

Tree Planning Solutions Ltd

Arboricultural Consultancy

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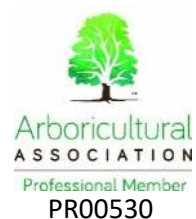
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## Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statements

For

Land adjacent 2 Snailswell Lane, Ickleford, Hitchin, North  
Herts, SG5 3TP

|               |                                |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| Date          | 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2025 |
| Client        | Intouch Planning Ltd           |
| Report by     | Mr James Choat BSc, M Arbor A  |
| Site          | 2 Snailswell Lane              |
| Reference No. | TPSQU0354                      |
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## 1. Summary

1.1.1 Tree Planning Solutions Ltd received instruction from Intouch Planning Ltd to complete an arboricultural site survey and produce this subsequent Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) for an area of land at 2 Snailswell Lane, Ickleford, Hitchin, North Herts, SG5 3TP.

1.1.2 Trees are a material consideration during the planning application process and require specialist input at the design stage to ensure the success for the end use of the proposed development whilst retaining the best tree specimens. Generally, local authorities provide local plan policies for planning applicants with regards to the suitable retention and protection criteria for trees during the application process and subsequent construction phase, and the level of detail that will be required to determine the application - details can be found on the local authority web site. Central government provide 'The National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF 2025), which provides specific details of application acceptability; paragraphs 136, 187 and 193 specifically relate to tree planting, tree retention, biodiversity, habitat including trees and woodlands. Consultants providing arboricultural impact assessment (AIA) apply British Standard 5837 2012 criteria to demonstrate the suitable retention, design and protection of trees during the application / design process. The completed assessment forms part of the application detail and will aid the Planning Authorities decision with regard to the impact of the proposed development on the existing tree stock and local landscape character.

1.1.3 The survey and this report are provided in support of a full planning application for subdivision of the plot and development of 2 dwellings with access and parking.

1.1.4 The site was surveyed on the 20th November 2025, the weather was dry with a light wind, conditions and visibility for surveying trees were reasonable. 3 individual trees, 3 tree groups and 3 hedgerows were surveyed as part of the assessment for trees that could be affected either directly or indirectly by the construction of the proposed development.

1.1.5 The report provides the following information and data in accordance with the criteria provided within BS 5837 2012 '*Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction Recommendations*'

- Tree survey and schedule
- Tree constraints data and plan
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan

1.1.6 This report pays particular reference to:

- |                              |                                                                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ▪ British Standard 5837 2012 | Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction Recommendations |
| ▪ British Standard 3998 2010 | Recommendations for tree work                                            |
| ▪ NHBC CH 4.2                | Building near trees                                                      |
| ▪ NJUG 4                     | National Joint Utilities Group 'Working Near Trees'                      |
| ▪ NPPF 2025                  | National Planning Policy Framework                                       |

## 1.2 Statutory protection and non-statutory constraints

1.2.1 North Hertfordshire District Council GIS planning constraints GIS data was assessed 19/11/25. The site is not subject to a Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) nor is it subject to a local authority designated conservation area. The hedgerows at the site are not subject to the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 as they are not situated on land used for the keeping of horses, agricultural land or common land. It is recommended the applicant obtain written consent from North Herts District Council and where applicable the Forestry Commission, before carrying out recommendations contained within this report. Furthermore, no works should be carried out to any 3<sup>rd</sup> party tree(s) without first obtaining consent from the owner(s) of the tree(s).

1.2.2 Multi-agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC), was assessed 19/11/25, specifically data sets for land designations and habitats (woodlands). The site is subject to Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact zones – Oughton Head Lane SSSI.

1.2.3 The ancient tree inventory (non-statutory) was assessed 19/11/25, there are no listed ancient, veteran or notable trees at the site.

## **1.3 Limitations**

1.3.1 The applicant has supplied a plan of the existing and proposed (desired) site, no further information has been provided.

The following plans have been provided with the instruction for this report:

- Existing layout drawing provided by Intouch Planning Ltd
- Proposed layout drawing provided by Intouch Planning Ltd

1.3.2 This survey is for the purpose of determining the impact of the development upon existing trees; it is not a detailed tree condition survey and should not be used as such. All trees have been assessed from ground level; no aerial or below ground parts have been inspected in detail.

1.3.3 The survey remains valid for 12 months. If during 12 months following the tree survey adverse weather conditions have occurred, or the site environment changed in any form, it is recommended the trees be reassessed.

1.3.4 The content of this report remains the property of Tree Planning Solutions unless otherwise stated. This report is not to be copied without written consent from Tree Planning Solutions.

1.3.5 The consultant is a qualified arboriculturist, occasionally opinions and views are provided regarding buildings and structures, the consultant is not a qualified buildings surveyor or structural engineer and therefore all opinions and views should be supported by a qualified structural/building engineer.

## **1.4 Qualifications**

1.4.1 The consultant has been working within the Arboricultural industry for 26 years as a tree surgeon, tree officer and consultant. Knowledge and experience are regularly updated by attending industry related seminars and courses. Continued professional development is verified by professional membership to the Arboricultural Association (membership No.

PR00530), CPD is updated on-line, a record can be provided upon request, last CPD event attended February 2025.

