

Arboricultural
Survey and Assessment

Land south of Blackburn Road
Longridge PR3 2YJ

SUMMARY

A survey of the existing trees on and adjacent land east of Higher College Farm, Blackburn Road, Longridge has been carried out in accordance with British Standard 5837: 2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*.

The purpose of the survey and of this assessment is to identify the impact of the proposed development of the site on trees, both within and immediately adjacent the site, in accordance with the provisions of BS5837: 2012.

The development of the site will involve the construction of three blocks of E(g) use (office, Research and light industrial), which will not require the removal of any existing trees and which is unlikely to have the potential to have any indirect impact on a tree proposed for retention.

Although all mature trees lie outside of the site and safely well away from the boundaries so as to be unaffected by the development a precautionary approach was taken by the introduction of a planning condition requiring this report. There are some hedgerows to be retained also a short section to be replanted so this report also identifies these and sets out suitable parameters for the safeguarding/new planting. With suggested improvements the good level existing beneficial landscaping can be enhanced.

The existing immediate layout is within the current/retained control of the applicants and considered acceptable from a design perspective and contributes to a balanced landscape.

Mitigation for the impact of the development can be provided in the form of the following:

- The erection of protective fencing in advance of the commencement of the development to safeguard the root systems of retained trees;
- The trees for protection are offsite so provision of the correct levels of protection required can be provided by a suitably worded planning condition referring to this report and plan.

Compensation for the impact of the development, together with landscape and biodiversity enhancements can be achieved by way of the following enhancements:

- The gapping up of existing native hedges where possible and replace a short section lost to the development and provide linear habitats that link to habitats located off site;
- The use of a mixture of native species within hedgerow planting schemes, where those species are suited to the site and local landscape; and
- The provision of bird and bat boxes on the existing tree T1 and in hedgerow H1

1.0 Introduction

1.1 A survey of the trees has been carried out within and immediately adjacent land east of Higher College Farm, and south of Blackburn Road, Longridge, and to assess the potential impact of the development as proposed on trees within / adjacent the site in accordance with British Standard 5837: 2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*.

1.2 The site was visited on 1st September 2022 to survey and assess the arboricultural and landscape within the context of the planning system. During the site visit, a survey was carried out of the hedgerows/trees growing both on and immediately adjacent the site to the standards contained within BS5837: 2012. This report presents the results of the survey, provides an assessment of the impact of the development and includes recommendations for further actions, where applicable, in order to mitigate any potentially negative effects of the development on tree cover within the local landscape.

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Our client's objective is to develop the site by the construction of three blocks of E(g) use (office, research and light industrial).

2.2 Our objectives are as follows:

- Identify what arboricultural features exist presently within and adjacent the site and to record and categorise them in a manner consistent with BS5837: 2012;
- Identify which trees, if any dead/diseased, will need to be removed directly as a result of the proposed development of the site;
- Identify any indirect impact from the proposed development on trees proposed for retention;
- Provide an indication of what protection measures can be implemented as part of the development of the site to ensure the physical protection of retained trees;
- Provide recommendations for mitigation and compensation in terms of new planting or enhancement of existing features of arboricultural, landscape or ecological interest or importance;
- Provide any other recommendations to assist our clients in achieving their objectives whilst satisfying current legislation or policy guidance in relation to enhancing the existing hedgerows/woody vegetation on site.

3.0 Planning Policy & Relevant Legislation

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Framework contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with sustainable development in the UK being defined under the UK Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future*. This sets out five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

3.2 The Framework seeks to facilitate the approval, without delay, of developments that meet the objectives of up to date Local Plans. Where proposed developments involve net gains for nature and biodiversity, this is to be seen as a positive improvement in the quality of the natural environment and thus in compliance with the objectives of the Framework.

3.3 The site lies within the Ribble Valley Borough Council administrative area and is subject to the Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley. Policies DME1: PROTECTING TREES AND WOODLANDS and DME2: LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE PROTECTION apply to the subject site in relation to trees and have been taken into account when writing this report.

3.4 Checks made with Ribble Valley Borough Council previously indicate that none of the trees within the site are subject to statutory controls either in the form of a Tree Preservation Order, nor by virtue of their location within a Conservation Area. In advance of the commencement of any works to trees within or adjacent the site, those instructing and proposing to carry out such works should satisfy themselves that all appropriate consents are in place to prevent potential breach of legislation.

