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Arboricultural Implications Report

Proposed re-development at

16 Jefferson Close

Reading

Berkshire



February 2025

Ref. SJA air 25063-01

SUMMARY

S1. On the basis of our assessment, we conclude that the arboricultural impact of this scheme is of negligible magnitude, as defined according to the categories set out in **Table 1** of this report.

S2. Our assessment of the impacts of the proposals on the existing trees concludes that no trees are to be removed and as such there will be no alteration to the main arboricultural features of the property, or to its arboricultural character; accordingly the proposals will not have any adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape

S3. No trees are to be pruned to facilitate implementation of the proposals.

S4. The single incursion into the Root Protection Area of English oak tree no. 1 is minor, and subject to implementation of the measures recommended on the Tree Protection Plan and set out at **Appendix 2**, no significant or long-term damage to its root system or rooting environment will occur.

S5. The proposed rear extension is unlikely to be shaded by surrounding trees to the extent that this will interfere with its reasonable use or enjoyment by occupiers, which might otherwise lead to pressure on the Local Planning Authority to permit felling or severe pruning that it could not reasonably resist.

S6. As the proposed development will not result in the removal of trees which are of importance, it complies with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. Instructions

1.1.1. SJAtrees has been instructed by Mr Langdon to visit 16 Jefferson Close and to survey the trees growing on or immediately adjacent to this property.

1.1.2. We are further asked to identify which trees are worthy of retention within a proposed re-development of the property; to assess the implications of the development proposals on these specimens, and to advise how they should be protected from unacceptable damage during demolition and construction.

1.2. Scope of report

1.2.1. This report and its appendices reflect the scope of our instructions, as set out above. It is intended to accompany a planning application to be submitted to Reading Borough Council (“the LPA”) and complies with local validation requirements.

1.2.2. It complies also with the recommendations of British Standard BS 5837:2012, *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* (‘BS 5837’). However, the British Standard is not a Code of Practice that consists of written rules outlining how actions or decision must be taken and it “should not be quoted as if it were a specification¹”; it is a set of recommendations intended to “assist decision-making with regard to existing and proposed trees in the context of design, demolition and construction²”. It doesn’t form part of planning policy; and it is neither mentioned nor referenced in Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (November 2019-2036) or the accompanying text, but it is a material consideration to which weight is likely to be given.

1.2.3. The proposed development comprises a single storey rear extension to the existing property.

¹ British Standard BS 5837:2012. *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*; Foreword. The British Standards Institution.

² Ibid., p.1, Introduction.

1.2.4. This report summarises and sets out the main conclusions of the baseline data collected during the tree survey and identifies those trees and groups of trees whose removal could result in a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the local area (Section 3). It then details and assesses the impacts of the proposed development on individual trees and groups of trees, including those to be removed (Section 4), those to be pruned (Section 5), those which might incur root damage that might threaten their viability (Section 6) and those that might become under pressure for removal or pruning because of shading or apprehension (Section 7). A summary and conclusions, with regard to local planning policy, are presented in Section 8.

1.3. Site inspection

1.3.1. A site visit and tree inspection were undertaken by Nigel Kirby of SJAtrees on Wednesday the 19th of February 2025. Weather conditions at the time were clear, dry and bright. Deciduous trees were not in leaf.

1.4. Site description

1.4.1. The property is located on the east side of Jefferson Close, as shown at **Figure 1** below. The north boundary adjoins a neighbouring residential property on Jefferson Close; the east boundary adjoins a residential property on Venetia Close, whilst the south boundary borders the grounds of the 89th Reading Scout hut.



Figure 1: Site location shown on aerial satellite image

1.4.2. The site is on level ground and currently comprises an occupied two-storey dwelling with associated front hard standing and rear garden with adjoining patio.

1.4.3. Historical maps and records indicate that the site was within the grounds of an area used for chalk mining as well as the firing of bricks and tiles in a series of kilns. This industrial activity lasted from at least the mid-17th century until the 1950s. The adjacent scout hall was constructed in the 1970s. Subsequently, in the 21st century, Jefferson Close was developed as a residential street.

1.5. Soil type

1.5.1. The British Geological Survey Solid and Drift Geology map of the area indicates the property overlies superficial deposits of “**Winter Hill Gravel - Sand and gravel**” above a bedrock of London Clay Formation.

1.5.2. We are not aware of a site investigation or soil analysis having been undertaken; but the indications of the British Geological Survey map suggest that trees may be deep rooted and that the soil is unlikely to be highly susceptible to compaction.

1.6. Statutory controls

1.6.1. At the time of writing, the LPA website does not make information available that identifies which trees are covered by a tree preservation order (TPO); but it does provide a directory which indicates where tree preservation orders are in force throughout the borough. The directory indicates that there is a TPO (order no. 73/003) which protects 21 individual trees and two groups of trees growing within the grounds of the Scout Hut and the residential properties nos. 12, 14, 15 and 16 Jefferson Close.

1.6.2. An arboricultural report produced by Mark Welby Consulting Arborists dated 14th May 2024 and produced as part of a separate application for the construction of an outbuilding within the rear garden of the property (planning reference: PL/24/0742), which was approved in August 2024, identifies five individual trees growing within and directly adjacent to the site boundary that are protected by the TPO. These protected trees are identified within the tree survey schedule at **Appendix 3** and on the accompanying tree protection plan.

1.6.3. The property is not within a conservation area, and therefore there are no

constraints relating to existing trees in this regard.

1.7. Non-statutory designations

1.7.1. There are no woodlands within or abutting the property that are classified as 'Ancient'. Ancient woodland is defined as "any area that's been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD" and is considered an important and irreplaceable habitat.

