

LAND ADJACENT TO GRANGE LANE, GATEACRE



For

COUNTRYSIDE PROPERTIES

ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

November 2014

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Scope and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides an initial analysis of the impacts that the proposed scheme would have on trees located on land south west of Grange Lane, Gateacre in Merseyside (hereafter referred to as 'the Site') both within the site and immediately adjacent to its boundaries. It also offers guidance on mitigation for projected losses, along with appropriate tree protection measures for those trees retained as part of the development proposals.

Tree Survey

- 1.2 A tree survey was undertaken on 27th October 2014 by Appletons, the findings of which are indicated in the Tree Survey Report dated, November 2014. This includes a tree survey plan which confirms the number and quality of trees within the site and define their associated Root Protection Areas (RPAs). Where appropriate their protection requirements are discussed in detail at Paragraphs 5.1 – 5.2.

2.0 STATUTORY PROTECTION IN RESPECT OF TREES AND ASSOCIATED WILDLIFE

Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Area Designations

- 2.1 The Town & Country Planning Act (1990) (the Act) and associated Regulations empower Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to protect trees in the interests of amenity by making Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). The Act also affords protection for trees of over 75mm diameter that stand within the curtilage of a Conservation Area (CA). Subject to certain exemptions, an application must be made to the LPA in question to carry out works upon or to remove trees that are subject to a TPO, whilst six weeks' notice of intention must be given to carry out works upon or to remove trees within a CA that are not protected by a TPO.
- 2.2 At the time of writing we understand that the Site is not contained within a designated Conservation Area and no trees are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

Protected Species

- 2.3 Information and recommendations relating to protected species have been included within the separate report, Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, November 2014 prepared by Appletons.

Felling Licences

- 2.4 Subject to certain exemptions the Forestry Act (1967) requires that a 'Felling Licence' be obtained to remove growing trees amounting to specific volumes of timber. Felling Licences are administered by the Forestry Commission, and contravention of the associated controls can incur substantial penalties. A Felling Licence is not needed for the removal of trees immediately required for the purpose of carrying out a development authorised by detailed (i.e. full) planning permission granted under the Act (1990).

3.0 THE SITE AND TREE POPULATION

- 3.1 The Site comprises of the former Gateacre Comprehensive School. The buildings have been demolished within recent times and the area now consists of redundant playing fields and grassed areas, bare areas of hard standing including tarmacdam playground areas, levelled but uneven areas of demolition rubble and features such as concrete steps, brick walls and planters. The Site is rectangular in shape and is approximately 500m by 200m in maximum dimensions.
- 3.2 Trees and taller vegetation such as bramble and some exotic shrub species are located generally to the margins of the Site which would have related to the distribution of the school buildings and car parking areas. They are both broad-leaved and coniferous species and occur mainly on the southern and eastern site margins. These include native and non-native exotic tree and shrub species, typically including ornamental Cherry, Maple species and Birch species. A cherry laurel hedge runs along parts of the north eastern boundary with Grange Lane at the southern end.
- 3.3 A total of 60no. individual trees and groups of trees were surveyed on 27th November 2014. All trees surveyed are shown on **drawing no. 1963_01** at **Appendix 1** Details of the findings are contained within the Tree Survey Report.

4.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AND PROJECTED ARBORICULTURAL IMPACTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The application is for full planning permission for a residential development of 200 units.
- 4.2 Vehicular access is proposed from a number of locations from both Grange Lane to the east and Cuckoo Lane to the west as detailed on the Tree Protection Plan, **drawing no. 1963_02** at **Appendix 2**.

Projected Arboricultural Losses Relating to the Proposal

- 4.3 The proposed residential layout of the development and its implementation will require the removal of the following trees and tree groups (Table 1) as identified from the initial tree survey assessment.

	Ret. Cats.	Tree removals necessary to implement development	Tree removals suggested for non-development related reasons	Sub total of trees required to be removed	Trees retained off site requiring protection	Trees retained on site requiring protection	Total number of tree/ group
Those of a high quality that should be afforded appropriate consideration in the context of development.	'A'	-	-	-	-	-	0
Those of a moderate quality that should be afforded appropriate consideration in the context of development.	'B'	G12, T13, T14, T15, T24, G26, G27,	T53 (over mature)	8	T1	-	9
Those of a low quality that should be afforded appropriate consideration in the context of development.	'C'	T16, T20, T29, T30, T31, T38, T42, T43, T44, T45, T50, G51, T52	(6), T5, T7, T8, T9, G17, T18, T19, G25, T28, T37, G48, G55, G59, T60	28	T2, T3, T4, T34, T35, G36, T41, T54	T40, G49, G56, G57, T58	41
Those that should be removed for sound management reasons regardless of site plans.	'U'	-	T10, T11, T21, T22, T23, T32, T33, T39, T46, T47.	10	-	-	10
Totals		21	25		9	5	60

