



7.2022

BS5837 2012 Arboricultural Implications Assessment



Site:

R&J Metals
The Docks Estate
Briton Ferry
Neath
SA11 2HZ

Treecare Consulting
james@treecareconsulting.co.uk www.treecareconsulting.co.uk
01633 882 890 – 07939 150 457
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Report by James Pinder Tech Cert (Arbor A)

james@treecareconsulting.co.uk

07939 150 457

01633 882 890

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Instruction

Following an email instruction from the client, I have been commissioned to provide a preliminary document to highlight the potential conflict with trees on site – an arboricultural implications assessment or AIA.

I hold the ABC Awards Technical Certification in Arboriculture (AA Tech Cert) and am familiar and experienced with the British Standard 5837 2012 and working with it on development sites. I have over 15 year's practical experience surrounding the planning process and trees during my work as an arboricultural consultant and contractor. My aim is to bring my knowledge and experiences into the report which then aims to help the planning process.

By utilising the guidelines of BS 5837 2012, data is taken of tree features, such as specie, height, stem diameter measured at 1.5m above ground level (to give an even sized stem taper) for single stemmed trees or an average stem diameter for multi stemmed trees. Further data is collected to assess the trees suitability for the location which uses physiological and structural assessments to give a final opinion of the trees overall condition. Further considerations are given to the trees such as rooting area and any required arboricultural management work prior to development.

Experience in working with trees is vital when providing information in relation to a BS5837 Report. BS5837 2012 recommends the use of an arboriculturalist in order to understand the trees needs on site and the trees current and future environment. In this case the arboriculturalist is James Pinder. The arboriculturalist needs to be able work out the extent of root mass occupying the area and how placing the footprint of a building near it may change the dynamics of the tree's surroundings. Once a building is placed next to trees it is also important to understand the long-term effects of aerodynamic changes on trees retained and any rain shadow created by the new structure may adjust water availability to trees. Should the development be seen to have a detrimental or significant nature to the trees then changes may be required to the buildings architecture or size to ensure minimal impact on a tree. In certain case's the tree or trees may need to be removed.

By using the data gathered to compile the report and assessing the tree's needs, an opinion can then be made on it is best to protect the trees from the development process. Root protection areas are calculated and these need to be adhered to when installing a protection at the extremity of the RPA. Under no circumstances should an RPA be lessened unless a specific method and reason is being used. All guidance contained within this report should be followed to ensure that the whole or part of the proposed development is not jeopardised.

Site Location/descriptions



- Site access from Wharf Road.
- Redundant commercial property/land.
- Significant historical clearance and heavy machinery operations on site.
- Low value trees on land.
- Schedule 9 invasive plants.
- Extensive weed growth.

Definitions

BS 5837 2012 (Trees in relation to construction) was revised in 2012 and now supersedes the previous 1991 & 2005 editions.

Within the newer BS many definitions are given so the professional arboriculturist's are able to give an indication to planners and architects so that a common understanding of trees and how building new structures may affect the health and support of trees can be given.

Arboriculturist

A person who through relevant training, qualifications and experience in the arboricultural world is able to form an opinion on how trees may be affected through development processes.

Competent person

A person, who has had training and experience relevant to the matter in hand and is able to recognize whether it is safe to proceed with a specific site process.

Structure

Man-made object, such as a building, carriageway, path, wall, services and built or excavated earthworks.

Root protection area (RPA)

A site layout design tool that enables a pictorial representation of trees required rooting area. This area must be protected to ensure the survival of trees.

Tree constraints plan (TCP)

A clear plan diagram showing tree locations, crown spreads and rooting areas. This allows the arboriculturist to demonstrate areas where trees will affect a proposal by tree volume, height or shade.

Construction exclusion zone (CEZ)

An area clearly marked both on site and on a site plan. This area must have no construction operations carried out within.

Tree protection plan (TPP)

A scale drawing that shows tree locations, rooting areas and fencing locations on site.

Arboricultural implications assessment (AIA)

An assessment made by the arborist to identify, evaluate and possibly mitigate affects of construction process on trees.

Arboricultural method statement (AMS)

A written or toolbox talk applied method of ensuring the contractor (construction) can implement the design adjacent to existing trees.

Services

Above or below ground pipe work, wire or ducting construction that could affect trees crowns or their roots or rooting areas.

Special engineering

Designing of a structure with the physiological requirements of trees as the primary concern.

Tree AIA

Tree schedule from site visit on 05.06.22

I made a site visit to the site following a request from the LPA for a BS5837 2012 tree survey. This survey was in order to support a planning application for R&J Metals to extend their yard area into a previously cleared section of land known locally as the former Rentair site. Hard copy site drawings explaining the lay out and location have been supplied to the LPA.

On arrival at the site, it was obvious that tree cover can only be described as minimal at best. Two 3-4m tall trees are present that could be seen as recordable under BS5837 2012. However, both trees are self-set trees and not formal plantings. Both trees are growing out of rubble and one of the two has been previously coppiced leaving it now as a multi stemmed tree within an area of rubble. Both trees would be C category under BS5837 2012.

The remaining vegetation on site is comprised of the following and are not suitable for recording under BS5837 2012:

Japanese knotweed – schedule 9 invasive plant.
Buddleah shrubs.
Grasses and weeds.
Brambles.

The clearance of weeds, shrubs and scrub species (not to mention Japanese knotweed control/removal) will mean that no area of the site can be left unaltered. This means that all vegetation within the site will have to be cleared. On this basis there is no point creating tree constraint plans as the trees on site will not survive the proposed remedial work. On this basis a BS5837 2012 tree report is not appropriate for the location.

Recommendations

Given no trees worthy of recording within a BS583 2012 survey exist on site or the proposed site boundaries, my suggestion is that the landowner carry out control of Japanese knotweed through chemical control whilst in full leaf summer 2022. Icade herbicide would be a suitable product to use via stem injection of moisture droplet applied. I would also advise that control of remaining weed species is advisable within the proposed site area using Round Up Pro Vantage 480 mixed at suitable rates to control the species present. The initial recommended vegetation controls will enable far easier marking out and site clearance in relation to the proposed project.

Photographs from site



The above sycamore tree is located under the A48 in a rubble pile. Whilst its stem diameter is worthy of classification of 75mm or greater (BS5837 2012), the overall tree is very low value and will be lost in management of the site.



The images above show the second sycamore tree on site near the existing entrance. It is multi-stem suggesting previous control but it has no regrown within the rubble mound. This mound will need to be removed and with it the tree. The tree will not survive the rooting area changes around its location.



The above images show further small diameter sycamore stems and budleah plants.

The images below show the general site rubble and Japanese knot weed presence.