1.7.2. There are no trees within or abutting the property that can be classified as 'Ancient' or 'Veteran'. Ancient and veteran trees are also considered to be irreplaceable habitats, and contribute to a site's biodiversity, cultural and heritage value, and the National Planning Policy Framework (see below) states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of ancient or veteran trees should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

2. PLANNING CONTEXT

2.1. Planning history

2.1.1. A review of the planning history of this site on the planning section of the LPA website reveals that a recent application for the construction of a new outbuilding within the rear garden (planning reference PL/24/0742) was submitted to the LPA in June 2024 and approved in August 2024.

2.1.2. The LPA website also reveals that two applications for minor tree works were also submitted and approved in 2018.

2.2. Planning policy - national

2.2.1. Under Section 197 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, local authorities have a statutory duty to consider the protection and planting of trees when considering planning applications. The effects of proposed development on trees are therefore a material consideration, and this is normally reflected in local planning policies.

2.2.2. The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF')³ sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied in both plan and decision-making. Paragraph 2 makes it clear that the NPPF is itself a material consideration in the determination of planning application. Paragraph 11 states that **"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development."**

2.2.3. In paragraph 135, within Section 12 "Achieving well-designed places" the NPPF states: **"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:**

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and

³ The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024). Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”

2.2.4. Paragraph 136 in this section states: **“Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.”**

2.2.5. The section titled “Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change” states at paragraph 162: “Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures . Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future health and resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation

of vulnerable development and infrastructure.”

2.2.6. In paragraph 187, within Section 15 “Conserving and enhancing the natural environment” the NPPF states: **“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;

[...] 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; [...]

2.2.7. In paragraph 193, under the ‘Habitats and biodiversity’ section, the NPPF states: **“When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:**

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....”

2.3. Local planning policy

2.3.1. Local planning policies are contained in the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (November 2019-2036).

2.3.2. Policy EN14 (Trees, hedges and woodlands) of the local plan states:

“Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading’s vegetation cover will be extended. The quality of waterside vegetation will be maintained or enhanced.

New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting within the application site, particularly on the street frontage, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change. Measures must be in place to ensure that these trees are adequately maintained.”

2.3.3. The LPA has not published any Supplementary Planning Guidance that relates either to this site, or to the protection of existing trees.

2.4. Neighbourhood planning policy

2.4.1. At the time of writing there is no Neighbourhood Plan covering the area within which the property is found.

3. THE TREES

3.1. Survey findings

3.1.1. We surveyed eight individual trees and two groups of trees growing within or immediately adjacent to the property. Their details can be found in the tree survey schedule at **Appendix 3**.

3.1.2. The arboricultural character of the property is dominated by self-seeded, broadleaved specimens of native species, growing within and directly adjacent to the rear garden. The most commonly-found and dominant species is English oak, representing 75% of individuals surveyed. Two of the trees are mature in age, whilst all but one of the remaining trees are semi-mature.

3.2. Assessment of suitability for retention

3.2.1. As noted above in Section 2.3, local planning policies require the retention of **“Individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands [...] where they are of importance”** The individuals within or adjacent to the property, whose attributes we consider meet this criterion, are as follows:

- the English oak tree (no. 1) growing within the rear garden, adjacent to the dwelling;
- the off-site sycamore tree (no. 4) growing adjacent to the north boundary; and
- the on-site ash tree (no. 5) and off-site oaks (nos. 6 and 7) growing adjacent to the south boundary which together form the north-most extent of the larger group of trees growing within the grounds of the Scout Hut.

3.2.2. There are no category 'A' trees and eight category 'B' specimens, representing all the trees surveyed individually.

3.2.3. All of the groups of trees have been assessed as category 'C'.

3.3. Assessment of arboricultural impacts

3.3.1. The arboricultural impacts of the proposed site layout by Filbert Designs building engineers, drawing no. FD/452/624 rev B have been assessed by overlaying

this onto the TCP and are discussed in the following sections of this report and are shown on the tree protection plan (TPP) presented at **Appendix 4**.

3.3.2. The TPP identifies that no trees are to be removed to accommodate the proposed development.

3.3.3. The TPP shows how the trees will be protected from damage during construction, and the measures identified are set out and described in the outline arboricultural method statement at **Appendix 2** of this report. The implementation of, and adherence to, these measures can readily be secured by the imposition of appropriate planning conditions.

3.3.4. Details of the impacts identified within these categories, and our assessment of their respective significance, are analysed in Sections 4 to 7 below.

3.3.5. Based on these findings, we have assessed the magnitude of the overall arboricultural impact of the proposals according to the categories defined in **Table 1** below.

Impact	Description
High	Total loss of or major alteration to main elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline, post-development situation fundamentally different
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to main elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline, post-development situation will be partially changed
Low	Minor loss of or alteration to main elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline, post-development changes will be discernible but the underlying situation will remain similar to the baseline
Negligible	Very minor loss of or alteration to main elements/ features/ characteristics of the baseline, post-development changes will be barely discernible, approximating to the 'no change' situation

Table 1: Magnitude of impacts⁴

⁴ Determination of magnitude based on DETR (2000) Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies, as modified and extended.

4. TREES TO BE REMOVED

4.1. Details

4.1.1. No trees are to be removed to facilitate the proposed development.

4.2. Assessment

4.2.1. As no trees are to be removed, the proposals represent no alteration to the main arboricultural features of the site and as such, the contribution these make to the character and appearance of the local landscape, to amenity or to biodiversity (see paragraph 3.2.1), will be retained.

5. TREES TO BE PRUNED

5.1. Details

5.1.1. No trees are to be pruned to facilitate implementation of the proposals.

5.2. Assessment

5.2.1. Although the north-west crown extent of oak tree no. 1 overlaps the proposed extension by up to 3.5m, the tree's crown will not require any pruning to facilitate construction. This is because the extension comprises a single storey only, and as such, it is unlikely to exceed 4m in height. As the tree's west crown extent shows a clearance of 5.25m, there will be a clearance of at least 1.25m between the extension roof and the tree's crown which will allow adequate working space for construction and a reasonable margin of clearance for future growth.

