

# Townley Primary School: Tree Survey, Impact Assessment & Outline Method Statement

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# Townley Primary School: Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Outline Method Statement

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a BS5837 tree survey, arboricultural impact assessment and outline method statement. It has been prepared by M McGrath (Dip Arb L4 ABC, TechArborA). It was commissioned by Jeakins Weir in support of a planning application for redevelopment at Townley Primary School, Christchurch Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2 This document should be read in conjunction with plans 2317-WWA-DD-L-0701-PL01 (tree survey) and 2317-WWA-DD-L-0702-PL01 (tree protection plan).

# 2 Site Description, Location and Survey Extent

- 2.1 The school is in Christchurch at postcode PE14 9NA. Figure 1 is an aerial view showing the location and approximate extent of the school grounds.

Figure 1: Aerial view showing school grounds



### 3 Planning Designations and Constraints

- 3.1 The local planning authority is Fenland District Council. The site is not within a conservation area. It is not known whether any of the trees within the site or adjacent to it are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) at present<sup>1</sup>. Tree work including removal approved as part of a planning decision overrides a TPO in any event.

### 4 Tree Survey – Methodology

- 4.1 The site was surveyed on 13 April 2023.
- 4.2 The survey was in accordance with Sections 4.4 and 4.5 of British Standard BS5837:2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*.
- 4.3 All trees were inspected from ground level only and no invasive examination techniques were used, so all notes in this report on structural and physiological condition are provisional and do not constitute an assessment for safety or management purposes.
- 4.4 15 individual trees (and no tree groups) were surveyed. See tree plan 2317-WWA-DD-L-0701-PL01. This shows the positions, canopy sizes, and Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of the trees as defined by the British Standard. Data on the surveyed trees is set out in Tables 1 and 2 at the end of this document.
- 4.5 Some site trees were excluded from the survey because they are remote from the proposed development work<sup>2</sup> and the planned access routes for it. They are keyed separately on the tree plan.
- 4.6 The British Standard requires RPAs to be plotted as circles centred on the tree stem unless there is good reason to believe asymmetrical root growth has occurred. In such circumstances the envelope of the RPA should be adjusted to match probable pattern of growth. It was not considered necessary to make any such adjustment for the RPAs of the surveyed trees.

### 5 Tree Survey – Results

- 5.1 The surveyed trees are all commonly-planted amenity species. None are ancient or otherwise particularly noteworthy.
- 5.2 One tree (T07, a remnant semi-mature cherry in very poor condition by the current vehicle entrance) was classed as unsuitable for retention: removal is recommended.
- 5.3 There are 2 high quality specimens:
- T02, a large mature beech in a prominent position on the frontage with the road, and
  - T12, a good example of a mature silver birch on the eastern boundary.
- Development proposals should not, where possible, adversely impact such trees.
- 5.4 6 of the remaining surveyed trees are of moderate quality: T03, T05, T08, T11, T13 and T14. See Tables 1 and 2 for details. From an arboricultural standpoint it is preferable for

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<sup>1</sup> Inspection of Fenland District Council website April 2023: no data on TPOs found.

<sup>2</sup> See the section *Development Proposals* for more on this.

development proposals to avoid removal of such trees. Where other considerations override this, it is highly recommended that replacement trees be planted.

- 5.5 The other 5 surveyed trees are of low quality. They should not be regarded as a constraint on development. It may be appropriate to plan their replacement as part of any scheme of landscaping forming part of the development plan.
- 5.6 Photos of the 2 grade A trees T02 and T12 are in Figures 2 and 3 below.

Figure 2: T01, T02 and T03 on frontage with road. T02 is the large beech in the centre, graded high quality.



Figure 3: T12, a high-quality mature silver birch on the eastern boundary of the site.



## 6 Development Proposals

- 6.1 The main elements of the development proposals are as follows. They are shown on Pick Everard's plan 110630-PEV-XX-XX-DR-A-0200 and Tree Protection Plan 2317-WWA-DD-L-0702-PL01.
- Two extensions are to be built on the existing main school building: one on the west side and the other on the south side.
  - A temporary classroom on the east side of the site is to be removed.
  - The existing hard play area is to be extended over a rectangular strip of the grass playing field to the west of the main school building.
- 6.2 Contractor access and compound position is shown on Tree Protection Plan 2317-WWA-DD-L-0702-PL01. Access will be enlarging the existing vehicle entrance, and the compound will be on the hard play area to the north-west of the school building.

