

# Woodland & Countryside Management Ltd.

Helping you make the most of your land



## LAND NORTH OF FELINDRE ROAD, PENCOED.

### Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement (Updated)

**Report by:** Steve Russell BSc (Hons)

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019

# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background**

Woodland & Countryside Management Ltd. was commissioned to carry out a BS5837 (2012) Tree Survey in April 2019, and subsequently to produce an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement in May 2019. Following revision of the layout the report was updated in October 2019, the Tree Survey carried out on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 2019 has been applied to the latest proposed layout plan.

## **1.2 Purpose of Report**

This report provides analysis of the impact of the proposed development on trees and local amenity, its primary purpose is for the planning authority to review the tree information in support of the planning submission and for use as a basis for issuing planning consent or engaging in further discussion towards that end. This report is based on my site observations and the information provided; I have interpreted this in the context of my experience.

The report provides details of the recommendations for tree protective measures that should be put in place to ensure the retained trees remain in the long term. The report provides details for protective fencing and surfacing to ensure retained trees are protected during the development works.

## **1.3 Ecological Constraints**

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, provide statutory protection for the species that inhabit trees particularly Bats. Although there was no evidence noted during the tree survey, a Bat survey is recommended and this matter should be dealt with in a separate report by a suitably qualified Bat inspector.

## **1.4 Qualifications and Experience**

My Qualifications are a BSc (Hons) in Countryside Management and National Diploma in Forestry. I have over 40 years' experience in Forestry, Arboriculture and Countryside Management primarily in the local authority sector but also the Forestry Commission. I hold numerous NPTC certificates including tree inspection. I have been running Woodland and Countryside Management Ltd. for 9 years. I have worked for Local Authorities, Forestry Commission, MOD, Environmental Organisations, Estates, Estate Agents, Individual landowners and householders. I am a serving member of the Royal Forestry Society and Confederation of Forest Industries. I have also been a part time lecturer in Arboriculture and Woodland Management at Sparsholt and Lackham Colleges.

## **2 SITE EVALUATION**

### **2.1 Site Visit**

The Tree Survey was carried out on the 25th April 2019. All observation was from ground level, observations were confined to what was visible from within the site, the public highway and the adjacent property. The weather was generally overcast but dry.

### **2.2 Site Description**

The site is located to the east of Pencoed on the north of the Felindre Road. The site consists of two grazed fields surrounded by hedges of varying maintenance; there are a number of trees located within the hedgerows. The site adjoins an electricity sub-station to the west which has a tree shelterbelt screening it. The site is generally flat and has an existing access in the south east corner of the site. The large tree within the middle hedge in the centre of the site has been pollarded.

### **2.3 Proposal**

The proposal is to develop part of the site as a power generation site with associated access whilst maintaining as much of the existing two fields as is feasible. The aim is to set the main construction to the north west of the site and to landscape the development so as to ensure its impact on the local landscape is limited and minimise the impact on the sites trees.

### **2.4 Collection of Data**

All individual trees impacting on the site were surveyed as advocated by BS5837 (2012). Category rating was based on BS5837 (2012) Tree Quality Assessment Chart (Appendix 3). The surveyed trees details are found in the Tree Survey Schedule (Appendix 1) and the Tree Survey Plan (Appendix 2).

### **2.5 Interpretation of Data**

The Root Protection Area (RPA) for individual trees was calculated using the process laid down in section 4.6 of BS5837 (2012). However this is a simplistic methodology for establishing the minimum distance for protective barriers and consideration should be given to the influencing factors set out in section 4.6.3 of BS5837 (2012) in setting the RPA's on this site. The calculated RPA's of the retained trees are detailed in the Root Protection Area Plan (Appendix 4). The area of the retained trees shadow has also been calculated and is detailed in the Outline Tree Shadow Plan (Appendix 5).

### **2.6 Root Protection Area**

The Root Protection Area (RPA) is the area where ground disturbance must be carefully controlled. In principle, no significant disturbance should occur within the RPA of category A, B or C trees as described in the BS5837 (2012) Tree Quality Assessment Chart (Appendix 3), and high levels of care are needed during any activities authorised within the RPA if the trees are to be successfully retained. Consideration also needs to be given to the space needed for the trees to be successfully retained after development has finished i.e. enabling tree crowns to have room to develop. This is more important for trees that fall within Category A or B.