1.4.2 The consultant holds a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree in Rural Resource Development (final option Forestry), a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Rural Resource Management, the Lantra Professional Tree Inspection Award (refresher 2024), the RFS Level 2 Certificate in Arboriculture, level 3 certificate in Ecology and is a registered user of Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA).

## 2.1 The site

## 2.2 Site description

2.2.1 The site is located north of the village of Ickleford and accessed via a crossover from Snailswell Lane providing vehicular access to the site . The site is situated within a semi-rural position with a reasonable number of tree features within the immediate vicinity. Ward canopy cover for the Cadwell Ward is 10.6% (Ward Canopy Cover Maps 2025). The trees subject of this report are situated to and beyond the boundaries of the site with occasional trees internal to the application site. The application site contains the following built structures - semi-detached dwelling, shed and hard stand access and patio. The application site consists of the following habitat / green features – improved grass, formal hedgerows and trees.

## 2.3 Topographical survey

2.3.1 A topographical survey was provided with the instruction for this project. OD recordings ranging from 49.96 to the north to 50.06 to the south were provided on the survey plan. The site is generally flat with no significant changes in levels that will influence root orientation or morphology, it is therefore reasonable to assume the root protection areas will be normal in terms of size and shape. Where recently constructed structures are present within the root protection area (RPA) that are likely to have founds deeper than 600mm, it is likely that the RPA will be modified as roots are deflected at the point of contact with the founds and the rooting environment below the founds and structures will generally be less favourable for optimal root growth. Where sheer level changes are evident that are over 1000mm depth (ponds, streams, ditches, etc), then these are likely to modify the RPA, although will be dependent on species tolerance and soils. Various inspection chambers were recorded during the survey, the date of construction/servicing is not known, it is not known therefore whether the below ground services are affecting / have previously affected the rooting zone of the trees. Overhead services were not recorded during the tree survey.

## 2.4 Soils

2.4.1 British Geological Society (BGS) Geology Maps scaled at 1:50,000 show the site to be situated on bedrock of West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation – Chalk and superficial deposits of Head – Clay, silt, sand and gravel. Sand, gravel and chalk soil texture is likely to offer a deeper

rooting environment than that of clay as the roots can easily penetrate and explore such soils with little resistance, clay like soils tend to restrict root exploration. Clay soils can be modified by moisture, either reduced or increased in volume by fluctuations in moisture content, such fluctuations can influence how structures perform and therefore may require additional, engineered support to improve the stability of the structure. Local variations and differing soil seams of superficial and bedrock deposits do occur, differing bedrock and superficial deposits will have a different soil texture and structure to those described above and will perform differently. It is recommended core samples be obtained to determine the exact soil texture at the site.

## Part 1 Tree Survey, Constraints and Impact Assessment

### 3.1 Tree survey and schedule

3.1.1 The tree schedule provides an account of all the trees at or adjacent to the site and is written on to a tabular form. Each tree is given a reference number (T1, T2, T3, G1 etc) that is plotted on to a tree survey plan to be cross-referenced with the tabular form. Contained within the schedule are the dimensions of each individual tree and any notable physiological or mechanical defects. An estimated life expectancy is derived from the condition and context of the tree and the tree is then graded for its quality. The tabular form can be found in appendix 1 with explanatory notes for each column heading. The tree survey plan can be found in appendix 2. Provided below is a table of the existing trees, their current condition and British Standard 5837 category quality grading. The categories for quality are; A - high value, B - moderate value, C - low value and U - unable to be retained as a living tree, each category is given a colour code for use with the tree survey plan (appendix 2), A - Green, B- Blue, C - Grey and U- Red. There are further sub-categories used alongside the categorisation; 1 arboricultural, 2 landscape and 3 wildlife or historical values. British Standard 5837 recommends trees with a stem diameter of less than 150mm are categorised as C regardless of condition, form etc. it is assumed that a tree of this size can either be transplanted or replaced without any negative impact upon tree-based visual amenity. Ancient trees are automatically graded as category A due to their age and / or wildlife associations and cultural / historical value, all ancient trees are veteran but not all veteran trees are ancient. Veteran trees will likely contain significant defects and generally the defects are the microhabitats that increase their ecological value. Careful consideration should be given to the retention of veteran trees where the target area is high or increased as a result of development. Should an assessment be made with regards to veteran or ancient trees then the standing advice from Natural England and the Forestry Commission will be applicable and the criteria in NPPF 2025 will need to be met.

