

Arbortrack Systems Ltd
The Granary Studio
Crewe Lane
Kenilworth
Warwickshire
CV8 2LA

Telephone: 07986 122074
E-mail: james@arbortrackservices.com

Arboricultural Impact Assessment

& Method Statement:

Reinventing Borde Hill
Borde Hill Gardens
Borde Hill Lane
Haywards Heath
RH16 1XP

REPORT PREPARED FOR:

Borde Hill Gardens
Borde Hill Lane
Haywards Heath
RH16 1XP

REPORT PREPARED BY

James Bell
MSc. (Env). Arbor. A. Tech. Cert.

Ref: jwmb/rpt2/reinventingbordehill/AIAAMS

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose & Use of the Method Statement

- 1.1.1 This updated arboricultural impact assessment & method statement report has been prepared for submission to Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) to accompany an s73 variation of condition application for an approved development reference DM/24/0433 at Borde Hill Gardens, Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath RH16 1XP. This application is for revised path locations & a relocation of the play area. Minor modifications to the approved Ecolume are also envisaged - see accompanying material for full details. This statement is intended to demonstrate the feasibility of construction without harm to the retained tree resource on and adjoining the site. See the material accompanying this report for full scheme details.
- 1.1.2 This document lays down the methodology for any proposed works that may have an effect upon the trees on the site(s). It is essential within the scope of any contracts related to the development proposals that this method statement is observed and adhered to. It is recommended that this document form part of the work schedule and specification issued to the building contractors and can be used to form part of the contract.
- 1.1.3 Copies of this document should be available for inspection on-site. The developer will inform the local planning authority within twenty-four hours if the designated arboriculturist is replaced.

1.2 Terms of Reference

- 1.2.1 Arbortrack Systems Ltd is instructed by Borde Hill Gardens to prepare an updated arboricultural impact assessment & method statement report to accompany a s73 variation on condition planning application for works as detailed in section 1.1.1 at Borde Hill Gardens, Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath RH16 1XP with reference to British Standards publication: 'Trees in relation to design, demolition & construction - Recommendations (BS5837:2012).
- 1.2.2 The tree protection plan at Appendix A is based on:
- Topographical survey drawing reference 22/00/200 from J. C. White Geomatics Limited. Shrine Barn, Shrine Farm, Sanding Road, Postling, Hythe, Kent, CT21 4HE.
 - Proposals drawing reference BHG-251023 from Hortus Collective Ltd.

1.3 Tree Survey

1.3.1 A BS5837:2012 survey of the trees near the proposals was conducted between 28th March 2023 and 6th January 2024 by James Bell of Arbortrack Systems Ltd. Full tree survey data is provided at Appendix B.

1.3.2 Data from the iGeology app from the British Geological Survey suggests that it is likely that the site has a bedrock geology of:

- Ardingly Sandstone Member - Sandstone
- Lower Grinstead Clay - Mudstone
- Cuckfield Stone Bed - Sandstone, calcareous
- Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand - Sandstone and siltstone, interbedded
- Lower Tunbridge Wells Sand - Sandstone, siltstone and mudstone

There is no superficial geology recorded. The prevailing soil conditions evidently provide a good medium for tree growth. Any potential for soil compaction (highly deleterious to root function) during development will depend on the proportion of clay present in the upper profile. The presence of clay in this location would appear to be possible but cannot be confirmed. Further to confirmation of the precise soil type present, a structural engineer may be able to advise further on the local geology and its implications, if any, for development.

1.3.3 Areas of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) are present on the site, i.e. Dinosaur Wood and south of the proposed growing area at Sugworth Farm: see the Department for Environment Fisheries & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) MAGIC website for details at <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>. See Appendix A for details of the location of the ASNW.

1.3.4 The planning status of surveyed trees has not been established with MSDC.

1.4 Development Proposals & Impact Assessment

1.4.1 The s73 proposals are for works as detailed in section 1.1.1. See the proposals shown on the Tree Protection Plan at Appendix A and accompanying material for full details.

1.4.2 The following trees were previously consented for removal under approval reference DM/24/0433: i.e. trees 98, 100a, G127 (partial), 479a, 489, G718 (partial) & G719 (partial). Trees G127 (partial), 479a, 489, G718 (partial) & G719 (partial) can now be retained with the revised proposals, and no additional trees are required to be removed for the construction of the revised paths or the proposed parkland play area.

