

Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)

Proposed New Equestrian Development

Eastwood Farm, Shaves Wood Lane, Albourne, West Sussex

Date of Report: 18 February 2025

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Background

- 1.0 This Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) has been prepared by Furse Landscape Architect Ltd, (FLA) following instruction from the clients Mr & Mrs Cullum Cina to review the baseline tree survey carried out by St Aubyn Tree Consultancy (SATC) and assess the potential impact the proposed development could have on the trees that lie on the client's landholding, boundaries and on adjacent land.
- 1.1 The detailed design for the Equestrian Facilities general layout has been prepared by FLA in collaboration with SATC and Gould Baxter Architects (GBA), the building architects. The design aimed to avoid negatively affecting the individual trees and the Ancient Woodland Buffer Zone (AWBZ) identified within the Tree Survey (TS) conducted by SATC. Consequently, no trees will be removed, and the existing access track through the AWBZ used for accessing the new Equestrian Facilities will be carefully restored and resurfaced. Specific remediation measures will be implemented along this route to improve the soil profile conditions underneath.
- 1.2 Furse Landscape Architects Ltd, (FLA) is a Landscape Institute registered consultancy with offices in West Sussex and Hampshire providing landscape and arboricultural services across the south and southwest of the UK. The practice covers landscape design, management visual impact and arboricultural assessment. The Principal of the practice, Trevor Furse, has been involved with built development in the countryside for over 30 years. He is a Chartered Landscape Architect and Arboriculturalist with extensive knowledge of landscape and arboricultural assessment and techniques.

Site Description

- 1.3 The site is located at approximately 2.2km to the southwest of the village of Albourne, West Sussex (OS Ref: TQ24741500) and is part of the wider client's landholding of Eastwood Farm consisting of 120 acres of pasture, woodland and lakes. The main farmhouse and associated farmyard buildings are located directly adjacent to Shaves Wood Lane. The main farm and farmhouse access and egress is out onto Shaves Wood Lane through a gated entrance adjacent to the farmyard. This is to be utilised by vehicles servicing the new equestrian facilities via an existing trackway which runs westward, past the farmyard and onward along the edge of a block of Ancient Woodland. Approximately 250m from the entrance, the trackway emerges out into a large paddock where the proposed new equestrian facilities are to be located. In terms of planning authorities involved, although the majority of the site is within Mid Sussex, the access and existing parking area is within the South Downs National Park

Proposals & Background

- 1.4 Following preparation of initial design proposals for the scheme by PJC that was presented to the planning authorities at a pre application meeting, FLA were instructed to review the initial proposals and the comments received from the planning authorities. Following this review, it was evident that any development proposals for the site needed to respond to the site's topography, lakeside environment and the wider changing landscape character where farms are being fragmented and the historic connection between the Farmhouses and the land is being broken through a process of gentrification.
- 1.5 FLA have prepared an alternative scheme which responds positively to the comments made during the pre-application consultation seeking to maintain the connection between the farmhouse and the land by taking the approach of looking back at the historic development of the significant landscape features since 1887 on the site and adjoining land. Thereby respecting the historic landscape character of the old agricultural style buildings courtyard form, wetlands and ponds that have been formed along the valley floor.
- 1.6 The proposals now extend out past the trackway (circa 1990s) that bisects the historic open field allowing, for a less rigid cramped layout. The previous pre application proposals would have required a significant number of retaining walls and structures to achieve the development within the confines imposed by the Ancient Woodland and its buffer. The new proposals accomplish the required levels by using soft landform embankments that reflect those used to form the adjacent ponds together with a new balancing pond and SUDS systems, ensuring that drainage discharge from the site does not exceed the natural field run off rates.

Tree Survey Methodology

- 1.7 The Tree Survey conducted by SATC adheres to the requirements set forth by both authorities and aligns with the recommendations outlined in British Standard BS 5837: 2012, "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations" (the British Standard).
- 1.8 In statutory protection terms the survey confirms that Mid Sussex District Council's online mapping resource showed there to be no tree preservation orders (TPOs) within the parts of the site within their boundary. South Downs National Park do not provide online information about the locations of TPOs and so it is not known whether there are any TPOs within or adjacent to their boundary. However, A check of 'MAGIC'2 map showed that there are two areas of ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) nearby. These are shown on the tree

constraints plan with a 15m buffer. Ancient semi-natural woodland is any area that's been continuously wooded since at least 1600 AD.