3.5 British Standard 5837: 2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* provides current recommendations and guidance on the relationship between trees and design, demolition and the construction processes. It sets out the principles and procedures to be applied to achieve a harmonious and sustainable relationship between trees and structures.

3.6 Notwithstanding the aforementioned policies and legislation, consideration should also be given to any impacts from the proposed development in respect of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and the Forestry Act 1967 (and specifically the potential need for a felling licence), as well as existing UK and European legislation relating to wildlife and nature conservation.

4.0 Survey & Survey Methodology

4.1 We have been supplied with a copy of the Ordnance Survey map for the site and the tree survey was carried out on this map. Features of arboricultural or landscape interest that have been added to the plan.

4.2 Our assessment of the soils within the site, based on local site conditions, geography, available soil maps and our own experience of soils across the United Kingdom, indicates that the soils on site are likely to contain a clay element, and that this will have a plasticity index in the low/medium range. It is not anticipated that the clay content will cause specific issues relating to retention of trees given the limited impact of the development proposals. Provision will need to be made for the protection of soil structure in key areas during the construction phase. Further details are provided throughout this report setting out the suitable distances for working/building which have already been taken on board in the applicants layout and site plan.

4.3 Our survey of the trees adjacent the site was carried out in accordance with sections 4.4 and 4.5 of BS5837: 2012 on 1st September 2022. Those trees surveyed have been numbered sequentially, although for the purposes of this project they have not been tagged. The trees have also been categorised in accordance with section 4.5 and Table 1 of the Standard.

4.4 Where relevant and where the quality of shrub masses and hedges justifies recording, details have been recorded to the tree survey plan and tree data tables.

4.5 Where trees are surveyed that require immediate attention, for example to abate a nuisance, prevent a serious hazard to life or property, or are affected by a pathogen or pest that could cause widespread damage unless it is controlled, notification will be issued to the relevant person or organisation such that appropriate action can be taken.

4.6 Root Protection Areas for those trees surveyed have been calculated in accordance with the formulas within Annex C of the Standard and can be found within the tree data tables that accompany this report.

5.0 Survey Results & Impact Assessment

5.1 Existing Tree Cover:

One live individual tree and three sections of hedges were recorded during our survey, the details of which can be found within Appendix 1 to this report and cross referenced with Arboricultural Plan 7.

5.2 Direct Impact on Trees:

The development of the site as proposed will directly require the removal of a short section of hedge H2 (in part). This short length is not lost as will be re-sited, adjoining with new planting.

5.3 Indirect Impact on Trees:

With suitable controls, the development will not have any indirect impact on the single tree and mature hedge set apart to the north of the site. Measures are therefore suggested during the construction phase, as described throughout this report, in order to safeguard the retained tree for the long term benefit of the landscape.

5.4 Context in the Wider Landscape:

The site is set well off the road and away from dwellings. Existing trees and hedgerows in the locality already provide good screening. The wider landscape predominantly comprises agricultural fields with established boundary hedges and occasionally emerging mature trees. Considering the development proposals only require the removal of one small section of hedging, which can be replaced adjacent to the south boundary of the site, the direct impact of the development is considered likely to have a negligible impact on the extent of canopy cover within the wider landscape.

5.5 Hedgerows:

In accordance with the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, 'important' hedgerows (in the context of the Regulations) a short section for removal is exempt in this case. This is irrespective of any appropriate consent granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Appropriate checks have already been made in advance of the commencement of works to establish the importance or otherwise of hedgerows on or within influencing distance of the site.

5.6 Potential Mitigation for Development Impacts:

Mitigation of the impacts from the development of the site can be provided in the form of replacement of trees lost to the development (none), the erection of protective fencing to an agreed specification in suitable locations in advance of the commencement of the development and the use of site specific actions adopting modern methods of construction as agreed and documented herein, further details of which can be found throughout this report and annotated on drawing Arboricultural Plan 7.

5.0 Survey Results & Impact Assessment (Continued)

5.7 Potential for Shading & Nuisance:

This is considered unlikely to be of any issue to either new businesses on site or existing businesses close by and certainly not to adjoining land uses further away. Mature trees in urban and suburban areas add significant value and environmental benefits to properties; however, it is acknowledged that some land/property owners are averse to retaining trees close to commercial buildings because of shading and other potential nuisances (leaf / fruit drop for example). The acceptability or otherwise of shade is a somewhat subjective issue driven largely by land or property owner / occupier perceptions and in the majority of cases is not necessarily something that should be determined by a local planning authority. We do not consider in this case that there is any shade which will be excessive, or that any other ordinary circumstance arising from the presence of trees, for example from leaf or fruit drop, will constitute unacceptable nuisance.