**Table 1 Tree condition table**

| Tree ref | Species Common and Scientific | Age class | Observations                                                                                    | Category grading |
|----------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| T1       | Ash Fraxinus excelsior        | M         | Stem forks at 2.5m forming 3 codominant stems. Occasional small diameter deadwood within crown. | B1               |
| H1       | Beech Fagus sylvatica         | EM        | Maintained with frequent pruning cut.                                                           | B1               |

| Tree ref | Species Common and Scientific                   | Age class | Observations                                                                                                                                                        | Category grading |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| T2       | Hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i>                   | Y         | Damage at base of stem. Little arboricultural merit.                                                                                                                | C1               |
| T3       | Apple Sp<br>Malus Sp                            | Y         | Managed for fruit production. Little arboricultural merit.                                                                                                          | C1               |
| G1       | Various fruit trees                             | EM        | Various fruit, Cherry, Pear, Apple, Almond. Little arboricultural merit.                                                                                            | C1               |
| G2       | Leyland cypress<br><i>Cupressus x leylandii</i> | EM        | 2 trees within group, sharing crown. Little arboricultural merit.                                                                                                   | C1               |
| G3       | Hawthorn<br><i>Crataegus monogyna</i>           | M         | Ivy clad. Rooted behind shed, unable to fully assess. Little arboricultural merit.                                                                                  | C1               |
| H2       | Leyland cypress<br><i>Cupressus x leylandii</i> | Y         | Maintained with frequent pruning cut. Little arboricultural merit.                                                                                                  | C1               |
| H3       | Leyland cypress<br><i>Cupressus x leylandii</i> | Y         | Maintained with frequent pruning cut. Lateral spread pruned to stem on northern aspect resulting in exposed stem and flat sided crown. Little arboricultural merit. | C1               |

## 3.2 Further discussion

### 3.2.1 Visual amenity value.

Visual amenity value of the surveyed tree features T1 and H1 is good, the tree features can be seen from the publicly maintained highway and are prominent within the street scene. The trees beyond the front boundary are limited in terms of visual amenity value, they are less prominent and obscured from view by the existing surrounding natural form.

### 3.2.1 Landscape value

The trees provide reasonable screening / local landscape value, the trees partly screen the site and reduce the perceptual load of the built form and hard roof line at and beyond the site boundaries. The trees are not however, associated with the historical landscape / ancient countryside - holloways, narrow country lanes, ancient hedgerows, ancient woodland, closed small field systems, etc (Rackham 1986) or the historical landform - streams, ditches, slopes, etc. The trees are not rare, ancient, veteran or unusual specimens.

### 3.2.2 Wildlife value

The wildlife value is limited, the structural diversity and connectivity is limited, with poor connectivity of the ground and sub canopy layers with higher canopy layers which limits foraging, breeding, migratory and navigational opportunity for less mobile fauna. The trees

are a mix of native and non-native specimens, non-native trees tend to have limited numbers of associated native insects, although it is accepted that at differing times of the year non-native trees may house similar numbers as native trees and therefore provide a contribution during these times (Thomas 2022). The trees favour the early mature age range which is likely to limit associated microhabitats as these tend to favour older / veteran specimens.

3.2.3 Provided below is the British Standard 5837 categorisations with total number of surveyed trees for each corresponding categorisation:

A = 0

B = 2

C = 7

U = 0

3.2.4 The category B trees should be retained where their long-term retention is achievable. A mixture of tree works, design modification and special construction techniques should be employed to accommodate category B trees. Generally, category B trees have a life expectancy over 20 years and offer a medium to long-term contribution to the amenity/character of the area. Category B trees contain occasional defects that can be remedied with suitable tree works.

3.2.5 The category C trees are desirable for retention in the short term. Generally, category C trees have a life expectancy of less than 10 years and would be acceptable to remove once new planting is established. Category C trees contain many defects that are likely to reduce the long-term life expectancy of the tree. Category C trees do not add to the character or visual amenity of the area and have little arboricultural merit. Category C trees are those with a stem diameter less than 150mm measured at 1.5m above ground level.

## 4.1 Tree constraints

4.1.1 The above and below ground tree constraints are represented by the present crown spread and root protection areas (RPA) of each retained tree. British Standard 5837 provides a calculation for root protection areas for both single and multi-stem trees. The constraints are plotted to a site plan around each individual tree; the constraints plan is used to determine the site layout feasibility and further clarifies suitable tree retention or removal. The constraints plan can be found in appendix 2. Further consideration should be given to the future growth potential for each retained tree; the table below provides estimated growth rates that should be considered when achieving a suitable design layout.

4.1.2 There are no significant sheer level changes within the site such as trenches, soil voids, deep foundations, or ditches that would significantly alter the calculated RPAs. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the calculated RPAs will be normal in terms of size and shape and maintain the default position of a circle plotted around the stem of the tree.

4.1.3 Provided below is a constraints table that provides data for the radial distance required for the RPA, the present height and spread of the tree, the future increase in height and spread of the tree in 10 years and tree management considerations.

**Table 2 Tree constraints table**

| Tree ref | Species Common and Scientific            | Height in m | Stem diameter in mm | Radial distance required for RPA | Branch spread |   |   |   | Height of crown clearance in m | Estimated increase in M in crown height in 10 years | Estimated increase in M in crown spread in 10 years | Management Considerations                |
|----------|------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|---|---|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|          |                                          |             |                     |                                  | N             | E | S | W |                                |                                                     |                                                     |                                          |
| T1       | Ash<br>Fraxinus excelsior                | 17          | 550                 | 6.6                              | 6             | 6 | 6 | 6 | 4                              | 2                                                   | 2                                                   | None                                     |
| H1       | Beech<br>Fagus sylvatica                 | 2           | 150                 | 1.8                              | 1             | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0                              | 0                                                   | 0                                                   | Maintained at current height and spread. |
| T2       | Hazel<br>Corylus avellana                | 2           | 80                  | 0.96                             | 1             | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1                              | 1                                                   | 1                                                   | None                                     |
| T3       | Apple Sp<br>Malus Sp                     | 2           | 130                 | 1.56                             | 3             | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1                              | 0                                                   | 0                                                   | Maintained at current height and spread. |
| G1       | Various fruit trees                      | 5           | 220                 | 2.64                             | 3             | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1                              | 1                                                   | 1                                                   | None                                     |
| G2       | Leyland cypress<br>Cupressus x leylandii | 10          | 300                 | 3.6                              | 3             | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2                              | 0                                                   | 0                                                   | Maintained at current height and spread. |

