

Sylva Consultancy
expert arboricultural advice

Arboricultural Report

Land to the south of Southside
Steeple Aston
Oxfordshire

November 2017

Ref: 17078

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1. OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 Instructions were received to carry out an arboricultural report in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 on land at Steeple Aston (Appendix 1). This report advises on tree constraints in order to enable an informative approach to planning decisions.
- 1.2 The following document has been provided:
 - Topographical Survey, DWG No RGL 17 -2679-01 dated June 2017
 - Topographical Survey, DWG No RGL 17 -2679-02 dated June 2017

2. TREE SURVEY

- 2.1 The tree survey was undertaken on 2nd November 2017.
- 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 A desk top study of information posted on Cherwell District Council's (CDC) website details that select trees are located within Steeple Aston Conservation Area (Appendix 2). No information is currently available on the website to determine whether any of the trees are subject to any Tree Preservation Orders (TPO).
- 2.4 Trees in a Conservation Area that are not protected by a TPO are protected by the provisions in section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Anyone who **cuts down, uproots, tops, lops, wilfully destroys or wilfully damages a tree** in a Conservation Area (if that tree is not already protected by a Tree Preservation Order), or causes or permits such work, without giving a section 211 notice (or otherwise contravenes section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is guilty of an offence, unless an exception applies.
- 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 'Tree Works - Recommendations' 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 3) 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 Trees T4, T6, T10, T11, T12, T14, T15, T16 & T18 have ivy covering their main stems and as a result it has not been possible to undertake an appropriate assessment in the context of the British Standard 5837:2012. In this instance a provisional category grading has been assigned and expressed in italics within the Tree Survey Schedule. It is recommended that the ivy is severed and the category codes re-evaluated once the ivy has died back and the trees have been re-inspected.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 Details of the root protection area around each individual tree is provided within Appendix 4 and illustrated on the Tree Constraints Plan (Appendix 5) 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

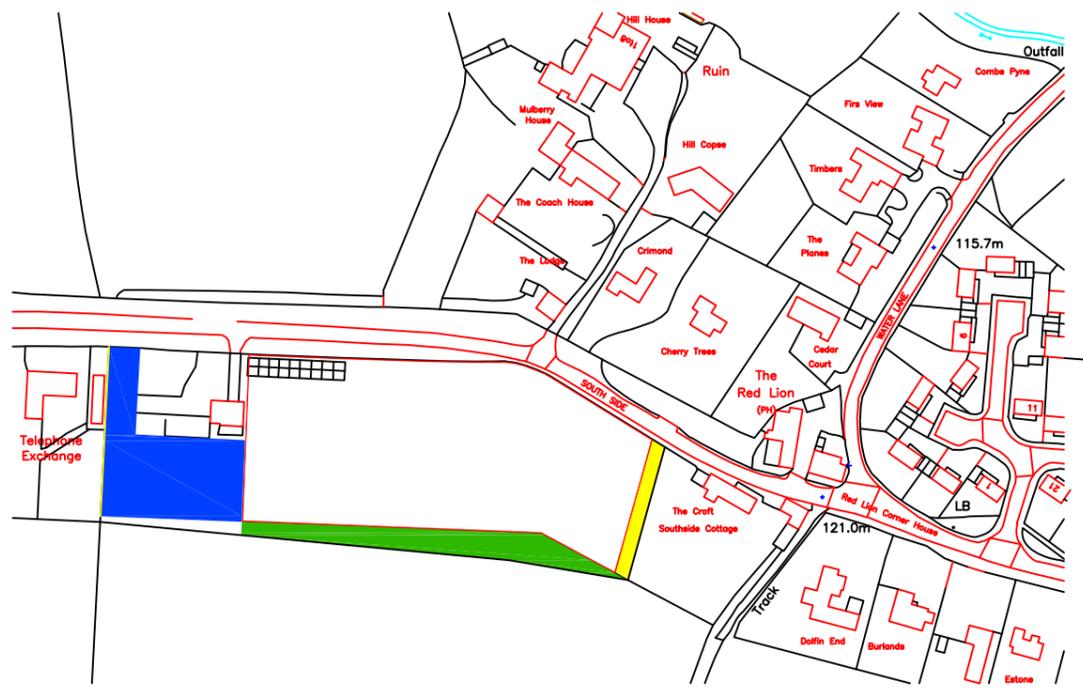
- 4.1 The site is located on land to the south of Southside on the outskirts of the village of Steeple Aston. The site surveyed is roughly rectangular in shape and flat.
- 4.2 The British Standard 5837:2012 recommends that the tree survey should include all trees highlighted on the topographical survey. A total of 18 trees, 1 group, 2 hedges and 2 areas have been recorded within this assessment. This included 10 category 'B' trees, 7 category 'C' trees and 1 category 'U' tree. No category 'A' trees have been recorded. In addition 1 category 'C' group and 2 category 'C' hedges have also been documented. The areas have been shown for illustrative purposes only.
- 4.3 Trees assessed as category 'U' trees are considered to be of such condition that any existing value would be lost within 10 years and which should, in the current context, be removed for reasons of sound arboriculture management. However, if category 'U' trees are placed in an inaccessible location such that concerns over public safety are reduced to an acceptable level, it may be preferable or possible to defer this recommendation.
- 4.4 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 3 'Cascade Chart' for full details of the tree quality assessment.
- 4.5 The tree stock is confined to the boundaries of the site. It has been interpreted that the follow trees are subject to the provisions of the Conservation Area Legislation:
- Offsite trees T7 (Beech), T8 (Beech) and T9 (Beech)
 - Trees on the highway verge T13 – T18 (Hawthorn & Sycamore)
- To ensure that the interpretation of the boundary of the Conservation Area is correct it is advised that CDC are contacted direct to confirm which trees are protected.
- 4.6 It is considered that the most significant trees within influencing distanced of the potentially developable area are the category 'A' and 'B' trees. Notwithstanding this merit must also be given to the contribution that the lower grade trees, and groups and hedges 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.

