



# Memo.

**Date:** 10<sup>th</sup> February 2012  
**To:** Sarah Smith  
**Cc:** -  
**From:** Oliver Waring  
**Subject:** N6/2010/3120/DC3 – Redevelopment of site to provide a wet play area, adventure play areas, an educational play area, high ropes attraction, changing huts, education room, cafe and toilet facilities.

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An assessment has been made of the impact of the above proposed development on trees on or near the proposed site.

The following documents were used in the assessment of the application:

- Arboricultural Survey and Planning Integration Report at Stanborough Park (north), Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire by Quaife Woodlands(ref. AR/2376a/ap) dated 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012.
- Cracknell Landscape Architecture Planning Tree Plan Sheet 1 (project no 5108, drg no TP001 rev 06)
- Cracknell Landscape Architecture Planning Tree Plan Sheet 2 (project no 5108, drg TP-002 rev 06).
- Cracknell Landscape Architecture Planning Play Area & High Ropes – Neighbourhood Context (Project no. 5108 drg LD-901 rev 00)

A site visit was also carried out on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

The proposed development is at the site of the old swimming complex at the northern section of Stanborough Park , Welwyn Garden City.

An assessment of the trees in and around the proposed development site has been carried out by Quiafe Woodlands and detailed in their report following the guidance set out in BS 5837: 2005 Trees in relation to construction- Recommendations. In general the categorisation of the trees given within the report is agreed with.

The tree report contains a general comment about tree pruning stating that it will be required to accord with British Standard 3998:1989 Tree Work. However this British Standard has been superseded by British Standard 3998:2010 and all work should accord with this current British Standard.

The tree report has recommended removal of 70 individual trees and 3 groups of trees. However there is some confusion regarding tree removals. It is clear from the plans that some tree removals are required to facilitate the proposed development. There are other tree removals both shown on the Cracknell plans and on the removals list within Quiafe Woodlands tree report which do not appear to have anything to do with the development and include some high value trees. I am assuming that these removals relate to a previous incarnation of this project but have not been reassessed with regard to the current proposal. An example is the trees at the entrance to the site (257,487 and 485) which are shown for removal which would have been due to the alterations to the entrance which are no longer proposed. Also the woodland area to the north west of the proposed site shows significant removals however these do not relate to the proposed development. These issues need to be addressed in order to proceed with the development and will need to be supplied before a decision is made.

The high rope access area is shown as having a metal fence all the way around it. The northwest section of the proposed fence is shown running along the edge of a woodland section. It is very close to the stems of some of the trees in this section. It would be better to move the fence between a 1m-2m away from the trees. This would require less pruning of the trees (needed to facilitate the erection of the fence) and will discourage people from climbing the trees and climbing over the fence. Also the surface proposed for the high ropes is shown as bound gravel surface. This type of surface is not ideal close to the trees and their rooting area and I would rather see something like bark mulch in this area.

The drawings show a blue dotted line around the trees labelled as root barrier protection. I think this is meant to show the indicative Root Protection Area (RPA). This cannot in all cases be protected using a fence as it is not practical in some places. As this is not a tree protection plan I have ignored the dotted blue lines. However when a Tree Protection Plan is submitted it will need to address the issues of fencing taking into account any other on site features.

## **CONCLUSION**

At present it is difficult to assess the impact of the development upon the trees as the information supplied is still conflicting. The following needs to be addressed and resubmitted:

- The Arb report and the proposed plans need to correlate, specifically with regard to tree removals. It would be helpful if the reasons for removal were supplied i.e to facilitate development or because of poor condition. (At the moment I have to guess the reason for removal if it is not obvious).
- The root protection barrier information is not helpful. A more thorough explanation of why it is there would be useful. Again this information does not correlate to the arb report.
- The fencing around the high ropes section is too close to the trees and should be moved away from the wooded area to the northwest of the proposed development site.
- The bonded gravel surface within the high ropes area is not appropriate I would recommend a bark chip over a permeable membrane.

If approved the following conditions would be required:

- An Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) in accordance with BS:5837;2005 section 7 which should include the following.
  1. A plan clearly indicating trees for removal and retention

2. Precise location for tree protection,
3. Details of special construction methods and the areas where these are to be applied.
4. Details of site huts, machinery and material storage.
5. Details of site parking
6. Details of services both existing and proposed.
7. Details of any on site supervision.

Also a detailed landscape scheme will need to be provided to include:

- Details of species, size and planting densities
- Planting method specification
- Details of after care and replacements if needed.

I trust the above clear. Please let me know if you need any classification.