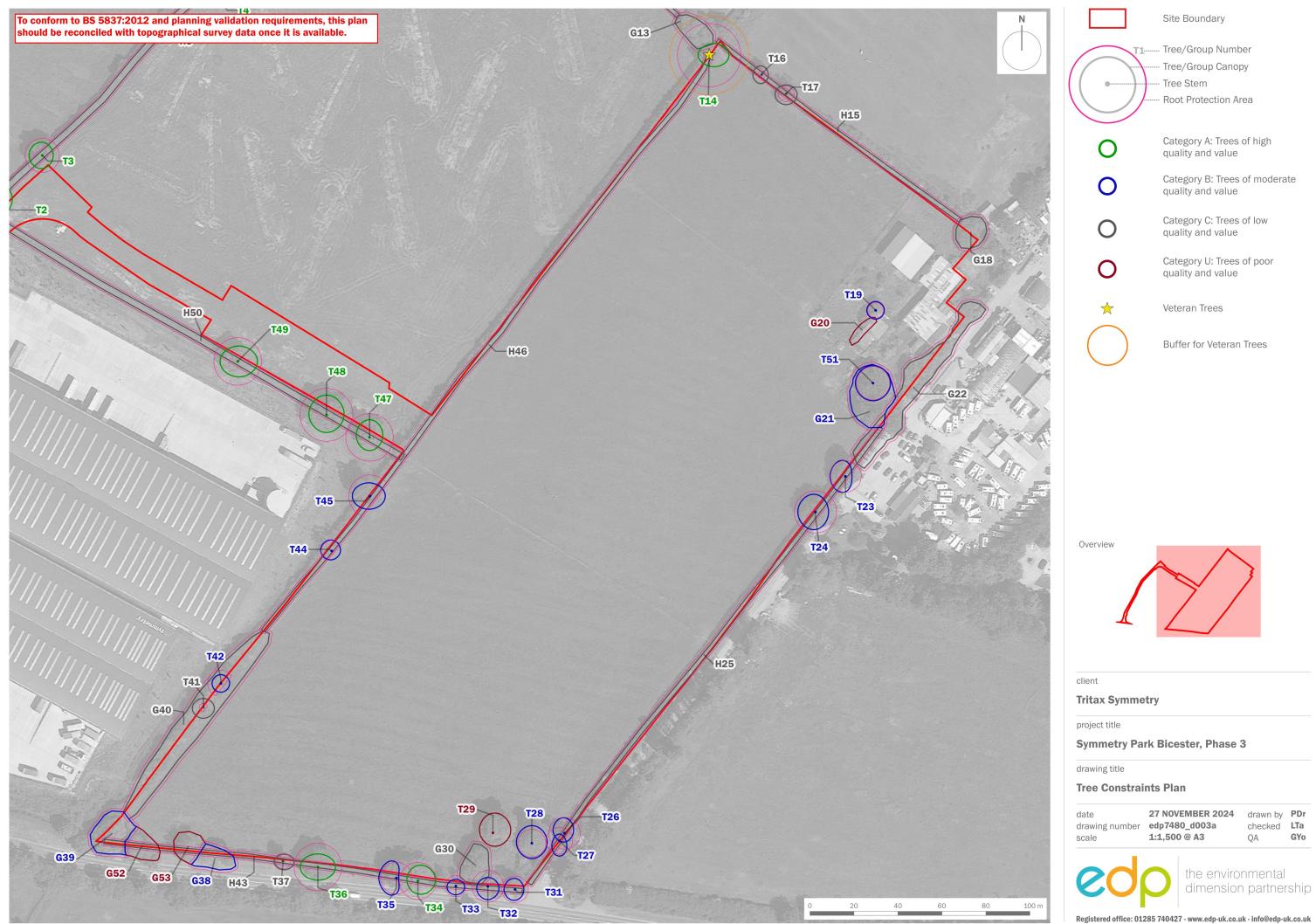
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CARDIFF 02921 671900

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