



Merewood
Arboricultural Consultancy Services

**Arboricultural survey to British
Standard B.S. 5837: 2012 'Trees in
relation to design, demolition and
construction - Recommendations'
at
Former Cox and Wyman premises
Cardiff Road
Reading**

Prepared by
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Brief

- 1.1.1. I am instructed by Thames Properties Ltd to carry out an arboricultural survey at the former Cox and Wyman premises, Cardiff Road Reading. I am to assess the health and condition of the trees, provide an estimate as to their longevity and to provide recommendations for tree work or other operation to ensure the trees are kept in safe a condition as can be reasonably expected.
- 1.1.2. I am to advise on the likely impact of development proposals to the trees on and adjacent to the site. I am to provide recommendations for tree retention and protection, including appropriate measures that are to be undertaken in order to minimize the impact of development.
- 1.1.3. I have carried out the survey, collecting data in accordance with the recommendations of British Standard B.S. 5837: 2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations' and in line with best practice procedures.

1.2 Report Limitations

- 1.2.1 This survey assesses the condition of the trees based on a visual inspection made at ground level, including the use of binoculars. Typically, instruments such as a nylon hammer or a simple core sampler may be used if necessary. If further inspection of any specific tree is required, including the use of more sophisticated decay detection equipment, the recommendation to do so is made clear, both in the report and as a note to the tree survey sheets.
- 1.2.2 Trees are dynamic living organisms that are subjected constantly to external stresses and to biological and non-biological influences. As such the structure of trees can change at any given time and it is therefore recommended that trees are inspected regularly and assessed for risk. It is normally recommended that such inspections are undertaken every five years, unless otherwise advised.
- 1.2.3 The assessment of the trees made in this report may be considered valid for a period of twelve months, after which a further assessment is normally recommended.
- 1.2.4 This report is restricted to those trees shown on the plans and described in the schedule.

1.2.5 It has been established at the time of the survey that the trees at the former Cox and Wyman premises, Cardiff Road are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (Reading Borough Council TPO 21, 2014). If any works to protected trees are proposed, other than the removal of dead wood or the implementation of operations agreed as part of a formal planning consent, an application must be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority before such works can be carried out

1.2.6 The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) makes provision for the protection of wild birds, bats and other wildlife. Land owners have a duty of care to consider nesting birds and bats (and any other wildlife that may be affected) when proposing tree management, especially felling.

1.3 Survey Date

I surveyed the trees at the former Cox and Wyman premises, Cardiff Road Reading on Thursday, December 15, 2016.

2.0 Summary

2.1 The plot is comprised of a large warehouse building currently being used as a storage facility. There are a few established trees around the periphery of the site.

3.0 Site Description

3.1 The Cox and Wyman site is made up of a large warehouse with associated offices and car parking, with a formal entrance to the offices to the south off Cardiff Road and a lorry entrance (accessing a large area of hard standing to the east) off Meadow Road.

3.2 The site is located to the north-west of Reading town centre, just south of the River Thames. The surrounding neighbourhood is made up of a mixture of light industrial buildings with residential properties (probably old workers cottages) lining surrounding streets. The property itself is surrounded on all sides by local roads.

3.3 The topography of the site is more or less level. I have not formally assessed the soil at the site, although the National Soil Resources Institute 'soilscape' viewer suggests that this is a free draining slightly acid loam.

4.0 Observations

- 4.1 The site is an industrial warehouse with few tree planting opportunities. Nevertheless trees have been established around the periphery of the site, including some recently planted fastigate hornbeams along the inside eastern boundary.
- 4.2 Within the site itself, on the east side around the parking areas, two limes (T1 and T2) have been long established. These have been pollarded in the past, but have been left to grow back in more recent times.
- 4.3 Also along the east side is a mature silver birch (T3) which has not been pruned.
- 4.4 The silver birch (T4) is growing along the southern boundary and is a good example of where an established tree in a street devoid of other planting can really stand out, making a positive impact on the local landscape (fig.1).



- 4.5 The west side of the site fronts the highway with an unmanaged verge between the building and the pavement. The grass here is unmown and

shrubs unpruned with shrub beds becoming lost. Here a silver birch (T5) is beginning to establish.

- 4.6 On the other side of the street (Milford Road) a sycamore (T6) has established although this tree has developed a twin stem form with a tight fork developing between the stems.
- 4.7 The tree survey has shown that of the 6 trees and 1 group of trees surveyed, 0 are category 'A'; 5 are category 'B'; 1 is a category 'C' plus 1 category 'C' group and there are 0 category 'U' trees.