Tree Survey Report Limitations

- 1.9 The Tree Survey Report has limitations defined as being:

“...This arboricultural survey report has been prepared as a design tool for a proposed development and planning application. This survey does not constitute a condition and safety survey. The locations of trees are based on the topographical plan provided. Additional trees omitted from the topographical survey have been plotted using measurements taken on site where necessary. The condition of trees can change significantly within short periods of time due to natural events or people led activities. If there are no changes within the site, this report is valid for a period of 2 years...”

Findings

- 1.10 The trees on the site were surveyed by Tom Wawman Cert Arb L4 (ABC) and Abi St Aubyn MICFor MArborA DipArb L6 (ABC) MEng(Hons). Information about the survey methodology and the tree data recorded can be found at Appendix 1. The root protection areas (RPAs) table and the tree constraints plan can be found at Appendix 2 & Appendix 3. A total of 94 individual trees, 6 groups, 6 hedges, 2 woodlands and 1 collection were surveyed. A summary of their British Standard categorisation is provided at table 1 below

Tree category	Individual tree	Group	Hedge	Woodland	Collection
A	1	-	-	2	-
B	61	3	-	-	-
C	26	3	5	-	1
U	6	-	1	-	-
Totals	94	6	6	2	1

Table 1: Tree categorisation summary

- 1.11 The key arboricultural features of the site are the two ancient semi-natural woodlands (ASNW) W98 & W99 and the mature Oak growing within and adjacent to the site. These trees are in keeping with the character and appearance of the locality and make a contribution to its character and appearance.

DISCUSSION

- 1.12 The principal constraints of the site are the two areas of ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) – W98 & W99. The National Planning Policy Framework explicitly addresses ancient woodland, emphasizing that any loss or degradation of this irreplaceable habitat must be avoided. In accordance with the standing advice from Natural England and the Forestry Commission, it is recommended to provide a buffer zone of 15 metres. These buffers are depicted on the tree constraints plan and the 'in principle' tree protection plan, indicated by pale brown hatching.
- 1.13 It is through the early involvement of SATC to give advice and guidance with regard to the individual trees and Ancient Woodland that the proposed new Equestrain Facilities have been designed so there is no loss of individual trees or encroachment into trees Root Protection Areas (RPA's), apart from where the existing access track passes along the edge of the ASNW and through the AWBZ.
- 1.14 The trackway has been present and depicted on historic maps since at least the 1912 OS maps, and it is apparent that the woodland to the east of the site remained largely undisturbed, as indicated on the 1993 OS maps.

