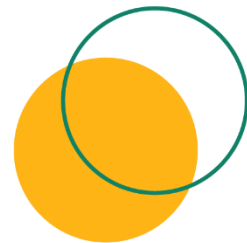




Balancing Growth with Green



Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)




Sharad Karia
Albuhera, Farm Road, Northwood, HA6 2NZ

December 2025

Project Information

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

Sharad Karia ('the client') is seeking consent for a proposed development at Albuhera, Farm Road, Northwood, HA6 2NZ thereafter referred to as the 'potential development site'), which is within the Hillingdon Borough Council (HBC).

The proposal is for the demolition of the existing buildings and the construction of new residential dwellings. Existing and proposed plans are provided in Appendix A.

ACP Consultants Ltd. was instructed by the client to produce an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) to accompany the planning application to HBC for consent to undertake the proposed work. The survey was conducted on the 22nd of August 2025, under suitable weather conditions by Brydie Stacey and Aidan Tse.

The purpose of the AIA in accordance with BS5837, is to provide guidance on how trees and other vegetation can be integrated into construction and development design schemes. The overall aim is to ensure the protection of trees which are appropriate for retention.

As the proposal relates to development works at site, the advice herein is produced in accordance with the British Standard 5837: 2012 '*Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations*' (hereafter; BS5837).

Local Authorities are tasked with determining new development and local planning applications against a wide range of social, economic, and environmental criteria. The purpose of this report is to assess whether the development proposal is compliant with the relevant local policies in terms of ecological impact as a result of the proposed commercial development.

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with good practice guidelines, including the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and applicable local supplementary guidance. Relevant national and local planning policies and legislation can be found in Appendix D.

The remainder of this report is presented in the following order:

- Section 2: Methodology
- Section 3: Results and Evaluation
- Section 4: Discussion and Recommendations
- Section 5: Conclusions

2 Methodology

2.1 Site Assessment

The site currently comprises open grassland, vegetation and several trees.

The site requires consideration from an Arboricultural perspective due to the presence of multiple trees on site; these trees are deemed to be within impacting distance of the potential construction area.

2.2 BS5837 Tree Survey

On the 22nd of August 2025, the field survey was completed at the site in order to obtain detailed baseline information regarding the trees present on site.

The tree survey and assessment resulted in the BS5837 quality/retention categories of 'A', 'B' and 'U'. It is also worth noting that the BS5837 circular RPAs are considered to halt at the extents of existing property, driveways and substantial walls.

Trees were generally in reasonable condition. No significant defects were detected other than minor leans (T5) or a minor degree of deadwood (T42). However, it is worth noting that all existing trees are proposed to be removed, meaning that no tree work considerations will apply.

Further data can be found in Appendix C, alongside the tree locations shown in the Tree Constraints Plan (Appendix B).

2.3 Limitations

This report is valid for one year from the date of inspection. Trees are living organisms, and no responsibility can be accepted by the surveyor for the failure of a tree or part of a tree due to adverse weather conditions, force majeure, or other unpredictable occurrences. It is the responsibility of the tree owner to inspect and maintain their trees on a regular basis.

This document does not contain a comprehensive list of botanical species on site. Only plant species characteristics of each habitat and incidental observations of notable plant species were recorded. In addition, many plant species are only evident at certain times of year and so some plant species may have gone undetected.

Any third party and external data sources used may vary due to the quality and scale, the supporting information used to define locations/boundaries and sensitivity of the data itself. ACP Consultants Ltd. cannot take responsibility for the accuracy of external data sources and as such discrepancies and inaccuracies may occur.

Seasonal limitations also exist in regard to species identification. Where a species cannot be identified in the winter due to leaf shedding or other variables, the species has been marked as deciduous.

No council search/contact has been requested and hence confirmation as to whether any of the trees are protected by Tree Preservation Order was unavailable at the time of writing this advice.

It is worth noting that the provided topographical survey labels existing shrubs as trees. Where surveyors have deemed a plotted tree to be mature shrubs, the plot has been omitted from the Tree Constraints Plan (TCP).