## 7 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

### 7.1 Tree Removals

- 7.2 One tree needs to be removed to accommodate the work. This is T10, a sapling silver birch graded C (low quality) in the tree survey which is growing in the area of soft ground which is to be converted to hard play. Its loss is not significant arboriculturally, and it is understood that the landscaping proposals forming part of the planning application include a replacement tree.

### 7.3 Incursions inside Root Protection Areas (RPAs)

- 7.3.1 Moderate-quality Lawson Cypress T11 has a root protection area that extends into the area of proposed hard play expansion. While any incursion is not ideal, the amount here is only 9m<sup>2</sup> out of a total RPA of 191m<sup>2</sup>. This is less than 5% of total RPA and is extremely unlikely to cause any observable harm to the tree provided the remainder of the RPA is adequately protected by fencing as described in the outline method statement below.
- 7.3.2 The temporary contractor site access and compound involves removal of part of the fence to the north of the existing vehicle entrance to provide a larger entrance way. Protective fencing will be erected to prevent any of the soft ground inside the RPAs of trees T02 and T03 from being damaged by this: see protection plan 2317-WWA-DD-L-0702-PL01.

### 7.4 Other Impacts

- 7.4.1 The height above ground of the canopy of high-quality birch T12 will need to be checked immediately before work starts. It may be necessary to prune part of the canopy which overhangs the access drive along the eastern boundary in order to prevent damage when the relocatable classroom is removed. The canopy is currently 3m above the drive (see Figure 3) but it will droop lower when the tree is in full leaf. The amount of pruning needed will not cause harm if done competently as set out in the outline method statement.



## 7.5 Summary

- 7.5.1 The development proposals will not cause any material risk of harm to retained trees provided the method statement below is followed. The only tree that has to be removed is not significant: as a sapling it can readily be replaced.

## 8 Outline Arboricultural Method Statement

### 8.1 Introduction

- 8.2 This outline arboricultural method statement will be followed by the appointed contractor carrying out the construction work and will be kept on site with Tree Protection Plan 2317-WWA-DD-L-0702-PL01 for reference throughout the work.

### 8.3 Tree removals

- 8.4 T10 may be removed by any convenient method. Its small size (stem diameter 30mm, height 3m) means no special measures will be required for safe removal.

### 8.5 Access Pruning

- 8.5.1 The site will be walked with a suitably competent and experienced arboricultural contractor before work starts to agree whether any access pruning is needed, in particular to silver birch T12. The amount of such pruning is expected to be minor.
- 8.5.2 All pruning work will be carried out in accordance with British Standard BS 3998:2010 *Tree Work: Recommendations* and in accordance with current best practice. A competent tree surgery contractor will be used for the work. Bird's nests are very unlikely in any of the pruned parts of these trees, but this will be checked before work starts.

### 8.6 Protective Fencing

- 8.6.1 The contractor will erect protective fencing at the start of work on site. The position of the fencing is shown on plan 2317-WWA-DD-L-0702-PL01. The fencing will be of the types described in BS5837:2012 (see Figures 8 and 9 for illustrations). It will remain in position until the end of construction work.

Figure 8: BS5837 suitable protective fencing (soft ground)

