



Barton Hyett Associates
Arboricultural Consultants

LAND AT BIRD IN EYE FARM, UCKFIELD

ARBORICULTURAL RESPONSE NOTE TO COMMENTS ON HIGHWAY ACCESS

Prepared by: Richard Hyett. MSc, BSc (Hons), MArborA. MICFor

ON BEHALF OF CROUDACE HOMES LTD

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Barton Hyett Associates Ltd | Arboricultural Experts

www.barton-hyett.co.uk

01386 576161

Planning | Development | Renewable Energy | Education | Estates | Hotels and Leisure
Registered office: Suite 5E, Deer Park Business Centre, Eckington, Pershore, Worcestershire, WR10 3DN
Company Reg No: 7110670 Registered in England and Wales.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This note has been prepared in response to the Arboricultural Rebuttal Note prepared by Mr. Ben Rainbow (Biodiversity and Arboricultural Officer) of Wealden DC and included as Appendix 1 within the Highway Rebuttal prepared by Mr. Roger New of GTA Civils and Transport (document reference 12527/2.3 and dated 31st August 2023).
- 1.2. Mr Rainbow raises concerns regarding the impact of the proposed highway access from the B2102. I seek to address those concerns within this document.
- 1.3. In preparing this note I have assessed both proposed access drawings 5330/021K and 5330/021P (produced by Bellamy Roberts). Both of these drawings are the same with regards to the highway works proposed to the south of the B2102. The difference between the revisions is that within 21P the carriageway is proposed to be widened by an additional 500mm (1m in total at its maximum) to the north. The plans at Appendix 1 and 2 are based on 21P as this requires the most widening to the north.

2. TREE QUALITY AND ONSITE POSISTION

- 2.1. The trees located to the south of the B2102 and east of the proposed access were included in the original tree survey for the site within a larger woodland block referenced as G4 (in drawing BHA_741_01-RevA). The relevant trees within G4 (those that could be influenced by the proposed access) have been identified within this note as T1(A) to T6(A) (the suffix A refers to 'access' as has been included to distinguish them from T1 to T6 located within main site).
- 2.2. It is important to note that not all individual trees within a larger group or woodland that is considered to be high quality (Category A) are themselves high quality. In this case G4 was assigned to category 'A2', with the suffix '2' indicating that the trees are of high value but mainly due to their landscape qualities.
- 2.3. BS5837 states within regards to sub category '2' that this should be used when '*Trees, groups or woodlands are of particular visual importance as arboricultural and/or landscape features*' and '*Trees present in numbers, usually growing as groups or woodlands, such that they attract a higher collective rating than they might as individuals*'.

- 2.4. When assessed individually the trees identified as T1(A) to T6(A) are all, in my view, of low (Category C) or moderate (Category B) quality. This is based on factors such as tree size, physiological condition, structural condition (including the presence of existing or developing structural defects), crown form, and management history. A summary of tree quality is provided in Figure 3 below.
- 2.5. Trees T1(A) to T6(A) are all located within third party ownership as they are offsite and outside of Highway Authority land.
- 2.6. No veteran or ancient trees are present within the area to the east of the proposed access, nor is G4 designated ancient woodland. In addition, I am not aware that any of the trees in this location are protected by Tree Preservation Order.
- 2.7. The vegetation to the north of the B2102 was not identified within the original tree survey of the site as, due to its size and nature, it falls outside of the scope of 'BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to Design Demolition and Construction'; the British Standard to which all tree surveys should be undertaken. The Standard sets a minimum stem size for woody vegetation to be included in a survey as 75mm).
- 2.8. The vegetation is a small remnant hedgerow/perennial vegetation. The woody vegetation present has been regularly flailed to approximately 500mm in height in the past. Evidence from Google Street View indicates that this has at least occurred in Spring 2022, Spring 2021 and Spring 2011). Figure 1 and 2 below are screen shot of Google Street View from March 2022 in the location of the maximum.



Figure 1: Looking east along the B2102 with the remnant woody vegetation on the north side of the B2102 visible on the left of the road.