3 Results and Evaluation

3.1 Survey Conditions

Table 1: Summary of conditions during survey

Abiotic Factor	Survey 1
Survey type	BS5837
Date completed	22.08.25
Precipitation	0
Weather Conditions	Clear skies

3.2 General Considerations for Tree Retention/Removal

It is understood from plans provided by the client that no existing trees on-site are to be removed as part of proposals.

Due to existing trees being of good to unremarkable quality and of limited merit, trees have been categorised as BS5837 Category 'A', 'B' and 'U' (Appendix C) as shown in Figure 1. No significant defects were identified in any of the trees on-site, and tree works are not deemed necessary. A regular monitoring scheme is recommended, with particular attention to be paid to minor defects in T5 (lean) and T42 (deadwood).

The Tree Constraints Plan (TCP) in Appendix B shows that there are no anticipated conflicts with the proposed development and the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of the surveyed trees as the footprint of the proposed building is largely within the footprint of the existing building (which does not encroach within RPAs). Therefore, as no encroachment is anticipated and all trees are proposed to be retained, no RPA restrictions are anticipated.

It is also worth noting that no ancient or veteran trees were observed on-site, so the arboricultural impact on irreplaceable trees is considered to be negligible.

Category and definition	Criteria (including subcategories where appropriate)			Identification on plan
Trees unsuitable for retention (see Note)				
Category U Those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 (e.g. where, for whatever reason, the loss of companion shelter cannot be mitigated by pruning)• Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate, and irreversible overall decline• Trees infected with pathogens of significance to the health and/or safety of other trees nearby, or very low quality trees suppressing adjacent trees of better quality <p><i>NOTE Category U trees can have existing or potential conservation value which it might be desirable to preserve; see 4.5.7.</i></p>			See Table 2
	1 Mainly arboricultural qualities	2 Mainly landscape qualities	3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation	
Trees to be considered for retention				
Category A Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years	Trees that are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual; or those that are essential components of groups or formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue)	Trees, groups or woodlands of particular visual importance as arboricultural and/or landscape features	Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture)	See Table 2
Category B Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years	Trees that might be included in category A, but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of significant though remediable defects, including unsympathetic past management and storm damage), such that they are unlikely to be suitable for retention for beyond 40 years; or trees lacking the special quality necessary to merit the category A designation	Trees present in numbers, usually growing as groups or woodlands, such that they attract a higher collective rating than they might as individuals; or trees occurring as collectives but situated so as to make little visual contribution to the wider locality	Trees with material conservation or other cultural value	See Table 2
Category C Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150 mm	Unremarkable trees of very limited merit or such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories	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 landscape benefits	Trees with no material conservation or other cultural value	See Table 2

Figure 1 – Cascade Chart for Tree Quality Assessments (Source: BS 5837:2012)

3.2.1 Tree Works

Tree works are not recommended for existing trees as these were in reasonable condition, and no significant defects were observed (other than a lean in T5 and the presence of deadwood in T42, which should be monitored through regular checks).

The provided plans (Appendix A) and TCP (Appendix B) show all trees are to be retained, so tree works to accommodate tree removals do not apply to this development. If this is to change (pending approval), all trees proposed to be removed should be well indicated to ensure that any potential retained trees are suitably protected (providing proposals change). Hence, all trees which are to be removed are to be marked by a suitably qualified person (spraying the stems with a cross) prior to tree works.

3.2.2 Tree Crowns

Consideration is required for both existing and newly planted trees whereby the proposed construction should take account of trees reaching their full growth potential. It is always prudent to provide adequate clearance from a tree's current crown for future growth, i.e. to allow a tree adequate space to reach maturity without conflicts with new structures.

No trees were within reasonable distance from the proposed development or with a significant crown spread in which one could reasonably expect conflicts between the proposed dwelling and future crown growth. Therefore, no constraints relating to crown conflicts are anticipated.

3.2.3 Root Protection Areas

As a minimum, it would be suitable to consider the outer extents of retained trees' RPAs (up to the previous foundations) as construction exclusion zones and be protected. The RPAs can be seen in the Tree Constraints Plan (TCP) located in Appendix B.