5. DISCUSSION

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 General observations note that the category 'B' trees surveyed are noteworthy feature of the site and as such it is recommended that the design takes the constraints of these trees into consideration. In addition post development concerns, such as future growth and fear and apprehension of the proximity of these trees should also be assessed during the design stage.
- 5.3 The trees and hedges that have been recorded as Category 'C' indicates their landscape value is reduced when compare to the 'B' trees. Notwithstanding this consideration for the retention of these groups and areas should be given to provide continued screening and tree cover to the site.
- 5.4 To assist further with the design process it is recommended that the following is taken into consideration: the existing root protection areas of trees to be retained; continued future growth requirements of retained trees; juxtaposition with buildings & amenity spaces and the routing of new services. Provision to ensure that there are suitable areas for mitigating tree planting should also be explored. Please note this list is not exhaustive.
- 5.5 It is anticipated that Cherwell District Council will require the submission of an arboricultural implications assessment (AIA) to accompany any future applications for development at the site. The AIA should take into account the effects of any tree loss required to implement the design and any potentially damaging activities proposed in the vicinity of retained trees. Such activities might include the removal of existing structures/hard surfacing; installation of new hard surfacing; installation of services and location and dimensions of proposed excavation or changes in ground level. In addition to the impact of the permanent work account should be taken of the buildability of a scheme in terms of access, adequate working space and provision the storage of materials.

APPENDIX 1

Site Location Plan



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PROJECT:			
Land to the South of Southside Steeple Aston			
DRAWING:			
Title Plan			
DEPARTMENT:	Planning	DRAWN BY:	GL
		CHECKED BY:	
DRAWING No:	SA.001	SCALE:	1:2500
		PAPER:	A3
		REV:	C
STATUS:	Proposed	DATE:	20.02.17