5.2.2. The oak tree will continue to grow in the future; and in time, in common with all trees in urban and suburban areas, it is possible that some pruning will be required to keep the tree's crown clear of the extension. However, any future pruning can be controlled by the LPA as the tree is covered by a TPO, and accordingly an application to prune would have to be made and consented to; and if the LPA considers the proposed works are likely to be harmful to the health, appearance or long-term potential of the tree, it could prevent this by refusing consent. In this way, the LPA would control both the extent and quality of any future pruning, if required.

6. ROOT PROTECTION AREA INCURSIONS

6.1. Details

6.1.1. Part of the foundations for the proposed extension will encroach within the RPA of the oak tree no. 1. Details of the incursion are shown in **Table 2** below.

Tree no.	Species	Incursion by:	Total RPA	Extent of incursion into RPA	% of RPA
1	English oak	Proposed foundations for extension	157.5m ²	5.7m ²	3.7%

Table 2: Proposed incursions within RPAs

6.2. Assessment

6.2.1. The incursion by part of the proposed extension into the RPA of oak tree no. 1 extends no closer than 4m from the trunk and equates to no more than 3.7%. Any potential adverse impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated as set out below.

6.2.2. The incursion into the RPA of oak tree no. 1 is due to the foundations for the proposed extension, and subject to proposed levels, some degree of excavation will be required (discussed below). To minimise impacts on this specimen, excavation within the RPA will be undertaken manually, under the direct control and supervision of an appointed arboricultural consultant, so that any over dig into the RPA is avoided, and any roots encountered can be treated appropriately.

6.2.3. The extent of excavation required within the RPA will be significantly minimised by the use of a 'block and beam' foundation constructed on top of screw piles; consequently, excavation will only be necessary to a depth sufficient to allow for the proposed finished floor level to tie in with the existing floor level of the dwelling. Accordingly, it is understood that excavation within the tree's RPA will not be required to depths greater than 300mm below existing ground level. Studies have shown that typically as much as 90% of tree root length occurs in the upper metre of the soil⁵ and

⁵ Roberts J., Jackson N., & Smith M. (2006). Tree Roots in the Built Environment. TSO.

so it is highly unlikely that this incursion into the RPA will result in all the roots in this area being severed. In this case, as only the upper 300mm of the upper metre of soil will be removed, the 3.7% incursion into the tree's RPA may result in a reduction of only 1.8% of roots within the RPA.

6.2.4. As a species English oak has been identified as moderate at tolerating root pruning and disturbance⁶. As this specimen is semi-mature, there is no reason to suggest that it will not be able to tolerate the cutting of roots within this significantly small section of its RPA.

6.2.5. The area lost to encroachment within the RPA of the tree can be compensated for in the area to the north and east of the tree, where there is extensive soft landscaping suitable for root growth, contiguous to the RPA. Therefore, there will be no net loss of suitable rooting area, and no foreseeable risk of future cumulative impacts, so there is no reason to suggest that it will not be able to tolerate the cutting of roots within this small section of its RPA or that it will not remain viable.

6.2.6. Furthermore, within the site boundary the opportunity exists for the soil used by the tree for root growth to be improved. Subject to proposed landscaping, the soil and rooting environments within the RPA of this specimen could be enhanced to promote improved root growth by de-compaction, aeration, fertilisation or mulching, as appropriate, and this can be ensured by condition. As this tree can remain viable by being able to root in other areas, contiguous to its RPA, and the soil environment in which it is rooting can be improved, this incursion complies with paragraph 5.3.1 of BS5837.

6.2.7. Implementation of measures to prevent other incursions into the RPAs of trees and to protect them during construction can be assured by the erection of appropriate protective fencing and the installation of ground protection, as shown on the TPP at **Appendix 4**.

6.2.8. Accordingly, subject to implementation of the above measures, and considering the age, current physiological condition and tolerance of disturbance of

⁶ MATHENY, N. P. and CLARK, J. R. (1998). Trees and Development. International Society of Arboriculture.

English oak tree no. 1, no significant or long-term damage to its root system or environment will occur as a result of the proposed development.

7. RELATIONSHIP OF TREES TO REAR EXTENSION

7.1. Details

7.1.1. The proposed rear extension lies within the shadow pattern⁷ of off-site oak tree no. 2; that is, the extension is sited in an arc between the north-west and the east of the tree and is closer to it than the tree's current height.

7.2. Assessment

7.2.1. Although the rear extension is located within the shadow pattern of off-site oak tree no. 2, the fenestration of the extension does not exclusively and directly face this specimen and as such, it will not be shaded by the tree to the extent that this will interfere with its reasonable use or enjoyment by occupiers; which might otherwise lead to pressure to permit felling or severe pruning that the LPA could not reasonably resist.

⁷ BS 5837:2012, 5.2.2, Note 1: "An indication of potential direct obstruction of sunlight can be illustrated by plotting a segment, with a radius from the centre of the stem equal to the height of the tree, drawn from due north-west to due east, indicating the shadow pattern through the main part of the day."

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1. Summary

8.1.1. Our assessment of the impacts of the proposals on the existing trees concludes that no trees are to be removed and as such there will be no alteration to the main arboricultural features of the property, or to its arboricultural character; accordingly the proposals will not have any adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape.

8.1.2. No trees are to be pruned to facilitate implementation of the proposals.

8.1.3. The single incursion into the Root Protection Area of English oak tree no. 1 is minor, and subject to implementation of the measures recommended on the Tree Protection Plan and set out at **Appendix 2**, no significant or long-term damage to its root system or rooting environment will occur.

8.1.4. The proposed rear extension is unlikely to be shaded by surrounding trees to the extent that this will interfere with its reasonable use or enjoyment by occupiers, which might otherwise lead to pressure on the Local Planning Authority to permit felling or severe pruning that it could not reasonably resist.