The TCP shows that no encroachment is expected within the RPAs of existing trees (all of which are to be retained). Therefore, this is not anticipated to be a constraint as Root Protection Areas will remain unaffected by the development. It is worth noting that the Root Protection Areas displayed in Appendix B should be considered construction exclusion zones unless an Arboricultural Method Statement is prepared which details how retained trees will be protected and their long-term viability ensured.

3.2.4 Demolition/Excavation Works

Demolition of the existing buildings on-site is proposed. As previously mentioned, no RPAs have been encroached upon - therefore, any constraints in relation to demolition or excavations are not expected to be applicable post-development as Root Protection Areas are not impacted. If this is changed, said works should adhere to the RPA restrictions, be undertaken manually with handheld non mechanical tools and ensure that existing ground levels are retained.

3.2.5 Hard Landscape Works

As with previously mentioned arboricultural restrictions to demolition/construction, the proposed works should avoid retained trees' RPAs (there are no hard landscape works currently indicated within existing RPAs). However, where ground works are proposed within the RPAs of any retained trees, construction methods (for hard surfacing, walls etc.) should retain the existing ground levels, be undertaken sensitively and using a no dig design.

3.2.6 Planting Species and Volume

It is understood from plans submitted by the client that no additional tree planting has been proposed. As no tree removals are scheduled, no mitigation in the form of additional planting is required in order to comply with Policy DMHB 14 (*Trees and Landscaping*).

3.2.7 Additional Details

The surveyed trees have been subject to a detailed inspection and the arboricultural considerations detailed within this advice. The advice herein is intended to guide a suitable design in consideration for the site's valuable amenity assets. Where retained trees are avoided and removed trees are mitigated, the considerations herein may form part of tree related planning conditions.

4 Discussion and Recommendations

4.1 Recommended Work

Based on the findings outlined above, no tree works are required as no significant tree defects were observed as detailed in Section 3.2.1. Regular monitoring (with particular attention paid to T5 and T42 due to minor defects) has been recommended as a good practice measure. The Tree Constraints Plan (Appendix B) also shows that no encroachment into the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of existing trees is anticipated as the proposed building largely falls within the footprint of the existing building (hardstanding ground can be replaced on a like-for-like basis, with the existing building also not encroaching upon RPAs).

Further tree planting has not yet been indicated on proposed plans, although the development is still considered to comply with local policies such as Policy DMHB 14 (*Trees and Landscaping*) and Policy DHHB 11 (*Design of New Development*) as all existing trees have been retained.

4.1.1 Further Surveys

Further surveys/advice that are required following the BS5837 assessment are as follows:

- No further surveys are required due to the nature of existing trees, the lack of proposed tree removals and the fact that the proposed development avoids the RPAs of all existing trees. However, if plans are modified in such a way in which RPA encroachment occurs, an Arboricultural Method Statement should be produced to detail how such trees will be protected (Appendix B).

5 Conclusions

This report provides an assessment of the trees on and adjacent to the proposed development at Albuhera, Farm Road, Northwood, HA6 2NZ. BS5837 methodology was used in order to complete the survey and produce an Arboricultural Impact Assessment. A Tree Constraints Plan (TCP), showing the RPA zones, has also been produced (Appendix B).

Trees on-site and adjacent have been classed as BS8537 Category 'A', 'B' and 'U' due to their varying merit (Figure 3.1). Recommendations regarding tree works have been made in Section 4.2.1. It is understood that all existing 44 trees on-site are proposed to be retained, complying with Policy DMHB 14 (*Trees and Landscaping*) and Policy DHHB 11 (*Design of New Development*). The TCP also demonstrates that no encroachment into existing RPAs is expected – as such, the arboricultural impact of the proposed development is considered to be negligible.

