

## **8.14 Tree Survey and Impact Assessment**

### Background

Trees and the relationship of development to those trees are an often a point of controversy and concern with many applications. Mature trees are important within the landscape and the setting of buildings within villages. The national requirements for the submission of applications require trees to be plotted on the application plans where they may be affected by development proposals. There are established British Standards for the construction and positioning of buildings in relation to trees and often developers do not take these standards into account when designing and positioning new buildings and extensions. This leads to amendments to applications and/or the submission of further details, all which delay the determination of a proposal.

Requiring the submission of a report on tree matters at the submission stage, where necessary, will help ensure that the importance and protection of trees are given increased weight and is more likely to ensure appropriate siting of development in the first place. This requirement is reflected by Policy LNC4 which seeks to protect woodlands, groups of trees or individual trees of significant landscape or amenity value.

### Requirements.

Tree Survey and Information will be required where there are trees within the application site or on land adjacent to it that could influence or be affected by the development. There is a need for a survey and impact assessment if any building or earth works are proposed within 15m of the base of a tree. Also the storage of materials and equipment, site access by heavy machinery as well as the digging of service trenches will need to be included in the survey and impact assessment.

Within that 15m area, information will be required on which trees are to be retained with an explanation of why these are important whilst others are proposed to be felled. It should be demonstrated why the retained trees will not be adversely affected by the development and on the means of protecting these trees during construction works. This information should normally be prepared by a suitably qualified and experienced arboriculturist.

The survey information, protection plan and method statement that should be provided with an application shall follow the guidance in the current BS5837 'Trees in relation to construction — Recommendations'. Using the methodology set out in the BS should help to ensure that development is suitably integrated with trees and that potential conflicts are avoided.

The Devon and Cornwall Tree Officers Group, on behalf of Tree Officers throughout the South West have provided guidance to explain the requirements and so that there is consistency in approach across the region. They have advised that:

“If your site or the land adjacent to your site contains trees, your Planning Application will need to be accompanied by the following details in accordance with British

Standard 5837:2005 Trees in Relation to Construction, unless otherwise agreed with the Local Planning Authority:

### ***Tree Survey and Associated Reports***

This is a factual record of trees on or adjacent to the site and should:

- a) Include a suitably scaled location plan scale to show trees, shrubs and hedgerows.
- b) Include a schedule as set out in British Standard 5837: 2005 Section 4.2.6. The following information should be provided: a reference number, species, height, stem diameter, branch spread, height of crown clearance, age class, physiological condition, structural condition, preliminary management recommendations, estimated remaining contribution in years and a category grading in accordance with Table 1.
- c) Include a Tree Constraints Plan, or equivalent information.

### ***Design Statement***

This must demonstrate how the development will achieve a satisfactory juxtaposition of retained trees, including shrubs, hedges and hedgerows, with the proposed development. It will include:

- a) Arboricultural Implications Assessment
- b) An Arboricultural Method Statement including a Tree Protection Plan.

The National Park Authority Trees and Woodlands Officers are willing to look at draft Tree Surveys and Reports to help advise whether development is acceptable in relation to trees.



ENPA: trees surrounding cottages at Hawkcombe