5.0 Appraisal

- 5.1 The trees present around the warehouse building are important to the local landscape, not only because there are few trees and shrubs in the immediate area, but also because they are good specimens unto themselves.
- 5.2 The lime trees (T1 and T2) should be pruned again to ensure the developing stems do not compete with one another and push each other out of the way. The re-growth that arises when lime trees are pollarded originates from previously suppressed buds in the bark which is where they start growing from. This is not a particularly strong anchor and where re-growth is dense the competition between shoots can result in one or more of the shoots splitting away from the main stem.
- 5.3 Pruning the limes could include thinning the stems, selecting the stronger stems to be allowed to grow on and/or re-reducing the crown. Where reduction pruning or re-pollarding takes place, the original pruning points should be left intact.
- 5.4 Pruning into the wood lain down since the original pollarding would encourage decay and shorten the life expectancy of the tree. Best practice indicates that a short length of the shoot should be left to regrow, ensuring the original wound wood is left alone.
- 5.5 The trees around the site appear to be in good health and all have a reasonably long life expectancy. Given their importance in the local landscape the tree should be retained as part of any re-development of the site where possible.
- 5.6 The sycamore (T6) has a shorter life expectancy due to the development of the twin stem. The union between the stems has developed as a V-shaped fork and an acute one at that. In time there is a danger that the expanding stems will push against each other resulting in a weakness that could lead to a stem failure. As such it is not expected for this tree to make old age.
- 5.7 The cypress hedge (G1) around the office car park offers useful

screening and a welcome evergreen aspect to the street. The hedge needs to be clipped into shape before long if it is to be retained.

- 5.8 The more recently planted fastigate hornbeams are of a size that they could be moved by transplanting. There are enough trees here to make that economically viable.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The former Cox and Wyman premises is an imposing building which as an industrial workplace offers few opportunities for tree planting. Nevertheless trees have established around the site, and although not great in number, these do offer a valuable amenity that needs to be taken into account when considering the possibilities for re-developing the site.
- 6.2 There has been little recent maintenance and the lime trees (T1 and T2) should be professionally pruned again soon. Similarly the cypress hedge at the front of the offices should also be trimmed to keep it in good shape.

Simon Hawkins BTec ND Arbor M. Arbor A.

Appendix 1

Key to Tree Survey Data

Tree number:

Sequential reference number corresponding to the tree survey plan. Trees are recorded either as individuals (T1, T2, etc.) or as groups (G1, G2, etc.)

Species:

These are listed in the schedule by their common name. The botanical name of the species present is as follows:

- Common lime (*Tilia x europaea*)
- Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)
- Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*)
- Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*)
- Fastigate hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus fastigiata* 'Frans Fontaine')

Height

The height of the tree is measured using a 'Suunto' Height Meter or estimated to the nearest metre.

Stem diameter

Stem diameter as measured at 1.5m above ground level, or otherwise in accordance with Annex 'C' of the British Standard and expressed in millimetres to the nearest 10mm. Where access to the stem for measurement purposes was not possible, an estimated size is given with (est.) shown.

Crown spread (m):

Crown radius measured in metres (shown est. if estimated) to cardinal point

Height to 1st main branch:

The height from ground level of the first significant branch growth of the tree, with an indication of direction of that branch to inform on ground clearance, crown/stem ratio and shading

Height of canopy:

The height from ground level of the lowest part of the main canopy to inform on ground clearance, crown/stem ratio and shading

General observations:

A brief description summarising the form and condition of the tree, including physiological and structural defects (e.g. the presence of any decay) and preliminary management recommendations.

Life expectancy

Estimated safe useful life expectancy based on species, condition & context. The following age class bands are used: <10; 10-20; 20-40; 40+.

Category

A summary of the British Standard classification:

Trees for Removal

Category U = Trees 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.

Trees to be considered for retention where

Subcategory 1 concerns mainly arboricultural values

Subcategory 2 concerns mainly landscape values

Subcategory 3 concerns mainly cultural values including conservation

Category A = **Those trees of the highest quality and value:** in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution (a minimum of 40 years is suggested).

Category B = **Trees of moderate to high quality and value:** in such a condition as to be able to make a significant contribution (a minimum of 20 years is suggested).

Category C = **Trees of low quality and value:** currently in adequate condition to remain until new planting could be established (a minimum of 10 years is suggested), or young trees with a stem diameter of below 150mm