Figure 2: Looking north across the B2102 (opposite the proposed access) at the remnant woody vegetation on its the north side.

- 2.9. In the summer months annual vegetation such as bracken does establish along this verge, but given the lack of woody vegetation it would not ordinarily be considered in any arboricultural assessment.

3. STABILITY OF BANK AND TREES

- 3.1. Within the 'Arboricultural Rebuttal Note' Mr. Rainbow refers to the potential effect of the proposed access works the stability of the adjacent trees whilst also acknowledging the Common Law right with regards to overhanging branches and encroaching roots. Mr Rainbow refers to the future stability of the trees potentially being affected if, as highlighted in paragraph 7.4.2.3 of BS5837:2012, 'New permanent hard surfacing should not exceed 20% of any existing unsurfaced ground within the RPA'. To assist in the assessment of this, and to understand if the proposed access meets this requirement, the plan at Appendix 1 (BHA_741_04) has been produced. This plan shows the RPA's, the existing hard surfacing, and the proposed hard surfacing. The results show that that none of the RPAs associated with T1(A) to T6(A) will have more that 20% of their unsurfaced RPA covered by new hard surfacing. These findings are also summarized in Figure 3 below.

Tree (suffix A refers to 'Access')	Species	BS5837 quality category assessed individually	DBH (MM)	RPA radius (m)	RPA area (m2)	m2 of RPA covered by hard surfacing	m2 of RPA not covered by hard surfacing	m2 RPA proposed to new hard surfacing	% of un surfaced RPA proposed to be new hard surfacing	% of new hard surfacing < 20% as per BS5837:2012?
T1(a)	Sycamore	C	250	3	28	0	28	2	7	YES
T2(a)	Oak	C	400	4.8	72	2	71	12	17	YES
T3(a)	Oak	B	650	7.8	191	49	142	20	14	YES
T4(a)	Beech	C	450	5.4	92	0	92	0	0	YES
T5(a)	Beech	B	900	10.8	366	83	284	15	5	YES
T6(a)	Sycamore	B	1100	13.2	547	130	417	13	3	YES

Figure 3: Summary table of percentage of RPA's to be covered by new hard surfacing.

- 3.2. As part of the detailed design it will be necessary to ensure the stability of the bank is not compromised in this location. This will be done by carrying out works with highway owned land only; where there are no significant trees present. Mr Twinberrow has advised that the new bank will not require any retaining structures and that the gradient of the new bank can be reduced by utilising techniques such as double height kerbs; should this be required. In addition, and if required through the detailed design process, it is also possible to install a low impact 2d geo grid system (or similar) over the new bank to aid its integrity. Such a system could be installed without impacting upon the roots of the adjacent trees and vegetation.

4. ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT

North of B2102

- 4.1. As 21P shows, the maximum extent of widening will be required to the direct north of the proposed access. Given the width of the grass verge between the existing road and the woody vegetation (as seen in Figure 1), and the level nature of the grass verge, (there is no significant bank present to the north) the widening could be accommodated without removing the small woody vegetation.
- 4.2. The maximum extent of carriageway widening (1m) is directly to the north of the proposed access where there are no trees or significant woody vegetation present. In the area to the east of the proposed access, the widening to the north tapers down to 340mm in the area just

north of T3(A). The widening then tapers off to tie into the existing carriageway edge just north of T5(A).

- 4.3. There will likely be some potential impacts on the root system of the small plants but in arboricultural terms this vegetation is so small and insignificant that any impact would be acceptable. The stems of woody vegetation can be retained and given the species present (mainly hazel and some blackthorn) they would tolerate some root impacts and grow to the new conditions.
- 4.4. I understand that the vegetation to the north would continue to be managed annually to the same height as stated above; approximately.