All works should adhere to RPA restrictions and with non-mechanical tools if nearby anticipated rooting areas of any retained trees in order to ensure existing ground levels remain unchanged. The overall advice is summarised below:

- Removal of all agreed trees and any agreed pruning works prior to works commencing by a suitably qualified arboricultural contractor.
- Induction of construction personnel regarding the exclusion of works (including access and storage) from the retained trees' RPAs.
- Secure temporary barrier fencing around the site to exclude the retained tree's crowns and RPAs from the working site.
- The storage of materials clear of all retained trees and conditions to ensure no contamination/run-off into soils in proximity to trees or on higher ground.
- For the removal of existing structures and/or hard surfaces from RPAs the works to be undertaken separate to construction, manually and sensitively.

Appendices

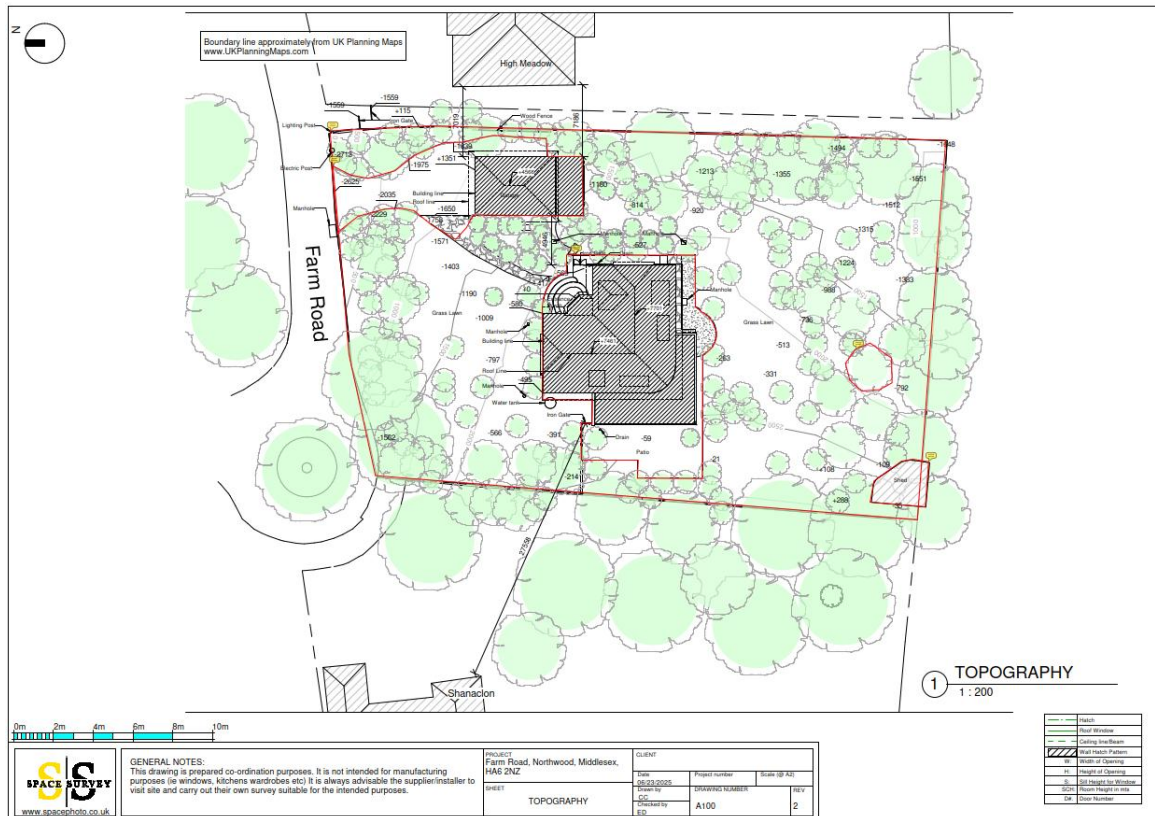
Appendix A: Site Plans

Appendix B: Tree Constraints Plan (TCP)

