

LINDHURST
MANSFIELD

APPENDIX 6.J VETERAN TREE ASSESSMENT

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J.1 INTRODUCTION

J.1.1 This appendix has been prepared by Faulks Perry Culley and Rech (FPCR) to present the findings of an assessment for Veteran Trees in existence on land located at Lindhurst, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire (hereafter referred to as “the assessment site”). The assessment site is centred approximately at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) SK 570 580.

J.1.2 The purpose of the report has been to undertake an overall assessment of mature trees within and in close proximity to the assessment site to identify those particular specimens that show characteristics and features that are typically associated with Veteran Trees. The survey and assessment process has been based on Standard Methodology as recommended by the Veteran Tree Initiative.

J.1.3 The site comprises large field compartments of principally arable farmland divided by native hedgerows and fencing with occasional pockets of plantation woodland, groups of trees and several buildings. The site is dissected laterally by Sherwood Way (A617). Firs Farm, a pig farm, lies centrally within the northern half of the site. Harlow Wood SINC (Forestry Commission Access Land) partly borders the southern extent of the site. This block of woodland is currently coniferous plantation with a broadleaved margin.

J.1.4 The site contained a low number of mature trees, with only one considered to be a suitable candidate for Veteran Tree classification. The report established those trees that show a strong Veteran Tree status, those that would be considered as Near Veteran Trees and finally those trees that would be considered potential Veteran Trees in the future.

J.1.5 For the purpose of the report, the tree reference numbers have been taken from the Tree Assessment Report (Appendix 6Q) prepared by FPCR, which should be read in conjunction with this document.

J.2 METHODOLOGY FOR VETERAN TREE SURVEY

J.2.1 For the purpose of the assessment the definition for a Veteran Tree follows that used by Smith & Bunce (2004) and amended according to English Nature’s Development of a Veteran Tree Site Assessment Protocol (Castle & Mileto 2005).

J.2.2 Characteristic features of veteran trees (Read 2000, Veteran Trees – a guide to good management) include the physical qualities listed below;

- Girth large for the trees species concerned;
- Major trunk cavities or progressive hollowing;
- Large quantities of dead wood in the canopy;
- Naturally forming water pools;
- Decay holes;
- Physical damage to trunks;
- Bark loss/loose bark;
- Sap runs;
- Crevices in the bark, under branches or in the root plate sheltered from direct rainfall;
- Fungal fruiting bodies (e.g. from heart rotting species);
- High number of independent wildlife species;
- Epiphytic plants;
- An ‘old’ look;
- High aesthetic interest.

J.2.3 In addition a Veteran Tree may also:

- Have a pollard form or show indications of past management;
- Have a cultural/historic value;
- Be in prominent position in the landscape;

J.2.4 Trees have therefore been recorded as veterans where they show either three or more of these characteristics or significant signs of one or more of the characteristics above. Mature trees are defined as being in their last 1/3 of life.

J.2.5 Table 6.J.1 below shows the estimated girth size categories that have been used to determine a Veteran Tree by species.

Table 6.J.1: Estimated girth size categories for Veteran Trees (from Rural Development Service 2006 Environmental Stewardship-Farm Environment Plan Guidance 009)

Tree Girth (minimum)	Diameter at Breast Height (dbh) (minimum)	Species
190 cm	60 cm	Birch species, Hawthorn
240 cm	75 cm	Field maple, Rowan, Grey and Goat willow, Hornbeam, Cherry, Alder

310 cm	100 cm	Oak species, Ash, Scots pine, Yew, Elm species
470 cm	150 cm	Lime species, Sycamore, Horse chestnut, Poplar species, other Pine species, Beech, Sweet chestnut, White and Crack willows

J.2.6 A maiden tree is the term given to a single /naturally multi stemmed tree that has not undergone past management such as coppicing or pollarding. Collapsed trees, naturally layered trees and individual specimens displaying phoenix regeneration will also be recorded as veterans, where the main stem or a sizeable stump is still present. Within the Veteran Tree Details Table – Appendix A, maiden forms have been represented by M, collapsed forms as C, layered forms as L, multi-stemmed or coppiced Ms, past pollards as Pol and phoenix regeneration forms as PR.

J.2.7 Near veteran trees have been defined as trees that are approaching veteran status, but exhibit fewer than three veteran characteristics. It should be noted that the near veteran classification is an informal definition and not used within current Natural England standard documentation or guidelines. However its inclusion means that the assessment takes into account trees that are likely to develop into veterans.

J.3 RESULTS (See Figure 1)

J.3.1 The Veteran Tree Details Table (Appendix A) provides the individual assessment information for each tree within the site, summarising girth, characteristic veteran tree features and any associated fauna and/or flora. The details of individual trees are discussed below.

J.3.2 There was one veteran tree present on the assessment site.

J.3.3 T3 was an English oak *Quercus robur*, of maiden form with an overall stem diameter of 1100cm, the tree would therefore be considered large for the species concerned. The specimen exhibited large amounts of exposed heartwood and trunk decay that would be typically associated with a tree having suffered damage to trunk, limbs and branches. There would be suitable areas of decay developing to provide ideal habitat for certain invertebrates and fungi. There was

associated split bark and patches of loose bark. Within the crown the tree housed significant amounts of dead wood.

J.3.4 TG2 comprised five common lime and one horse chestnut. Of maiden form with interlocking canopies the group were positioned on the site boundary within a field corner. The sizable specimens presented significant amounts of dead wood, partially due to browsing damage and lack of past management. Potentially the group could continue to develop features considered to be veteran. Due to their size and associated features, TG2 has been recorded as near veteran.

J.3.5 The remaining trees surveyed, as shown on Figure 1 of this appendix either did not meet veteran or near veteran status or fall outside the site boundary.

J.4 DISCUSSION

J.4.1 Overall the site yielded few quality freestanding and hedgerow trees. Where present, species included English oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and common lime *Tilia x europaea*.

J.4.2 Veteran trees are important components of our present landscape. The importance can be for wildlife, social, cultural and historic reasons. Veteran trees are also records of our past through the way they have been managed and treated. From an ecological perspective veteran trees provide a rare and very specialist habitat and therefore preservation of that habitat is considered highly important.

J.4.3 Changes of land use over time within close proximity to trees, especially veteran trees can influence their physiology and overall health. The way in which veteran trees respond to any changes to their local environment can be minimised through appropriate protection measures and future management decisions. Therefore continual re-appraisal of management operations in the light of tree response and condition is essential to ensure the long term survival of veteran trees and to guarantee the conservation of associated wildlife.

J.4.4 Due to the type and nature of the veterans detailed in this assessment the trees will need to be managed selectively and carefully. It is recommended any general tree management should be directed towards protecting the longevity of veteran trees, wherever possible, to ensure that there is no avoidable loss of veteran trees.