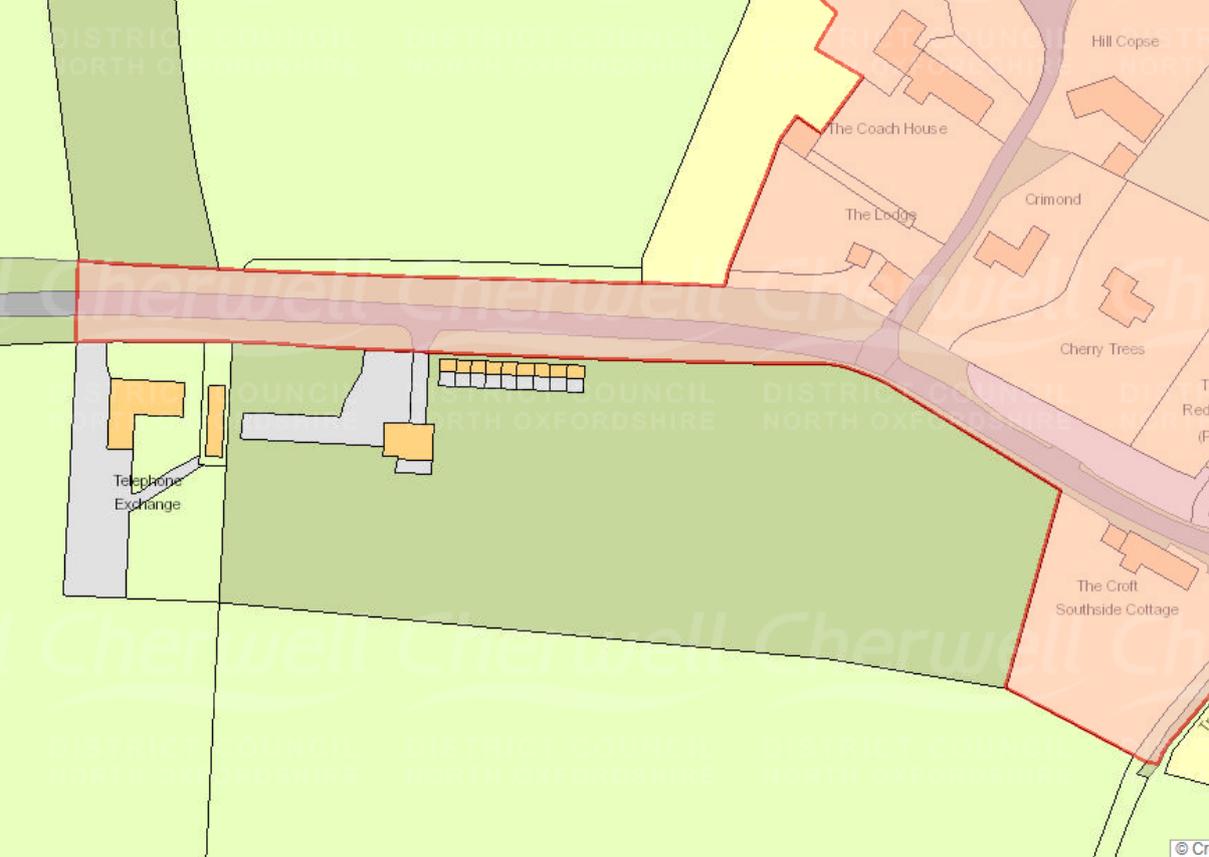
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APPENDIX 2