8.2. Compliance with national planning policy

8.2.1. As the proposals will retain all the main arboricultural features of the property, its arboricultural attractiveness, history and landscape character and setting will be maintained, thereby complying with Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

8.2.2. The proposals do not necessitate the removal of any mature trees of large ultimate size, which make the greatest contribution to carbon sequestration and storage, surface water run-off, biodiversity and landscape and air temperature and cleanliness; for all of which, appropriate space for their retention is provided. Accordingly, insofar as this relates to existing trees, the scheme can be seen to have taken a proactive approach to mitigating climate change and thereby complies with Paragraph 162 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

8.2.3. As the proposals will not result in the loss or deterioration of any ancient woodland or any ancient or veteran trees, they comply with paragraph 193 (c) of the NPPF.

8.3. Compliance with local planning policy

8.3.1. As the proposed development will not result in the removal of trees which are of importance, it complies with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan.

8.4. Conclusion

8.4.1. On the basis of our assessment, we conclude that the arboricultural impact of this scheme is of negligible magnitude, as defined according to the categories set out in **Table 1** of this report.

APPENDIX 1

Methodology

A1.1. Tree survey and baseline information

A1.1.1. We surveyed individual trees with trunk diameters of 75mm and above⁸, trees with trunk diameters of 150mm and above growing in groups or woodlands, and shrub masses, hedges and hedgerows⁹ growing within or immediately adjacent to the property; and recorded their locations, species, dimensions, ages, condition, and visual importance in accordance with BS 5837 recommendations.

A1.1.2. The baseline information collected during the site survey was recorded on site using a hand-held digital device. This information was then imported into an Excel spreadsheet and used to produce the tree survey schedule at **Appendix 3**. The numbers assigned to the trees in the tree survey schedule correspond with those shown on the appended tree protection plan.

A1.1.3. We surveyed trees as groups where they have grown together to form cohesive arboricultural features, either aerodynamically (trees that provide companion shelter), visually (e.g., avenues or screens) or culturally¹⁰. However, where it might be necessary to differentiate between specific trees within these groups, we also surveyed these individually.

A1.1.4. We inspected the trees from the ground only, aided by binoculars as appropriate, but did not climb them. We took no samples of wood, roots or fungi. We did not undertake a full hazard or risk assessment of the trees, and therefore can give no guarantee, either expressed or implied, of their safety or stability.

A1.1.5. Whilst we categorised the trees in accordance with BS 5837 (details of the criteria used for this process can be found in the notes that accompany the tree survey schedule), we assessed the trees' suitability for retention against national, regional and local planning policies. We applied this methodology in line with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development, giving greater weighting to the contribution of a tree to the character and appearance of the local landscape, to amenity, or to biodiversity, where its removal might have a significant adverse impact on these factors.

A1.1.6. For the trees shown to be retained, all measurements for pruning specifications, percentage estimates of RPA incursions and shading issues have been calculated using AutoCAD software.

A1.2. Tree constraints

A1.2.1. In line with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development, we assessed whether any trees should be retained in the context of the proposed

⁸ BS 5837, paragraph 4.2.4 b), recommends that all trees over 75mm stem diameter should be included in a pre-planning land and tree survey.

⁹ Ibid., 4.4.2.7

¹⁰ Ibid., 4.4.2.3

development. Our assessment of which trees might have to be retained, and which can be removed, is based on:

- whether any trees are classed as ‘ancient’ or ‘veteran’, and thereby are designated as ‘irreplaceable habitats’;¹¹
- which trees contribute to local character and history, including to the surrounding landscape setting; which trees contribute to biodiversity; and which trees help mitigate and adapt to climate change; and whose removal would thereby be unlikely to comply with national planning policy guidance;
- which trees are important features of the local landscape, such that their removal would be contrary to local planning policies: specifically, Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan, as set out above;
- our assessment of the trees’ quality, value and remaining life expectancy, in accordance with BS5837:2012, as summarised in the notes that accompany the tree survey schedule.

A1.2.2. As trees growing outside the boundaries of the site are in the control of others, we have assumed they will be retained, irrespective of their size, age or condition.

A1.2.3. Whilst we have categorised trees in accordance with BS 5837, we have not used these categorisations as the main criterion of whether specimens might be removed or should be retained. Trees in categories ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ are all a material consideration in the development process; but the retention of category ‘C’ trees, being of low quality or of only limited or short-term potential, will not normally be considered necessary should they impose a significant constraint on development.

A1.2.4. Furthermore, BS 5837 makes it clear that young trees, even those of good form and vitality, which have the potential to develop into quality specimens when mature **“need not necessarily be a significant constraint on the site’s potential”**¹².

A1.2.5. Moreover, BS 5837 states that **“.... care should be taken to avoid misplaced tree retention; attempts to retain too many or unsuitable trees on a site can result in excessive pressure on the trees during demolition or construction work, or post-completion demands for their removal”**¹³.

A1.2.6. The ‘Root Protection Areas’ (RPAs)¹⁴ of the trees identified for retention were calculated in accordance with Section 4.6 of BS 5837; and were assessed taking account of factors such as the likely tolerance of a tree to root disturbance or damage, the morphology and disposition of roots as influenced by existing site conditions

¹¹ The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024). Paragraph 193 (c).

¹² BS 5837, 4.5.10.

¹³ Ibid., 5.1.1.

¹⁴ Ibid., paragraph 3.7. “The minimum area around a retained tree “deemed to contain sufficient roots and rooting volume to maintain the tree’s viability, and where the protection of the roots and soil structure is treated as a priority.”

(including the presence of existing roads or structures), as well as soil type, topography and drainage.

APPENDIX 2

Outline Arboricultural Method Statement

A2.1. Tree Protection Plan

A2.1.1. The TPP at **Appendix 4** shows the general and specific provisions to be taken during construction of the proposed development, to ensure that no unacceptable damage is caused to the root systems, trunks or crowns of the trees identified for retention. These measures are indicated by coloured notations in areas where construction activities are to occur either within, or in proximity to, retained trees, as described in the relevant panels on the drawing.