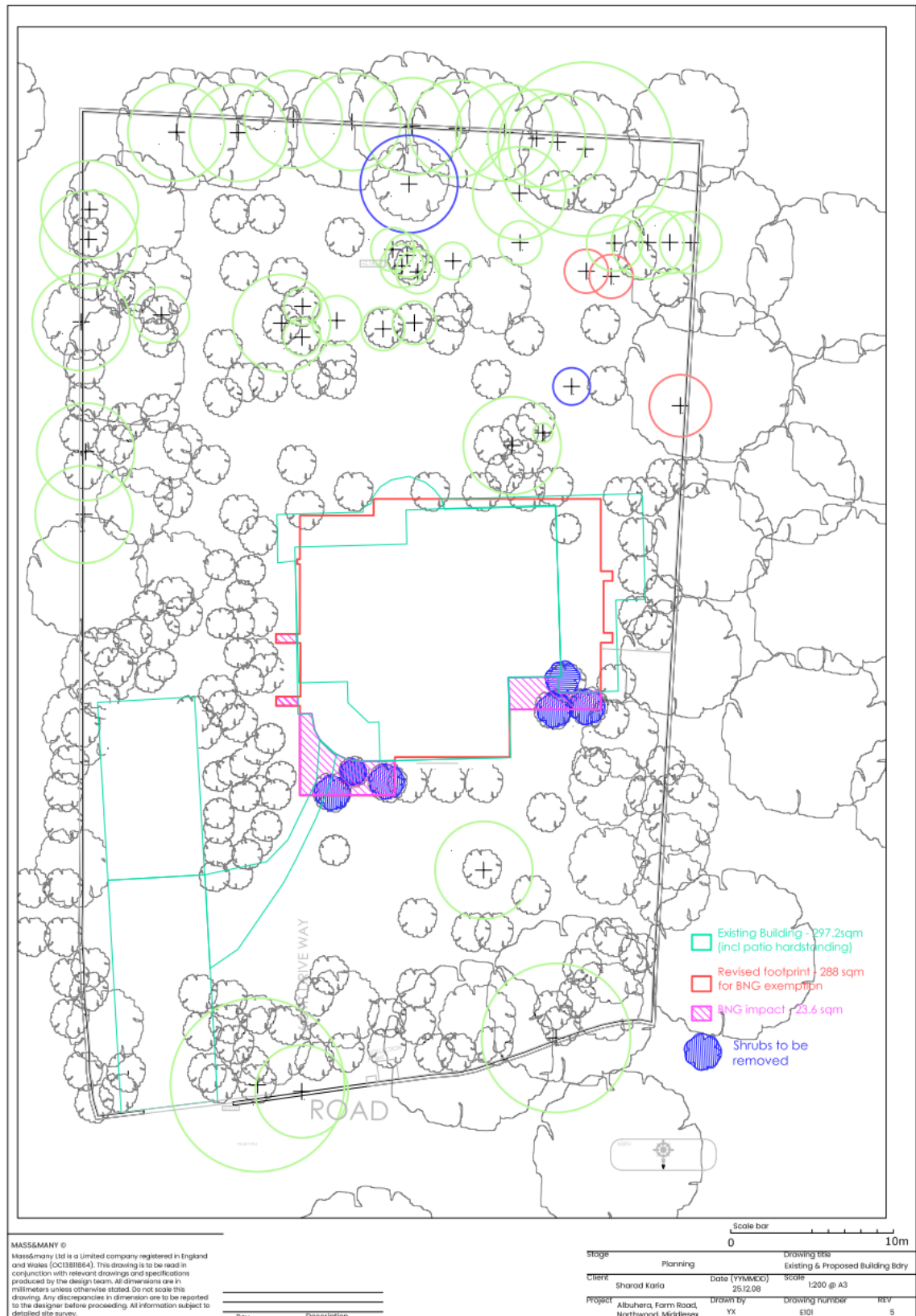
Appendix C: BS5837 Data Table

Appendix D: Planning Policy & Legislation

Appendix A: Site Plans