Extent of Conservation Area

Extent of Conservation Area



APPENDIX 3

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
V	Veteran
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	Prunus	4.5	226	2	1.5	1	1	N/A	M	P	Multi stem specimen - located adjacent to existing gate	<10	U
T2	Ash	12	445	4	4.8	5.5	1.5	2s	SM	F	x 3 at the base. Growing at the front of the site - not regarded as a constraint. Deadwood present.	10 -20	C1
T3	Ash	7.5	185	3.5	3.5	2.5	3	2n	SM	F	Regeneration from a stump. Not a constraint.	10 -20	C1
T4	Sycamore	8	361	4	4	4	3.5	2.5s	SM	F	Growing adjacent to the front boundary - ivy present on main stem. X 2 at base will lower SULE - potential to develop and contribute in the short term.	20 -40	B1
T5	Sycamore	10	337	2.5	1.5	2.5	3.5	2s	SM	F	1 of 2 Sycamore trees growing adjacent to the front boundary. X 2 at base - lower end of Category B group-potential to contribute in the short term.	20 -40	B2
T6	Sycamore	10	455	2	4	3.5	1.5	2.5s	SM	F	1 of 2 Sycamore trees growing adjacent to the front boundary. X 2 at base - lower end of Category B group-potential to contribute in the short term. Ivy present	10 -20	C2
T7	Beech	13	#850	6	6	5	5	GL	M	F	1 of 3 offsite Beech trees growing adjacent to the eastern boundary. Pleasant feature.	20 -40	B2
T8	Beech	14	#750	7	2.5	2	3.5	1.5w	M	F	1 of 3 offsite Beech trees growing adjacent to the eastern boundary. Pleasant feature.	20 -40	B2
T9	Beech	14	#750	2.5	4.5	4.5	5.5	2w	M	F	1 of 3 offsite Beech trees growing adjacent to the eastern boundary. Pleasant feature.	20 -40	B2
T10	Ash	14	440	8	0	3	5	5+	M	F	Group of 3 Ash trees located at the front of the site - ivy on main stem.	20 -40	B2
T11	Ash	14	355	4	1	1.5	1	5+	M	F	Group of 3 Ash trees located at the front of the site - ivy on main stem.	20 -40	B2
T12	Ash	14	527	6	2.5	6.5	1	5+	M	F	Group of 3 Ash trees located at the front of the site - ivy on main stem.	20 -40	B2
T13	Hawthorn	7	210	2.5	1.5	0.5	1	N/A	SM	F	Growing on the highway verge. Not within influencing distance of the site	10 -20	C1
T14	Hawthorn	8	427	2	3.5	1.5	2	3n	M	F	Growing on the highway verge. Ivy present. Contributes to the greening of the area.	20 -40	B2
T15	Hawthorn	9	423	2	3.5	2	1.5	N/A	M	F	Growing on the highway verge. Ivy present. Contributes to the greening of the area. Multiple stems	20 -40	B2
T16	Hawthorn	6	330	2	2.5	1	2	1.5	M	F	Growing on the highway verge. Ivy present. Contributes to the greening of the area. Smaller than other specimens	10 -20	C2
T17	Sycamore	8	173	1.5	2.5	1	1.5	N/A	M	F	Growing on the highway verge. Self seeded specimen - not regarded as a constraint.	10 -20	C2

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						
T18	Hawthorn	6	330	2	2	2	2	N/A	M	F	Growing on the highway verge. Ivy present. Contributes to the greening of the area.	10 -20	C2
G1	Prunus	5	180	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	N/A	SM	F	Group of suckering Prunus - not regarded as a constraint.	10 -20	C2
H1	Hawthorn	3	75	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	GL	Y	F	Young hedge located adjacent to the front boundary of the site. Potential to develop. Hazel also present.	10 -20	C2
H2	Hawthorn	2.5	75	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	GL	SM	F	Boundary hedge with occasional Prunus and Dogwood. Could be bought back into management	10 -20	C2
A1	Elder	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Area of ivy clad Elder	N/A	N/A
A2	Mixed species	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Mix of Hawthorn, Viburnum and bramble - covered in Clematis	N/A	N/A

