

Summary table						
Site Name:	Belvoir Solar Farm					
Project reference:	J.3834					
Site Address:	Bottesford, Melton, Leicestershire					
Nearest Postcode:	NG13 0FG					
Central Grid reference:	<u>SK 82145 37527</u>					
Local Planning Authority:	Melton Borough Council					
Relevant planning policies:	Melton Local Plan 2011-2036, adopted October 10th 2018; Policy EN1, Landscape, Policy EN2, Biodiversity and Geodiversity, Policy EN3, The Melton Green Infrastructure Network, Policy EN6, Settlement Character, Policy EN7, Open Space, Sport and Recreation, Policy EN9, Ensuring Energy Efficient and Low Carbon Development, Policy EN10, Energy Generation from Renewable and Low Carbon Sources, Policy EN12, Sustainable Drainage Systems, Policy D1, Raising the Standard of Design					
Statutory Controls:	Tree Preservation Order	Conservation Area				
	None	No				
Soil Type: (Source: BGS online soils map © NERC 2021)	Superficial/Drift	Bedrock				
	None recorded	Foston Member - Mudstone And Limestone, Interbedded.				
Topographical Survey:	20017-001, 19.02.2021					
Site Layout	20210630_49_1MIP540_export					
Report author:	Ellen Boardman MSc, BSc (Hons), TechCert (ArborA), MArborA					
Checked by:	Richard Hyett MSc, BSc (Hons), MICFor, MArborA					
Revision B Date of issue:	3/12/2021					







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**SECTION 1** 



## 1. INSTRUCTION

- 1.1. Barton Hyett Associates Ltd have been instructed by JBM Solar Projects 10 Ltd to survey trees located at Belvoir Solar Farm ('the site') in accordance with the recommendations of British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction Recommendations'.
- 1.2. The scope of the instruction was to inspect trees relevant to a planning application at the site and provide written advice on how they inform feasibility and design options for the site. The instruction also required an assessment of the potential impact (the arboricultural impact assessment) of the proposed development on the site's arboricultural resource to be undertaken.

# 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1. The site is located to the south of the A52 approximately 5.5 miles to the north-west of the town of Grantham. The village of Muston is to the north-east of the site, Bottesford to the north-west and the Belvoir Estate to the south of the site. The Muston Meadows National Nature Reserve is to the south-east of the site.
- 2.2. The site and field boundaries are defined by well maintained hedgerows with sporadic trees.
- 2.3. The surrounding landscape is predominantly agricultural with with field boundary hedgerows and trees. There are sections of woodland to the south of the site and villages, single houses and farm buildings are located within the wider landscape.
- 2.4. The site is gently undulating with gradual slopes. The highest point is located to the centre of the site.
- 2.5. Access to the site is currently from a farm access track from the A52 to the north-west of the site, to the east from Easthorpe Lane in the village of Muston and from farm access tracks to the south-east and south-west.

### 3. TREE SURVEY FINDINGS

3.1. A total of 98 trees, 24 groups of trees and 60 hedgerows were surveyed. These are summarised in terms of their quality in accordance with the recommendations of BS5837 below, and shown in more detail on the Tree Survey and Constraints Plan (Section 2) and within the Tree Survey Schedule (Section 3).

	Total	A - High quality trees whose retention is most desirable.	B - Moderate quality trees whose retention is desirable.	C - Low quality trees which could be retained but should not significantly constrain the proposal.	U - Very poor quality trees that should be removed unless they have high conservation value.
Trees	98	1	29	61	7
Groups	24	-	7	17	-
Hedgerows	60	-	53	7	-
Total	182	1	89	85	7

Table 1: summary of arboricultural features of each BS5837 quality category

# 4. KEY ARBORICULTURAL FEATURES

- 4.1. T15, common ash, is a moderate-quality (quality category B) tree located to the north-west of the site. It is classed as an emerging veteran due to its characteristics including its hollow stem and deadwood habitat.
- 4.2. T28, English oak is a high-quality (quality category A) tree located to the north-east of the site, T51, T58, and T65, English oak, located towards the central and south-eastern parts of the site are moderate-quality. They are classed as emerging veterans due to characteristics including previous branch failure and crown deadwood.
- 4.3. Trees T66, T67, T68, T70, T88, T89, T90, T91, T92 (all common ash and moderate-quality trees) and T69, ash, a low-quality (Category C) tree are located alongside the access tracks to the south-east and south-west of the site. They are classed as emerging veterans due to characteristics including branch failure, necrotic bark and decay.

## DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

5.1. The development proposal for:

"Installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with switchgear container, inverter/transformer units, DNO Substation, Site access, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements."

