

James Blake Associates Ltd

Arboricultural Appraisal

Land North of Cuffley Hill

Goffs Oak, EN7 5EX

On behalf of

Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd

September 2016

JBA 15/363 AR01

25 Years of Service, Value and Innovation

The Black Barn, Hall Road, Lavenham, Suffolk CO10 9QX
tel: **01787 248216** fax: **01787 247264** email: jamesblake@jba-landmarc.com
Chairman: James Blake - BA (Hons) Dip LA (Hons) CMLI
Company Secretary: Louise Blake - BSc PGCE
Directors: Catherine Xavier - BA (Hons) Dip LA CMLI : Rachel Bodiam - BSc (Hons) Dip LA CMLI : Elzbieta Zebrowska MSc Eng LArch MScEnvSc CMLI
Associate Directors: Mary Power BSc MSc MCIEEM : Vivienne Jackson

www.jba-landmarc.com

Registration no. 8169866 VAT no. 512.412791

Project	Goffs Oak, Cuffley Hill
Report	Arboricultural Appraisal
Date	12 September 2016
Author	Kevin Slezacek. DipArb. MArborA
Checked by	Simon Smith.

CONTENTS PAGE

1 SUMMARY 4

2 INSTRUCTIONS 4
DOCUMENTS PROVIDED 4

3 OBSERVATIONS 5
SITE VISIT 5
SITE AND CONTEXT 5

4 TECHNICAL INFORMATION 7
STATUTORY PROTECTION 7

5 ARBORICULTURAL APPRAISAL 8

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 9

APPENDIX 1: ARBORICULTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES..... 10

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Arboricultural Appraisal has been commissioned by Countryside Properties Ltd to accompany their representation on the Broxbourne Draft Local Plan and the residential allocation (Policy GO5) on Land North of Cuffley Hill.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared in accordance with British Standard 5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations (2012). This document provides best practice advice, assessment and guidance with regards to the design, planning and implementation of new developments.

2 INSTRUCTIONS

- 2.1 James Blake Associates were instructed to carry out a review of the original tree survey within and directly adjoining land North of Cuffley Hill, Goffs Oak.
- 2.2 All trees were visually inspected from ground level only and no diagnostic equipment or detailed decay investigation was carried out.
- 2.3 Our report is prepared to provide technical guidance with regards to the overall quality, value and condition of the trees in relation to the development potential of the site.

Documents provided

- 2.4 My report has been prepared with reference to the following documentation;
 - Topographical survey by The Survey Association
 - Tree Survey and report dated February 2013 by Patrick Stileman
 - Tree Preservation Order Plan and Schedule, reference Land R/O 90A-102 Cuffley Hill, Goffs Oak

3 OBSERVATIONS

Site visit

- 3.1 I first visited the site in January 2016 to familiarise myself with the area and to discuss the project requirements. I then returned in May 2016 with Emily Costello, Ecologist at James Blake Associates, to carry out a review of the tree survey information and a preliminary ecological appraisal.

Site and context

- 3.2 The main western part of the site is a former horticultural nursery which has become overgrown and colonised with a number of early mature trees, mainly oak with some ash. These are concentrated to the northern half of the site whilst the southern end contains fewer trees which appear to be more mature and may have been part of the original nursery layout.
- 3.3 The eastern part of the site was also a nursery but has been divided into two distinct halves by a wooden fence. To the north the area is overgrown and contains derelict sheds, remnants of the former nursery, old vehicles and various piles of debris and building materials. To the south the area formally occupied by a glass house has turned to grass and appears to be managed by the owners of Fairmead.
- 3.4 Access to both plots is via Cuffley Hill with the main western part having a separate entrance between 92 and 94 Cuffley Hill.
- 3.5 The site is bordered by residential properties along the southern and eastern boundaries with a building supplies yard directly adjoin the western boundary. This site is also allocated for residential development.
- 3.6 The northern boundary adjoins a small area of woodland beyond which is agricultural land.