A2.2. Pre-start meeting

A2.2.1. Prior to the commencement of any site clearance, ground preparation or construction works the developer will convene a pre-start site meeting. This shall be attended by the developer's contract manager or site manager, the fencing/boarding contractor, the groundwork contractor(s) and the arboricultural consultant. The LPA tree officer will be invited to attend. If appropriate, the tree felling/surgery contractor should also attend. At that meeting contact numbers will be exchanged, and the methods of tree protection shall be fully discussed, so that all aspects of their implementation and sequencing are made clear to all parties. Any clarifications or modifications to the TPP required as a result of the meeting shall be circulated to all attendees.

A2.3. Site clearance

A2.3.1. No clearance of trees or other vegetation shall be undertaken until after the pre-start meeting and after the erection of the tree protection fencing (see below). If any vegetation clearance is required behind the line of the protection fencing this will be made clear at the pre-start meeting and arrangements will be made to do this prior to the fencing's erection, under the supervision of the arboricultural consultant, who will ensure it doesn't cause any soil compaction or damage to the roots of trees to be retained.

A2.3.2. Except where within the RPAs of trees to be retained, all trees and other vegetation to be removed may be cut down or grubbed out as appropriate; but within the RPAs of trees to be retained, trees and vegetation will be cut by hand to ground level and stumps will be either left in place or ground out with a lightweight self-powered stump grinding machine. No excavators, tractors or other vehicles will enter the RPAs.

A2.4. Ground preparation

A2.4.1. No ground preparation or excavation of any kind, including topsoil stripping or ground levelling, shall be undertaken until after the pre-start meeting and after the erection of the tree protection fencing (see below).

A2.5. Tree protection fencing

A2.5.1. Construction exclusion zones (CEZs) will be formed by erecting protective fencing around the RPAs of all on-site trees to the specification recommended in BS 5837, Section 6.2, prior to the commencement of construction. This will be at least 2.1m in height, comprising welded mesh panels; every other one braced with a 45°

strut that is pinned to the ground; and seated in concrete or plastic bases pinned to the ground by scaffold uprights sunk to a minimum depth of 600mm, as shown in **Figure 3** of that document. Individual panels will be fixed to each other with at least two clamps, one of which will be a security clamp. **"TREE PROTECTION ZONE - KEEP OUT"** or similar notices will be attached with cable ties to every third panel.

A2.5.2. The RPAs of the off-site trees will also be enforced by the erection of protective fencing to the same specification, prior to the commencement of construction, thereby safeguarding them from incursions by plant or machinery, storage and mixing of materials, or other construction-related activities which could have a detrimental effect on their root systems.

A2.5.3. The recommended positions of the protective fencing are shown by **bold blue lines** on the TPP. The precise positioning of the fencing around the trees will be considered in conjunction with any other protective hoarding/fencing which may be required around the site boundary.

A2.5.4. Within the CEZs safeguarded by the protective fencing, there will be no changes in ground levels, **no soil stripping**, and no plant, equipment, or materials will be stored. Oil, bitumen, diesel, and cement will not be stored or discharged within 10m of any trees. Areas for the storage or mixing of such materials will be agreed in advance and be clearly marked. No notice boards, or power or telephone cables, will be attached to any of the trees. No fires will be lit within 10m of any part of any tree.

A2.6. Ground protection

A2.6.1. To allow space for construction and protection from soil compaction where proposed structures are in close proximity to RPAs of trees to be retained, the ground between the protective fencing and the footprints of the proposed structures will be covered by appropriate ground boarding, in accordance with the guidelines of Section 6.2.3.3 of BS 5837. The locations where these measures will be required are marked by **pink hatching** on the TPP.

A2.6.2. For purely pedestrian traffic, scaffold boards (or similar) will be used. Scaffold boards will comply with British Standard BS 2482: 2009 *Specification for timber scaffold boards* and be at least 225mm in width and 38mm thickness; they will be butted up and attached to each other with wooden battens or metal tie straps, and laid either on an above-ground scaffold framework, or secured to the ground with steel pins above a compressible material (a 75mm deep layer of woodchips may be appropriate) laid on top of a geotextile membrane of an appropriate specification.

A2.6.3. For wheeled or tracked traffic, ground boarding will be designed by a structural engineer, to take account of the type of soil and the likely loadings. Temporary aluminium roadway ('Trakway' or similar), interlocking plastic tread boards ('Ground-Guards' or similar), or reinforced concrete slabs may be appropriate. These will also be laid on top of a compressible material above a geotextile membrane.

A2.7. Manual excavation within RPAs

A2.7.1. The first 750mm depth of excavations required within the RPAs of the trees to be retained (as shown by **bold orange lines** on the TPP) will be dug by hand, using a compressed air soil pick if appropriate, and under on-site arboricultural supervision, to safeguard against the possibility of unacceptable root damage being caused to these specimens. Any roots encountered of over 25mm diameter will be cut back cleanly to the face of the dig nearest to the tree, using a sharp hand saw or secateurs, and their cut ends covered with hessian to prevent desiccation.

APPENDIX 3

Tree Survey Schedule



ARBORICULTURAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS

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(Operations)

Tree Survey Schedule

16 Jefferson Close, Reading

February 2025

SJA tss 25063-01

Tree Survey Schedule: Explanatory Notes

16 Jefferson Close, Reading

This schedule is based on a tree inspection undertaken by Nigel Kirby of SJAtrees (the trading name of Simon Jones Associates Ltd.), on Wednesday the 19th of February 2025. Weather conditions at the time were clear, dry and bright. Deciduous trees were not in leaf.

