

Sylva Consultancy
expert arboricultural advice

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Bicester Hotel & Golf Club
Chesterton
Bicester
Oxfordshire
OX26 1TE

September 2015

Ref: 15082

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1. OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Instructions were received to carry out an arboricultural report in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 at land at The Bicester Hotel and Golf Club, Bicester. This report advises on tree constraints in order to enable an informative approach to planning decisions.
- 1.2 The following document has been provided:
 - Site Plan DWG No. SK.15-543-53 Dated May 2015

2. TREE SURVEY

- 2.1 The tree survey was undertaken on 26th August 2015. General weather conditions were good.
- 2.2 The tree survey assessment was carried out in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations' and good arboricultural practice. This is a basic data collection exercise and a record of the trees condition at the time of surveying.
- 2.3 Cherwell District Council (Trees at Vicarage Farm) Tree Preservation Order (TPO) No. 1 1991 protects selected trees (Appendix 1). Additional information obtained from Cherwell District Council website reveals that the site is not located within a Conservation Area.
- 2.4 A TPO ***prohibits the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction to protected trees or woodlands unless permission has been granted by the LPA.***
- 2.5 Before undertaking any work that may be recommended within this report, it is advisable to check direct with Cherwell District Council to determine whether any planning controls are in operation; written consent must be obtained for works on trees subject to a TPO and in the case of a Conservation Area six weeks' notice of intent must be forwarded before undertaking any such work. All tree works that may be recommended within this report should be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 'Recommendations for Tree Works' and in compliance with good practice as promoted by the Forestry Industry Safety Accord.
- 2.6 In addition The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000, provides statutory protection to birds, bats and other species that inhabit trees. These have the potential to pose additional constraints on the use and timings of works that may occur to trees located at or adjacent to the site. These issues are beyond my expertise and it is strongly recommended that appropriate advice is sort prior to the implementation of any works considered within this report.

3. TREE INSPECTION METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 Trees identified within the above site survey drawing were assessed visually from ground level by a person qualified and experienced in arboriculture.
- 3.2 Whilst this report considers amongst other things, the trees structural condition, it does not form a detailed health and safety inspection. However, where significant defects are visually identified, remedial works may be included within the tree survey schedule. As a baseline, works that would be identified as part of a regular inspection carried out by a prudent land owner i.e. removal of deadwood or remedial works would not be highlighted in this report. However, should development occur it is recommended that the trees are re-inspected following final design and a tree works schedule drawn up. This should consider Health & Safety and facilitative pruning in accordance with the design layout.
- 3.3 For the purpose of clarity, all trees assessed are identified by a reference number within the Tree Survey Schedule (Appendix 2) which corresponds with the Tree No. recorded on the Tree Constraints Plan.
- 3.4 The tree species and their dimensions are recorded in the Tree Survey Schedule together with the trees age, physiological and structural condition and a category code in accordance with the guidelines set out in the British Standard 5837:2012.
- 3.5 Where a tree's crown is heavily asymmetrical, the crown radius for each cardinal compass point is given. Together with the height and direction of growth of the first significant branch and the canopy height above ground level, this provides a good guide to the size and outline form of the tree. The estimated life expectancy in context of the species is provided as guidance only. In some instances an alternative life expectancy has been provided than what is recommended within the British Standard 5837:2012. This alternative life expectancy guideline is based on my experience and the current age and environment that the tree is growing in.
- 3.6 Details of the root protection area around each individual tree is provided within Appendix 3 and illustrated on the Tree Constraints Plan (Appendix 4) to assist in the assessment of the site layout and the likely impact of construction works proposed within close proximity of the trees that are to be retained.