APPENDIX 4

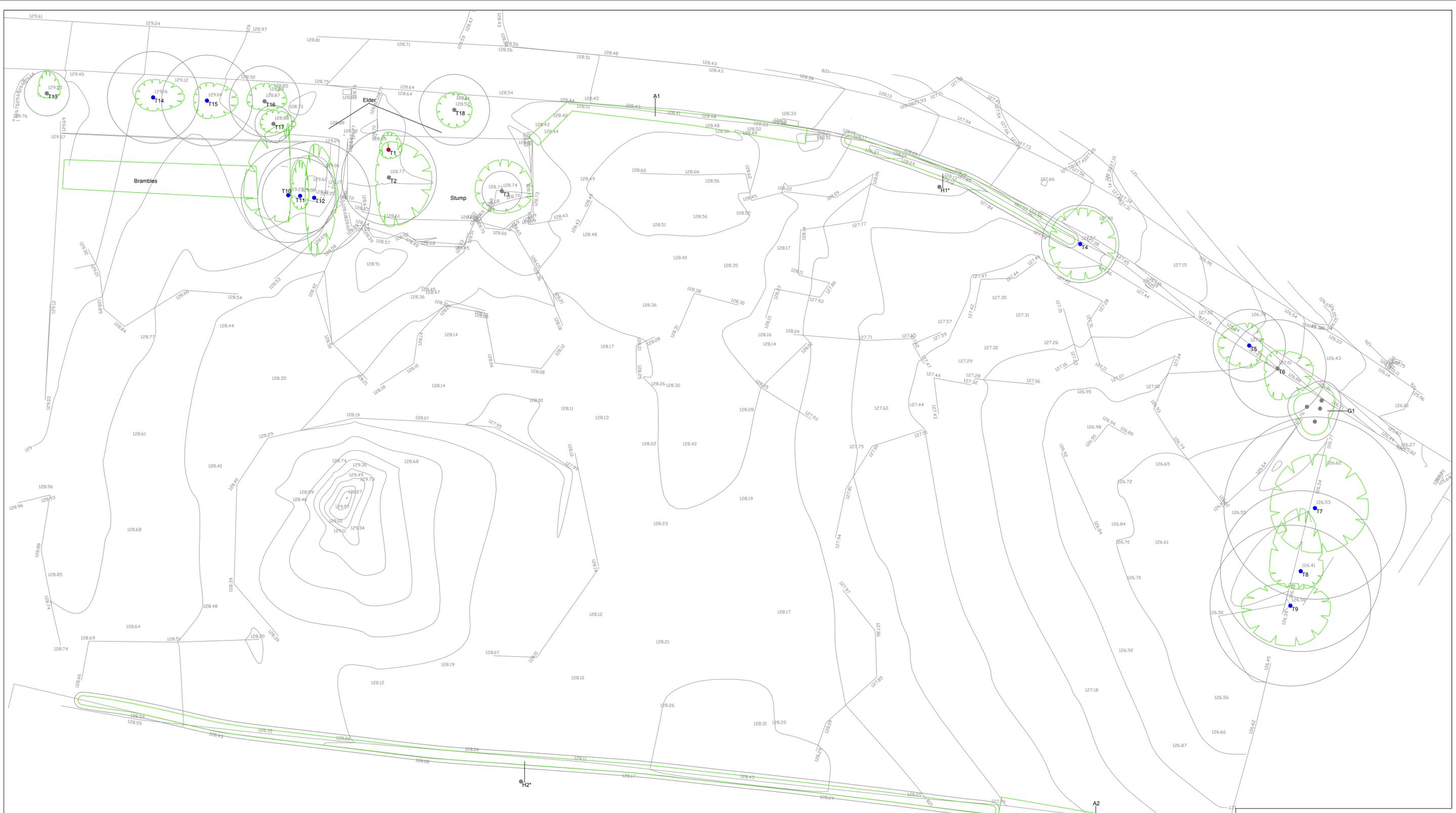
Root Protection Area

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	Prunus	2		160	160					2.72	23	<10	U
T2	Ash	3		260	300	200				5.33	92	10 -20	C1
T3	Ash	1	185							2.22	18	10 -20	C1
T4	Sycamore	2		200	300					4.33	64	20 -40	B1
T5	Sycamore	2		195	275					4.05	55	20 -40	B2
T6	Sycamore	3		210	200	350				5.45	92	10 -20	C2
T7	Beech	1	850							10.20	327	20 -40	B2
T8	Beech	1	750							9.00	255	20 -40	B2
T9	Beech	1	750							9.00	255	20 -40	B2
T10	Ash	1	440							5.28	92	20 -40	B2
T11	Ash	4		180	140	220	160			4.26	55	20 -40	B2
T12	Ash	3		355	190	340				6.32	124	20 -40	B2
T13	Hawthorn	1	210							2.52	23	10 -20	C1
T14	Hawthorn	2		265	335					5.13	81	20 -40	B2
T15	Hawthorn	7						160		5.08	81	20 -40	B2
T16	Hawthorn	1	330							3.96	48	10 -20	C2
T17	Sycamore	3		100	100	100				2.08	14	10 -20	C2
T18	Hawthorn	1	330							3.96	48	10 -20	C2
G1	Prunus	1	180							2.16	14	10 -20	C2
H1	Hawthorn	1	75							0.90	3	10 -20	C2
H2	Hawthorn	1	75							0.90	3	10 -20	C2
A1	Elder	N/A								0.00	0	N/A	N/A
A2	Mixed species	N/A								0.00	0	N/A	N/A

APPENDIX 5

Tree Constraints Plan



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Site: Steeple Aston
 Drawing Title: Tree Constraints Plan
 November 2017

1:200 @ A1

Key:

- Category A
- Category B
- Category C
- Category U
- Crown Spread
- Root Protection Area
- Tree Number

NOTE: Tree/group numbers marked with an * have approximate locations.
 NOTE: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

5m 10m