| Tree ref | Species Common and Scientific            | Height in m | Stem diameter in mm | Radial distance required for RPA | Branch spread |   |   |   | Height of crown clearance in m | Estimated increase in M in crown height in 10 years | Estimated increase in M in crown spread in 10 years | Management Considerations                |
|----------|------------------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|---|---|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|          |                                          |             |                     |                                  | N             | E | S | W |                                |                                                     |                                                     |                                          |
| G3       | Hawthorn<br>Crataegus monogyna           | 3           | 250                 | 3                                | 2             | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1                              | 1                                                   | 1                                                   | None                                     |
| H2       | Leyland cypress<br>Cupressus x leylandii | 2           | 100                 | 1.2                              | 1             | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0                              | 0                                                   | 0                                                   | Maintained at current height and spread. |
| H3       | Leyland cypress<br>Cupressus x leylandii | 2           | 100                 | 1.2                              | 1             | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0                              | 0                                                   | 0                                                   | Maintained at current height and spread. |

## 5.1 Arboricultural impact assessment

5.1.1 Provided below is an assessment of the impact of the development on each individual tree and any design requirements for the site. Such factors include tree preservation orders, tree amenity, tree retention, removal of structures within RPA, infrastructure requirements, construction of infrastructure, end use of space, tree loss / new planting, light issues, proximity to structures, relationship with new homeowners and tree nuisance.

**Table 3 Arboricultural Impact Assessment**

| Tree Ref | TPO/CA/other statutory protection. Amenity assessment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Removal of existing structures and hard surfacing within RPA | Proposed Infrastructure within RPA                                                                                       | Construction methods for proposed infrastructure                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | End use of space                                                                                                                                         | Tree loss and new planting | Shading and light                                                                                                                                               | Proximity to structures                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Future pressure for tree removal/works                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Seasonal tree nuisance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T1       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Herts District Councils GIS planning constraints data was checked 19/11/25, the trees are not subject to TPO and the site is not situated within a designated conservation area.</li> <li>MAGIC GIS checked 19/11/25 – the site is listed within SSSI Impact Zones.</li> <li>Reasonable amenity and landscape value, limited wildlife value.</li> </ul> | N/a                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crossover, access and minor section of the dwelling is within the RPA.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excavation using handheld tools only to a depth of 600mm, excavation beyond 600mm depth is to be undertaken using a mechanical excavator under the supervision of the project arboriculturist, see method statement provided in section 9 and appendix 5.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The end use of the proposed amenity space and dwellings will not be constrained by the retained trees.</li> </ul> | N/a                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees is situated north of the proposal and is to be managed so as not to cause a significant shade nuisance.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees are at sufficient distance from the proposal so as not to cause general nuisance.</li> <li>Selective / repeat crown reduction is likely in the future to maintain suitable crown clearance.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low. The trees will not cause a significant nuisance or loss of enjoyment to the use of the proposal.</li> <li>Selective / repeat crown reduction is likely in the future to maintain suitable crown clearance.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaf and fruit dispersal</li> <li>Nuisance of blocked drains, gutters etc.</li> <li>Recommend use of guards as appropriate to prevent blockages occurring.</li> <li>Use surfaces that do not tarnish from tree deposits (shingle, loose stone, grass, etc.).</li> </ul> |

| Tree Ref            | TPO/CA/other statutory protection. Amenity assessment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Removal of existing structures and hard surfacing within RPA | Proposed Infrastructure within RPA | Construction methods for proposed infrastructure | End use of space                                                                                                                                         | Tree loss and new planting                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Shading and light                                                                                                                                                                     | Proximity to structures                                                                                                                                                                           | Future pressure for tree removal/works                                                                                                                                                                          | Seasonal tree nuisance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| H2                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Herts District Councils GIS planning constraints data was checked 19/11/25, the trees are not subject to TPO and the site is not situated within a designated conservation area.</li> <li>MAGIC GIS checked 19/11/25 – the site is listed within SSSI Impact Zones.</li> <li>Hedgerows are not subject to the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.</li> <li>Reasonable amenity and landscape value, limited wildlife value.</li> </ul> | N/a                                                          | N/a                                | N/a                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The end use of the proposed amenity space and dwellings will not be constrained by the retained trees.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of sections of H1 for the end use access. Replacement planting of native hedges to the side and rear of the site to mitigate for loss.</li> </ul>                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees are managed at current height and spread and situated at sufficient distance so as not to cause a significant shade nuisance.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trees are at sufficient distance from the proposal so as not to cause general nuisance.</li> <li>H1 is to be managed to the current dimensions.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low. The trees will not cause a significant nuisance or loss of enjoyment to the use of the proposal.</li> <li>H1 is to be managed to the current dimensions.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaf and fruit dispersal</li> <li>Nuisance of blocked drains, gutters etc.</li> <li>Recommend use of guards as appropriate to prevent blockages occurring.</li> <li>Use surfaces that do not tarnish from tree deposits (shingle, loose stone, grass, etc.).</li> </ul> |
| T2-T3, G1-G3, H2-H3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Herts District Councils GIS planning constraints data was checked 19/11/25, the trees are not subject to TPO and the site is not situated within a designated conservation area.</li> <li>MAGIC GIS checked 19/11/25 – site listed within SSSI Impact Zones.</li> <li>Hedgerows are not subject to the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.</li> <li>Limited amenity, landscape and wildlife value.</li> </ul>                         | N/a                                                          | N/a                                | N/a                                              | N/a                                                                                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of trees.</li> <li>No statutory duty to replace with the same species in the same location.</li> <li>Replacement planting as part of end phase landscaping works using hedges and shrubs.</li> </ul> | N/a                                                                                                                                                                                   | N/a                                                                                                                                                                                               | N/a                                                                                                                                                                                                             | N/a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