Photograph 1: Showing approximate site boundary and site in relation to its surroundings

4 TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Statutory protection

- 4.1 The site is not located within a conservation area; however the site is the subject of two Tree Preservation Orders. Broxbourne Borough Council order (ref TPO LT6-212) covers 37 individual trees but it is unclear as to which trees it was intended to protect. An area order protecting all trees within the entire site was made recently.
- 4.2 Following the serving of the area TPO, a site meeting was held on 14/9/16 between Broxbourne Borough Council tree officer & planners, Countryside Properties, James Blake Associates and Icen Projects. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the condition of the trees and their value in terms of whether they should be included within a Tree Preservation Order.
- 4.3 It was agreed that a woodland order would be appropriate for the northern section as part of a new TPO, along with any notable individuals elsewhere to be identified as single trees. This TPO will supersede the two existing TPOs and clearly mark which trees are worthy of protection.

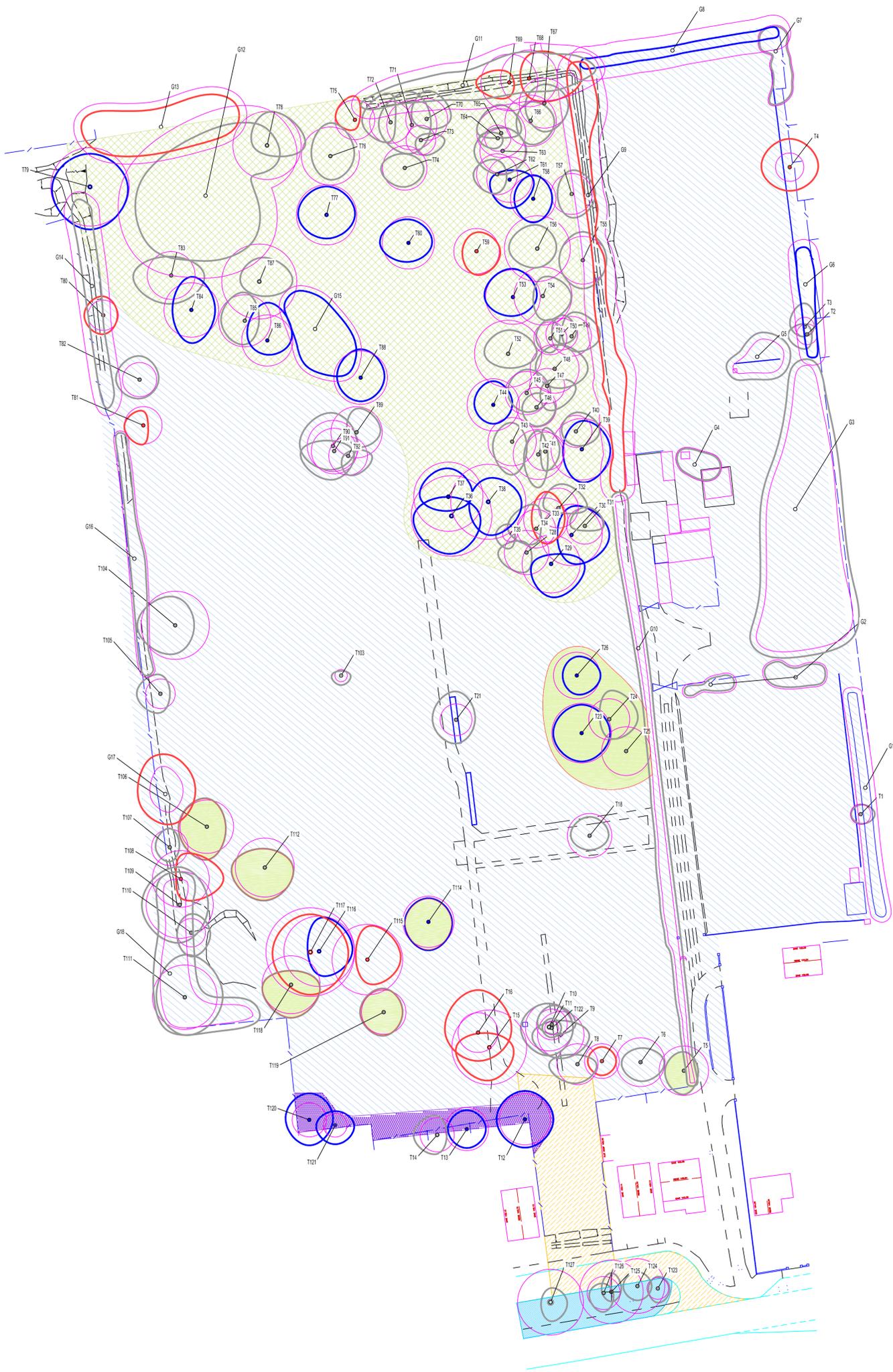
5 ARBORICULTURAL APPRAISAL

- 5.1 Broadly speaking the woodland area in the north of the site contains the better quality trees and is the main feature of the site. This is predominantly oak with occasional groups of ash, many of the latter are of poor form and condition. The understorey consists of bramble and grassland with tall ruderal vegetation. There is very little in terms of shrub or secondary canopy layer with only a few saplings and sparse natural regeneration of hawthorn, holly and occasional nursery escapees such as *Cotoneaster* spp.
- 5.2 The southern part of the site contains a wider mix of species which appear to be older and may have been associated with the former nursery. Ash, sycamore, crab apple, pear and occasional willow and conifers are scattered across the area with denser scrub regeneration around the boundaries. Many of these trees are in decline with significant amounts of decay and structural defects that limit their life expectancy, to less than 10 years in some cases. When assessed in accordance with BS5837: 2012, there are very few trees of moderate quality (minimum 20 years life expectancy) and therefore it is contrary to best practice to consider these as significant constraints to development.