1.4.3 It has been accepted by MSDC that the loss of these trees is a low and acceptable impact in the context of the proposals and is likely to have a minimal amenity impact on the site or the surrounding area - therefore the retention of trees G127 (partial), 479a, 489, G718 (partial) & G719 (partial) is a positive development.

1.4.4 There is also very good scope for new planting to mitigate for unavoidable tree losses, if deemed appropriate. However, it is not evident that this is necessary, given the character of the site.

1.4.5 Any recommended tree works (regardless of development) are included at Appendix B.

1.4.6 The previously consented path within Dinosaur Wood will be built out as per approval reference DM/24/0433.

-
- 1.4.7 New steps are proposed near tree 176b, an approximately 8m tall semi-mature English oak. The tree has good vigour, and the step construction specification is likely to be shallow. It is considered that mitigation is not appropriate. In all likelihood, this small tree will be minimally affected (given the extent of undisturbed ground to the west), but if it does decline, it is very unlikely to affect the landscape character of the area. Plus, there is excellent scope for replacement planting.
- 1.4.8 Revised paths near the proposed Ecolodge will be constructed to a 'No Dig' specification, assuming existing levels allow, where this is necessary - see Appendix A for details. Details can be agreed upon via the discharge of a condition of the approved s73 application.
- 1.4.9 The proposed play area has been shifted out of Dinosaur Wood to open ground to the north, with a small section of this play area standing within a marginal area of recent landscape planting (trees 218-226a). No specimen trees are present in this area, and the play features can coexist with the trees already present.
- 1.4.10 The proposed path around the western flank of Robertsmere Lake follows the existing permissive path, where possible. Sections will be upgraded using a root-friendly 'No Dig' specification where they pass through the RPAs of retained trees.
- 1.4.11 The current driveway from South Lodge into the site will be retained on its current line & upgraded-see Appendix A for details.

1.5 Sequence of Works

1.5.1 The sequence of works should be as follows:

- tree works required to allow or facilitate development or for arboricultural best practice - see Appendix B
- erection of tree protection barrier (TPB) on advised line(s) and laying of ground protection: see Appendix A
- upgrading of driveway
- main construction phase: Ecolodge, footpaths and parkland play
- removal of TPB & ground protection
- landscape planting

1.6 Site Supervision

1.6.1 An individual, e.g. the Site Agent, must be nominated to be responsible for all arboricultural matters on site. This person must:

- be present on-site for the majority of the time
- be aware of the arboricultural responsibilities
- have the authority to stop any work that is causing, or has the potential to cause, harm to any retained tree
- be responsible for ensuring that all site operatives are aware of their responsibilities toward trees on site and the consequences of the failure to observe these responsibilities
- make immediate contact with the local authority and/or the designated arboriculturist in the event of any tree-related problems occurring, whether actual or potential

1.7 Site Monitoring

- 1.7.1 The site agent will be responsible for monitoring all arboricultural works, inspecting protective fencing and monitoring all on-site works in the context of tree protection. The designated arboriculturist will be available for site visits on a basis to be agreed upon between the client and planning authority when/if appropriate or required, i.e. if required by condition. It is recommended that a record of site visits is maintained for inspection on-site and copies forwarded to the developer/agent and to the local planning authority. A certificate of practical completion can be produced for sites deemed by all parties to merit this.
- 1.7.2 It is the responsibility of the client to advise Arbortrack when the project begins and to forward on the approval notice when published on the planning portal, should supervision requirements be stipulated.
- 1.7.3 Principal contact information: 1/. Mr James Bell. Arbortrack Systems Ltd. Arboricultural Consultant. 07986 122074. james@arbortrackservices.com. 2/. Ms Emma Rivett. MSDC Assistant Tree Officer. 01444 477067. emma.rivett@midsussex.gov.uk. 3/. Site agent. Details to be advised. 4/. Ms Chern-Min Teong. Erect Architecture. ct@erectarchitecture.co.uk. 5/. Ms Maria Kirk. Project Manager @ Borde Hill Gardens. maria.kirk@bordehill.co.uk. 01444 450326. 6/. Mr Mark Rogers. Hortus Collective. Landscape Architects. mark@hortuscollective.co.uk. 07977 440962.