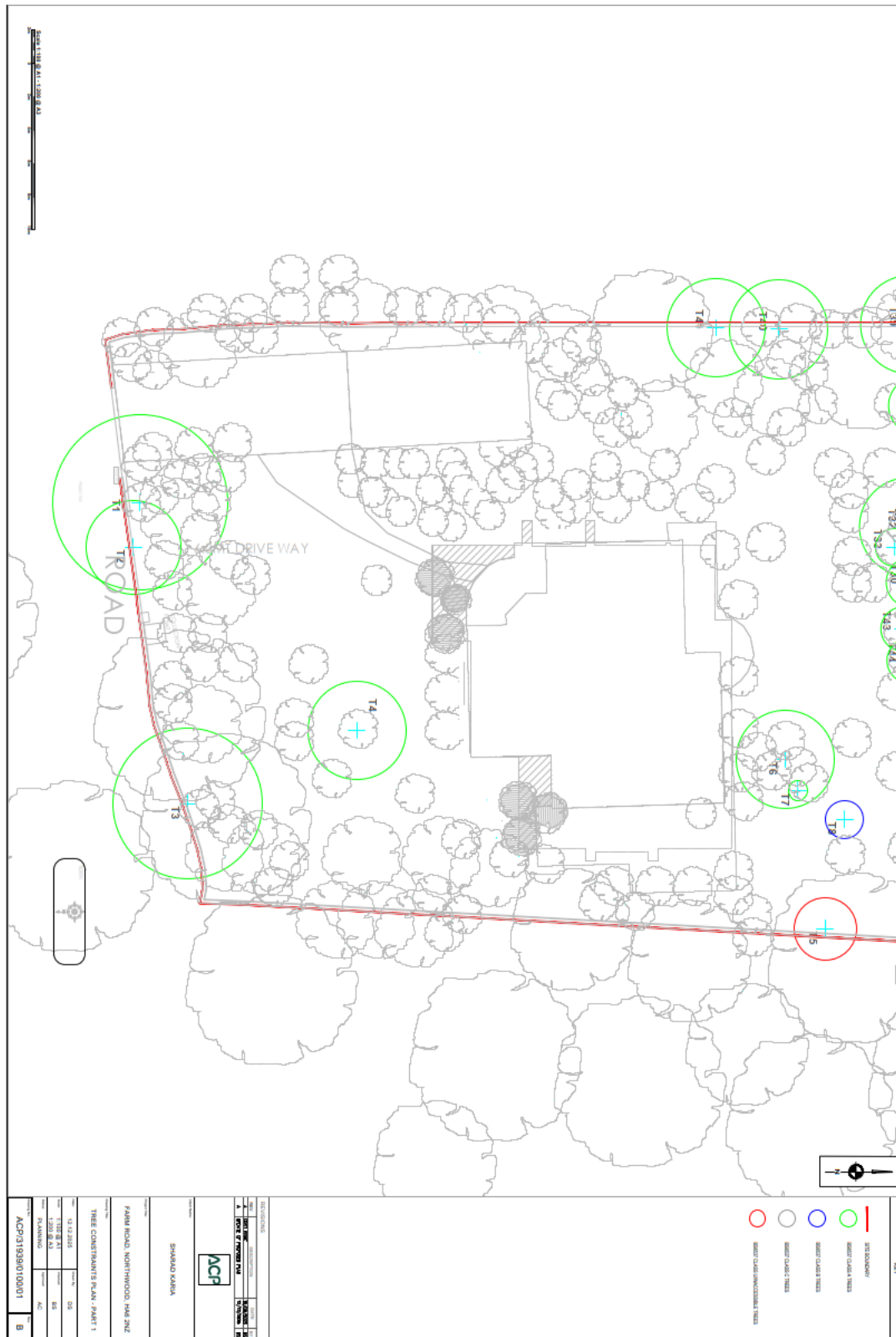


Existing Site Plans (Source: Client)



Proposed Plan (Source: Client)

Appendix B: Tree Constraints Plan (TCP)