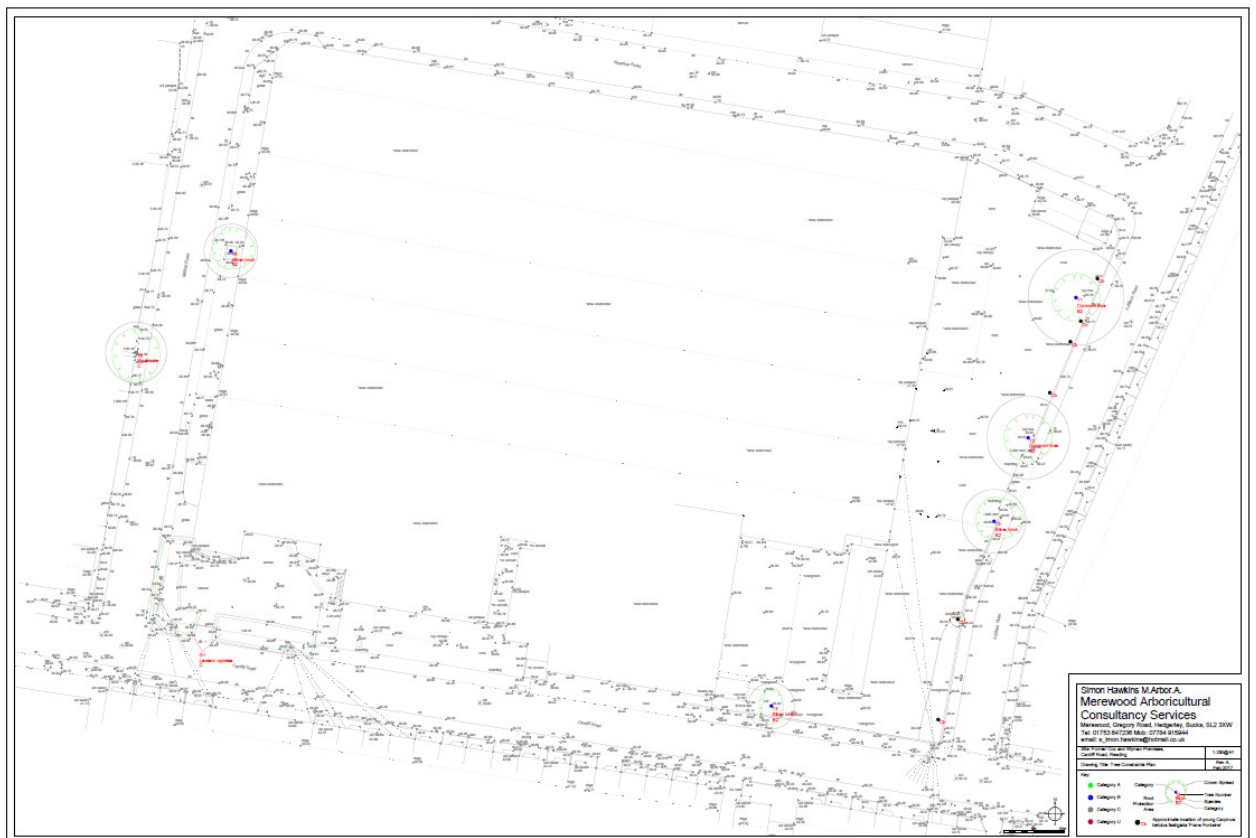
Appendix 2

Tree survey data sheets

Tree no	Species	Height	Stem diameter	Crown spread				Height to 1st main branch	Height of canopy	Age	General observations	Life expectancy	Category
				North	South	East	West						
T1	Common lime	13	660	4	4	4	4			M	Pollarded at 8m	40+	B2
T2	Common lime	12	570	4	4	4	4			M	Pollarded at 8m	40+	B2
T3	Silver birch	13	440	4	3	5	3			M		20 - 40	B2
T4	Silver birch	12	320	3	3	2	2			M		20 - 40	B2
T5	Silver birch	9	370	4	3	4	3			M		40+	B2
T6	Sycamore	10	420	4	5	4	4			M	Main stem divides at 1.8m, leaving a tight V-shaped fork	40+	C
G1	Lawson cypress	5	120	1	1	1	1			Y	Screen planting	40+	C

Appendix 3

Tree constraints plan



Appendix 4

Qualifications and experience

- I am Simon Hawkins, proprietor of Merewood Arboricultural Consultancy Services.
- I hold the National Diploma in Arboriculture which I attained in 1987. I have studied and practised Arboriculture for 30 years, during which time I have been involved with both the private and public sector.
- I hold professional member status of the Arboricultural Association (M. Arbor A.), recognised as a higher vocational level within the industry.
- I have undertaken an intensive course in the principles and application of VTA Visual Tree Assessment. I have been assessed and found to have attained the advanced level of technical competence of a VTA Practitioner with Elite Training.
- I hold the LANTRA award for professional tree inspections
- I have run a successful tree surgery business in which I was involved with the hands-on aspect of organising and running the day to day operations and carrying out contract work, including Local Authority contract work to a high professional standard.
- I have over 18 years experience working in the public sector, during which time I have dealt with all aspects of trees and development in the town planning context, within the inner city; in a greater London Borough; and in the Green Belt. Typically, I have worked with planners, developers, architects and other professionals in the construction industry in which I provide advice and assistance in dealing with arboricultural matters.
- I have appeared at numerous appeals, informal hearings and public enquiries to make formal representations. I have also appeared as an expert witness in court with regard to breaches of Tree Preservations Orders.