4. SITE DESCRIPTION & OBSERVATIONS

- 4.1 The site surveyed is located to the rear of Bicester Hotel & Golf Club. The site is roughly rectangular in shape and flat. A row of Poplar trees are located in north/south row centrally within the site with the remainder of the tree stock surveyed for the purpose of this report located adjacent to the boundaries of the area identified for development.
- 4.2 The British Standard 5837:2012 recommends that the tree survey should include all trees highlighted on the topographical survey. A total of 15 trees and 3 groups have been recorded within this assessment. This included 12 category 'B' trees and 3 category 'C' trees. No category 'A' trees or category 'U' trees have been recorded. In addition 1 category 'B' and 2 category 'C' groups have also been documented.
- 4.3 To summarise trees assessed as category 'A' trees are considered as trees of high quality with an estimated life expectancy of at least 40 years; Category 'B' trees of moderate quality with an estimated life expectancy of at least 20 years with Category 'C' trees considered as low quality with a life expectancy of at least 10 years (or young trees with a stem diameter of less than 150mm). Please refer to Appendix 1 'Cascade Chart' for full details of the tree quality assessment.
- 4.4 With regard to development the BS5837:2012 recommends that the default position should be that structures are located outside the root protection areas (RPA) of trees to be retained. However, where there is an overriding justification for construction within the RPA, technical solutions might be available that prevent damage to the tree(s). In addition the BS5837:2012 further states that there is the need to avoid misplaced tree retention; for example, to attempt to retain too many trees on a site may result in excessive pressure on the trees during the development work and subsequent demands for their removal post development.
- 4.5 It is considered that the most significant trees within the potentially developable area are the category 'B' trees. Notwithstanding this merit must also be given to the contribution that the lower grade trees and groups provide to the site. As such it is recommended that due consideration regarding their retention, should development occur is undertaken as they have the potential to provide useful softening and screening to development.
- 4.6 In the event that category 'C' tree removal is desirable it is considered that there is a good opportunity to provide mitigating tree planting through the planning process.

5. ARBORICULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 It is proposed to construct a rear extension to the existing Hotel. The most noteworthy trees within influencing distance of the proposal are the category 'B' trees. These trees form a noteworthy skyline feature within the landscape with the trees contributing appreciably to the publically visual amenity of the immediate area.
- 5.1.2 The appended arboricultural implications plan (Appendix 5) illustrates the proposals in relation to the tree stock. In addition to pre-development concerns, post development concerns such as shading, debris and concerns of the trees proximity and juxtaposition to the proposal have also be considered during the design process.
- 5.1.3 An assessment of the impacts of the proposed development on the tree stock reveals that for development 1 category 'C' tree and 1 category 'C' group requires removal. Of the trees to be removed, none are subject of the above tree preservation order.
- 5.1.4 On the bases of the appraisal it is considered that the arboricultural impact of the scheme on the tree stock will result in a negligible impact on the character and appearance of both the site and wider environment.

5.2 Impact of the proposal on the tree stock

- 5.2.1 In order to implement the scheme it is proposed to remove one category 'C' tree and one category 'C' group. Category 'C' trees and groups are assessed as being either of low quality, limited merit, low landscape benefits, no material cultural or conservation value, or only limited or short-term potential; or young trees with trunk diameter below 150mm; or a combination of these. It is considered that the removal of these trees provides a good opportunity to provide mitigating tree planting through the planning process.
- 5.2.2 Whilst trees in categories 'A', 'B' and 'C' are all a material consideration in the development process, the retention of category 'C' trees, being of low quality or of only limited or short-term potential, will not normally be considered necessary where they impose a significant constraint on development. Furthermore, BS 5837:2012 makes it clear that young trees, even those of good form and vitality, which have the potential to develop into quality specimens when mature "*need not necessarily be a significant constraint on the site's potential*".
- 5.2.3 The arboricultural implication plan illustrates that the proposed footprint falls outside the root protection areas (RPA's) of the intended retained tree stock. As such these trees can be adequately protected during the development. It is further considered that the trees are located at a reasonable distance to the proposals, therefore avoiding post development concerns such as excessive shading and or fear or apprehension from trees.

5.3 Proposed Landscaping

- 5.3.1 Landscaping will occur site wide in order to complement the re-development of the site. New tree planting is proposed whereby suitable species for the site will be chosen. It is considered that the new planting will enhance both the scheme and the character of the immediate area.

