

# Tree Technical Note

**Client:** Ty Green Ltd

**Site Address:** Land at Penyworlod Farm, Penhow, Caldicot, NP26 3AJ

**Note by:** James Pinder Tech Cert (Arbor A)

**Date:** 24.05.23

## **Findings & outcome**

I have been asked to comment on trees at the above-named site. The site is an agricultural grazing field with an existing barn to the south east of two trees. The barn is subject to a planning application to turn the building into a dwelling. My role in this process is to advise on how not to cause inadvertent damage to trees.

T1. Closest to the barn is a veteran ash pollard which has become outgrown. This means that a long time ago all main scaffold limbs were removed from the tree back to the main low stump. Some of these original pruning wounds have now decayed and have left the main low stump hollow in places with cavities within the tree trunk/stem. Being a veteran and important for ecological purposes, the tree is an A/2/3 category tree under BS5837. The tree does have *Hymenoschyphus fraxineus* infection. I can tell this by the reaction shoots that are throughout the crown. These are small pencil like shoots that stand mostly vertical on all limbs. I could also see various areas of dead buds/twigs within the crown. The tree will need to be in full leaf for a final categorization for ash die back but my gut feeling is the tree will be well into stage 2 or maybe even stage three. Stage four is a tree that is pretty much dead.

The client wants to keep the tree so knowing the true physiological condition will be important when in full leaf for long term safety reasons. Infected mature ash trees are known to drop large limbs as they become more brittle as the physiological decline progresses to stage 2+. We should not forget that this tree's structure is already compromised through decay within the main stem/s. My feeling is the tree should be reduced in size significantly by around 6-8m at suitable lateral branches, or potentially back to where the main scaffold limbs develop from the main low stem as a full re pollard. If this were to happen, it'd remove leverage and remove a lot of risk to the existing barn and potential work area of the proposed. The tree will then continue to provide epicormic regrowth shoots as long as it is able to do so. This could be many years and even eventually lead to another crown forming if the tree physiological reserve copes with the hard pruning which is required for safety. This pruning process is what the tree has been through before.

Being an "A" category tree and retention preferred there will need to be a tree protection fence in place and a tree protection plan created. The tree protection fence radius should be around 10m. At the moment the horses have made a path around the tree to the south east. It makes sense to use this path as the line for the tree protection fence. If you send me a dwg of the topo I can create this if required. I can also provide some further notes to explain the score with trees on site.

T2. The oak tree sits higher than T1 in the field and closer to the upper road. This tree simply needs excluding from any development activity by using a construction exclusion zone with a

radius of 12-15m from the tree. This protection area/exclusion zone is shown on the site TCP-TPP a4 plan. The tree would also be an A category. Given both trees are above the proposed work area, there should not be any reason either tree will suffer due to development activity if they are fenced off during work on site and their rooting areas retained as they are now.

The site seems straight forward from an arboricultural point of view. I therefore make the following recommendations.

### Recommendations

1. Make T1 safe by re pollarding or crown reduction of 6-8m at suitable lateral branches but retain the tree for historical and wildlife value.
2. Ensure T2 remains as a field tree as it stands now with some minor crown cleaning work if required.
3. Erect suitable tree temporary tree protection fencing for each tree to provide the CEZ area around T1 and T2 as shown on the TCP-TPP a4 plan.

### Images of T1



In the image above the horse track around T1 is visible in the foreground. Tree protection fences on this track will keep rooting areas safe from development activity. The tree should be reduced in size to improve site safety.

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The above images show infection reaction shoots in response to the Hymenoscyphus infection T1 has.



This image left shows the various decayed pruning wounds that extend back into the hollow stem. Great for wildlife but not good for structural support of weak limbs near buildings.