## 5.2 Further discussion

5.2.1 Details regarding services are yet to be issued, generally services are considered during the detailed design phase; the following is recommended when considering the detailed design: - below ground services for drainage, electricity, gas, water, telecoms, are to be located outside the RPA of the retained trees or connected to existing services within the site. If however, this is not viable then trenchless methods of working will be adopted, shallow trenching may be permitted although a trial trench should be prepared to determine the presence of roots and the impact upon the health of the tree/s affected. Overhead services such as lighting columns, electricity, telecoms, etc. are to be outside the present and future canopy spread, use of Table 2 'Tree Constraints' will aid design.

5.2.2 Guttering and drains will have guards to prevent leaf/fruit drain blockages. Where a significant loss of rainwater water is likely due to loss of natural soft surfaces, the rainwater drainage will be redirected into the soil area of the retained trees. The drainage will result in an even and slow distribution within the soil environment, it will not cause waterlogged conditions or damage to the soil structure, structural engineer to advise further.

5.2.3 The information provided in the impact assessment and constraints advice has provided a basis for tree retention, works specification and construction techniques required. Further details for this can be found in the following sections of this report.

## 6.1 Tree removals and impact assessment

**6.1.1** Provided below is a table of the trees to be removed and the impact upon visual amenity value. This is to be cross-referenced with the tree survey plan provided in appendix 2.

**Table 4 Trees to be removed**

| Trees to be removed                         | Reason for removal                                                                      | Impact upon visual amenity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| H1 (part of), H2, H3, G1, G2, G3, T2 and T3 | Facilitate construction of the proposal and improve the end use useable amenity spaces. | Low. The trees to be removed are low value (Category C) and have little arboricultural merit. Their loss will not have a significant impact upon visual amenity or local landscape character. End phase landscaping using hedgerows and shrubs is considered sufficient to mitigate loss. |

## Part 2 Arboricultural Method Statement

### 7.1 Tree works specification

**7.1.1** All tree works are to be completed as a starting phase of development unless otherwise stated.

**7.1.2** All works are to be completed to BS3998 2010 'Recommendations for tree works'

**7.1.3** Research suggests that tree works are better completed when the trees are using the least amount of energy and when conditions do not favour pathogens. It is recommended that the works specified below be carried out in midsummer July/early August or the dormant period Jan/Feb. Specifically, times of bud break and leaf abscission should be avoided. This may need further assessment for different species or for aged/veteran trees whose energy reserve and potential to kinetic ratio is susceptible to change from minor tree works. Where this is likely to occur, a separate management plan for that individual tree may be required.

**7.1.4** Provided below is a table showing tree works specification. The key for works urgency can be found in Appendix 1 Explanatory notes.

**Table 5 Tree works specification**

| Tree ref | Species Common and Scientific | Age class | Tree works to facilitate construction and / or access                                    | Preliminary management recommendations | Works urgency (preliminary works only) | Category grading |
|----------|-------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| T1       | Ash Fraxinus excelsior        | M         | Reduce crown by 2.5m, works may have already occurred prior to providing the assessment. | None                                   | 0                                      | B1               |
| H1       | Beech Fagus sylvatica         | EM        | Remove 2 sections and grind stumps following below ground service assessment.            | Maintain at current height and spread. | 3                                      | B1               |
| T2       | Hazel Corylus avellana        | Y         | Fell and grind stump following below ground service assessment.                          | None                                   | 0                                      | C1               |
| T3       | Apple Sp Malus Sp             | Y         | Fell and grind stump following below ground service assessment.                          | None                                   | 0                                      | C1               |
| G1       | Various fruit trees           | EM        | Fell and grind stumps following below ground service assessment.                         | None                                   | 0                                      | C1               |