Appendix C: BS5837 Data Table

Tree No.	Species	TPO	Height (m)	Stem Circumference at 1.5m (cm)	Age Class	Management Recommendations	BS5837 Class	Root Protection Area radius (m)
T1	Hawthorne	Data Not requested	8	140	M		A	5.35
T2	Holly	Data not requested	15	75	M		A	2.86
T3	Yew	Data not requested	12	120	M		A	4.58
T4	Golden chain tree	Data not requested	3	Inaccessible	S/M		A	I/A
T5	Cherry	Data not requested	4	50	M	Lean present.	C/U	1.91
T6	Deciduous	Data not requested	4	Multistem	M		A	I/A
T7	Strawberry tree	Data not requested	3	30	M		A	0.6
T8	Apple	Data not requested	4	30cm	M		B	1.15
T9&10	Strawberry tree	Data not requested	4	20-30cm x2	M		U	1.35 1.35
T11	Plum	Data not requested	5	45	M		A	1.72
T12	Golden chain tree	Data not requested	3	20-35 x4	M		A	2.23
T13-14	Cedar	Data not requested	5.5	50cm	M		A	1.91 1.91
T15	Cherry	Data not requested	4	35	M		A	1.34

T16	Cherry	Data not requested	9	75	M		A	2.86
T17	Cedar	Data not requested	13	140	M		A	5.35
T19-24	Hornbeams	Data not requested	10m	IA	M		A	I/A
T42	Apple	Data not requested	5.5	IA	M	Broken branch and degree of deadwood present	B	i/a
T25	Non native	Data not requested	5m	30cm	M		A	1.15
T26-29	Yew	Data not requested	3m	20-35	S/M		A	1.34 1.34 1.34 1.34
T30	Palm tree	Data not requested	?	40cm	M		A	1.53
T31&33	Hornbeam	Data not requested	4.5	30	Y		A	1.15 1.15
T32	Cedar	Data not requested	4m	IA	S/M		A	i/a
T43&44	Yew	Data not requested	3	35	M		A	1.34 1.34
T34	Cedar	Data not requested	13m	IA	M		A	i/a
T35	Ash	Data not requested	14m	IA	M		A	i/a
T36	Cedar	Data not requested	8m	IA	M		A	i/a
T37	Oak	Data not requested	17m	IA	M		A	i/a
T38	Cedar	Data not requested	3.5	45cm	S/M		A	1.72
T39	Cedar	Data not requested	12m	IA	M		A	i/a

T40&41	Cedar	Data not requested	12	IA	M		A	i/a i/a

Appendix D: Planning Policy & Legislation

This section summarises the relevant National and Local legislative and policy background, statutory and non-statutory guidelines relevant to the potential commercial development.

National Policy

National Planning Policy (December 2024)

The principal national planning policy guidance with respect to the potential development is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The most recent update of the NPPF was published in December 2024 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. This guidance sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. Three dimensions to sustainable development have been identified in the NPPF: economic, social, and environmental.

The NPPF Section 187 states that:

"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."*

Section 188 states that:

"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."

Section 189 states that:

"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads⁶³. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."

Section 190 states that:

“When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁴ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.”*

Section 192 states that:

“To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and steppingstones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
- b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”*

Section 193 states that:

“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”*

Section 194 states that:

“The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.”

5.1.1 Relevant National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG, 2016)

NPPG is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning.

The guidance note on 'Natural Environment' explains key issues in implementing policy to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements. This has been referred to when preparing this report. It states that:

"Planning authorities need to consider the potential impacts of development on protected and priority species, and the scope to avoid or mitigate any impacts when considering site allocations or planning applications. Guidance on the law affecting Habitats Sites, protected species and SSSIs.

Natural England has issued standing advice on protected species. A protected species mitigation licence from Natural England may be required before any work can start."

The PPG also states that:

"Information on biodiversity and geodiversity impacts and opportunities needs to inform all stages of development (including site selection and design, pre-application consultation and the application itself). An ecological survey will be necessary in advance of a planning application if the type and location of development could have a significant impact on biodiversity and existing information is lacking or inadequate. Pre-application discussions can help to scope whether this is the case and, if so, the survey work required.

Even where an Environmental Impact Assessment is not needed, it might still be appropriate to undertake an ecological survey, for example, where protected species may be present or where biodiverse habitats may be lost.

As with other supporting information, local planning authorities should require ecological surveys only where clearly justified. Assessments should be proportionate to the nature and scale of development proposed and the likely impact on biodiversity. Further guidance on information requirements is set out in making an application."

