



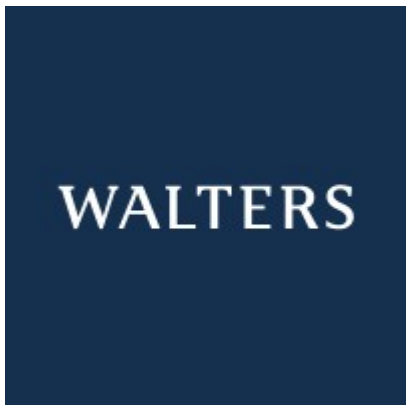
Sylvan Ecology

ARBORICULTURAL
REPORT:

BS 5837 – 2012

GCRE

For:



WALTERS

Project: GCRE		
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1 INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 Sylvan Ecology were commissioned to prepare a tree survey report for the proposed *Global Centre for Rail Excellence (GCRE)*, in order to inform the development design process as part of a proposed development planning application.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to identify the quality of the trees on this site, as categorised by the *British Standard 5837:2012, Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction – Recommendations*. The survey and findings, as reported here, represent an unbiased third-party opinion, offering professional advice as to the value of the trees on site. To illustrate the constraints trees, pose to the design of any future development, a tree constraints plan can be found in Appendix A.

Site description

1.3 The site lies within *Onllwyn, Onllwyn Road, Onllwyn, Neath Port Talbot*. All associated land for the proposed development (herein referred to as the site) is located at:

- central OS grid reference: SN 84128 10508;
- nearest post code: *SA10 9HG*.

1.4 The site comprises of approximately 0.5 hectares of semi-improved grassland, scattered trees, woodlands, and scrub. The immediate surrounding area is predominantly agricultural; there are also large sections of woodland (some of which could be ancient) and a relatively intact network of hedgerows. The surrounding landscape has good potential for roosting, foraging, and commuting bats.



2 METHODOLOGY

Field Survey

- 2.1 The survey was carried out in accordance with the guidance set out in British Standard 5837:2012, *Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction – Recommendations*. This standard gives a systematic, consistent, and transparent evaluation method to tree surveys. The survey was undertaken in accordance with standard methodology by David Price TechArborA, Alice Wheeler and Katherine Wickens on 7th May 2023. Weather conditions on the day of the survey were suitable, dry, clear, with good visibility and a light breeze (Force 1 on the Beaufort Scale).
- 2.2 The survey involved a site walkover of the area falling within the site boundary shown on the map in *Appendix A* and approximately 12m beyond where accessible and/or appropriate. All observations were made from the ground using short focal range binoculars where appropriate. No invasive decay detecting instruments were utilised. Detailed notes were made in relation to any features considered important to the health, viability, or ecology of the trees. This information was used to inform the associated classification system as per the guidance. All trees, where appropriate and accessible, were tagged with metal identification tags, on the north side of the tree at 2m.
- 2.3 The survey was extended to include assessment of the potential of the site to support protected and/or notable species. Although this approach supports an initial analysis of the likely presence of protected or notable species, a comprehensive assessment may require season-critical survey techniques, which fall beyond the scope of this study. The presence of protected species was noted where possible, but walkthrough surveys cannot usually confirm species presence or absence; only the likelihood of presence can be assessed.

Soil Assessment

- 2.4 A soil assessment should be undertaken by a competent person to inform any decisions relating to the design process. The assessment should determine whether the soil is shrinkable. If it is, trees and other vegetation have the potential to cause indirect damage to structures. In such cases, desiccation assessments should be carried out at a specialist laboratory to check the extent to which existing vegetation has dehydrated the soil.



- 2.5 Soil structure, composition and pH should be included in the assessment for the purpose of designing new planting and landscape proposals.

Limitations

- 2.6 While every effort is made to ensure that an accurate assessment of the tree's condition is made during the survey, no responsibility can be taken for resultant damage or injury occurred by a failing tree. The survey only gives a snapshot of what is visible and not obscured on the day of survey.



3 RESULTS

Arboricultural Summery

- 3.1 The trees on site are dominated by areas of overgrown scrub; as result, many have grown too close to each other adversely impacted their growth, and or been subject to unsympathetic pruning. The condition of these trees and the groups has been classified in line with B.S.5837; the table below, summarises the results of the survey.

Species Diversity

- 3.2 Species diversity is low as the majority of the trees on site are from overgrown scrub and consist primary of sycamore or other fast-growing species.



Tree No	Tree Tag ID	Spp	Diameter mm	Height (m)	Crown Spread (m)				Category	Life stage	Life Exp	Low Branch and direction	Observations
					N	S	E	W					
1	N/A	Hawthorn	#350	5	2.3	2.5	3	2	C1	SM	10-20	N/E	Trees appears in poor health with dieback throughout.
G1	Cat C1	Small area of woodland. The canopy is dominated by SM sycamore trees, with young oak, hawthorn, and field maple. The understorey is limited to spare bramble. The trees within the woodland aren't mature and have low arboricultural value; the woodland has negligible bat roost potential; however the trees have high potential for nesting birds. The woodland is approximately 8 m tall,											
G2	Cat C1	Managed species rich hedgerow; dominated by hawthorn and mature/semi mature ash, with frequent blackthorn, oak, holly, and bramble. The hedge also contains occasional, hazel, and field maple. The ground flora is dominated by stinging nettle and bracken; with occasional broad-leaved dock. Occasional ground layer species include foxglove and herb-Robert.											
G3	Cat C1	Small area of scrub, with young Rowan trees, gorse and bramble											



Photo 1: Overview of T1, dieback is clearly visible



Photo 2: Overview of G1



**Trees**

- 3.3 All trees and groups within the survey area were deemed worthy of a *Category C* grade. Trees or groups of a *Category C* grade will not usually be retained where they would impose a significant constraint to development. The majority of the trees on site have been designated *Category C* due to the damage they have received, their likely reduced lifespan or their low inherent value.

Tree constraints plan

- 3.4 The TCP attached overleaf, highlights the above and below ground constraints each tree poses to the future scheme design. The orange circle set out the RPAs, and the different coloured circled highlight the crown spread of the trees on site.



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TREE CONSTRAINTS PLAN

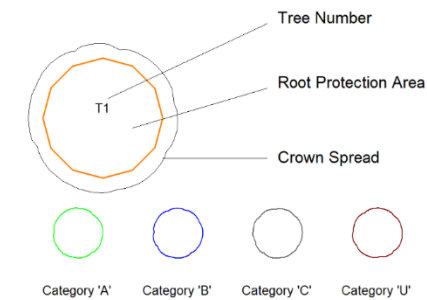
GCRE

Date: May 2023

Drawn by: D.P.
© OS open map data

Scale: 1: 600 @A4

Drawing N°: v1.1



0 30m

LEGEND



Cat C Group



Ecology & Arboriculture

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