5.8 Boundary Screening:

Existing trees and mature hedgerows located adjacent to the boundaries of the site make a welcome contribution to the screening of views and can be complemented and enhanced by the gapping up of existing hedgerows with native species such as to filter views and integrate the development into the surrounding landscape.

5.9 Long Term Spatial Constraints:

The proposed layout has been designed to meet the standards set by the local planning authority and is such that, where applicable, there should generally be adequate space between new buildings and trees to limit the potential for future pressure to remove trees. It is not possible to predict what actions future occupiers will seek to take in respect of trees at adjacent properties. The existing immediate layout is within the current/retained control of the applicants and considered acceptable from a design perspective and contributes to a balanced landscape.

5.10 Existing Areas of Hard Standing:

There are no existing areas of hard standing located close to trees proposed for retention. Subject to the agreement and implementation of physical protection for those trees throughout the ground works/remediation stage of the project, there are no arboricultural implications.

5.11 Existing buildings/structures to be removed:

The absence of any built form to be removed from site will ensure that retained trees are not at any particular risk from demolition or remediation process.

5.12 Proposed Areas of Hard Standing:

There are no areas where proposed hard surfaces encroach within or are immediately adjacent root protection areas of the retained tree T1 which is marked on drawing Arboricultural Plan 7 appended to this report; specific areas requiring attention in this regard are located close to but not within the root protection areas of H1 and H2. The site layout design already incorporates suitable safeguarding distances from building works. The extent of precautionary measures and special construction methodologies required in order to safeguard the trees are also indicated on the drawing.

5.0 Survey Results & Impact Assessment (Continued)

5.13 Any Proposed Buildings Located Adjacent / Within Root Protection Areas? :

No buildings are proposed close to or within the root protection areas of any tree.

Aboricultural Plan 7 appended to this report indicates areas where site boundaries lie well clear of the adjacent root protection areas of the retained tree T1. The drawing also suggests appropriate measures for the safeguarding of retained hedgerows. Specific areas requiring attention in this regard are located near to, but not within, the root protection area of H2. A good margin has been set out on the application site plan.

5.14 Proposed Drainage & Services:

At the planning application stage of the project, details of proposed drainage arrangements and provision of utility services are generally not known. It is considered that existing services and those considered in principle will not affect any trees and are unlikely to affect any hedgerows. During the installation process however, general guidance can be obtained from the National Joint Utilities Group publication *Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees – Volume 4* such as to minimise the impact of works on retained trees. There appears to be sufficient and reasonable space off-site around T1 not to require any existing or future services to pass anywhere close to the existing root protection area.

5.15 Working Space During the Construction Phase:

The site is of a size such that there will be adequate working space throughout the construction phase, with no potential impact on retained trees. However, it is essential that construction exclusion zones created to safeguard retained trees are not breached without prior consideration and implementation of control measures to limit any potentially negative impacts on trees.

5.16 Access Facilitation Pruning:

Canopies of boundary hedges will need to be pruned back (normal annual maintenance) in advance of any construction or remediation works in order to avoid any associated unnecessary canopy damage. No low hanging branches of trees adjacent to the site will need to be pruned. Being outside of the site boundary the working area allows a more than adequate clearance of T1 to avoid canopy damage. Although not required in this case, such works are controlled and carried out to a minimum of the standards as contained within BS3998: 2010 *Tree work – Recommendations*, then the visual impact of the work will be minimal and will not detract from the overall landscape value of the site.

5.0 Survey Results & Impact Assessment (Continued)

5.17 Protection of Planting Areas:

In this case some gapping up of existing hedgerows and a short new section will be fenced to protect from works and/or livestock. It is often desirable to fence off areas that are to be newly planted to protect the soil structure. Provided that adequate provisions are made for ground preparations in advance of the landscape stage, there is unlikely to be a negative impact on the viability of newly planted stock.

5.18 No requirement for an Arboricultural Method Statement:

As there are no trees within the site nor at risk close to the site it is not considered that a Method Statement for Tree Protection (an Arboricultural Method Statement) is required. The careful placing of the north boundary fencing and temporary protective fencing beyond in case of contractors straying off site will ensure that the retained tree is adequately protected from the outset and that no unnecessary harm occurs during the construction phase. Section 6 of this report contains further details of the aspects of the development that could successfully be controlled, which can in turn be subject to a suitably worded planning condition.