Table 1: Arboricultural Impacts of Proposed Development & Other Tree/ Groups Removal Proposals

- 4.4 From the table a total of 46no. trees or tree groups would require removal to implement the proposed development. Nonetheless, the poor quality trees represents 60% of the total number of trees required to be removed with half of these assessed as being unsuitable or undesirable for any future use of the site including a 'do nothing' scenario.

10no. trees are recommended for removal for good management reason due to their overall condition.

- 4.5 Although implementation of the development will necessitate the removal of a number of trees the overall quality of the existing tree cover is considered limited and its loss would not be significant in the context of the surrounding locality.

Mitigation for Subsequent Tree Losses

- 4.6 Tree planting should be included as part of any subsequent detailed development proposals, with an associated landscape scheme specifying such matters submitted in support of any such planning application. In consideration of the character of the surrounding local landscape it is recommended that such a scheme should include a substantial percentage of trees of locally native or wildlife attracting species but which can be accommodated in association with residential housing in terms of ultimate mature height, canopy spread and root growth. Potential shading and visibility sight lines along the highways should also be a factor in determining tree species and location.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL TREE RETENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT

Root Protection Areas and Construction Exclusion Zones

- 5.1 Adequate protection of the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of retained trees during construction is essential if their long-term viability is to be assured. RPAs, which are calculated through a method provided in *BS5837: 2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*, are ground areas that should be protected by temporary protective fencing as Construction Exclusion Zones (CEZs) throughout the development process, thereby keeping the trees' root zones free from disturbance, compaction or damage and protecting overhead canopies from accidental damage due to the construction processes. The RPA distances are indicated on both the Tree Survey Plan and on the Tree Protection Plan, **drawing 1963_02** at **Appendix 2**. In certain situations, however, there is a limited degree of flexibility in the RPA and CEZ positioning.
- 5.2 With regard to the CEZs, the design, materials and construction of the temporary fencing should be appropriate for the intensity and type of site construction works and should conform to at least section 6.2 of *BS5837: 2012*. A Temporary Protective Fencing/ Barrier Specification together with recommendations for general tree protection measures are appended for reference at **Appendix 3**. The protection of retained trees should, in turn, be secured by the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition.

Precautions outside the Construction Zone

- 5.3 All weather notices should be erected on protective barriers for example of notice see **Appendix 4**.
- 5.4 Care shall be taken when planning site operations to ensure tall or wide loads/ plant can be operate without coming into contact with retained trees. It is the responsibility of the contract's manager on site to prepare method statements for these operations and to inform all parties of their responsibilities in this regard.
- 5.5 Material which will contaminate the soil, shall not be discharged within 10 metres of the tree stem. Fires shall not be lit in a position where flames can extend within 5 metres of any part of the tree. Notice boards and cables shall not be attached to any part of the tree.

- 5.6 General precautions which should be taken to protect trees during the construction phase are attached at **Appendix 5**.

Underground Utilities

- 5.7 The installation of underground utilities in close proximity to trees can cause serious damage to their roots. As such, it is essential that utilities be routed outside RPAs unless there is no other available option. Where RPAs cannot be avoided then guidelines set out in the National Joint Utilities Group publication 'Volume 4: NJUG Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees (Issue 2) – Operatives Handbook' should be followed (e.g. trenches of a very limited width to be hand dug or the use of directional drilling). In the case of the site under consideration it is recommended that all underground utilities should be routed outside tree RPAs.

6.0 OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Non-Development Related Tree Works and Recommendations

- 6.1 Any general management pruning works for retained trees that are stated to be non-development related, as detailed in the Tree Survey Report, are recommended in accordance with prudent arboricultural management and should therefore be carried out regardless of any site development proposals and potential changes in land usage. All tree works should be carried out in accordance with *BS3998: 2010, Tree Work -Recommendations*.

Arboricultural Contractors

- 6.2 All tree works should be carried out by suitably qualified and experienced arboricultural contractors carrying appropriate public liability insurance cover and be implemented to the minimum current CE and UK industry standards and in accordance with industry codes of practice. Only certificated personnel should, in accordance with The Control of Pesticides Regulations, apply any pesticides.