1.8 Statement Adoption

- 1.8.1 It is recommended that, in due course, acceptance of the recommendations in this report is demonstrated by, for example, the architect specifying in writing to the building contractor that tree care conditions apply in the execution of the contract and by an estimate or written undertaking from the contractor to the architect demonstrating that the practical aspects of observation of such recommendations have been priced in.
- 1.8.2 If conflicts between any part of a tree and the proposals arise during the course of development, these can often be resolved quickly and at little cost if a qualified arboriculturist is consulted promptly. Lack of such care is often apparent quickly, and the decline and death of such trees can spoil design aims and can, of course, reflect poorly on the construction and design personnel involved. Trees that have been the recipients of careful handling during construction add considerably to the appeal and value of the finished development.

2.0 Pre-Development Site Preparation

2.1 Arboricultural Works

- 2.1.1 See Appendix B for full details of tree works required to allow or facilitate development or for arboricultural best practice.

2.2 Preparation of Surfaces

- 2.2.1 Areas within RPAs potentially requiring ground protection are shown at Appendix A. Ground protection should be fit for purpose as per the guidance in BS5837:2012 section 6.2.3.3. The preferred specification is provided by products such as Trak Mat; see www.multimatts.co.uk. On this site, the use of well-rotted broadleaved bark mulch is considered appropriate for many locations, and within Dinosaur Wood in particular.

2.3 Installation of Tree Protective Barrier

- 2.3.1 On this site and in the context of these proposals, the use of chestnut pale fencing or 1000mm high barrier mesh mounted on road pins or equivalent is considered appropriate. The suggested location(s) of the TPB is shown in Appendix A. Fencing locations can readily be adjusted to reflect site conditions during setting out (under arboricultural supervision if deemed necessary by MSDC): the priority remains to protect the trunks of retained trees and their RPAs from direct or indirect damage.
- 2.3.2 This TPB is to be erected before any construction work commences on site, is to remain 'in situ' and undamaged for the duration of all work or each phase and is only to be removed once all work is completed. If any work other than preparatory tree work is deemed necessary prior to the erection of fencing, the designated arboriculturist should be informed to enable his/her presence to oversee the work being carried out.
- 2.3.3 The only other exception is the completion of soft landscaping, but if any excavations, however minor, are to be carried out as part of soft landscaping within RPAs, an arboricultural assessment must be carried out beforehand, and any arboricultural protection measures incorporated. The TPB should carry waterproof warning notices denying access within RPAs.
- 2.3.4 The Tree Protection Plan in Appendix A illustrates where the protective fencing should be located to form the boundary of the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ). The TPZ is an exclusion zone, and suitable steps should be taken to prevent access by pedestrians and vehicles. The storage of any work materials and equipment should be located outside of the TPZ.

2.4 Pre-Development Site Inspection

- 2.4.1 At the instigation of the client/site agent or MSDC, upon the erection of the TPB, the designated arboriculturist can meet the relevant local authority member on-site to check the standard of the work(s). If there are any amendments required to the protective fencing, these will be agreed upon at this meeting, confirmed in writing, and undertaken thereafter.

3.0 Development Phase

3.1 General Precautions

- 3.1.1 No fires shall be made on any part of the site or within 10m of the furthest extent of the canopy of any tree or group tree to be retained on-site or on land adjoining.
- 3.1.2 No spilling or pouring of fuels, oils, solvents, or tar shall be made on any part of the site.
- 3.1.3 No materials that are likely to have an adverse effect on tree health, such as oil, bitumen or cement, will be stored or discharged within 10 metres of the trunk of a tree that is to be retained.
- 3.1.4 No spillage or discharge of wet mortar or concrete shall be made on any part of the site.
- 3.1.5 No storage of materials shall be made within the protective fences.
- 3.1.6 No breaching or moving of the protective fences shall occur without the approval of the designated arboriculturist.
- 3.1.7 Alterations in levels within the tree protection fence areas shall be avoided.

3.2 Root Protection Areas

- 3.2.1 The RPA is a desirable zone of protection around the trees' rooting system, and these have been marked on the plan in Appendix A. The RPAs will lie within the TPZ and, therefore, be fully fenced off (see Appendix A) unless appropriate ground protection is offered or if the impact on the RPA is deemed to be very low and acceptable.

3.3 Site Access, Accommodation & Storage

- 3.3.1 Many site activities are potentially damaging to trees, e.g. material storage, parking, soil compaction and the use of plant machinery. In this latter example, particular care is required to ensure that the operational arcs of excavation and lifting machinery, including their loads, do not physically damage trees when in use or while accessing the site.