- 5.3 Following the site meeting with Broxbourne Borough Council it was agreed in principle that the majority of trees in the southern half were of poor to low quality and that, subject to suitable replacement planting, removal could be justified. However, some trees were identified worthy of inclusion within a TPO and these will be included within the new order when it is made.
- 5.4 The opportunities and constraints plan at Appendix 1 identifies the BS categorisation, root protection areas, crown spreads and areas of influence upon the site. The plan also details potential enhancement opportunities and development areas as discussed with Broxbourne Borough Council.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The constraints that existing trees and vegetation pose to development have been assessed in accordance with BS5837: 2012 and through liaison with Broxbourne Borough Council the most suitable areas for development have been identified.
- 6.2 Through the design process, tree retentions and removals will be assessed and continually reviewed to minimise the impacts, avoiding those trees agreed as being important to the site and the public amenity of the surrounding area.
- 6.3 A landscape strategy will be developed that protects and improves biodiversity, public amenity and the tree population across the site.

APPENDIX 1: ARBORICULTURAL CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



KEY

- Green - Cat A groups/hedges/trees of high quality and value.
- Blue - Cat B groups/hedges/trees of moderate quality and value.
- Grey - Cat C groups/hedges/trees of low quality and value.
- Red - Category U tree in irreversible decline or dead
- Root Protection Area as calculated in accordance with BS 5837:2012
- Protected woodland area to be developed for public open space and ecological enhancement
- Main development area
- Vegetated buffer zone with rear gardens
- Main access point
- Council owned street trees to be retained and protected.
- Trees to be considered for retention (TPO)



REV.	DATE	INITIALS	DETAILS
CLIENT		DWG. TITLE	
Countrywide Properties		Historic Conservation & Opportunity Plan	
SITE			
10th Oak, 10a Cuffey Hill, 15-363			
PURPOSE OF ISSUE			
DRG BY	CHECKED	AUTHD	SCALE
GP	JBA	JBA	1:500(A)
DATE	DWG. NO.	REV.	
10/09/2016	JBA 10 303 7302		

GENERAL NOTES
 - ALL DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES
 - DO NOT SCALE OFF THIS DRAWING
 - ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE
 (C) JAMES BLAKE ASSOCIATES LTD 2016

James Blake Associates
 HEAD OFFICE
 The Black Barn, Hill Road, Lavenham, Suffolk, CO10 9QX
 Tel: (01787) 242116 Fax: (01787) 247264
 jamesblake@jba-landsc.com www.jba-landsc.com
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE o ARBORICULTURE o ECOLOGY