# TPS

| Tree ref | Species Common and Scientific            | Age class | Tree works to facilitate construction and / or access            | Preliminary management recommendations | Works urgency (preliminary works only) | Category grading |
|----------|------------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------|
| G2       | Leyland cypress<br>Cupressus x leylandii | EM        | Fell and grind stumps following below ground service assessment. | None                                   | 0                                      | C1               |
| G3       | Hawthorn<br>Crataegus monogyna           | M         | Fell and grind stumps following below ground service assessment. | None                                   | 0                                      | C1               |
| H2       | Leyland cypress<br>Cupressus x leylandii | Y         | Fell and grind stumps following below ground service assessment. | Maintain at current height and spread. | 0                                      | C1               |
| H3       | Leyland cypress<br>Cupressus x leylandii | Y         | Fell and grind stumps following below ground service assessment. | Maintain at current height and spread. | 0                                      | C1               |

## **8.1 Tree protection method statement**

- 8.1.2 Tree protection is required to prevent physical damage to the stem, branch and crown structure. Tree protection is used also to prevent indirect damage caused by loads passing over the root protection area that would otherwise cause compaction of the soil. Soil compaction reduces soil pore space, which in turn reduces; soil air, available water and nutrients, the anaerobic environment will prevent healthy and strong root growth (elongation, thickening, mycorrhizal association, etc.). Prolonged anaerobic soil conditions will lead to longer term poor tree health with symptoms (crown die back, sparse crown, poor extension growth, etc.) not evident until well after the occurrence. The simplest and most effective way to prevent damage to any retained tree on the development site is the provision of a construction exclusion zone around the tree and its calculated rooting area.
- 8.1.2 The areas for protection will see the RPA confirmed on the ground with the erection of a scaffold frame with wire mesh attached (Please see appendix 3 Barrier protection construction profile, diagram 2). Where site personnel require access across the RPA, ground protection will be installed utilising scaffold boards laid on a compressible layer (100mm of woodchip) with geotextile membrane beneath, as per British Standard 5837 section 6.2.3.3 (see appendix 5 tree protection plan). Where plant less than 2 tonnes requires access across an RPA, the compressible layer, as described above, should be increased to 200-300mm and the scaffold boards substituted for composite boards fit for the applied load, plant above 2 tonnes should utilise an engineered design using reinforced concrete slabs or specialised track mats fit for the applied load.
- 8.1.3 The barrier protection will contain and display information highlighting the protected tree and consequences of any breach of the tree protection. Please see appendix 4, example of informative to be placed on barrier protection.
- 8.1.4 The tree protection plan is shown in appendix 5. This shows; the RPA for each retained tree, the location of protective barriers/ground protection and areas for site storage and contractors parking.

## **9.1 Construction method statements**

9.1.2 Provided in this section are arboricultural method statements primarily concerned with working within the RPA of the retained trees. The method statements aim to reduce or prevent identified impacts, damage, or disturbance. These method statements should be distributed to all relevant staff involved in the development.

## **9.2 Excavation within the RPA**

9.2.1 Excavation will be required within part of the RPA of T1 as identified in the impact assessment section 5 and tree protection plan appendix 5 for the construction of the crossovers, paved landscape features and minor section of the dwelling. The method statement provided below is in accordance with British Standard 5837 section 7.2 and industry best practice.

### **Sequential method statement for hand / mechanical excavation and root pruning.**

1. Use a turf remover set at 50mm to remove turfs within RPA, hand barrow and store all debris outside of the RPA. Remove any hard surfacing to the original construction depth using a handheld concrete breaker, hand barrow and store all debris outside of the RPA.
2. Exposed soils / soft surfaces - Use an air lance or rake / fork to soften and break the underlying soils. Carefully remove the exposed soils using handheld tools only (spade, shovel, soft brush, trowel) to achieve excavation depth. Depths TBC by project structural engineer. Excavation not exceeding 600mm depth (landscape features, paths, patios etc, shallow foundations, pre excavation for deeper mechanical excavation, etc) to be carried out using handheld tools only (as above); excavation beyond 600mm depth (strip trench foundations, storm soakaways, etc) is to be carried out under supervision using a mechanical excavator with untoothed ditching bucket working from outside of the RPA or on suitable ground protection (see section 8 of AIA). 150mm soil scrapes are to be excavated and at each soil scrape interval a check for roots is to be carried out by the

project arboriculturist Where roots are encountered then points 3 onwards as below is to be applied.

3. Where roots are pliable and will not be damaged by movement, push to side of pit or downwards, pin with hazel rod and cover with 50mm of sharp sand.
4. Any exposed roots should immediately be wrapped or covered in damp hessian to prevent desiccation and to protect them from rapid temperature changes.
5. If required, sever any roots with a diameter less than 25mm (use a sharp tool to provide a clean cut across the cross section near to a root junction/ growth point).
6. Avoid severing roots greater than 25mm or clumps of roots (root mats). If this is necessary, then request an arboriculturist to attend the site to assess likely impact upon tree health and future stability.
7. Prior to backfilling any roots should be removed from the protective wrapping and surrounded by sharp sand, or other loose granular fill (minimum of 50mm), before soil or other material is replaced. The backfill is to be free from any contaminants or foreign objects.
8. Monitor tree health during next 2 growth seasons. Check leaf colour, size, density and extension growth.

## 9.3 Soft surfaces within RPA

9.3.1 Provided below is a method statement to avoid damaging/disturbance to the roots of the retained trees during soft landscape operations.