3.4 Routing & Installation of Services

- 3.4.1 If new service runs to the Ecolodge are envisaged, these should avoid RPAs of retained trees where possible. If unavoidable, any trenches within the RPAs of site trees should be hand-dug and kept as narrow as possible. They should not extend to within 1m from the base of any retained tree trunk. Exposed roots larger than 25mm in diameter should be retained with their bark intact and, when exposed, wrapped in dry hessian sacking. A mechanical mole should ideally be used for the section beneath a tree. The mechanical device is sent through the protected area at a depth of no less than 0.6m. Machinery that can be externally lubricated by water rather than oil, etc., should be selected. The designated arboriculturist should be informed in advance of such operations so that monitoring arrangements can be undertaken.
- 3.4.2 Where crown interference with mature trees is a possibility, over-ground services will be routed in an alternative direction. In relation to this, any landscaping taking place should accommodate the presence of over-ground services and take mature tree size into account.

3.5 Demolition Measures n/a

3.6 Changes in Grade

- 3.6.1 The upper layer of topsoil (top 60cm) contains the majority of a tree's roots, and if this is disturbed by a change in ground level, serious damage can be caused. On this basis, as a minimum, level changes should be avoided within RPAs.
- 3.6.2 If any significant section of ground level requires raising within RPAs, this should be achieved using coarse, granular material such as pebbles. See section 7.4.4.4 of BS5837:2012.
- 3.6.3 If ground levels need to be altered within 1.5 metres of any tree trunk, prior agreement must be sought and given by the local authority tree officer.

3.7 Construction Measures

- 3.7.1 The Ecolodge will be constructed off piles into the floor of the lake. On this basis, the impact on lake-side trees has the scope to be negligible – previously approved under DM/24/0433.
- 3.7.2 All play structures are to be lightly founded on small diameter piles.
- 3.7.3 Minimum sections of footpaths that are to be constructed to a 'No Dig' specification have been identified on the Tree Protection Plan at Appendix A. Surfaces should be porous to allow water infiltration & gaseous exchange. Various products are available with warranty & guarantees: contact providers for full details. If 'No Dig' surfaces are laid at the end of the build, then ground protection will be required throughout the course of the build. See Appendix D for further guidance on 'No Dig' construction.

3.8 Removal of Tree Protective Barrier

- 3.8.1 The protective fencing may be removed only upon completion of the development phase and when all drainage and service runs have been installed (if applicable) and any site machinery has been removed.

3.9 Post Construction Landscaping

- 3.9.1 Following the development phase, retained trees may be subject to either landscaping or seeding beneath their canopies
- 3.9.2 Any approved landscaping works should avoid the changing of ground levels or deep digging in the vicinity of trees except where already approved. Mechanised cultivation, such as tractor-mounted rotovation, must not be used within the RPA of retained trees.
- 3.9.3 Heavy machinery should not be used in the vicinity of any retained trees unless adequate ground protection is in place.
- 3.9.4 If herbicides are to be used, they should be appropriate to their purpose and not used in such a way as to damage any retained trees or vegetation.
- 3.9.5 Ideally, retained trees should be within a shrub area as this reduces the chances of compaction and disturbance of root systems.

4.0 Summary of Proposed Methods

4.1 Table of Impacts and Mitigation

4.1.1 The table below summarises the main areas where trees could become damaged by the proposed development and the methods that need to be adopted in order to prevent such damage:

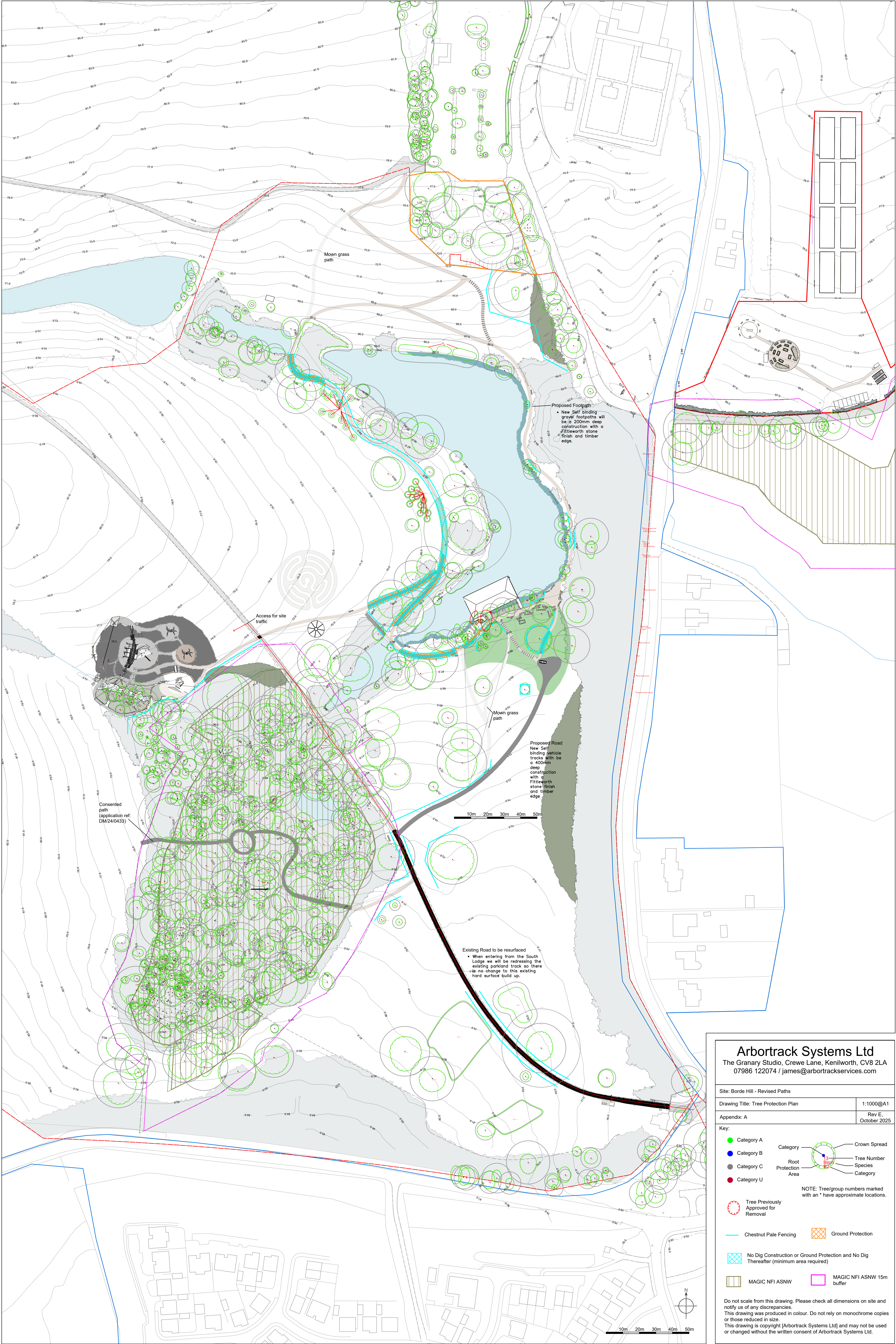
<u>Impact</u>	<u>Mitigation</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Trees Affected</u>
Passage of machinery and storage of materials over RPAs	Construction of protective fencing to acceptable standards	Sections 2.3. & Tree Protection Plan Appendix A	Various – see Appendix A
Works within RPAs of retained trees	Ground protection	Section 2.2.1	Various – see Appendix A
New hard standing within RPA	New footpaths installed to specialist ‘No Dig’ construction specification	Section 3.7.2 & Appendix D	Various – see Appendix A

5.0 Completion

5.1 Completion Meeting

- 5.1.1 Following completion of the approved works on site, the designated arboriculturist can meet with a local authority representative and agree upon any remedial works deemed necessary (if any).
- 5.1.2 Any works agreed upon in the above meeting will be confirmed in writing and should be performed to BS3998:2010.
- 5.1.3 Any work proposed post-development should be checked to avoid a penalty for performing illegal work on a protected tree.

APPENDIX A



Arbortrack Systems Ltd
The Granary Studio, Crewe Lane, Kenilworth, CV8 2LA
07986 122074 / james@arbortrackservices.com

Site: Borde Hill - Revised Paths	
Drawing Title: Tree Protection Plan	1:1000@A1
Appendix: A	Rev E, October 2025

Key:

- Category A
- Category B
- Category C
- Category U

Category

NOTE: Tree/group numbers marked with an * have approximate locations.

- Tree Previously Approved for Removal
- Chestnut Pale Fencing
- No Dig Construction or Ground Protection and No Dig Thereafter (minimum area required)
- MAGIC NFI ASNW

- Ground Protection
- MAGIC NFI ASNW 15m buffer

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