# 5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1. The AIA considers the effects of any tree loss required to implement the proposed development as well as any reasonably foreseeable potentially damaging activities proposed in the vicinity of retained trees. This is undertaken with reference to BS5837:2012 and considering the nature of the proposals. This can include tree removal to facilitate design, demolition of buildings and removal of existing hard surfacing, soil compaction in close proximity to trees and direct impact damage to canopy and roots of retained trees from construction activities. A summary of anticipated impacts resulting from the proposed development is provided below.

#### Tree and Hedgerow Removals

- 6.2. There are no significant individual trees to be removed to facilitate the proposed development. The proposed development has been designed to avoid rooting areas of trees within the site.
- 6.3. Hedgerow removals are limited to sectional removals to allow for the construction of perimeter fencing and an access track. 2 meter sections of H5, H6, H13, H23, H27, H28, H33, H43, H58 and H59 will need to be removed to allow for the construction of the perimeter security fencing. Circa 5m to the north of H6 and a

- circa 8m section of H23, and H37 will require removal to allow for the construction of the site access and maintenance track. In total, the hedgerow removal will total circa 41 linear metres.
- 6.4. Circa 170m of a newly planted and unestablished hedgerow H61 is also required to be removed to the south of the substation. Due to the limited maturity of this hedgerow the associated arboricultural impact will remain low.
- 6.5. A section at the southern extent of low quality tree group G23 will be removed to widen the access to the site. This is anticipated to be limited to six linear metres of the group and therefore only constitutes a low arboricultural impact.
- 6.6. The above hedgerow and tree group removals are not considered to be significant across the site as a whole and it will be possible to mitigate for the loss through considered new tree and hedgerow planting as part of an approved Landscape Plan for the site.

#### Potential Impacts upon Retained Trees

- 6.7. There is ample space outside of the RPA's of retained trees to undertake any required service installation, including interconnecting below ground cable installation.
- 6.8. There are no proposed ground level changes within the RPA's of any retained trees.
- 6.9. Soft landscaping will be undertaken on completion of the construction phase. No intensive soft landscaping is proposed within the RPAs of retained trees. Any soft landscaping within RPAs is likely to result in an enhancement to the rooting area of the retained trees.
- 6.10. The proposal is feasible from an arboricultural perspective, and if carefully implemented according to an approved arboricultural method statement there would be no or only a low potential negative impact on the retained trees. A Combined Tree Retention and Removal and Tree Protection Plan is included in **Section 3**.

### 7. TREE PROTECTION BARRIERS

- 7.1. The proposed site security fence (standard deer fence on timber posts), which is to be erected around the periphery of the site, will act as an effective tree protection barrier if erected before any construction works commence on site. This will remove the need to install BS5837:2012 fencing along the outer perimeters of the site. However, the perimeter fencing will only protect trees located around the periphery of the site. Trees and hedgerows contained within the interior of the site could be impacted during the construction phase of the development and some will require protection.
- 7.2. Where more significant, high-value trees (of moderate or high quality) are located within the site interior, specific robust tree protection barriers have been proposed (BS5837:2012 Figure 3.) For less significant vegetation such as hedgerows, or trees remote from construction, a lower specification of barrier (Euromesh style barrier) or no fence at all is deemed to be adequate.
- 7.3. The location of the temporary tree protection fencing, and the specification proposed, is shown on the Combined Tree Retention/Removal and Protection Plan in **Section 3**.



# 8. HEADS OF TERMS FOR AN ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT (AMS)

- 8.1. BS5837:2012 (Figure 1) recommends that detailed/technical design of tree protection and arboricultural methodologies should be resolved and finalised following on from the approval of the feasibility of a scheme by the Local Planning Authority.
- 8.2. Annex B and Table B.1 of BS5837:2012, an informative, advises that arboricultural method statement heads of terms are a sufficient level of information in order to deliver tree-related information into the planning system. The table also advises that a detailed arboricultural method statement might reasonably be required as a pre-commencement planning condition.
- 8.3. In relation to the site, it is anticipated that arboricultural working methods are likely to be quite straightforward. A brief summary of the principles of tree protection on development sites is included in Section 7. A draft, 'heads of terms' for an arboricultural method statement is set out below:
  - Pre commencement site meeting Site manager and arboriculturist to agree locations for temporary protective fencing and setting out (and phasing) of perimeter fence
  - Hedgerow removals to allow for the construction of the perimeter fencing and access tracks
  - Erection of temporary tree protection barriers- as agreed at the pre-commencement meeting
  - Main construction phase
  - Removal of tree protection barriers on completion of all construction works on site and move to maintenance phase
  - Final landscaping including tree planting.