The information contained in this schedule covers only those trees that were examined, and reflects the condition of these specimens at the time of inspection. We did not have access to the trees from any adjacent properties; observations are thus confined to what was visible from within the site and from surrounding public areas.

The trees were inspected from the ground only and were not climbed, and no samples of wood, roots or fungi were taken. A full hazard or risk assessment of the trees was not undertaken, and therefore no guarantee, either expressed or implied, of their safety or stability can be given.

Trees are dynamic organisms and are subject to continual growth and change; therefore the dimensions and assessments presented in this schedule should not be relied upon in relation to any development of the site for more than twelve months from the survey date.

1. Tree no.

Given in sequential order, commencing at "1".

2. TPO no.

Number assigned to tree in the Reading Borough Council Tree Preservation Order no. 73/003, as shown in the TPO schedule and plan.

3. Species.

'Common names' are given, taken from MITCHELL, A. (1978) A Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe.

4. Height.

Estimated with the aid of a hypsometer, given in metres.

5. Trunk diameter.

Trunk diameter measured at approx. 1.5m above ground level; or where the trunk forks into separate stems between ground level and 1.5m, measured at the narrowest point beneath the fork. Given in millimetres.

6. Radial crown spread.

The linear extent of branches from the base of the trunk to the main cardinal points, rounded up to the closest half metre, unless shown otherwise. For small trees with reasonably symmetrical crowns, a single averaged figure is quoted.

7. Crown break.

Height above ground and direction of growth of first significant live branch.

8. Crown clearance.

Distance from adjacent ground level to lowest part of lowest branch, in metres.

9. Age class.

Young: Seedling, sapling or recently planted tree; not yet producing flowers or seeds; strong apical dominance.

Semi-mature: Trunk often still smooth-barked; producing flowers and/or seeds; strong apical dominance, not yet achieved ultimate height.

Mature: Apical dominance lost, tree close to ultimate height.

Over-mature: Mature, but in decline, no crown retrenchment

Veteran: Mature, with a large trunk diameter for species; but showing signs of veteranisation, irrespective of actual age, with decay or hollowing, a crown showing retrenchment and a structure characteristic of the latter stages of life.

Ancient: Beyond typical age range and with a very large trunk diameter for species; with extensive decay or hollowing, a crown that has undergone retrenchment and a structure characteristic of the latter stages of life.

10. Physiology.

Health, condition and function of the tree, in comparison to a normal specimen of its species and age.

11. Structure.

Structural condition of the tree – based on both the structure of its roots, trunk and major stems and branches, and on the presence of any structural defects or decay.

Good: No significant morphological or structural defects, and an upright and reasonably symmetrical structure.

Moderate: No significant pathological defects, but a slightly impaired morphological structure; however, not to the extent that the tree is at immediate or early risk of collapse.

Indifferent: Significant morphological or pathological defects; but these are either remediable or do not put the tree at immediate or early risk of collapse.

Poor: Significant and irreparable morphological or pathological defects, such that there may be a risk of failure or collapse.

Hazardous: Significant and irreparable morphological or pathological defects, with a risk of imminent collapse.

12. Comments.

Where appropriate comments have been made relating to:

- Health and condition
- Safety, particularly close to areas of public access
- Structure and form
- Estimated life expectancy or potential
- Visibility and impact in the local landscape

13. Category.

Based on the British Standard "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations", BS 5837: 2012; adjusted to give a greater weighting to trees that contribute to the character and appearance of the local landscape, to amenity, or to arboricultural biodiversity.

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.

(1) Trees that have a serious, irreparable, 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).

(2) Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate, and irreversible overall decline.

(3) 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.

Category A: Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years.

(1) Trees that are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual.

(2) Trees, groups or woodlands of particular visual importance as arboricultural and/or landscape features.

(3) Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value.

Category B: Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years.

(1) 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 minor 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.

(2) Trees present in numbers, usually growing as groups or woodlands, such that they form distinct landscape features, thereby attracting a higher collective rating than they might as individuals; or trees present in numbers but situated so as to make little visual contribution to the wider locality.

(3) Trees with material conservation or other cultural value.

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 150mm.

(1) Unremarkable trees of very limited merit or of such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories.

(2) 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 landscape benefits.

(3) Trees with no material limited conservation or other cultural value.

TREE SURVEY SCHEDULE **16 Jefferson Close, Reading**

No.	TPO no.	Species	Height	Trunk diameter	Radial crown spread	Crown break	Crown clearance	Age class	Physio -logy	Structure	Comments	Cate gory
1	T5	English oak	17m	590mm	N 3m E 7.75m S 4.5m SW 7.25m W 7.5m NW 4.75m	1.5m	W 5.25m	Semi-mature	Below average	Indifferent	Located on slightly rising ground to E of dwelling; prominent buttress root in E side of trunk; historic buttress root and trunk wound at ground level on S side; wound fully occluded; on sounding with acoustic mallet no differences in tone denoted; shallow surface root for 2m to S within gravel footpath; N side of trunk, algal staining on trunk; darker black stained area; dia. approx. 130mm; on sounding with acoustic mallet, significant differences in tone denoted; probe achieved 30mm penetration before hitting solid internal wood; indicative of bark death in black stained area and delamination from the trunk; no evidence of significant or extensive internal decay between buttress roots on SE side, black weeping exudate and staining; x2 areas each 10mm and 30mm in dia.; many occluded, partially occluded and unoccluded pruning wounds on trunk indicative of crown lifting and thinning; epicormic growth on internal branches suggestive of reduced physiological condition; asymmetrical canopy to S; notably reduced shoot extension lengths and slightly sparse bud density in apical extents; glimpsed in views from the E, less so from the W.	B (2)
2	T6	English oak	15m	415mm est.	N 4.25m E 3.5m S 4.75m W 5.25m	2.5m	N 5m	Semi-mature	Average	Indifferent	Off-site tree; single trunk; asymmetrical crown as suppressed by adjacent specimens; contributes to boundary screening; in keeping with the character of the area.	B (2)
3		English oak	8.5m	160mm est.	1.75m	1m	2m	Semi-mature	Average	Moderate	Off-site tree; fastigiate crown; small ornamental tree.	B (1)
4		Sycamore	16m	2 stems @ 355mm est.	N 4m E 5m S 5.25m W 5.5m	2m	3m	Semi-mature	Average	Indifferent	Off-site tree; twin-stemmed; asymmetrical crown as suppressed by adjacent specimens; significant component of group in which it stands; contributes to boundary screening.	B (12)
5	T7	Ash	21m	580mm	N 7m E 7m S 5m W 5.75m	5m	E 6m	Semi-mature	Average	Indifferent	Prominent buttress roots to E by 4m; exposed surface roots 4.5m SE; exposed surface roots with mechanical damage; single trunk; asymmetrical crown as suppressed by adjacent specimens; meshing crown providing companion shelter; significant component of group in which it stands; in keeping with the character of the area.	B (12)
6	T8	English oak	20m	590mm est.	N 8.25m E 10.25m S 9m W 7m NW 8m	3.25m	E 6m	Mature	Average	Moderate	Off-site tree; single trunk; asymmetrical crown as suppressed by adjacent specimens; significant component of group in which it stands; contributes to boundary screening.	B (12)

