

Preliminary Tree Survey.

Bassetlaw Local Plan, Peaks Hill Farm, Worksop.

Tree Survey Dates: 11th & 17th September 2019

Consultant: Conrad Daniels, FdSc (Arb)

Tree Survey Scope: To assess on the ground, the proposed area for the strategic route road and housing potential offered.

Report Scope: A single sheet, brief, outline to determine;

- If access from the public highway would be constrained.
- Future management requirements/implications.
- Potential for mitigation (if necessary).

Supporting Documents: Maps from Bassetlaw District Council.

Emailed report dated 21/02/2019 Representations from Freeths (by David Gray).

SUMMARY: There are major tree constraints, with possible alternative solutions.

- There is a route possible without the loss of significant trees, by way of slight deviation to the South of the initially suggested route. In conjunction with this, the route could be moved farther South to run alongside Long Plantation. This would move houses further away, and eliminate the need for pruning or felling requests by residents living within direct shade of the woodland.
- A Woodland Management Plan will be required for Forestry Commission approval for a felling license. Future tree inspection and management would be an additional cost as trees would become located in public green spaces and alongside highways - benefits gained by people being in contact with nature have been shown to outweigh such costs.
- Replacement planting will be required by the Forestry Commission to offset trees removed for the road. Some hedgerow loss would be unavoidable but effort should be made to retain as much as possible. Space for housing is possible in the areas not occupied by trees, providing ample consideration is given in addressing the space that mature trees require and shade they give.

Findings: The Forestry Commission was established as a direct result of the Forestry Act in 1919 to manage the UK's available standing timber resource for times of crisis. They strictly control felling licences and impose restocking conditions. There are certain exceptions but allowances without a felling license total up to 5 cubic metres of growing trees per calendar quarter, as long as no more than 2 cubic metres are sold. This is to ensure woodland cover is maintained. A Woodland Management Plan is required in order to demonstrate sustainable felling and planting.

The strategic route requires one passage through a wooded area directly below Peaks Hill Farm. Numerous very large and old beech, English oak, sycamore, Scots pine, larch and sweet chestnut trees are within the area initially suggested for the strategic route. There is potential for slight deviation of the route in order to avoid these. The presence of a pre-existing man made cutting some 50 to 100 metres to the South will accommodate the route without the loss of any of the older trees. The trees present in the cutting are younger trees having naturally regenerated within the area since it was first cleared. Around 30 to 40 of these older trees are within the area each side of the cutting, with more to the North-side. The trees here are generally on steeper ground as the flatter areas, such as those suggested for housing, have been more easily used for farming. Potential for hedgerow loss and retention would need consideration and mitigation sought by way of replanting where possible.

Long Plantation consists of mainly younger sweet chestnut and sycamore. Many of these are growing from the stumps of past management some 30 to 50 years ago. There are few older trees, however there is a wider range of species in the younger ages. Ground covering of bramble and bracken is prolific throughout. Hedgerows connect this to the larger wooded areas of Peaks Hill, these should be retained for the benefit of the broader ecology.

There is a small and steep copse of 36 maturing oak and sycamore trees to the North of Freshfields above Edison Plantation. Two large and old stumps of either oak or sweet chestnut are present. The trees have been left as a small, isolated stand, with the surrounding field used as farmland on very sandy soil. These appear to be natural regeneration and there is merit in their retention by way of their contribution to the landscape on this side of Carlton Road.

Further to the North West, and to the West of Sand Hill Plantation, are two large individual oak trees. These are significant trees, both in size and age, as well as their contribution to the landscape and broader ecology of the area.

The route of the road can be altered to minimise concerns by future householders, which become inevitable where housing is too close to woodland. Excessive pruning and felling would be both costly and in conflict with any Woodland Management Plan.