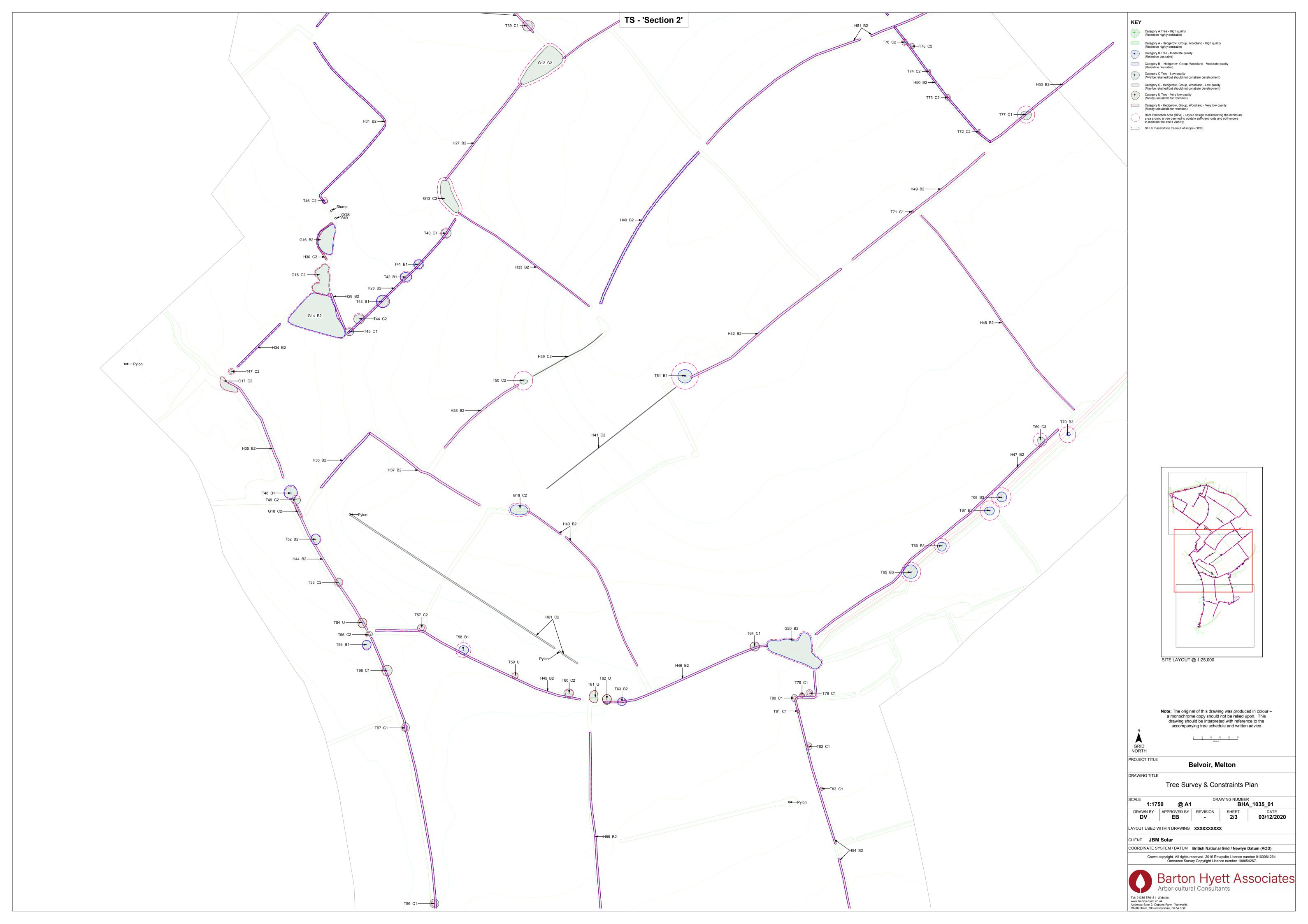
## RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY

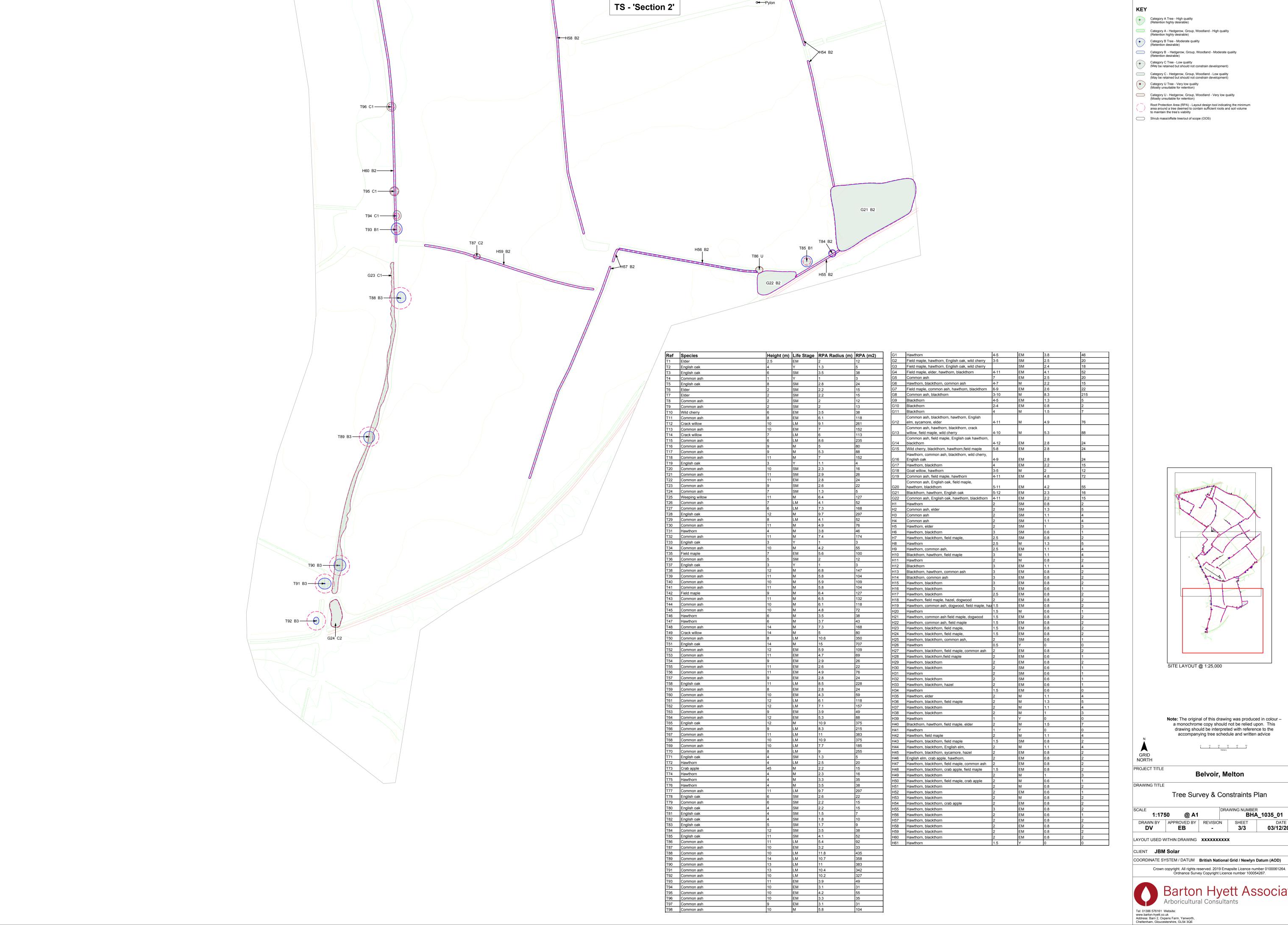
- 9.1. The proposed hedgerow removal has been kept to a minimum, with the exception of the newly planted and unestablished hedgerow H61, and the arboricultural impact of these removals across the site as a whole will remain low. The loss of hedgerow can be readily mitigated by replanting and enhancement of existing hedgerows as demonstrated within the submitted Landscape Plan. The retained trees and hedgerows can be adequately protected during construction activities to sustain their health and longevity.
- 9.2. Subject to the implementation of the advice contained within this report the proposed development is acceptable from an arboricultural perspective.
- 9.3. An arboricultural method statement and finalised tree protection plan will need to be produced. Where the feasibility of a scheme has been agreed by the Local Planning Authority, this detail can be agreed upon and submitted at a later a pre-commencement planning condition (by agreement with the applicant).

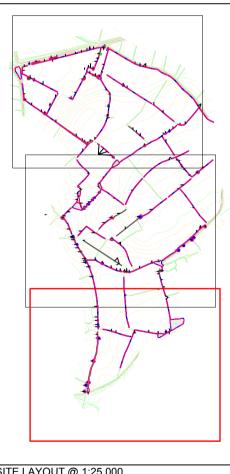


Ellen Boardman - Arboriculturist









Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour a monochrome copy should not be relied upon. This drawing should be interpreted with reference to the accompanying tree schedule and written advice

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03/12/2020

Belvoir, Melton

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COORDINATE SYSTEM / DATUM British National Grid / Newlyn Datum (AOD)