5.4 Conclusions

- 5.4.1 The British Standard 5837:2012 states that there is the need to avoid misplaced tree retention; for example, to attempt to retain too many unsuitable trees on a site may result in excessive pressure on the trees during the development work and subsequent demands for their removal post development. However where design permits, the retention of lower category trees can be beneficial providing screening and softening to a development and a sense of maturity to a scheme.
- 5.4.2 It is acknowledged that consideration for both the direct impact and indirect impact of a development with respect to retained trees needs to be assessed. With respect to the retained tree stock it is considered that their successful integration into the layout can be achieved. It is regarded that adequate space has been allowed within the development to allow for their long-term physical retention and future maintenance requirements. As such it is concluded that there will not be undue pressure to fell or severely prune retained trees.
- 5.4.3 Careful planning of site operations are recommended so as to avoid any adverse impact to the retained trees. In order to safeguard the trees through the development it is recommended that a site specific Arboricultural Method Statement is drawn up and implemented.
- 5.4.4 New service runs have yet to be confirmed; however the layout illustrates that sufficient space provides the opportunity to route services away from retained trees and proposed tree planting areas.
- 5.4.5 It is concluded that there is an adequate juxtaposition with the retained tree stock and proposal therefore reducing any post development concerns. Seasonal nuisances are a consideration, however it is regarded that there is a reasonable distance with trees to the proposal. As such it is regarded that there will not be any future pressure to significantly prune, or to seek permission to remove trees within the site. With further regard to any concerns of debris and seasonal nuisances it is considered that this can be managed by good design and as part of the overall general maintenance of the adjacent property/properties.

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Tree Preservation Order

FIRST SCHEDULE**TREES SPECIFIED INDIVIDUALLY***

(encircled in black on the map)

<i>No. on Map.</i>	<i>Description.</i>	<i>Situation.</i>
T1	Willow	Vicarage Farm, Chesterton
T2 - T4	Semi-mature Beech	ditto

TREES SPECIFIED BY REFERENCES TO AN AREA*

(within a dotted black line on the map)

<i>No. on Map.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Situation.</i>
None		

GROUPS OF TREES*

(within a broken black line on the map)

<i>No. on Map.</i>	<i>Description.</i>	<i>Situation.</i>
G1	Group comprising of 54 Poplars	Vicarage Farm, Chesterton
G2	Group comprising of over 20 Scots Pine of which only 6 are protected. Those not protected have been marked.	ditto

* The word "NONE" must be entered where necessary.



SCALE:- 1/2500



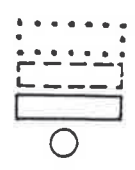
path 0826 27-60

Cherwell
 District Council
Tree Preservation Order TPO (No1) 1991

**Trees to Vicarage Farm,
 Chesterton.**

under
 Statutory Instrument 17 of 1969 and
 Town & Country Planning Act 1971
 Scale: 1: 2500 Ref.CHS 718/90
 Date: 14th January 1991

- A = AREA
- G = GROUP
- W = WOODLAND
- T = INDIVIDUAL TREE



Drain

APPENDIX 2

Tree Survey Schedule

KEY TO TREE SCHEDULE

Tree No: Relates to individual trees identified within the Tree Survey Schedule and Tree Constraints Plan

Species: Common name

Height: Estimated height expressed in meters

ST: Stem diameter of the main trunk taken at 1.5m above ground level or in accordance with Annex C BS5837:2012.

Height in M of Canopy: Information of the first significant branch and direction of growth in order to inform on ground clearance.

Abbreviations:

#:	Estimated
Ave:	Average
A.G.L:	Above ground level
SULE:	Safe Useful Life Expectancy

Branch Spread: Estimated crown radius expressed in meters, taken for each cardinal compass point.

Age Class:

Y	Young - Less than one third of natural life expectancy
SM	Middle aged - One to two thirds of natural life expectancy
M	Mature - More than two thirds of natural life expectancy
OM	Over mature
NP	Newly Planted

Physiological Condition:

G	Good
F	Fair
P	Poor
D	Dead

Notes:

Root Protection Area: This is a layout 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 is treated as a priority (detailed in paragraph 3.7 British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to Construction-Recommendations').

Young trees with a stem diameter of less than 150mm: Whilst the presence of young trees of good form and vitality is generally desirable (i.e those which have the potential to develop into quality mature specimens), they need not necessarily be a significant constraint on the site's potential (detailed in paragraph 4.5.10 British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to Construction-Recommendations').

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 <p><i>NOTE Category U trees can have existing or potential conservation value which it might be desirable to preserve; see 4.5.7.</i></p>	Dark 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)
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
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
		Light Green
		Mid Blue
		Grey