Biodiversity net gain is mentioned in the PPG and states that:

"The National Planning Policy Framework encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. Biodiversity net gain delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures. It may help local authorities to meet their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006."

Species and Habitats Legislation

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) consolidates all various amendments made to The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994, in respect of England and Wales. The 1994 Regulations transposed the EC Habitats Directive 1992 (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora) into national law.

Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive list (respectively) habitats and species for which member states are required to establish and monitor SACs. The EC Birds Directive provides a similar network of sites (SPAs) for all rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex I and all regularly occurring migratory species, with particular focus on wetlands of international importance.

Together with SACs, SPAs form a network of pan-European protected areas known as 'NATURA 2000' sites.

The Habitats Regulations also make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade on the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, cut, uproot, destroy or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 4.

This legislation was amended in January 2021: The main changes to the 2017 Regulations are:

- “the creation of a national site network within the UK territory comprising the protected sites already designated under the Nature Directives, and any further sites designated under these Regulations
- the establishment of management objectives for the national site network (the ‘network objectives’)
- a duty for appropriate authorities to manage and where necessary adapt the national site network as a whole to achieve the network objectives
- an amended process for the designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- arrangements for reporting on the implementation of the Regulations, given that the UK no longer provides reports to the European Commission
- arrangements replacing the European Commission’s functions with regard to the imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) test where a plan or project affects a priority habitat or species
- arrangements for amending the schedules to the Regulations and the annexes to the Nature Directives that apply to the UK.”

The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979)

The Convention on Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention 1979) aims to ensure conservation and protection of all wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to afford special protection to the most vulnerable or threatened species (including migratory species).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981)

The WCA is the primary UK mechanism for statutory site designation (Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSIs]) and the protection of individual species listed under Schedule 1,2,5 and 8 of the Act, each subject to varying levels of protection.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

This legislation strengthens the provision of the 1981 WCA (as amended), both in respect of statutory sites such as SSSIs and protected species. It also places a statutory obligation on Local Authorities and other public bodies to further conservation of biodiversity in the exercise of their functions, thus providing a statutory basis to the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) process, which began in 1994. Section 74 of the Act lists the habitat types and species of principal importance in England. The UK Biodiversity action Plan has now been superseded by the ‘UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework’ (July 2012), however, many of the species and habitats in the UK and local BAPs have not been updated and are still considered relevant to date.

A Bill to amend the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to extend the right of public access to the countryside, including to woodlands, the Green Belt, waters and more grasslands; and for connected purposes is currently in second reading in the House of Commons (November 2022).

Local Policy – Hillingdon Borough Council

Trees, woodlands and landscaped areas are recognised in Hillingdon's Local Plan as vital to character, biodiversity, climate resilience and amenity. Development must demonstrate how these assets will be protected, integrated and enhanced in line with local policy. Relevant policies are outlined below:

- **Policy DMHB 14 – Trees and Landscaping**
Development proposals must retain and protect trees and woodlands of high ecological, amenity or historic value. Removal will only be permitted where robust justification is provided, and suitable replacements are secured. Landscaping must be designed as an integral part of proposals, incorporating appropriate new planting and ensuring retained trees are safeguarded during construction.
- **Policy DMHB 11 – Design of New Development**
Schemes must respond positively to local context, including natural features such as mature trees and planting. Proposals should incorporate green infrastructure to enhance visual quality, biodiversity and resilience.
- **Policy DMHB 12 – Streets and Public Realm**
Development affecting streets and open spaces must contribute to high quality landscaping. Trees are to be integrated into the design of public realm improvements, with long-term maintenance and species selection informed by arboricultural best practice.
- **Policy DMH 6 – Garden and Backland Development**
The loss of garden land is resisted due to its role in supporting biodiversity and providing tree cover. Where exceptional backland development is permitted, proposals must demonstrate the retention or reprovision of trees and vegetation to maintain local character and habitat value.
- **Policy DMEI 2 – Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and Agricultural Land**
Development within or adjacent to Green Belt and open land must preserve and enhance natural features including trees and hedgerows, ensuring they remain a core part of the borough's landscape character.