



Tree Officer Report

Officer: David Rees

Date: [1/6/2026]

Application Number: [P2026/0262]

Location: Pontrhydyfen Rugby Football Ground Oakwood Avenue Pontrhydyfen Neath Port Talbot SA12 9SD

Case Officer: Lewis Byng

Tree officer comments

The application includes a Tree Survey prepared in accordance with BS5837:2012 which categorises the majority of trees within and adjacent to the site as Category C, comprising young to middle-aged, naturally regenerated woodland edge and scrub vegetation of limited individual arboricultural value. Two Category B groups and an individual Category B tree have been identified, however, these are largely located peripheral to the main development footprint.

The proposed development relates to the construction of a new clubhouse and associated infrastructure within an area of existing use. The layout indicates that the majority of the tree stock is to be retained with proposed tree removals limited to ash dieback infected ash trees and a structurally compromised willow. Development is largely confined to previously disturbed areas.

No Arboricultural Impact Assessment or Arboricultural Method Statement has been submitted. Notwithstanding this, a review of the proposed site layout and engineering drawings indicates that the primary interface with retained trees relates to the installation of foul drainage infrastructure to the west of the proposed clubhouse, together with minor works associated with access and hardstanding toward the northern boundary.

The engineering layout is not overlaid with arboricultural constraints but, when considered in conjunction with the Tree Constraints Plan, it is apparent that sections of the proposed drainage route are likely to occur within close proximity to, and potentially within, the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of adjacent tree groups. These trees are located predominantly to the west of the overflow car park and to the north of the playing field and include two Category B groups (G22 and G4). It is noted that the Root Protection Areas of individual trees and smaller groups to the west of the overflow car park are largely encompassed within the wider Root Protection Area of Group G22. As such, whilst much of the tree stock is of low individual value, the presence of overlapping RPAs associated with retained groups increases the likelihood of cumulative root disturbance arising from construction activity, particularly in relation to service installation.

Given the scale of development, the nature of the tree stock, and the localised extent of the anticipated interactions, the potential impacts are considered to be low. The trees present are of a type which are generally tolerant of minor disturbance and capable of continued regeneration. The likely impacts are confined to localised root disturbance associated with service installation and general construction activity, rather than widespread loss of tree cover or significant alteration to the site's landscape structure.



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Whilst the submitted information does not include a full BS5837:2012 impact assessment, it is considered that the risks to retained trees can be adequately controlled through the implementation of simple and proportionate site measures. The imposition of such measures is considered appropriate given the limited arboricultural value of the trees and the nature of the proposal.

Tree officer recommendations

In light of the submitted Tree Survey and the nature of the development proposals, there is no reason that trees on site would represent a constraint to the planning application. The trees are predominantly of low arboricultural value, and their retention can be reasonably secured through appropriate site practices during construction.

No objection is raised on arboricultural grounds subject to the imposition of planning conditions. Given the proximity of proposed works (the drainage works in particular) to retained trees located to the north and west of the playing field, it is considered necessary that conditions are attached to ensure the protection of Root Protection Areas (RPAs) and to control construction activities in these areas.

The recommended conditions are proportionate to the scale of the development and are considered sufficient to safeguard the continued health and contribution of retained trees without placing an undue burden on the development.



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Conditions

Condition 1 – Root Protection Areas (RPAs)

Prior to the commencement of any development (including site clearance, groundworks, or installation of services), protective fencing shall be erected around retained trees located to the north and west of the playing field, at a distance equivalent to their calculated Root Protection Areas (RPAs) in accordance with BS5837:2012 (calculated as $12 \times$ the stem diameter (DBH) and measured radially from the centre of the trunk, unless otherwise agreed to reflect site constraints).

The protective fencing shall be retained in position for the duration of the construction works.

No excavation, level changes, storage of materials, vehicular access, or site activity shall take place within these RPAs unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent damage to the root systems of retained trees adjacent to the proposed development areas and ensure their continued health and contribution to local amenity in accordance with BS5837:2012.

Condition 2 – Installation of Drainage and Services

Notwithstanding the submitted details, any foul or surface water drainage or service installation within 3 metres of retained trees located to the north and west of the playing field, or within their Root Protection Areas, shall be carried out using low-impact methods such as thrust boring, moling, or hand excavation.

No mechanical trenching shall take place within the Root Protection Areas of these trees.

Reason: To minimise damage to tree root systems during construction and to ensure the retention and long-term viability of trees adjacent to the development in accordance with BS5837:2012.

Condition 3 – Site Storage and Construction Activity



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No materials, plant, machinery, spoil, or site compounds shall be stored, located, or operated within the Root Protection Areas of retained trees to the north and west of the playing field at any time during the construction period.

Reason: To avoid compaction and physical damage to the rooting environment of retained trees.

Condition 4 – Protection of Roots During Works

If roots greater than 25mm in diameter are encountered during any excavation works within areas adjacent to retained trees to the north and west of the playing field, works shall cease immediately in that location, and appropriate measures shall be implemented to minimise damage to the roots.

Reason: To ensure that significant roots are not unnecessarily damaged, thereby safeguarding the health and structural stability of retained trees.