No.	TPO no.	Species	Height	Trunk diameter	Radial crown spread	Crown break	Crown clearance	Age class	Physio -logy	Structure	Comments	Category
7	T9	English oak	20m	580mm est.	N 7m E 8.75m S 6m W 6.6m	7m	E 7m	Mature	Average	Indifferent	Off-site tree; single trunk; asymmetrical crown as suppressed by adjacent specimens; thinned crown; contributes to boundary screening; significant component of group in which it stands.	B (2)
8		English oak	6m	60mm	0.5m	2m	2m	Young	Average	Moderate	Small recently planted specimen; unremarkable tree of very limited merit.	B (1)
G1		Photinia 'Red Robin'	3.5m	Max 75mm	1.75m	1.25m	1m	Young	Average	Moderate	Row of closely planted specimens, designed to form a hedge or screen; of low landscape value, due to small size; contributes to boundary screening.	C (12)
G2		Leyland cypress	4m	Max 160mm est.	2m	0.2m	0.2m	Semi-mature	Average	Indifferent	Off-site group of trees; row of closely planted specimens, designed to form a hedge or screen; crowns have been heavily reduced or "topped" in past; unremarkable trees of very limited merit; 8 specimens.	C (1)

Root Protection Areas (RPAs)

Root Protection Areas have been calculated in accordance with paragraph 4.6.1 of the British Standard 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations', BS 5837:2012. This is the minimum area which should be left undisturbed around each retained tree. RPAs are portrayed initially as a circle of a fixed radius from the centre of the trunk; but where there appear to be restrictions to root growth the circle is modified to reflect more accurately the likely distribution of roots.

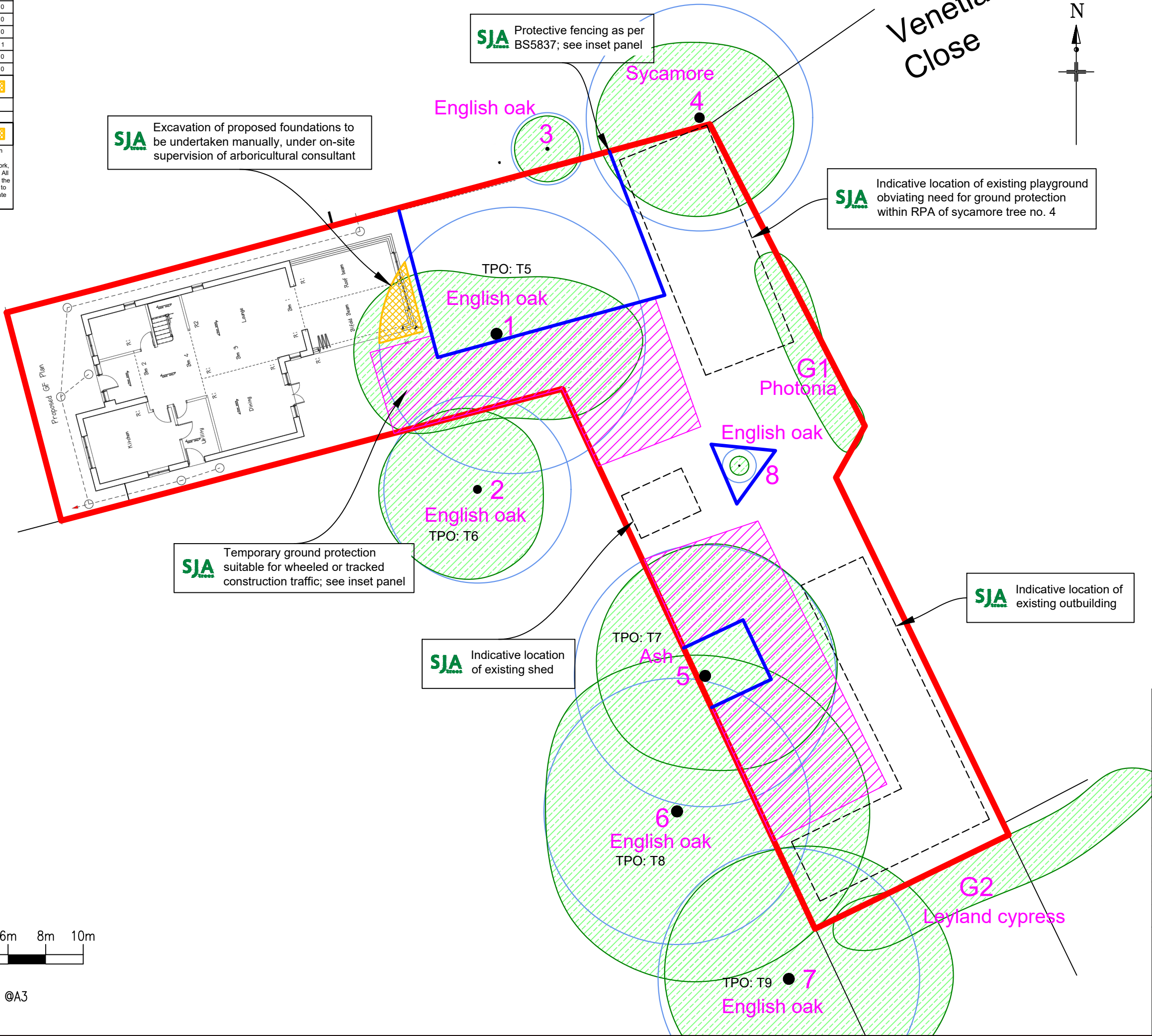
<i>Tree No.</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>RPA</i>	<i>RPA Radius</i>
1	English oak	157.5m ²	7.1m
2	English oak	77.9m ²	5.0m
3	English oak	11.6m ²	1.9m
4	Sycamore	114.0m ²	6.0m
5	Ash	152.2m ²	7.0m
6	English oak	157.5m ²	7.1m
7	English oak	152.2m ²	7.0m
8	English oak	2.5m ²	0.9m
G1	Photinia 'Red Robin'	2.5m ²	0.9m
G2	Leyland cypress	11.6m ²	1.9m