Contractors and Subsequently Identified Tree Defects

- 6.3 Tree contractors should be made aware that, should any significant tree defects become apparent during operations that would not have been immediately obvious to the surveyor, then such defects should be notified immediately to the client and subsequently confirmed to the consultant within five working days.

New Tree Planting

- 6.4 Where trees are removed in order to facilitate construction then new tree planting proposals should be included as part of the landscape design plan for the site. All tree planting and subsequent young tree management at the site should be carried out in accordance with relevant sections of *BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations*.

Retained Tree Management

- 6.5 Any tree risk management appraisals and subsequent recommendations made in this report were based on observations and site circumstances at the time of the survey. Trees are dynamic living organisms whose structure is constantly changing and even those evidently in good condition can succumb to damage and/or stress. In this

respect it should be noted that, under the Occupiers' Liability Act (1957 & 1984), site occupants have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent or minimise the risk of personal injury and/or damage to property from any tree located within the curtilage of the land they occupy. It is accepted that these steps should normally include commissioning a qualified and experienced arboriculturist to survey the trees in order to identify any risk of harm to persons or damage to property that they may present and, where unacceptable risks are identified, taking suitable remedial action to negate those risks.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The Site is located within the residential area of Gateacre and comprises of a demolished school site with areas of grassed playing fields and hard standings. Trees and vegetation is limited and located generally to the margins or within zones surrounding previous buildings. A tree survey was undertaken in October 2014, the results of which are contained within a separate report prepared by Appletons. This report is an assessment of the impact on trees of a proposed residential development for 200 units.
- 7.2 An evaluation of the proposed layout against the tree constraints information has indicated that development of the site, as shown, is projected to require the removal of 8no. moderate quality trees/ tree groups and 28no. low quality trees/ tree groups with 10no trees recommended for removal due their overall condition in any event.
- 7.3 14no trees can be retained as part of the development which are generally located along the south eastern boundary with adjacent residential gardens. These trees would assist in forming screening to adjacent properties.
- 7.4 Retained trees shall be protected from disturbance during the construction phase by appropriate protective fencing or barrier in accordance with *BS5837: 2012*.
- 7.5 Any subsequent detailed development proposals should include adequate provision for the incorporation of trees.
- 7.6 Although implementation of the development will necessitate the removal of a number of trees the overall quality of the existing tree cover is considered limited. Its loss would not be significant in the context of the surrounding locality. It is evident that extensive new tree planting can be provided as part of the development's landscaping which, over the long-term, is projected to have a significant and positive effect on the overall sustainability of the Site's tree cover.

REFERENCES

BS4428: 1989 - Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations. BSI British Standards. London.

BS3936-1:1992, Nursery Stock – Part 1: Specification for Trees and Shrubs. BSI British Standards, London.

BS3998:2010 - Tree Work - Recommendations. BSI British Standards, London.

BS5837:2012 - Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations. BSI British Standards, London.