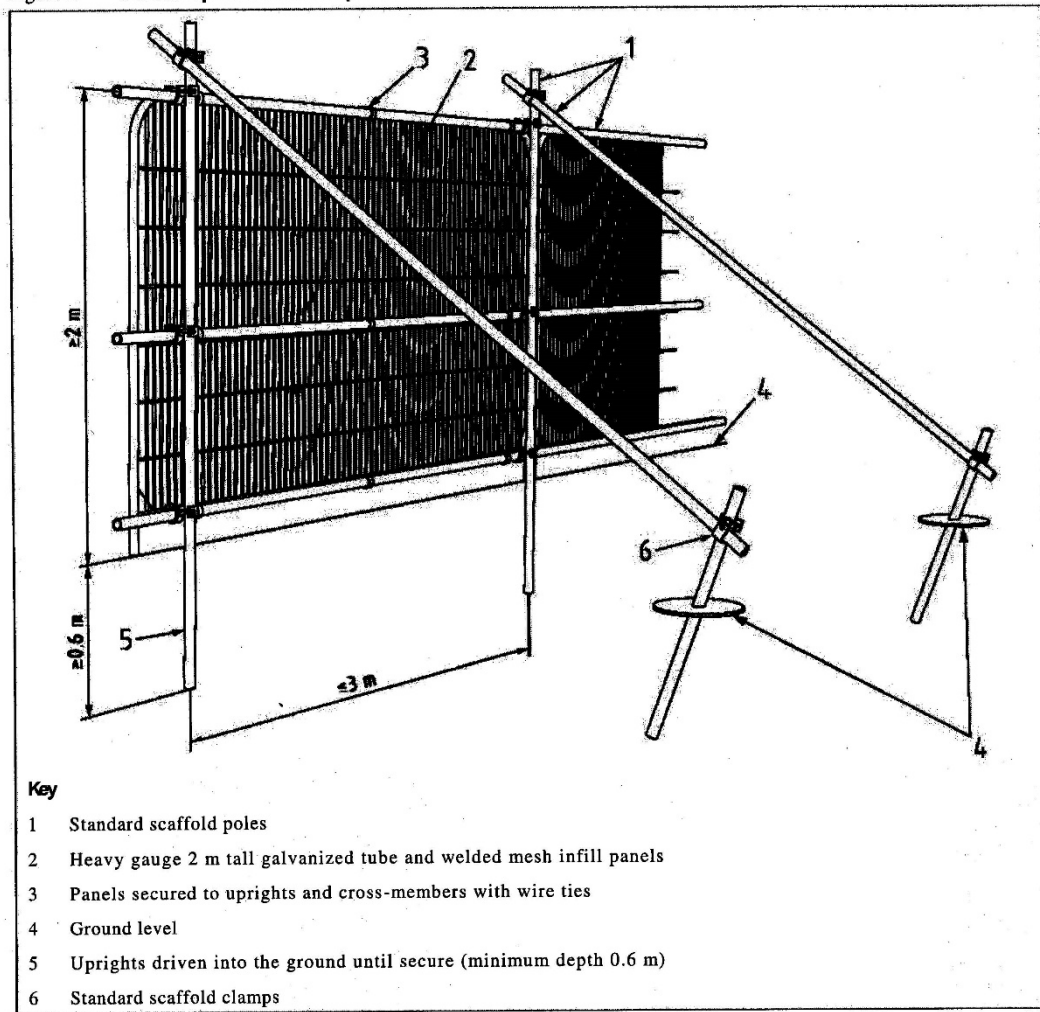
