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Ecological Surveys • Habitat Management • Arboricultural Surveys • Vegetation Clearance

# Arboricultural Method Statement Covering Report

## Hill Top, Cucumber Lane, Essendon, Hertfordshire

## AL9 6JA

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**On behalf of: Crosdil Leisure**

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# Contents



## Additional files

Tree Protection Plan

Legend to Tree Survey Form

NJUG Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees

Tree Survey Schedule

# 1. Limitations

1.1. The content of this report is valid for one year from the date shown on the title page.

1.2. Trees

1.2.1. General Site Description
The tree survey has been undertaken from ground level using non-invasive methods. The presence of Ivy, epicormic shoots or other climbing plants on tree trunks and branches obscures any defects that might be present that could otherwise be identified. In the presence of climbing plants etc assumptions are made based upon the general health and appearance of trees, which may differ fundamentally if Ivy etc were not present. For example, a tree that has the overall appearance of good health and vigour may have a serious structural defect hidden by climbing plants.

1.3. *The Base Map*

1.3.1. The base map for the tree survey is the LPA **approved** block plan provided by the architect. It has been scaled using the length of the proposed swimming pool at 10 metres. Tree locations have been triangulated on site as precisely as possible using an accurate laser rangefinder (Haglof Laser Geo) and using the dwelling as a datum. The author accepts no responsibility for inaccuracies in the base plan or tree locations.

1.4. Tree *Law*

1.4.1. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. All trees on site are protected by Tree Preservation Order (TPO) no. TPO 3 of 1955, within woodland W6 which covers mixed conifers and deciduous trees. It is a criminal offence to undertake tree works or harm trees in any way, including to roots (even by soil compaction) without the consent of the local planning authority. **You must wait until the Council 'discharges' (approves) this Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) in writing before commencement of development.**

1.5. *Non*-Disclosure *Notice*

1.5.1. The content and layout of this report are owned by the author. This report may not be copied or used without the author's agreement for any purpose other than the purpose indicated in this report.

1.6. *Third* Party *Disclaimer*

1.6.1. The report was prepared by the author on behalf of Greenwillows Associates Ltd. The author provides this advice without prejudice and bases his opinions on knowledge, experience, qualifications and published research and cannot be held responsible for the consequences of a difference of

opinion held by third parties, for example the Local Planning Authority or Planning Inspector. The author does not accept liability for any loss or damage arising from reliance on the content of this report.

1.7. *Status*

1.7.1. This is the covering report (explanatory) for an arboricultural method statement that has been produced to comply with a planning condition imposed by a local planning authority. The planning condition must be discharged in writing by the LPA prior to commencement (full wording in the decision notice).

1.7.2. The applicant is responsible for obtaining the Local Planning Authority's written approval for commencement – as stated in planning condition number 1. This shall not be the responsibility of the arboricultural consultant.

## 2. Brief

2.1. This report was requested on 10 March 2020. The site visit / tree survey was conducted on 16 March 2020.

2.2. The advice herein takes the form of an arboricultural method statement covering report and supporting information as required by a planning condition.

2.3. The Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council planning application reference number is 6/2020/0004/HOUSE. The decision notice is dated 3 March 2020. This report is prepared in respect of condition number 1, which states:

1. Prior to commencement of the development an Arboricultural Method Statement must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Arboricultural Method statement must include:

   a) A plan showing the areas of trees, or parts of trees growing from adjacent sites, to be protected and fencing in accordance with the relevant British Standard (BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations) and to identify areas where no chemical or materials or equipment shall be stored, mixed or prepared, no fires or site washings, within the root protection area of the tree or under the canopy spread whichever is the greater;
   b) Details of any proposed alterations to existing ground levels and details of any proposed excavation within the proximity of the root protection area of any retained tree, including trees growing from adjacent sites, or within a distance from any retained tree equivalent to half the height of that tree; and
   c) Specify any other means needed to ensure that all of the trees to be retained will not be harmed during the development, including by damage to their root system, directly or indirectly.

# 3. Findings and Recommendations

3.1. No trees are to be removed.

3.2. The accompanying AMS plan (proposed) describes the context and shows the areas where the recommendations should be applied.