South of B2102 (east of proposed access)

- 4.5. No trees will be removed in this area to allow for the carriageway widening.
- 4.6. Works will be required within the RPAs of retained offsite trees with the main considerations being T3(A), T5(A) and T6(A). These three trees are all of moderate quality (Category B). Adjacent these trees it will be necessary to ensure the final kerb edging design and working methods adopted during construction will minimise any root disturbance. As set out in section 3 of this note, and in response to the comments of Mr Rainbow, it is not proposed to install new carriageway over an area greater than 20% of the existing unsurfaced RPA's of retained trees.
- 4.7. To achieve the required visibility splay to the east of the access some vegetation removal and pruning will be required. This is comprised of a 13m long area of vegetation alongside the existing carriageway and that will require pruning back to the highway ownership boundary. (as shown in red on the plan in Appendix 2). This will also result in the removal of some small stems of holly and sycamore that are also present in this area. These are small stems that are insignificant in arboricultural terms.
- 4.8. Beyond the work required for the visibility splays, it will also be necessary to prune back the vegetation along the existing carriageway to allow for the carriageway widening (as shown in orange on the plan in Appendix 2).
- 4.9. Lastly, it is likely that the small area of scrubby vegetation, formed by birch, bramble and holly, to the immediate east of the proposed access (as shown by a cross hatch on the plan in

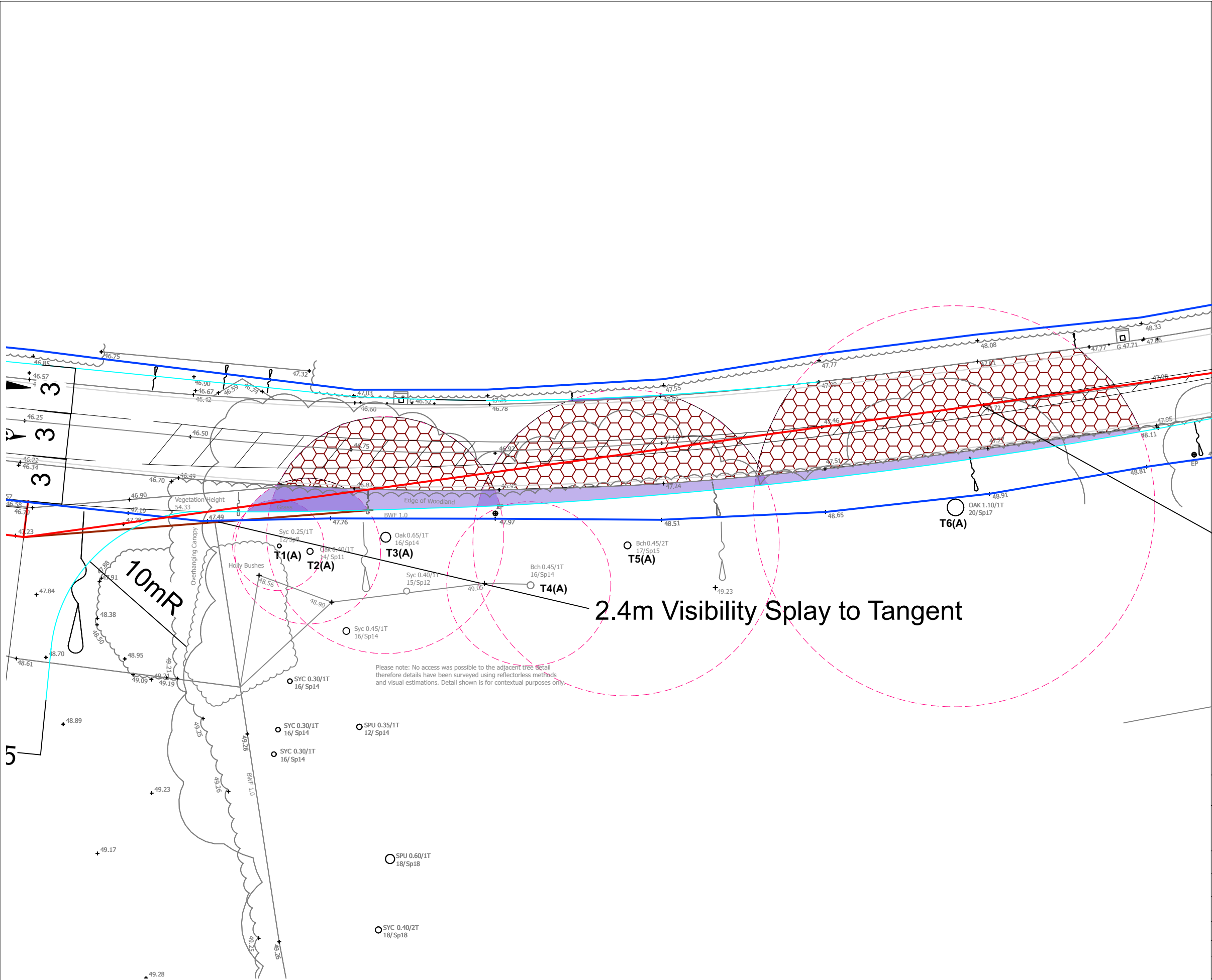
Appendix 2) will also likely require removal to allow for the construction of the access. Again, these are small stems that are insignificant in arboricultural terms.