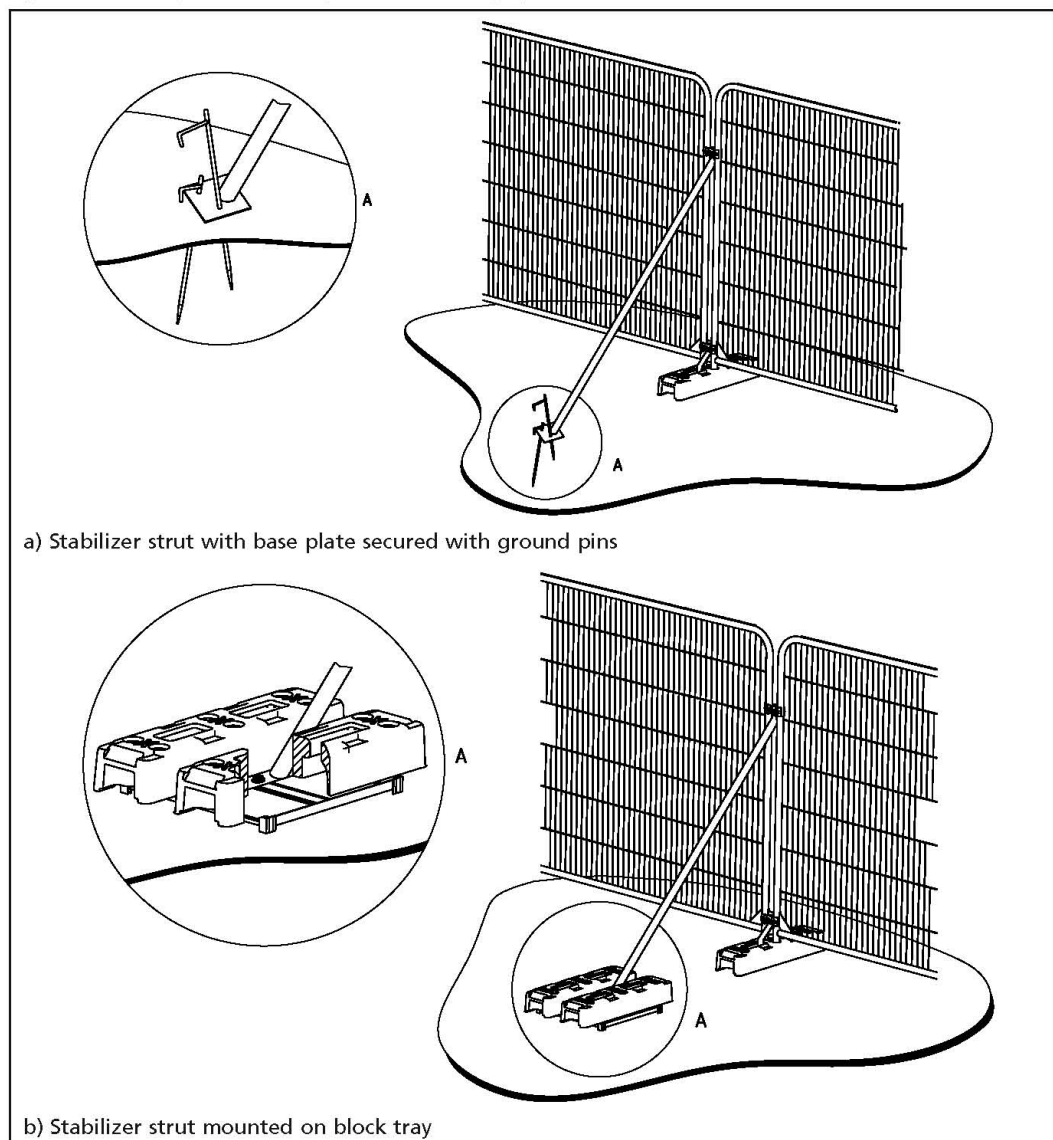