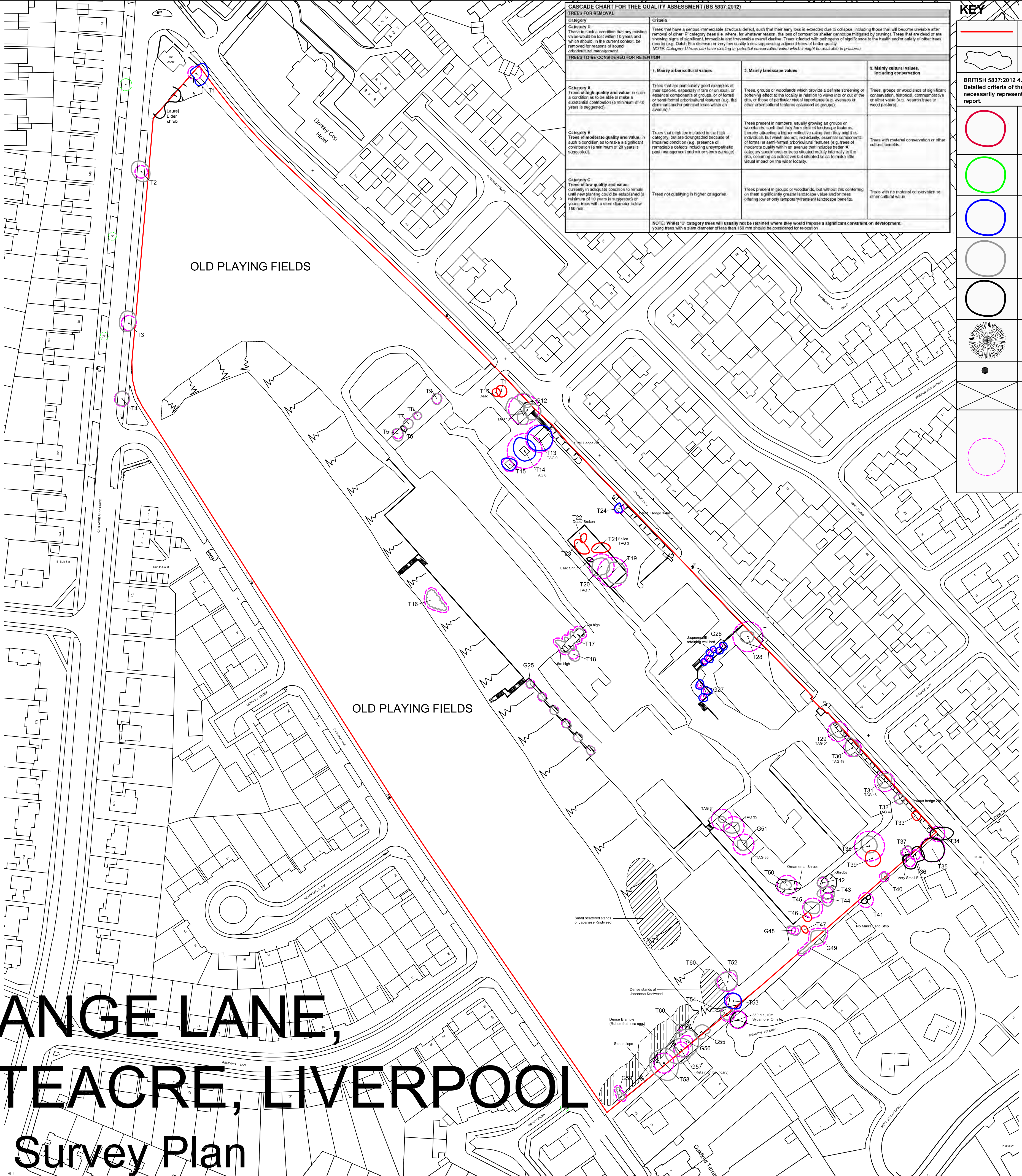
BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations. BSI British Standards, London.

National House Building Council (2008). NHBC Standards Chapter 4.2 - Building Near Trees. NHBC, Amersham.

National Joint Utilities Group (2007). Volume 4: NJUG Guidelines For The Planning, Installation And Maintenance Of Utility Apparatus In Proximity To Trees (Issue 2) – Operatives Handbook.
Main body of report



APPENDIX 1



	Site Boundary
	Vegetation
<p>BRITISH 5837:2012 4.5 TREE CATEGORIZATION Detailed criteria for these categories are given above. These categories do not necessarily represent or correspond to recommendations for action in any relevant report.</p>	
	<p>CATEGORY U: Serious, irredeemable defect with early loss expected/trees showing signs of overall decline/suppressing trees of better quality. Unsuitable for retention but may have desirable conservation value</p>
	<p>CATEGORY A: Good/moderately good quality and value. Retention most desirable.</p>
	<p>CATEGORY B: Moderately/fair quality and value. Retention desirable but has some defect which downgrades value.</p>
	<p>CATEGORY C: Low quality and value. Tree possibly expendable but should be retained if appropriate to development.</p>
	<p>TREES OFF SITE - trees not surveyed in detail and location and statistics are estimates only Category grade not necessarily provided.</p>
	CONIFER SPECIES - any category
	CENTRE OF TREE/SHRUB.
	<p>TREES PROTECTED BY TREE PRESERVATION ORDER (Area, Group, Woodland or Individual)</p>
	<p>ROOT PROTECTION AREA (RPA) The root protection area is the minimum area around a tree which should be left undisturbed in order to avoid damage to the roots or rooting environment. If work needs to be carried out within the RPA then specialist surfaces or specialist construction techniques must be considered. Care must also be taken to avoid ground compaction within the RPA and storage of materials is not permitted. No excavations shall be carried out within the RPA unless agreed with the LPA. Any agreed excavations must only be carried out by hand.</p>

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