3.3. The AMS plan is based on the approved layout. This is the layout that will be implemented. The tree protection methods recommended will mitigate and minimise the damage that will be caused to the root systems of trees, it cannot prevent damage altogether. The installation of some temporary track mats around the base of tree no.8 will reduce damage to the soil structure around the base of the tree but the area is very restricted and does not allow track mats to be laid easily due to their dimensions.

3.4. With the tree protection measures in place, the trees will encounter no demonstrable damage or relatively minor damage that would not be expected to result in long-term consequences for their health or safety.

3.5. The new permeable paving between the swimming pool and pool house covers some of the RPA of tree no.6. This shouldn't be very harmful provided that excavation is very minimal and that the edging treatment along the eastern edge doesn't use a trenched edge retention method.

# 4. Tree Survey Methodology

4.1. The trees have been assessed in accordance with British Standard BS 5837: 2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations'. Ten trees were recorded. The trees are given sequential numbers and are listed in the tree survey schedule. Tree locations are identified on the AMS plan.

4.2. The British Standard divides trees into one of four categories (based on the cascade chart for tree quality assessment – Table 1 in the Standard). These are classed as U, A, B or C (Section 4.5 of BS5837). This gives an indication as to the tree's quality. For a tree to qualify under any given category it should fall within the scope of that category's definition (see below). Categories A, B and C cover trees that might be a material consideration in the development process, each with three further sub-categories (1, 2 or 3) which are intended to reflect arboricultural, landscape and cultural (including conservation) values. Category U trees are those which would be lost in the short term for reasons usually connected with their physiological or structural condition. In assigning trees to the A, B or C categories, the presence of any serious disease or tree-related hazards are taken into account. If the disease is considered fatal and / or irremediable, or likely to require sanitation for the protection of other trees it may be categorised as U, even if they are otherwise of considerable value.

4.3. Category 'U'. (Dark Red): Trees for removal are those trees in such a condition that any existing value would be lost within 10 years and which should in the current context be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management. Trees within this category are:

i. 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;
ii. Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate or irreversible overall decline;
iii. Trees infected with pathogens of significance to the health and or/safety of other trees nearby trees or very low-quality trees suppressing adjacent trees of better quality.

4.4. Category 'A'. (Green): are trees whose retention is most desirable and are of high quality and value. These trees are considered to be in such a condition as to be able to make a lasting contribution (at least 40 years) and may comprise:

i. Trees which are particularly good examples of their species especially rare or unusual, or essential components of groups or of formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue);
ii. Trees, groups or woodlands of particular visual importance as arboricultural

and/or landscape features,

iii. Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (eg. veteran trees or wood-pasture trees).

4.5. Category 'B'. (Blue): are trees whose retention is considered desirable and are of moderate quality. These trees are considered to be in such a condition as to make a significant contribution (at least 20 years) and may comprise:

i. Trees that might be included in category A, but because of their numbers or slightly impaired condition (e.g. presence of remediable defects including unsympathetic past management and minor storm damage), are downgraded in favour of the best individuals;
ii. Trees present in numbers such that they form distinct landscape features and attract a higher collective rating than they would as individuals or trees occurring as collectives but situated so as to make little visual contribution to the wider locality;
iii. Trees with material conservation or other cultural value.

4.6. Category 'C'. (Grey): are trees that could be retained and are considered to be of low-quality. They have a life expectancy of at least 10 years or are young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm and may comprise:

i. Unremarkable trees of very limited merit or such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories;
ii. 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 screening benefits;
iii. Trees with no material conservation or other cultural value.

4.7. Crown spreads have been measured in metres and taken for the four cardinal points where necessary and where access permits. The measurements are always considered in the following sequence: north, east, south and west, and therefore appear as such within the tree survey schedule. Where access is not available dimensions are estimated.

4.8. In the assessment particular consideration has been given to the following when considering the appropriate BS Category and Sub-Category allocation:

i. the health, vigour and condition of each tree;
ii. the presence of any structural defects in each tree and its remaining contribution in years (i.e. future life expectancy);
iii. the size and form of each tree and its suitability within the context of a proposed development for the land use;
iv. the location of each tree relative to existing site features, e.g. its value as a screen or as a skyline feature.