Figure 9: BS5837 suitable protective fencing (paved ground)



## 8.7 Roots exposed or cut during the works

- 8.7.1 Every effort should be made to avoid cutting or severing any root of any tree to be retained. Where excavation or removal of existing paving reveals roots of 25mm or greater diameter, work will halt until the advice of a suitably qualified and experienced arboricultural consultant has been obtained.
- 8.7.2 The arboricultural consultant will instruct the use of hand excavation if they consider it necessary to protect roots.
- 8.7.3 If, during the course of the approved works, it is necessary to expose any root greater than 25mm in diameter the following procedure will be followed.

- All works adjacent to the retained roots will be carried out using hand tools only. On no account will machinery be used to carry out any excavation, back-filling or compaction work.
- All damaged and exposed roots within the excavated pits or trenches must be pared back, ideally to a side shoot.
- If roots are to be exposed for more than 2 hours they will be protected from freezing or desiccation by wrapping them in clean hessian.

8.7.4 If any root from any retained tree requires removal it will be paired back with a clean sharp knife, bypass secateurs or pruning saw.

8.7.5 Any root to be removed greater than 25mm in diameter will require the agreement of the arboricultural consultant. If any root greater than 25mm in diameter is severed during the work, the arboricultural consultant will be informed immediately.

## 10 **Table 1: Tree Survey Data**

Reference	Species	Height (m)	Stem	Root	Canopy Spread (m)	Canopy	First	First Significant
			Diameter(s) (m)	Protection Area (m <sup>2</sup> )		Start Height (m)	Significant Branch Height	Branch Direction
T01	Apple	5m	0.22m	23m <sup>2</sup>	3 N 3 E 3 S 2 W	2m	2m	N/A
T02	Beech	17m	0.8m	290m <sup>2</sup>	6 N 6 E 7 S 7 W	2m	2m	South
T03	Hawthorn	5m	0.44m	92m <sup>2</sup>	3 N 4 E 3 S 3 W	2m	2m	N/A
T04	Silver birch	11m	0.16m	10m <sup>2</sup>	2 N 1 E 1 S 4 W	3m	N/A	N/A
T05	Goat willow	7m	0.33m	48m <sup>2</sup>	4 N 4 E 2 S 4 W	2m	1m	N/A
T06	Goat willow	7m	0.14m 0.2m; 0.17m;	41m <sup>2</sup>	3 N 3 E 1 S 2 W	2m	N/A	N/A
T07	Cherry	3m	0.09m	5m <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
T08	Silver Birch	13m	0.54m	137m <sup>2</sup>	5 N 4 E 4 S 4 W	4m	3m	South
T09	Apple	4m	0.22m	23m <sup>2</sup>	2 N 3 E 3 S 2 W	2m	2m	South
T10	Silver birch	3m	0.03m	3m <sup>2</sup>		N/A	N/A	N/A
T11	Lawson Cypress	13m	0.39m; 0.52m	191m <sup>2</sup>	4 N 4 E 3 S 3 W	N/A	N/A	N/A
T12	Silver birch	18m	0.61m	163m <sup>2</sup>	6 N 5 E 5 S 5 W	3m	2m	East
T13	Alder	14m	0.45m	92m <sup>2</sup>	4 N 4 E 5 S 4 W	3m	2m	South
T14	Field maple	12m	0.48m	102m <sup>2</sup>	7 N 5 E 4 S 7 W	2m	1m	North
T15	Alder	14m	0.35m	55m <sup>2</sup>	7 N 5 E 3 S 4 W	6m	4m	East

## Notes

Table 2 shows comments, observations and ratings for the trees listed above.

All measurements and calculations made in accordance with BS 5837: 2012.

## 11 Table 2: Tree Survey Data (continued)

Reference	Species	Age Class	Est. Remaining Contribution (years)	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition	Notes & Observations	Preliminary Management Recommendations	Quality Category
T01	Apple	Early mature	20-40 Years	Good	Fair	Prominent position on frontage		C1
T02	Beech	Mature	40+ Years	Good	Good	Prominent position on frontage. Power cable through canopy		A2
T03	Hawthorn	Mature	40+ Years	Good	Good			B1
T04	Silver birch	Semi-mature	20-40 Years	Fair	Fair	Stem damage at 3m from branch of adjacent tree		C1
T05	Goat willow	Early mature	20-40 Years	Good	Good			B2
T06	Goat willow	Early mature	20-40 Years	Fair	Fair			C1
T07	Cherry	Semi-mature	Less than 10 Years	Poor	Poor	Remnant right by fence, no potential because of shadowing	Remove	U
T08	Silver Birch	Mature	20-40 Years	Good	Fair			B1
T09	Apple	Mature	10-20 Years	Fair	Fair			C1
T10	Silver birch	Young	20-40 Years	Fair	Fair	Small sapling		C1
T11	Lawson Cypress	Mature	20-40 Years	Good	Fair	Some canopy damage to s where there used to be another tree		B1
T12	Silver birch	Mature	20-40 Years	Good	Good	Lowest canopy over road at 3m		A1
T13	Alder	Mature	20-40 Years	Good	Good			B1
T14	Field maple	Mature	20-40 Years	Good	Good	Overhangs car park entrance at height of 4m		B1
T15	Alder	Mature	20-40 Years	Fair	Fair	Corner of car park		C1

#### Quality Category Key

- A Tree of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years
- B Tree of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years
- C Tree of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young tree with a stem diameter below 150mm
- U Tree unsuitable for retention: in such condition that it cannot realistically be kept alive for more than 10 years in the context of current land use

Note – the quality category is sub-divided where appropriate into:

1 – mainly arboricultural qualities      2 – mainly landscape qualities      3 – mainly cultural qualities, including conservation

Table 1 gives base measurements for the trees listed above.





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