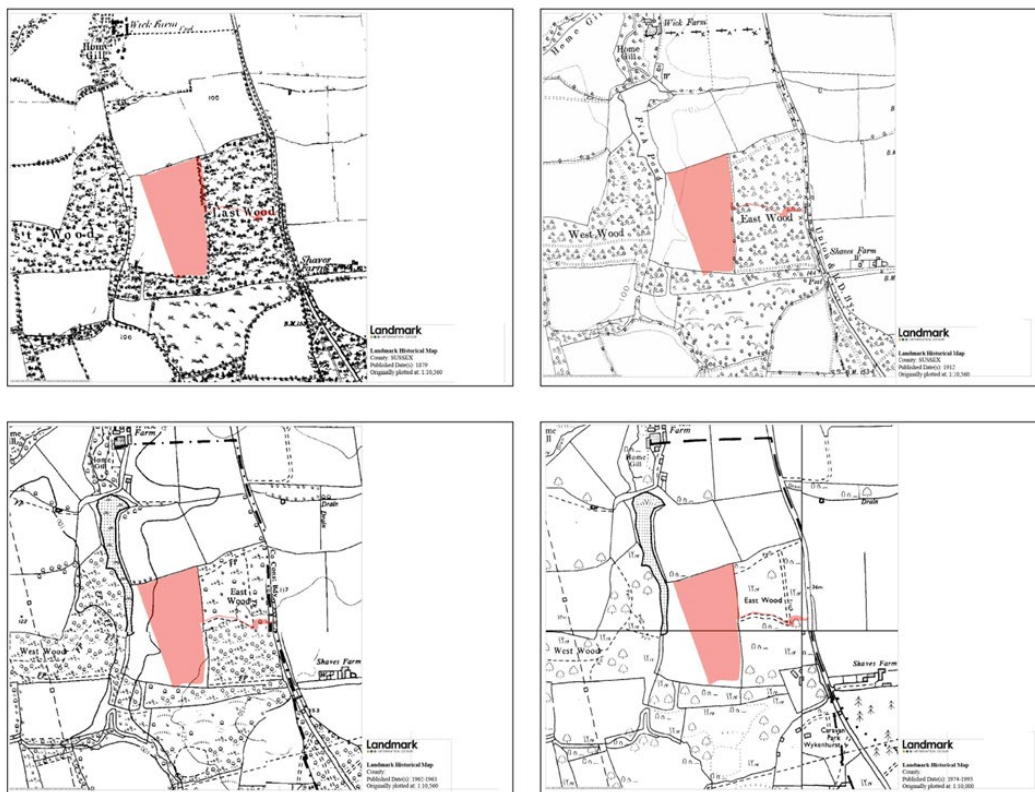


Figure 1 Extract from Landscape & Visual Appraisal report detailing the historic timeline of the property

1.15 The woodland has been cleared in the intervening period for the development of farm buildings and a farmhouse, resulting in the assartment of the woodland. It is understood that the Ancient Woodland designation was made after the construction of the Eastwood Farm agricultural buildings.

1.16 The trackway has a direct effect upon RPA's of 11 No Trees that lie along its route with 2 No further trees removed T84 (cat U) and T83 (cat B) due to storm damage since the tree survey was undertaken. (see Schedule A)

1.17 To enable protection of these trees RPA's the relevant protection and No Dig Surfacing measures are detailed below.

Schedule A		
No.	Species	Category
T43	Oak	B
T44	Oak	B
T45	Oak	B
T76	Oak	B
T77	Oak	B
T78	Ash	C
T80	Oak	B
T81	Oak	B
G82	Oak	B
T83	Oak	U
T84	Oak	B
T86	Oak	B



Figure 2 View looking along the Access Track with the Garden area on the right and the ASNW on the left

PROTECTION MEASURES

Construction Exclusion Zone (CEZ)

1.18 The CEZ for the construction phase of the works will be demarcated with temporary Heras fencing (Fig 3b) which will be installed prior to works starting on site and installation of No Dig Surfacing. This will ensure that CEZ is clearly demarcated and maintained during construction phase of the works.

1.19 All fencing and planting works within the CEZ shall be undertaken in accordance with best practice and details identified within an appropriate pre-approved Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) prior to works taking place.

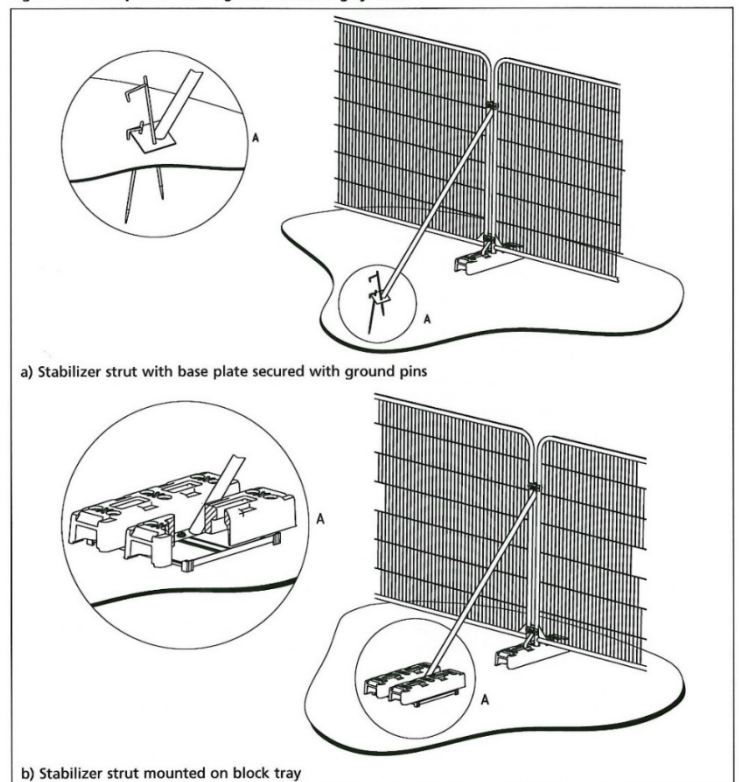
1.20 No construction activity whatsoever must occur within this area:

- No tree works, other than those specified in the report.
- No alterations of ground levels or conditions.
- No chemicals or cement washings.
- No excavation.
- No temporary structures.
- No storage of soil, rubble or other materials.
- No vehicles or machinery to be used or parked.
- No fixtures (lighting, signs etc) to be attached to trees.
- No fires within 10 metres of the canopies of any tree or hedge.

1.21 Temporary fencing alignment shall be signed off by the Arboricultural Consultant/ Landscape Architect before any works commence on site.

1.22 Where there will be limited potential access to the CEZ and RAZ temporary 1.2m chest pail fencing can be installed in accordance with FLA std detail.

Figure 3 Examples of above-ground stabilizing systems



Restricted Activity Zone (RAZ)

- 1.23 Construction activities within this area must be conducted in accordance with a pre-approved Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) for each specific location. In particular, along the trackway within the AWBZ.

No Dig Surfacing (Outline AMS)

The concept of no-dig construction was first described in Arboricultural Practice Note 1: *Driveways Close to Trees* (Patch & Dobson 1996), and the three principles set out in that guidance remain valid today:

- Roots must not be severed.
- Soil must not be compacted.
- Oxygen must be able to diffuse into the soil (and carbon dioxide out of the soil) beneath the engineered surface.

- 1.24 Cellular Confinement Systems (CCS) as identified in Arboricultural Association Technical Note 12: *'The Use of Cellular Confinement Systems Near Trees - A Guide To Good Practice'* provides for guidance on using CCS to minimise adverse impact on trees and woodland resource.

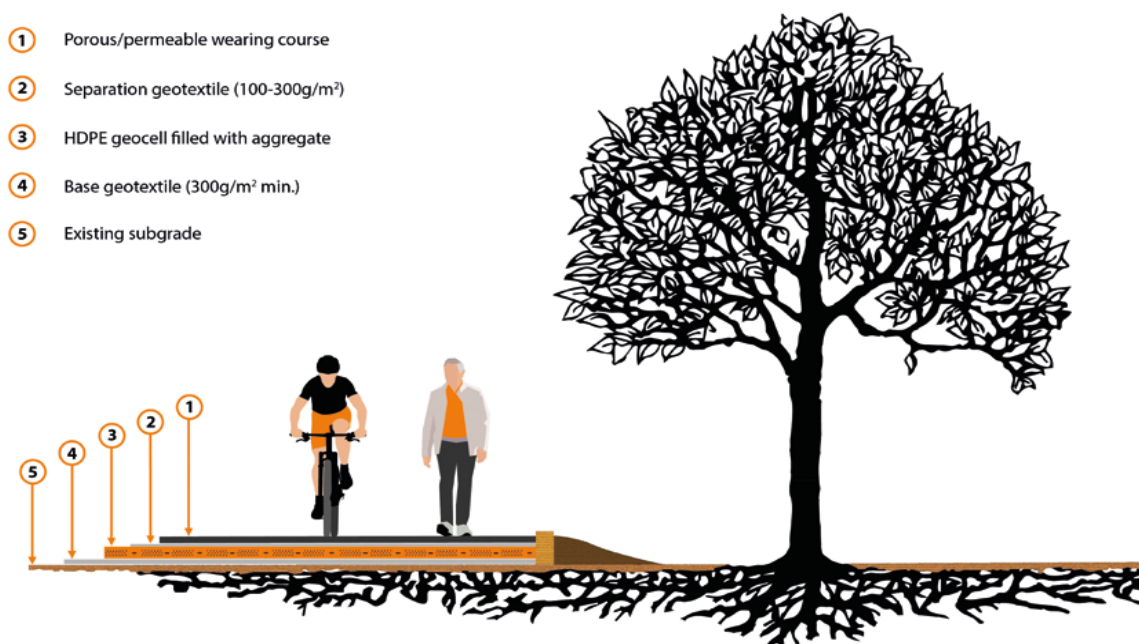


Figure 3 The basic approach to using cellular confinement systems for ground protection near trees [image courtesy of Core LP]. Extract from AA Technical Note 12 page 6

