

<b>Tree officer's comment</b>	<b>Our response</b>
<b>Would the proposal require the removal of any trees, woodland or significant vegetation?</b>	
<p><b>Comment:</b> It is not clear from the information submitted how many trees are to be removed but the Planning statement submitted states:</p> <p><i>A desire not to remove trees of worth and to minimise disruption to the site pointed to the most appropriate location being where trees T46, T62 and T63 are located; all are classified C with limited lifespan, T46, a Hornbeam is dead in its larger stem and both T47 and T63 are Ash trees which are almost dead, both visibly suffering Ash dieback. To utilise this space would also require removal of T62 a small Hornbeam classified C. In addition to these, tree T70, a class C Ash tree is also required to be removed as it too is nearly dead.</i></p>	<p>1.1 Refer to drawings 086PL12, 086PL13 and 086PL14 which clearly identify which trees are proposed to be removed and the reasons why.</p>
<p>It also not clear if the applicant has considered the construction of the building and its impact on the trees. For example, the use of pile foundation is mentioned which requires specialist equipment with the need for height clearance and manoeuvrability around the site. Site storage and site compounds are also consideration that will affect the trees on site.</p>	<p>1.2 Please refer to paragraphs in 1.17 of the Supporting Design Information. The sketches highlight that the building largely sits outside of the root protection area.</p> <p>1.3 The design process to date has been heavily focussed on ensuring trees are safeguarded, however, we acknowledge that more design / investigation work will need to be undertaken as the project moves forward. We propose that a construction phase plan be required to be submitted as part of a pre-commencement condition as part of a planning approval. The approval of the proposal with conditions will give the applicant assurance that future investment (ground investigation, structural engineer's fees, specialist ground workers design etc) is not 'at risk'.</p>
<b>Has any BS: 5837:2012 information been supplied?</b>	
<p><b>Comment</b> (if applicable): A BS:5837 Tree Survey Report and Tree Constraints Plan by Verdant Ecology date April 2021 has been supplied by the applicant.</p>	

<p>Neither an Arboricultural Impact Assessment nor an Arboricultural Method Statement has been supplied.</p>	<p>1.4 We propose that these are undertaken and submitted for approval by the council as part of a pre-commencement condition of approval. This can be done in conjunction with additional ground investigation / engineer design such that the design solution is specific to the site and not generic.</p>
<p>There is no information regarding the impact of shade on the dwelling. Many of the computer-generated images show the trees with minimal or no leaves. When the trees are in full leaf the proposed house would be in significant shade. Experience would indicate there would be an increased pressure to prune the trees or requests to prune for light via a TPO application.</p>	<p>1.5 Please refer to the Planning Consultants comments in his email dated 20/10/2022.</p> <p>1.6 Please refer to the following paragraphs of the Supporting Design Information which outline how the design of the dwelling and landscaping has been undertaken to ensure sufficient sunlight for the development; 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.12, 1.13, 1.14, 2.1 (Policy R3). Note that windows are generally full height, 2.85m floor to ceiling structural glazed and in some cases sliding windows / doors. This, combined with the large 'walk-on' rooflights and terraces, means that the house will enjoy sufficient ambient light as well direct sunlight (as it percolates through the trees), all year round.</p>
<p><b>Would the development maintain the amenity of adjoining occupiers?</b> (e.g. privacy, outlook, light etc.)</p>	
<p><b>Comment</b> (if applicable): Inevitable because of the current character of the site there will be some effect on the amenity of adjoining occupiers.</p>	<p>1.7 The effect will be negligible. The house sits within the woodland, in and around the trees, thereby minimising its impact. The proposed house is also sited at a sufficient distance from the neighbouring boundaries.</p>
<p><b>Is there a detailed proposed landscape plan?</b></p>	
<p><b>Comment</b> (if applicable): Some limited detail regarding green roofs and forest gardens is mentioned on the plans.</p>	<p>1.8 Refer to drawing 086PL16 alongside Graham Bell's appraisal of the proposed landscaping included in the Supporting Design Information (3.1).</p> <p>1.9 Graham Bell is an independent, specialist consultant and expert on permaculture and forest gardening.</p> <p>1.10 The proposal includes for 2no. large ponds which will provide a significant benefit to biodiversity on the site.</p>

	<p>1.11 The proposals are not conventional landscaping proposals; they demonstrate a real commitment to enhancing the biodiversity of the site. The proposals are innovative in that they have been designed alongside / in conjunction with the dwelling.</p> <p>1.12 The Tree officer's comments do not acknowledge the input and proposed enhancements outlined by the Ecological Consultant. Please refer to the 'BOTANICAL SURVEY AND BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENTS AND ECOLOGICAL MITIGATION PLAN (BEEMP)'.</p>
<b>Recommendations and conclusion</b>	
The proposed site is protected woodland and part of larger expanse of woodland to the northeast of the site. The applicant has considered the impact of the proposal and has tried to reduce its impact; however, any form of development will have an impact on the character, ecological and biodiversity of the wood.	1.13 Please refer to the BEEMP.
A BS:5837 survey has been undertaken and assessed the trees in accordance with standard. However, the character of a woodland such as this is that there are trees in decline which, although are not conducive for a development site provide important ecology and biodiversity features.	1.14 The intention is, where trees are required to be felled, to use the timber for the project (where it can be utilised) and, or (where it cannot be utilised) retain the trees on the site as an ecology and biodiversity feature.
There are concerns about the impact of the construction process on the trees in particular the requirement for specialist equipment for pile foundations.	1.15 Please refer to 1.3 above.
In conclusion, it is recommended that the site should be considered as a whole and not as individual trees. The value of the wood both visually and ecologically is important particularly given the surrounding developments along the road.	1.16 Our proposals consider the site as a whole and not as individual trees. This is evident in the approach taken; to design the building in and around the trees alongside a wider landscaping strategy (forest gardens and ponds) which will provide edible crops for the dwelling whilst enhancing the biodiversity of the site. This approach is innovative and provides a unique response to the site.

<p>Although the proposed development is seeking to minimise its impact it will have a detrimental effect the character and ecology of the area.</p>	<p>1.17 Please refer to 3.1 of the Supporting Design Information, in particular, the Q&amp;A with Graham Bell:</p> <p><b>h. If the woodland site was left as-is, it wouldn't benefit from as many species as there might be with the proposed landscaping, clearings, forest gardens and dwelling. (This includes the proposed removal of some trees as highlighted on the drawings).</b></p> <p>“All of the indications are that the proposed plan will massively increase species on the site. It will help link up with adjacent wildlife corridors, both woodland pasture and riparian for the benefit of wildlife in the locality generally. All of the above will provide potential to increase biodiversity over and above what is there at the moment.”</p>
	<p>1.18 We have made a significant effort to ensure that the design proposals will be an enhancement to the site. We are happy to work with the tree officer / Council and to take on board any additional advice that might help us bring additional benefits to the proposals.</p>