- Damage to roots is to be avoided, large structural roots may be seen at or near the surface and where they radiate from the stem of the tree from large buttresses. After around 4m radial distance structural roots tend to taper to around 3cm in diameter.
- No tractor mounted or heavy plant rotavating machinery is to be used.
- Cultivation is to be completed using manual hand tools only.
- The existing soil is to be used, where additional soil is required it should be contaminant free, well drained and suitable PH, texture and structure for the site and planting/existing trees/shrubs.
- Changes in ground levels are to be avoided, any lowering or raising of levels should be carried out using a suitable method statement that maintains continued soil conditions for gas exchange and water percolation.
- Planting is to be done with care and to avoid severing tree roots; generally, planting should be completed outside the RPA.

## **10.1 General arboricultural considerations**

**10.1.1** This section includes arboricultural considerations for use during the later design stage or by the on-site contracting team. Additionally, this section provides information on tree and associated wildlife legislation. The method statements should be distributed to all key staff involved with the development.

## **10.2 Storage**

**10.2.1** There is to be no storage within the RPA of any retained trees. An outline area can be designated at the pre-commencement construction site meeting.

## **10.3 Contractors parking**

**10.3.1** There is to be no parking within the RPA of any retained trees. An outline area can be designated at the pre-commencement construction site meeting.

## **10.4 Slopes**

**10.4.1** All mixing and storage of materials/chemicals to be done on a pre-prepared flat/level surface with sealed sides to prevent any runoff. Storage of all chemicals/materials likely to cause harm to the trees should be in a sealed container or area with a bund to prevent run off if spillages occur. Site personnel are to have access to spillage treatment equipment.

## **10.5 Services**

**10.5.1** Methods for service run construction within the RPA are micro tunnelling, Surface launched directional drilling, pipe ramming and impact moling. Method statements for the above listed modes of service provision should be provided by the relevant utility companies. Shallow trenching may be acceptable for minor services; if shallow

trenching is required then hand excavation should be adopted using an approved method statement.

**10.5.2** All overhead services are to be located outside the present and future crown spread of the retained trees, use tree constraints table provided in section 4 to aid design.

## **10.6 Levels**

**10.6.1** No stripping or raising of levels within the RPA without consent from the local authority. Where site levels require lowering, the use of hand excavation or an air spade should be adopted using an approved method statement. If site levels are to be raised the material added should allow for water infiltration and gaseous exchange allowing the roots to carry out their normal biological function, the use of a structural soil and a below ground aeration system may be required depending on the size of the area affected and depth.

## **10.7 Development phasing**

**10.7.1** All contracting staff working at the site should be briefed on approved working practices and protection requirements for the retained trees.

**10.7.2** The tree works specification should be completed following approval from the local authority.

**10.7.3** Prior to the commencing of development the chosen arboriculturist should re- assess all retained trees and provide further assessment.

**10.7.4** All barrier/ground protection should be erected/laid and confirmed as correct by the arboriculturist. All signs should be placed on the barriers at a height of 2m at 3m intervals.

**10.7.5** Barrier/ground protection altered after intensive phase of development for soft landscaping.

**10.7.6** Soft landscaping as final phase of development.

**10.7.7** Barrier / ground protection removed following landscaping phase.

## 10.8 Monitoring

### 10.8.1 Site key personnel

#### Architect and Contractors

| Name                 | Position                       | Contact details                                                              |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Builder - TBC        |                                |                                                                              |
| Intouch Planning Ltd | Planning and design consultant | <a href="mailto:james@intouchplanning.co.uk">james@intouchplanning.co.uk</a> |

#### Planning Authority

| Name                        | Position          | Contact details |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Nort Herts District Council | Customer Services | 01462 474000    |

#### Arboriculturist

| Name                        | Position                  | Contact details                                                                        |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tree Planning Solutions Ltd | Arboricultural Consultant | 07813204621                                                                            |
|                             |                           | <a href="mailto:info@treeplanningsolutions.co.uk">info@treeplanningsolutions.co.uk</a> |

10.8.2 It is recommended that all trees and protection methods be monitored for the duration of development. A qualified arboriculturist will make a regular visit; the project arboriculturist is to carry out an assessment of tree health and protection condition and make recommendations when required.

## 10.8.3 Site specific monitoring

| Item                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Number of visits required                                           | Timing of visit                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre-commencement site meeting with key personnel. (Contractor, site manager, architect).<br>Tree works<br>Tree protection installation (ground/barrier) as per tree protection plan and method statements within supplied arboricultural report. Identify area for contractors parking, site storage and access. Place 'exclusion zone' signs at 2m height, 3m intervals facing outwards on temporary fencing. | 1 or 2 depending on whether items can be completed on the same day. | Meeting to be arranged between architect and site manager before construction phase. |
| Site visit during construction phase to monitor tree health and tree protection condition.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 3 - 1 specifically when excavating within the RPA of T1.            | During construction phase                                                            |
| Removal of tree protection.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 1                                                                   | After intensive construction phase                                                   |

**10.8.4** The above is subject to the client/site manager informing the project staff of the proposed date for each development activity. Following each site visit a brief report (see appendix 6 arboricultural monitoring form) to be sent to the client and local authority within 24 hrs following the visit. Any incidents will be dealt with within 2 hours and to be reported to the project arboriculturist, photos to be provided via email and recommendations provided verbally, if required a site visit should be undertaken to provide further advice/ recommendations.