5.19 Planning for New Landscaping:

If not considered carefully at the design stage, new planting and landscaping can have an adverse impact on existing trees and cause long term problems for the built environment. Care should be taken in the design of new landscapes to prevent physical damage to retained trees during the planting process, and to ensure that schemes are designed to survive and thrive rather than compete for resources. Similarly new trees and shrubs should not be planted where they will cause damage to structures, either directly or indirectly in the future. A separate landscaping plan is submitted with the planning application. The landscaping plan accurately follows recommendations within this report and the recent ecology report.

Guidance will be followed on minimum distances for new trees/hedgerow plants from structures to avoid direct damage from future tree growth.

6.0 Tree Protection Measures

6.1 On the basis of the proposed layout and those trees proposed for retention, drawing Arboricultural Plan 7 shows our preliminary recommendations for the physical protection of retained trees throughout the construction phase. The plan indicates the location of protective barriers. The specification for construction of the protective fencing in accordance with Figures 2 & 3 of the Standard will be followed. These barriers will form a construction exclusion zone around the retained tree (note the site limits end well before such zone).

7.0 Summary of Impacts & Potential Mitigation Factors

7.1 Table 1 below summarises the nil impacts of the development as proposed on tree cover within and immediately adjacent the site. Comments are also provided on potential mitigation, compensation or special measures required in order to minimise the impact of the development and safeguard trees proposed for retention. Hedges are largely enhanced, with small sections gapped up/replanted.

Table 1: Summary of the impacts of the development on trees within / adjacent the site.

Issue	Affecting	Mitigation/Compensation/Special Procedures
Trees to be removed	None	
Indirect physical impact on retained trees	None at risk	See protective fencing below in case of contractors straying off site.
Provision of new hard surfaces	No effect	None within/close to root protection areas
Construction of new buildings	No effect	None within/ close to root protection areas
Access for pruning	H1 and H2	Annual maintenance both on and off site is possible
Hedges (small part) removed	H2	Equivalent length new planting adjoining existing H2
Hedges to be gapped up	H1 and H3	To be double fenced and native plants used Hawthorn 50% , Holly 20%, Blackthorn 20%, Elder 10%
Protective fencing	H1, H2 part (+ new H2) and T1	To be erected pre commencement of site works as shown on Plan 7 and retained in situ throughout the course of the construction phase.

7.2 On the basis of the above and the contents of this report, we consider it appropriate that a Planning condition be prepared as a condition of planning consent, requiring the developer to follow the above actions in Table 1 of this report in conjunction with Arboricultural Plan 7 to demonstrate the tree proposed for retention will be suitably safeguarded. The gapping up of existing hedgerows and part new hedgerow should be planted within protective fencing, and guards where required, during the first suitable planting season (installation of services permitting) following commencement of works on site and no later than the season following first occupation. Such conditions would be standard for a modest development of this type.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

8.1 The direct and indirect impacts on tree cover as a result of the development proposals are outlined within this report and mitigation proposed accordingly that seeks where possible to satisfy local and national planning guidance and policy. Where a short section of hedge is proposed for removal, replacement planting should be undertaken as part of the landscape strategy for the site in line with local plan requirements and to integrate the development into the surrounding landscape. Arrangements for the safeguarding and physical protection of the retained trees should be implemented in a manner consistent with current arboricultural management practices to minimise any potentially negative effects on long term tree cover.

8.2 We recommend that the landscape proposal set out in the submitted Landscape Plan and shown on the Landscape Plan 6 be followed for the site, to include where feasible provision for the planting of a mixture of native species within the gapping up of existing hedges (H1,H3)/ new part hedge (H2), and implemented as a condition of planning consent.

8.3 We also recommend that tree protection measures are implemented in accordance with Table 1 of this report and Arboricultural Plan 7 be implemented as a condition of planning consent for the development.

9.0 References

Department for Communities and Local Government (March 2012) *National Planning Policy Framework*;

Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley;

British Standard 5837: 2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*;

National Joint Utilities Group publication *Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees – Volume 4*.

Land off Blackburn Road, Longridge – Arboricultural Plan 7

Scale 1 : 1250

KEY

- Hedges retained and gapped up 
- Short section hedge removed 
- New section replacement hedge to plant 