4.9. Age class is assessed according to the age class categories referred to in BS 5837.

**Young** trees
**Early-mature**, trees less than 1/2 life expectancy.
**Mature** trees up to 2/3 life expectancy.
**Over-mature**, declining or moribund trees of low vigour.
**Veteran** trees

4.10. The physiological condition of the tree, or group of trees, has been referred to as one of the following:

**Good:** A sound tree, trees needing little, if any, attention.

**Moderate:** A tree, trees, with minor but rectifiable defects or in the early stages of stress, from which it may recover.

**Poor:** A tree, trees, with major structural and physiological defects or stressed such that it would be very expensive and inappropriate to retain.

**Dead:** A tree or trees, no longer alive. However, this could also apply to those trees that are dying and will be unlikely to recover, or are / have become dangerous.

4.11. Major defects or diseases and relevant observations have also been recorded under Structural Condition within the Tree Schedule. The assessment for structural condition has included inspection of the following defects:

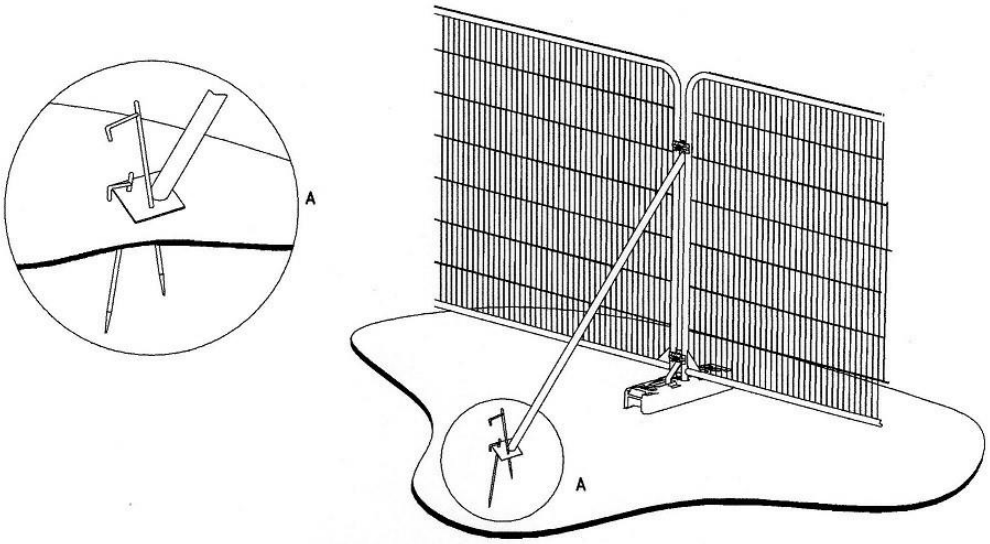
- The presence of fungal fruiting bodies around the base of the tree or on the stem, as they could possibly indicate the presence of possible internal decay.
- Soil cracks and any heaving of the soil around the base indicating possible root plate movement.
- Any abrupt bends in branches and limbs resulting from past pruning, as it may be an indication of internal weakness and decay.
- Tight or weak 'V' shaped forks and co-dominant stems
- Hazard beam formations and other such biomechanical related defects (as described by Claus Mattheck, Body Language of Trees HMSO Research for Amenity Trees No. 4 1994).
- Cavities as a result of limb losses or past pruning.
- Broken branches
- Storm damage
- Canker formations
- Loose bark
- Damage to roots

- Basal, stem or branch / limb cavities
- Die-back in the crown
- Abnormal foliage size and colour
- Any changes to the timing of normal leaf flush and leaf fall patterns
- Other pathological diseases affecting any part of the tree

# 5. Methodology

5.1. The following documents are indispensable in the application of the recommendations in this report:

- British Standard BS5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations'
- British Standard BS3998:2010 'Tree Work - Recommendations'
- Managing Trees During Construction - International Society of Arboriculture (second edition) (2016)
- The Construction (Design & Management) Regulations (CDM) (2015)
- Below: Example of tree protective barrier – Support struts on tree side




a) Stabilizer strut with base plate secured with ground pins

- Below: Example of tree protective fencing installed correctly

Below: Example of track mats in-situ

# 6. Photographs


Tree 1 (Oak) – Next to gate entrance


Tree 2 (Holly) – An insignificant tree


Tree 3 (Oak) – Located off site, to the south


Trees 4,5 & 6 (Oak) and Tree 7 (Lime) – Trees 4 & 5 are small


Tree 8 (Oak). Trees 9 (Oak) and 10 (Sycamore) are located off site