## 10.9 Incidents/variations

### 10.9.1 Planned

- Site manager to contact arboriculturist for any anticipated/planned variations
- Arboriculturist to assess impact upon trees and offer advice regarding alternative methods
- Arboriculturist to update tree officer providing details of variations

### 10.9.2 Non-planned

- Site manager to inform arboriculturist of incident
- Site manager to photograph incident and send to arboriculturist
- Arboriculturist to provide initial advice via telephone or email
- Arboriculturist to make site visit within 1 day to assess impact upon trees and offer advice to reduce/remove impact

- Arboriculturist to update the local authority tree officer providing details of incident and measure taken to reduce/remove impact.

## 10.10 Wildlife legislation

10.10.1 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, The Habitats Directive 1994 (consolidated under Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017) and The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. These acts protect certain species of flora and fauna; it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly destroy species or habitats contained within these acts. Trees, especially veteran or ancient, can support associated flora and fauna that is protected via the above legislation. It is recommended the applicant employ a suitably qualified ecologist to carry out a survey of the area to ensure no offence is committed. See the following link for further details.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications>

## 10.11 Tree legislation

10.11.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It is an offence to cut down, uproot, lop, top, or cause wilful damage or destruction to a tree subject of a tree preservation order or conservation area. Such acts will lead to prosecution and if convicted a fine not exceeding £20,000 in the magistrate's court; if the case is referred to the crown court the fine may be unlimited. See the following link for further details.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas>

10.11.2 Hedgerow regulations 1997 protect certain hedgerows from being removed, certain exemptions apply. A removal notice is required to be sent to the local authority for consideration to determine whether the hedgerow is important before the authority can permit the removal of a hedgerow subject of the above regulations. See the following link for further details.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1997/1160/contents/made>

10.11.3 Forestry Act 1967 as amended - Felling licences are issued by the Forestry Commission, certain exemptions apply. Before felling trees it should be confirmed with the Forestry Commission to ensure a felling licence is not required. See the following link for further details. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/10/contents>

10.11.4 The Management of Hedgerows (England) Regulations 2024. The regulations protect hedgerows on agricultural land You must not cut or trim a hedgerow that is covered by the rules from 1 March to 31 August. You must not cause or permit another person to cut or trim such a hedgerow. Certain exemptions apply. See the following link for further details. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hedgerow-management-rules-cutting-and-trimming#cutting-and-trimming-rules>

## 11.1 Conclusion

### 11.1.1 All surveyed trees have been categorised in accordance with British Standard 5837 2012.

Visual amenity value of the surveyed tree features T1 and H1 is good, the tree features can be seen from the publicly maintained highway and are prominent within the street scene. The trees beyond the front boundary are limited in terms of visual amenity value, they are less prominent and obscured from view by the existing surrounding natural form.

The trees provide reasonable screening / local landscape value, the trees partly screen the site and reduce the perceptual load of the built form and hard roof line at and beyond the site boundaries. The trees are not however, associated with the historical landscape / ancient countryside - holloways, narrow country lanes, ancient hedgerows, ancient woodland, closed small field systems, etc (Rackham 1986) or the historical landform - streams, ditches, slopes, etc. The trees are not rare, ancient, veteran or unusual specimens.

The wildlife value is limited, the structural diversity and connectivity is limited, with poor connectivity of the ground and sub canopy layers with higher canopy layers which limits foraging, breeding, migratory and navigational opportunity for less mobile fauna. The trees are a mix of native and non-native specimens, non-native trees tend to have limited numbers of associated native insects, although it is accepted that at differing times of the year non-native trees may house similar numbers as native trees and therefore provide a contribution during these times (Thomas 2022). The trees favour the early mature age range which is likely to limit associated microhabitats as these tend to favour older / veteran specimens.

### 11.1.2 H1 (part of), H2, H3, T2, T3, G1, G2 and G3 are to be removed to facilitate construction of the prospanal and to improve the end use of the useable amenity spaces. The trees are low value specimens (Category C), the loss of the trees / hedges will not have a significant impact upon visual amenity or local landscape character. Replacement planting mitigation as part of the end phase landscaping works is considered sufficient to mitigate loss.

Excavation within the RPA of T1 is required to facilitate construction of the crossovers, landscaped path and minor section of the dwellings. A suitable method statement for

excavation using handheld tools only is provided with the overriding aim to minimise the impact that would otherwise result in unnecessary root loss, soil compaction and root damage.

Minor crown works to T1 is recommended to provide sufficient crown clearance during the build and for the end use. The crown reduction is limited to 2.5m and will not have a detrimental impact upon tree health or visual amenity value.

The retained tree features can be adequately protected during the construction phase using temporary barriers in accordance with BS 5837.

11.1.3 Tree protection and method statements have been provided within this report to reduce the risk of direct and indirect development related damage that may otherwise occur to the retained trees. In conclusion, assuming the method statements and tree protection are implemented as part of the development, the proposal can be constructed with reduced disturbance to the trees.

## 12.1 References

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