

# Arboricultural Technical Note

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Project: Land North of Rounds Gardens, Rugby

12078\_TN.01

October 2024

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- 1.1. This document serves as a supplement to Arboricultural Impact Assessment<sup>1</sup> (AIA) prepared by Aspect Arboriculture Limited, submitted as part of application ref: R24/0111. The purpose of the document is to respond to comments received from the Council's Arboricultural Officer<sup>2</sup> and to provide clarification on outstanding matters, including the proposed removal of protected London Plane trees T149-T153, T156, T157, T159, T161-T164, Lime T11 and T96 Himalayan Birch.
- 1.2. The submitted AIA describes key design improvements and wider constraints which influence the scheme's capacity to retain trees at section 4.1 and 4.2. Within these sections, the document reports on arboricultural gains which have been achieved through design amendments and where trees can be confidently incorporated within the layout, i.e. where the risk of harm occurring during construction can be managed and residual pressures are absent.
- 1.3. Whilst the AIA acknowledges that some tree losses remain unavoidable, it must be noted that the scheme accommodates the retention of a significant proportion of high value trees within areas of public open space. Noting that access is a prerequisite to releasing public benefit associated with high value tree retention, their integration within the submitted layout cannot be overlooked and should be considered a positive factor as part of the planning balance.
- 1.4. Where the loss of protected trees is necessary to accommodate the scheme, the AIA provides a clear narrative, explaining why their loss cannot be avoided within a feasible scheme that is able to deliver on aspirations for providing high density residential development in a town centre location. As noted, wider constraints influencing tree retention include urban design principles, drainage and ground levels, with the latter forming a key constraint which has a direct bearing on the placement of SuDs and the deliverability of tree retention.
- 1.5. For example, if SuDs are relocated elsewhere within the site, it generates an unavoidable need to adjust ground levels, inevitably resulting in a wider effect on tree removal. Accordingly, for the site to come forward, design has to progress on the basis that SuDs are sited within the lowest point of the site, enabling higher ground (occupied by TPO trees) to be retained and undisturbed. In turn, this results in developable areas being focused within the western and eastern extents of the site, leading to the unavoidable loss of some interior trees, including London Plane T149-T153, T156, T157, T159, T161-T164, Lime T11 and T96 Himalayan Birch.

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<sup>1</sup> AIA document reference 12078\_AIA.001.

<sup>2</sup> Comments received via email on 09.10.24 from Ella Casey (Principal Planning Officer).

- 1.6. Whilst the loss of protected trees is regretful, the site will maintain a strong verdant character and sense of sylvan maturity, with harm to public amenity largely restricted to short distance views available from Edward Street, where London Planes T149-T153, T156, T157, T159 and T161-T164 are visible over the adjoining community centre car park. Views of T11 and T96 are mostly contained within the application area, therefore their loss will not significantly alter the sylvan appearance of the site when viewed from the public realm, i.e. Princes Street, York Street or Edward Street.
- 1.7. **In conclusion**, assessment demonstrates that some tree loss is an unavoidable necessity of design if aspirations for delivering high density residential development are to be delivered onsite, including TPO trees T11, T96, T149-T153, T156, T157, T159 and T161-T164. All opportunities for tree retention have been fully explored against the revised design, with review confirming that proposed tree losses are inextricably linked to providing an appropriate levels and drainage strategy. Subsequently, proposed tree losses (including TPO trees) must be assessed in combination with the need for the development, high standards of design; the quantum and quality of replacement planting and the wider benefits the development will yield.

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