TREE NO.	SPECIES	HT (M)	CALCULATED STEM DIA (MM)	BRANCH SPREAD				HEIGHT IN M OF CANOPY	AGE CLASS	PHYS. COND	COMMENTS	REMAINING CONTRIBUTION (EST YEARS)	CATEGORY GRADING
				N	E	S	W						
T1	Poplar	21	430	1.5	0.5	1.5	1.5	N/A	M	F	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Dieback in upper canopy, minor damage on buttress roots.	10-20	C2
T2	Poplar	21	530	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	N/A	M	F	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Dieback in upper canopy. X 2 at 3.5m above ground level.	10-20	C2
T3	Poplar	23	525	1.5	1	1.5	1.5	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Typical of species. Adjacent to existing outdoor plant area.	20-40	B2
T4	Poplar	23	450	1.5	1.5	1	1	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Typical of species. Adjacent to existing outdoor plant area.	20-40	B2
T5	Poplar	22	460	1.5	1	1.5	1.5	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Typical of species. Adjacent to existing outdoor plant area.	20-40	B2
T6	Poplar	21.5	453	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Typical of species. Adjacent to existing outdoor plant area.	20-40	B2
T7	Poplar	22	500	1.5	1	1.5	1	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Typical of species. Adjacent to existing outdoor plant area.	20-40	B2
T8	Poplar	22	383	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar tree.	20-40	B2
T9	Poplar	22	440	1.5	1.5	1	1.5	N/A	M	F	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Ivy encroaching on main stem. Minor deadwood on northwest side of canopy. Decay noted on west side from ground level to 0.75m. Wound wood present.	20-40	B2
T10	Poplar	22	505	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	N/A	M	F	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Wounding on north side from ground level - 1m above ground level.	20-40	B2
T11	Poplar	21	368	1	1	1	1	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar trees.	20-40	B2
T12	Poplar	20.5	348	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	N/A	M	F	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Large wound on east side at 1.5m above ground level. Wound wood present. Scattered dead wood in canopy.	20-40	B2
T13	Poplar	20	380	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	N/A	M	G	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Grass bund located to south of tree.	20-40	B2
T14	Poplar	19	395	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	N/A	M	F	Component of a row of Poplar trees. Grass bund located to south of tree. Wounding on buttress roots on north and northwest side.	20-40	B2
G1	Willow x 4	Ave. 15	686	7	7	7	7	N/A	M	F	Lapsed pollards adjacent to existing access road. Average x6 stems. Average crown spread recorded.	20-40	B2
G2	Mixed Species	Ave. 6.5	Ave. 100	2	2	2	2	GL	SM	F	Hedge boundary between golf green and existing access road. Average dimensions recorded. Pleasant group feature located at the rear of the existing hotel provides pleasant screening. Could be transplanted.	10-20	C2
G3	Tibetan Cherry x 7	Ave. 4	Ave. 60	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	N/A	Y	G	Average dimensions recorded. Pleasant group feature located at the rear of the existing hotel provides pleasant screening. Could be transplanted.	10-20	C2
TNW	Norway Maple	9	243	2.8	3	2.8	2.8	2n	SM	G	Located on edge of golf course. Pleasant feature.	10-20	C2