- 1.25 It is proposed to use CCS along the existing access track to the site of the proposed New Equestrian Facilities to alleviate any potential adverse impact ASNW. Installation will be carried out prior to any construction or earthworks works being carried out on site. The initial installation of the temporary protective fencing identified above (Fig3) shall define the southern edge of the trackway and the limit of the CEZ which covers the entire ASNW.
- 1.26 The width of the existing trackway currently varies from 2.5 meters to 3.5 meters, as over time the edges have been lost due to encroaching grass and vegetation. The trackway will be fully exposed by manually removing the edge and central strip of vegetation, along with up to 50mm of leaf litter and surface vegetation. If there are visible surface roots or if the soil layer is shallow, it may not be suitable to remove any surface material. Any voids or depressions shall be regularised with clean sharp sand. There will be no further alterations to the soil level within the AWBZ. All work on the trackway will be supervised by the approved Arboricultural Consultant or Landscape Architect present on site.
- 1.27 After removing surface vegetation, the trackway route adjacent to the ASNW will undergo decompaction using direct air injection soil decompaction. Decompaction is a method where compacted soils are mechanically treated to create fissures, gaps, and air pockets. This process facilitates improved nutrient uptake, enhances water movement, and importantly, allows for better invertebrate movement through the soil.
- 1.28 Soil decompaction is recommended for areas around trees that have long been compacted, like parks or street trees. It's also required by local authorities or consultants when machinery or materials encroach on the RPA of protected trees at construction sites.



Figure 4 Air Injection Decompaction being carried out by a team from Ruskin

1.29 The CCS up to Figure 3 layer 3 can be installed over the decompacted trackway prior to receiving Trackway or similar temporary access road systems providing protection to the CCS and the decompacted sub grade formation.

1.30 The Trackway System shall be removed upon the completion of construction activities for the new facilities. The exposed surface shall be inspected for any defects, with approval sought from the Arboricultural Consultant or Landscape Architect prior to the application of layers 2 and 1 as specified in Figure 3. The wearing course shall consist of ULTIPOROUS 10 - porous asphalt surface course with 10 mm aggregate installed in accordance with manufacturers recommendation ([Porous Asphalt Paving Solutions - Tarmac](#))

1.31 In terms of underground services for the new facilities they will be utilising existing ducts and pipes installed by the previous owners outside the AWBZ. This includes a piped land drain connection to the ponds to the north of the proposed new Equestrian Facilities.

1.32 However, if these were found unusable or suitable and other cables are required then they would be laid along side the CCS and contained within precast cable-trough which would act at the northern edging to the CCS.

1.33 No excavation within the ancient woodland buffer or within the woodland will be required to install these connections.

1.34 The canopies of the ASNW are at a sufficient height due to the historic passage of agricultural vehicles, so no crown raising of the tree canopies will be necessary.



Figure 5 Example of Trackway System in use



Figure 6 Example of a Cable-Trough system used to run cables above ground

Conclusion

- 1.35 The scheme has been developed to minimise any adverse impact upon the mature trees that form the edge of the ASNW and require any removal of trees across the wider site. The proposals respect the AWBZ and avoid any direct encroachment thereby protecting the Ancient Woodland resource.

Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS)

- 1.36 Following Planning Approval and prior to works commencing on site, a full AMS will be prepared to ensure that protection measures and tree works identified within the AIA are carried out in accordance with best practice. An Arboricultural consultant/ Landscape Architect will be engaged directly provide advice on site set up location and to carry out regular inspections and to provide a final report once the construction phase of the works are completed, to satisfy the normal compliance conditions imposed by the Planning Authority.

APPENDIX