APPENDIX 4

Tree Protection Plan

Arboricultural Impacts: Summary		
(For details, see below)		
Impact		No. of Trees
Trees to be removed		0
Groups of trees to be removed		0
TPO trees to be removed		0
Trees to be pruned		0
Trees where manual excavation needed within RPAs		1
Trees where above soil surfacing needed within RPAs		0
Trees with proposed underground services within RPAs		0
Trees that require manual excavation within RPAs		
No.	Species	Type of structure
1	English oak	Proposed foundations
Manual Excavation		
Within the root protection area of English oak tree no. 1, excavation for proposed foundations shall be undertaken by hand under arboricultural supervision. The soil will be loosened with a pick or fork, and then will be cleared from roots with a compressed air soil pick. All roots will be cut cleanly with a hand saw or secateurs. The edge of the excavation closest to the tree will be covered with hessian sacking to prevent drying out, and if necessary be shuttered with an appropriate material to prevent soil collapse.		

Jefferson Close



Protective Fencing

To be erected prior to the commencement of all works on site, and retained in place throughout construction. To comprise 2m tall 'Heras' welded mesh panels on rubber or concrete feet. The panels shall be joined together with two anti-tamper couplers, installed so that they can only be removed from inside the fence. Distance between the couplers should be at least 1m and should be uniform throughout the fence. Panels should be supported (where possible) on the inner side by stabilizer struts, which should normally be attached to a base plate secured with ground pins (see Figure 3a below). Where the fencing is to be erected on retained hard surfacing or it is otherwise unfeasible to use ground pins, e.g. due to the presence of underground services, the stabilizer struts shall be mounted on a block tray (see Figure 3b). "TREE PROTECTION ZONE - KEEP OUT" or similar notices to be attached to every fifth panel.

Figure 3 Examples of above-ground stabilizing systems

a) Stabilizer strut with baseplate secured with ground pins

b) Stabilizer strut mounted on block tray

TREE PROTECTIVE FENCING as shown in BS 5837: 2012, Section 6.2.2 & Figure 3.

Ground Protection

To be installed prior to commencement of demolition or construction works, at same time as erection of protective fencing. For purely pedestrian traffic: scaffold boards or similar, of at least 35mm thickness, buttled together and attached to each other with wooden battens or steel tie straps, laid either on an above ground scaffold framework, or on a compressible material (a 75mm deep layer of woodchips may be appropriate) above a biaxial geotextile grid ('geogrid' - 'Tensar' or similar) and pinned to the ground with steel pins to prevent movement.

For wheeled or tracked traffic: temporary aluminium roadway ('Trakway' or similar), interlocking polyethylene tread boards ('Ground-Guards' or similar), or reinforced concrete slabs laid on an appropriate compressible layer above a biaxial geotextile grid - to be designed by a structural engineer to accommodate likely loadings.

Arboricultural Supervision

The arboricultural consultant will directly supervise all construction works that have to be undertaken within root protection areas. These include:

1. Location of protective fencing and ground protection.
2. Lifting of existing hard surfaces.
3. All excavations, whether for proposed foundations, hard surfacing, or underground services.

SJA ARBORICULTURAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Project: 16 Jefferson Close, Reading

Client: Nick Langdon

Drawing: TREE PROTECTION PLAN

Drawing no: SJA TPP 25063-041

Based on: FD/452/624 rev B

Drawn by: APH Date of Issue: Feb 2025 Scale: 1: 200 @ A3

Checked by: FPS Tel:(01737) 813058 sja@sjatrees.co.uk

Tree nos.: ● 2 Canopies of trees: Ground protection: Manual excavation:

Protective fencing: Ground protection: Manual excavation:

For further information refer to the SJAtrees Tree Survey Schedule

Do not scale from this drawing; please check all dimensions on site, and notify us of any discrepancies. SJAtrees (the trading name of Simon Jones Associates Ltd.) cannot be held responsible for inaccuracies in the topographical plan on which this drawing is based. © Simon Jones Associates Ltd. 2025

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This drawing is designed to reflect only the principles of layout and for design insofar as these relate to the protection of trees to be retained, and should NOT be read as a definitive engineering or construction method statement. Reference should be made to the architect or structural engineer, as appropriate, over any matters of construction detail or specification, or any engineering standards or regulatory requirements relating to proposed structures, hard surfaces or underground services.