APPENDIX 3

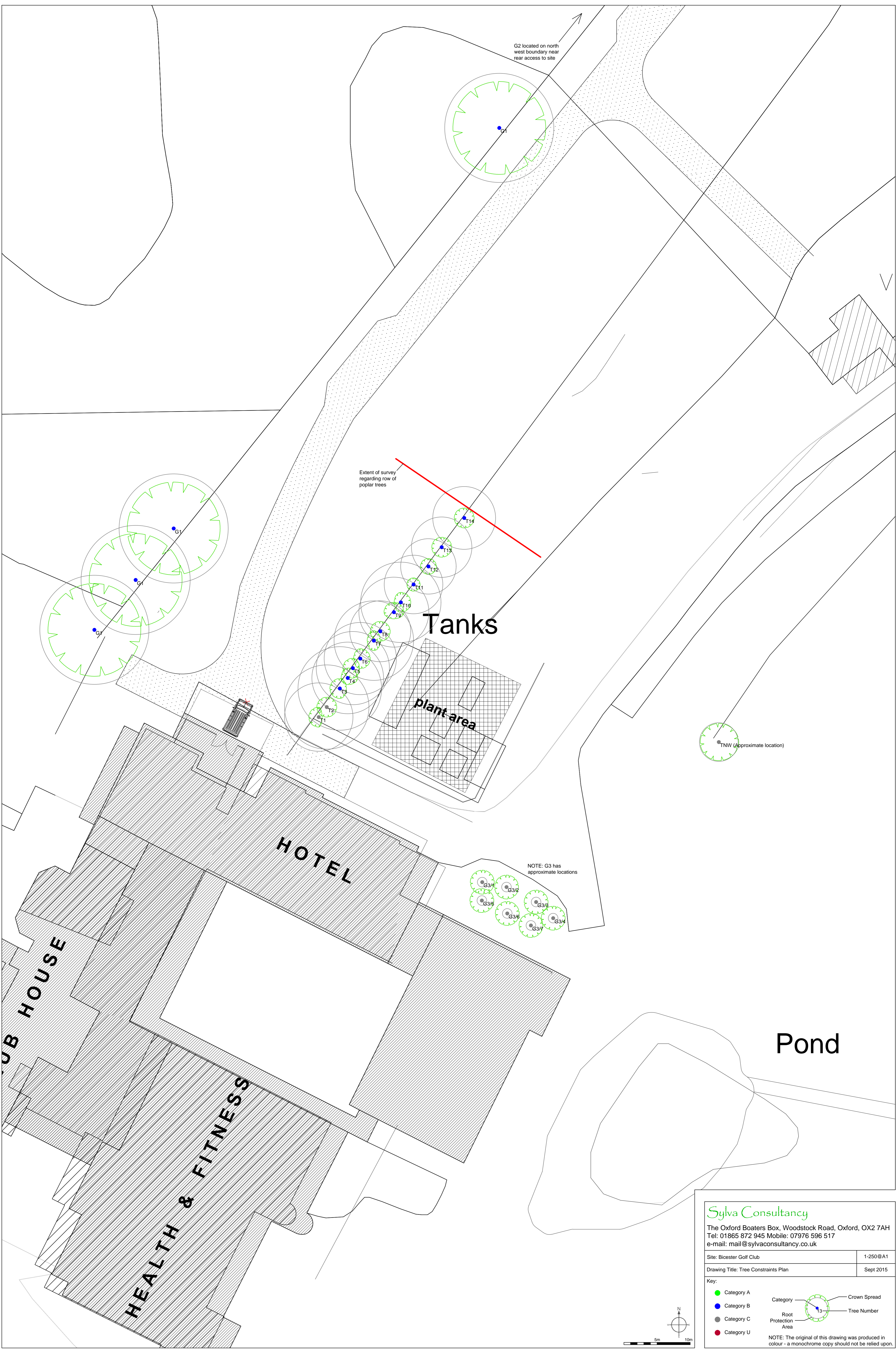
Root Protection Area

ROOT PROTECTION AREA

TREE NO.	SPECIES	NO. OF STEMS	SINGLE STEM DIA (mm)	2-5 STEMS					> 5 STEMS	ROOT PROTECTION AREA - RPA (RADIUS IN M)	RPA (M ²)	REMAINING CONTRIBUTION (EST YEARS)	CATEGORY GRADING
				STEM 1 (mm)	STEM 2 (mm)	STEM 3 (mm)	STEM 4 (mm)	STEM 5 (mm)	MEAN STEM DIA (mm)				
T1	Poplar	1	430							5.16	81	10-20	C2
T2	Poplar	1	530							6.36	124	10-20	C2
T3	Poplar	1	525							6.30	124	20-40	B2
T4	Poplar	1	450							5.40	92	20-40	B2
T5	Poplar	1	460							5.52	102	20-40	B2
T6	Poplar	1	453							5.44	92	20-40	B2
T7	Poplar	1	500							6.00	113	20-40	B2
T8	Poplar	1	383							4.60	72	20-40	B2
T9	Poplar	1	440							5.28	92	20-40	B2
T10	Poplar	1	505							6.06	113	20-40	B2
T11	Poplar	1	368							4.42	64	20-40	B2
T12	Poplar	1	348							4.18	55	20-40	B2
T13	Poplar	1	380							4.56	64	20-40	B2
T14	Poplar	1	395							4.74	72	20-40	B2
G1	Willow x 4	6							280	8.23	222	20-40	B2
G2	Mixed Species	1	100							1.20	5	10-20	C2
G3	Tibetan Cherry x 7	1	60							0.72	3	10-20	C2
TNW	Norway Maple	1	243							2.92	28	10-20	C2

APPENDIX 4

Tree Constraints Plan



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Site: Bicester Golf Club	1-250@A1
Drawing Title: Tree Constraints Plan	Sept 2015

Key:

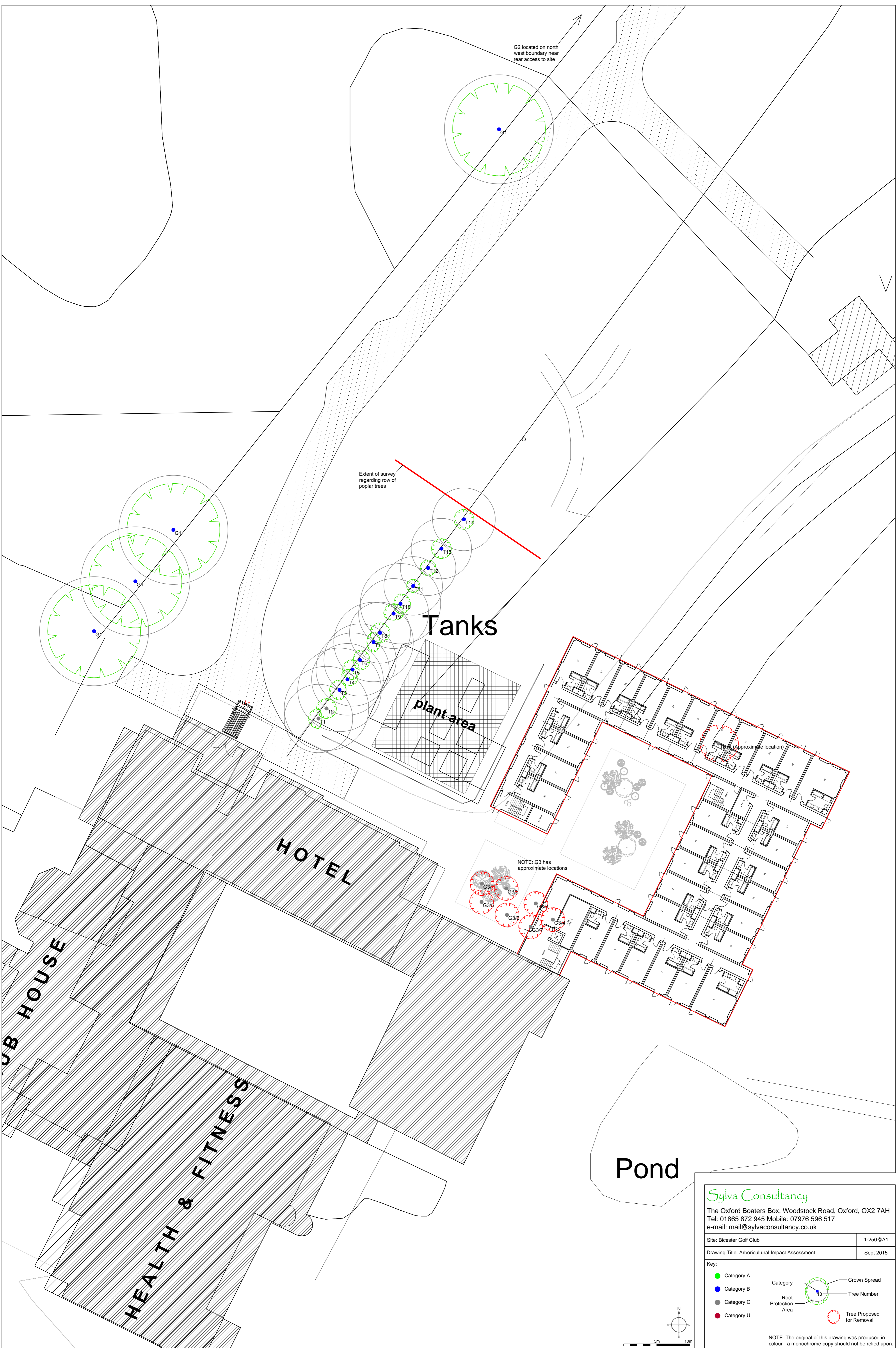
- Category A
- Category B
- Category C
- Category U

Category Crown Spread
 Root Protection Area Tree Number

NOTE: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

APPENDIX 5

Arboricultural Implications Plan



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Site: Bicester Golf Club	1-250@A1
Drawing Title: Arbicultural Impact Assessment	Sept 2015

Key:

- Category A (Green circle)
- Category B (Blue circle)
- Category C (Grey circle)
- Category U (Red circle)

Legend for tree symbols:

- Crown Spread (Green outline)
- Tree Number (Number inside circle)
- Root Protection Area (Dotted area)
- Tree Proposed for Removal (Red outline)

NOTE: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.