### **3 ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

#### **3.1 Impact on Trees**

Any development should be made based on the primary assumption that there is no disturbance within the RPA's of the retained trees, particularly those of categories A and B. The dominant trees on the site are the Mature Oak and Ash as well as a mature Hawthorn, indications are that the Ash have Chalara Ash Dieback *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* which means that their safe life expectancy is considerably reduced, even more so than indicated in the Survey Schedule (Appendix 1), potentially as little as 5 years. The two Oak trees become the long term feature trees on the site and are the only two category B trees.

#### **3.2 Proposals to Mitigate Impact**

All existing trees and hedgerows will be retained, there will be a need to create access points through the hedgerow (H4) but redundant current access points will be restored to hedgerow. Trees will require protection during the development of the site. Successful retention of trees depends on the quality of the protection and the administrative procedures in place to ensure that the protective measures remain in place whilst there is any risk of damage. This report provides the methodology for achieving this and is set out in the Arboricultural Method Statement (Section 4) below. A landscape scheme has been produced separately and this all involves shelterbelt and hedge/tree planting.

#### **3.3 Impact on Local Landscape**

The proposal has ensured that the trees on the site are retained. Subject to adequate precautions to protect the retained trees as specified in the Arboricultural Method Statement the development proposals will have minimal arboricultural impact.

#### **3.4 Detailed Impact Appraisal**

The site has nine recorded trees, there are two Oak, four Ash, two Elm and a Hawthorn, there are also four distinct hedgerows and an adjacent shelterbelt planting. Of the trees, the two Oak are Category B and the remainder are Category C (see BS5837 (2012) Tree Quality Assessment Chart (Appendix 3)). This is due to their maturity and condition as well as their role they have in the local landscape. Of the 6 Category C rating trees only the Hawthorn has any extended life expectancy with the Ash and Elm both likely to succumb to diseases.

In general terms Category A and B trees are the most important in the planning context and need full consideration, Category C trees are not so important and their loss should not influence the determination of a planning application.

## **4 ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The Arboricultural Method Statement sets out the protection measures that must be put in place to secure successful tree retention prior to, during and after development. It is based on the assumption that the minimum general standards for development issues are those set out in BS5837 (2012). The location and methodology of the protection measures must be approved by the Planning Authority and are subject to a site inspection and approval prior to commencement of works.

### **4.2 Protection Barriers**

Due to the location of the retained trees the ability to fully protect the RPA of the trees is impossible due to the location of the small building and the access. However the area of RPA impacted is limited and can be protected in the most part. By phasing the work to construct the access in the initial phase the risk of any damage caused by access to the actual construction site can be minimised particularly to trees 1, 2 and 3, which due to their location cannot be fully protected by fencing.

The tree protection fencing is to be erected prior to the start of any on-site works and will protect both the trees and hedgerows., The fencing will be retained and maintained for the full duration of the construction works. BS5837 (2012) states that where protective barriers are used these should be fit for purpose, BS5837 (2012) section 6.2.2 sets out the default position, however it also states in 6.2.2.3 that 'where the site circumstances and associated risk do not necessitate the default position, an alternative specification should be prepared and agreed by the local planning authority'. Due to the nature of the site and the amount of fencing within the RPAs, it is proposed that an above ground stabilising system of protective fence with stabilisers in block trays as per Figure 3b of BS5837 (2012) will be used (Appendix 6). The protective fencing will be erected as per the Tree Protection Plan (Appendix 7), and where meeting the boundary of the site will link to the existing boundary features to create fully enclosed protection areas. There are areas of the fields that will not be physically fenced off but these will be clearly designated no access areas.

### **4.3 Protection of RPA outside the Protective Fencing**

There will be areas of the Oak tree (tree 8) and particularly trees 1,2 and 3 with RPAs sitting outside the protective fence, however this is to allow the construction of the access, there will be no parking, storage or tipping permitted in this area whilst the access works are being carried out.