5. SUMMARY

- 5.1. For the reasons set out in this note, the proposed access is feasible in arboricultural terms.
- 5.2. The woody element of the vegetation to the north of the B2102 is insignificant in arboricultural terms (falling outside of the scope of BS5837:2012) and can be retained through the carriageway widening.
- 5.3. The minimal removal/pruning of insignificant vegetation to achieve the required visibility splays is acceptable in arboricultural terms.
- 5.4. The pruning back of the existing vegetation along the B2012 to the east of the proposed access to allow the carriageway widening is acceptable in arboricultural terms.
- 5.5. The proposed hard surfacing adjacent retained trees does not exceed the 20% limit of RPA coverage set out in BS5837:2012. However, it is important that the specific details of tree protection and arboricultural working methods (to be based on the finalised and approved access arrangement) are prepared and adhered to. As is commonplace with outline applications of this nature, and where offsite highway works are required via the Section 278 process, the matters of tree protection and working methodologies are agreed at Reserved Matters stage and through the Section 278 technical approval process. This approach is line with the process set out in BS5837:2012 that recommends the 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.

APPENDIX 1:

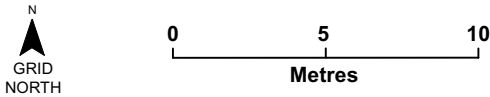
RPA COVERAGE PLAN (BHA_741_04)



KEY

- Root Protection Area (RPA)
- Area of RPA covered by existing hard surfacing
- Area of new hard surfacing in RPA
- Existing edge of carriageway
- Extent of visibility splays
- Edge of proposed carriageway after widening
- Extent of highway ownership