### **4.4 Protective Surfacing**

The access for the development construction and future access and car parking will impact the RPA a number of trees. The access will enter the site at the existing access gate and follow the line of the hedge in which a number of trees are located and then it turns west towards the development area. The field is not suitable for heavy vehicular access, so the permanent access should be constructed as the first phase of the development so allowing construction traffic access.

The construction of the access within the RPA's will require a 'non dig' solution being carried out in line with BS5837 2012 Section 7.4 and guided by Arboricultural Practice Note No 12 'Through the Trees to Development'. It will be of a proprietary cellular confinement system that will allow water and gas movement, will provide load spreading to avoid compaction and will require no excavation to the existing surface e.g. the Cellweb TRP® Cellular Confinement System. Effective edge retention if used will be custom designed to avoid any significant excavation into existing soil levels being pre-formed edging secured by metal pins.

#### **4.5 General Excavation**

There are no proposed excavations within the RPA. If for any reason excavation is required within the RPA, this should be agreed with the LPA and must be carried out by hand digging. Should any roots be exposed these and need to be removed these should be cut 10-20cm behind the final face of excavation. Retained roots must be protected from direct sunlight, drying out and extreme temperatures by an appropriate covering. Roots greater than 25mm should be retained where possible, roots 25 - 100mm should only be cut in exceptional circumstances and following guidance from the Arboricultural Advisor.

#### **4.6 Removal of Structures**

There are no existing structures to be removed.

#### **4.7 Installation of New Services**

Provision of new underground services has yet to be finalised although it is likely that they will follow the line of the access, these should be located so that where possible they sit outside the RPA's. Where the services must pass through the RPA's they should be installed using trenchless installation as the preferred method although hand excavation as detailed above (4.5) may be acceptable. The final details of services are provide separately and is not a part of this report.

#### **4.8 Site Storage, Cement mixing and Washing points**

Fuel storage, materials storage, handling and mixing areas and washing points for equipment and vehicles will all be located outside the RPA's. Where there is a risk of polluted water run off precautions will be in place to contain any spillages. Siting of any site office will be outside the RPA's. There will be no burning of waste material on the site; all waste material will be removed from site.

#### **4.9 Tree Protection Supervision**

Tree protection will be overseen by the Arboricultural Advisor, who will ensure all the proposed protective measures set out in this Method Statement are implemented and carried out in accordance with the approved details. This will require a visit once protection measures are in place and prior to commencement of works as well as a final visit to confirm removal of protective fencing on completion.

#### **4.10 Tree Management Works**

There are no proposed tree management works at this stage. Should any works be proposed these will need approval of the Local Planning Authority, with works being carried out to BS3998 (2010) Tree Work - Recommendations, by a competent Arboricultural contractor being overseen by the Arboricultural Consultant. All tree works should be carried out outside the bird nesting season and prior to the commencement of the development.

#### **4.11 Soft Landscaping**

No re-profiling is proposed and ground levels should be maintained at original levels where they extend over the RPA's.

#### **4.12 Tree and Shrub Planting**

The landscape proposals for the site are set out in the separate landscape report.

#### **4.13 Site Management**

It is the developer's responsibility to ensure that the details of the Method Statement and any subsequent details and amendments are fully understood by all site personal. The developer will also be responsible for alerting the Arboricultural Advisor of any unforeseen works that have potential to impact on any RPA and to take advice on the works and implement any recommendations made. The developers will also be responsible for the provision of site visit records and certificates of completion.

### **5 SUMMARY**

The protection of retained trees on this site has been considered and this report provides an Arboricultural Method Statement that ensures the development is carried out with the minimum impact on the retained trees.

### **6 APPENDIX**

Appendix 1	Tree Survey Schedule
Appendix 2	Tree Survey Plan
Appendix 3	BS5837 (2012) Tree Quality Assessment Chart
Appendix 4	Tree RPA Plan
Appendix 5	Tree Shadow Plan
Appendix 6	Protective Fencing Diagram BS5837 (2012)
Appendix 7	Tree Protection Plan



Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

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