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



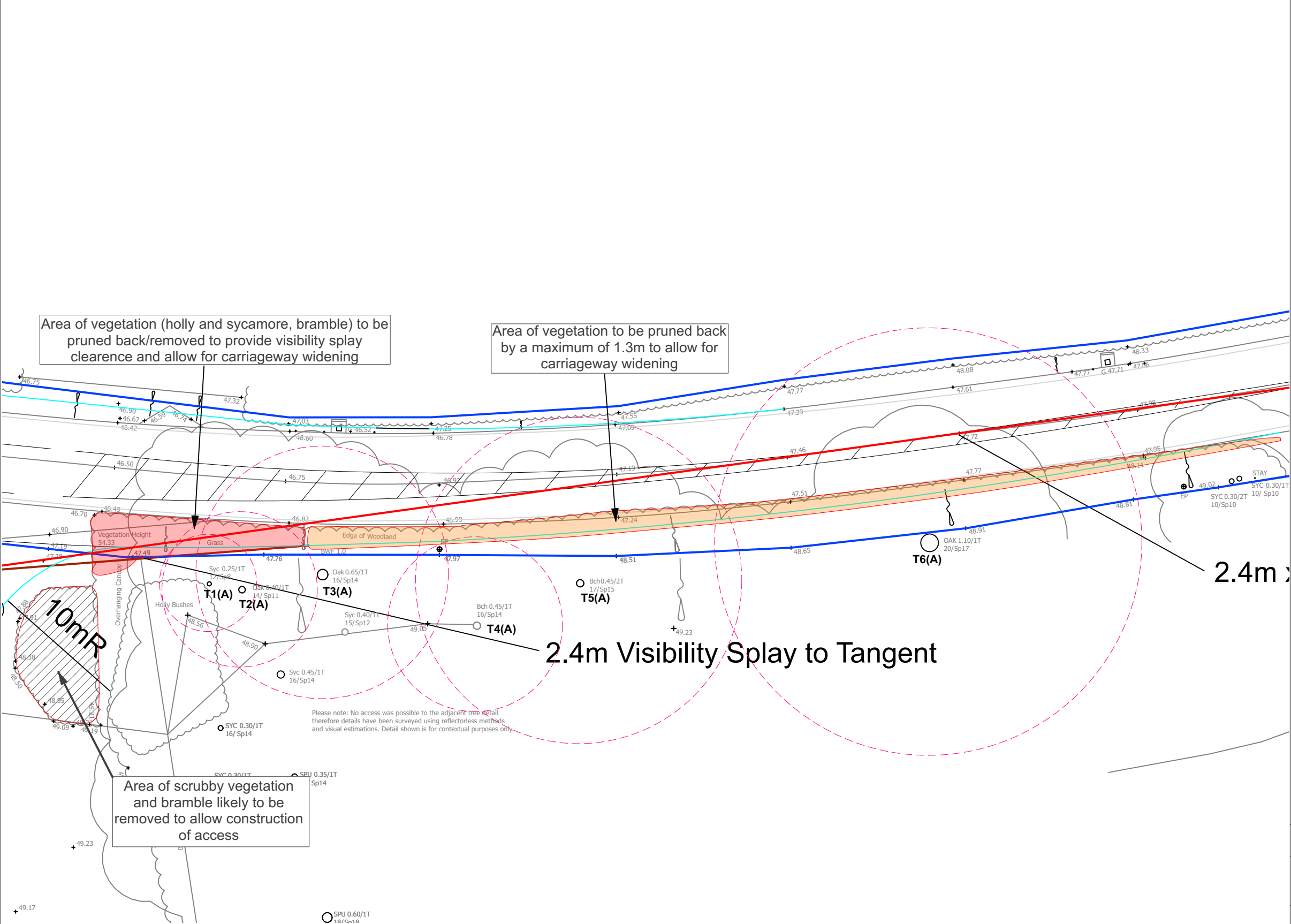
PROJECT TITLE				
Bird in Eye Farm				
DRAWING TITLE				
RPA COVERAGE PLAN				
SCALE			DRAWING NUMBER	
1:250 @ A3			BHA_741_03	
DRAWN BY	APPROVED BY	REVISION	SHEET	DATE
SD	RH	-	-	06/09/2023
LAYOUT USED WITHIN DRAWING 5330-021P				
CLIENT Croudace Homes				
COORDINATE SYSTEM / DATUM British National Grid / Newlyn Datum (AOD)				
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 **Barton Hyett Associates**
Arboricultural Consultants

Tel: 01386 576161 Website: www.barton-hyett.co.uk
Address: Office 5E, Deer Park Business Centre,
Eckington, Pershore, Worcestershire, WR10 3DN

APPENDIX 2:

ACCESS PRUNING PLAN (BHA_741_05)



KEY

- Root Protection Area (RPA)
- Vegetation likely to be removed to construct access
- Pruning/removal for visibility splays
- Pruning for carriageway widening
- Existing edge of carriageway
- Extent of visibility splays
- Edge of proposed carriageway after widening
- Extent of highway ownership

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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GRID NORTH

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Metres

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Bird in Eye Farm				
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ACCESS PRUNING PLAN				
SCALE		DRAWING NUMBER		
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DRAWN BY	APPROVED BY	REVISION	SHEET	DATE
SD	RH	-	-	07/09/2023
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