
Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Prepared for:

DRLA Landscape Architects.

Proposed site:

Millers Lane, Galway

Project Title:

Kingston Park and Millers Lane –
Public Park and Urban Realm Project

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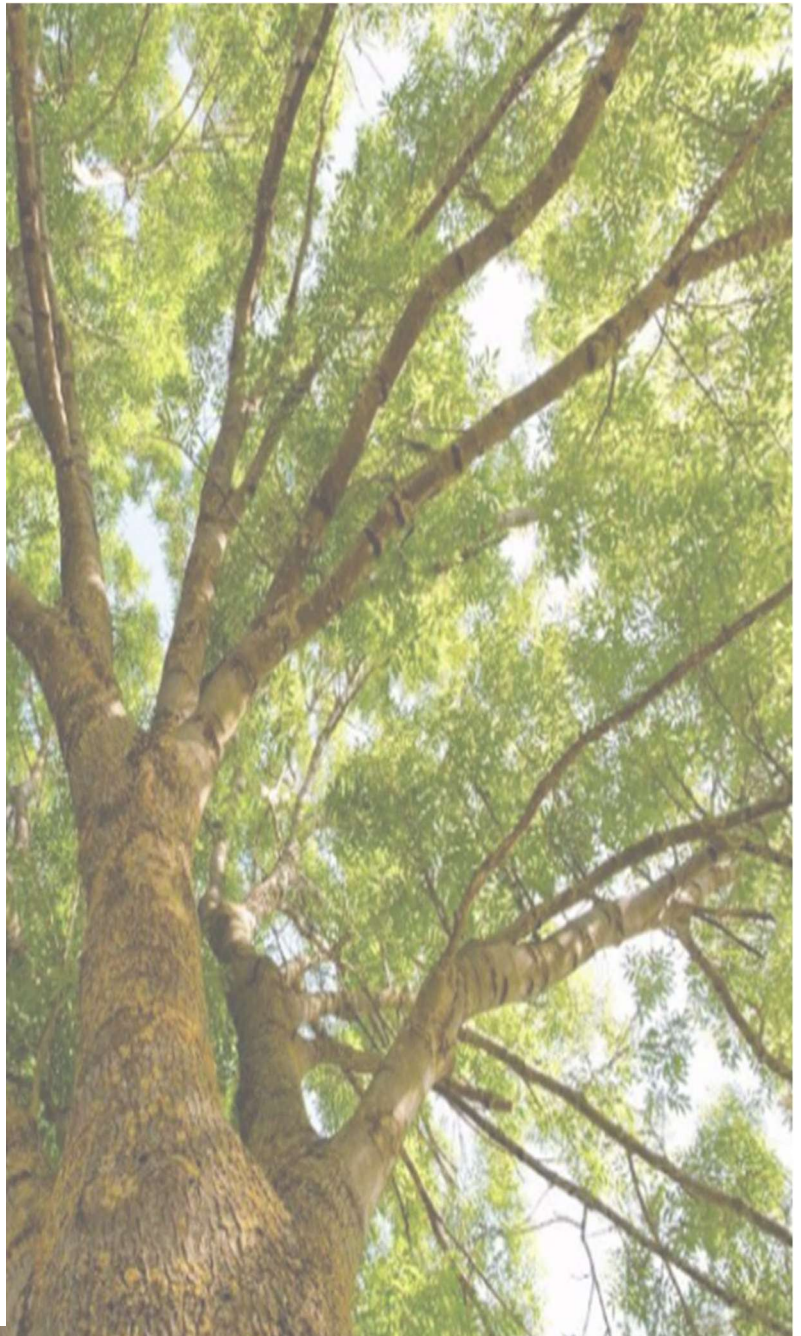


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Executive Summary

This arboricultural report has been commissioned by DRLA on behalf of Galway City Council to provide information to assist with the planning process in relation to a proposed development at the above location.

This report includes:

- an assessment of the trees, their quality and value in accordance with BS 5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction;
- the site context and observations on the trees;
- local planning policies relevant to the consideration of trees on the site;
- the impact of the proposed development upon the tree population in and around the site;

1.0 Introduction

Arbor-Care Ltd (Professional Consulting Tree Service) was retained to undertake an on-site tree survey of all trees that could be potentially be impacted by the proposed development within and adjacent to the site extents (Figure 1), the findings of the report will be used to inform design of development works and support a planning application for same.

The objective of the impact assessment was to identify the areas that contained trees, groups of trees, and to ensure where possible that these areas would be retained and to identify the trees that are to be removed to facilitate the development.

The survey commenced at the main entrance and worked in a northerly direction. The survey was undertaken on the 14th of May 2025.

The below impact assessment report is based on the British standard *BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction recommendations*, this standard gives recommendations and guidance on the principles to be applied to achieve a satisfactory juxtaposition of trees, including shrubs, hedges and hedgerows, with structures. It sets out to assist those concerned with trees in relation to construction to form balanced judgements. This impact assessment report will be accompanied by an inventory of trees and hedgerows on site and a tree protection plan.

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment and a tree protection plan was prepared for the site identifying trees that may be impacted on by the proposed development based on the proposed design.

1.2 Methodology

An initial tree survey and visual condition assessment was on the 14th of May 2025. The purpose of this report and in accordance with *BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations* only trees with diameters of 75mm or greater were surveyed.

Also in accordance with section 4.4.2.3 of the British standard document where trees formed obvious groups these were assessed and recorded as groups. All trees were individually tagged with a metal disc. This was placed on the northern side of the tree where practical. Where trees could not be tagged these were given a virtual number for example T1

Section 4.4.2.3 of BS 5837: 2012 states:

Trees growing as groups or woodland should be identified and assessed as such where the arboriculturist determines that this is appropriate. However, an assessment of individuals within any group should still be undertaken if there is a need to differentiate between them, e.g. in order to highlight significant variation in attributes (including physiological or structural condition).

NOTE: The term "group" is intended to identify trees that form cohesive arboricultural features either aerodynamically (e.g. trees that provide companion shelter), visually (e.g. avenues or screens) or culturally, including for biodiversity (e.g. parkland or wood pasture), in respect of each of the three subcategories.

The survey concentrated primarily on the significant trees/vegetation located within the development area and has been based on the topographical survey plan provided.

The objective of this survey was to gather information regarding the trees within or adjacent to the development area and the impact the proposed scheme may have on the trees. **Please refer to Appendix A for the tree inventory.**

Significant trees can be equated as those trees whose visual importance to the surrounding area are sufficient to justify special efforts to protect/preserve and whose loss would have an irremediable adverse impact on the local environment. Significance can also be placed depending on the trees age, another variable to imply significance can be the aesthetic merit of the tree based on its unusual size, intrinsic physical features or outstanding appearance or occurring in a unique location or context, and thus provides a special contribution as a landmark or landscape feature.

All above parts of the trees were visually examined. Tree diameters (DBH) were estimated at 1.5 meter above grade as per standard arboricultural practice. Tree height was measured with the use of a clinometer (Where practical).

A generalised system was employed to describe the overall health of the trees. The system uses a three tier rating scale with the following descriptors:

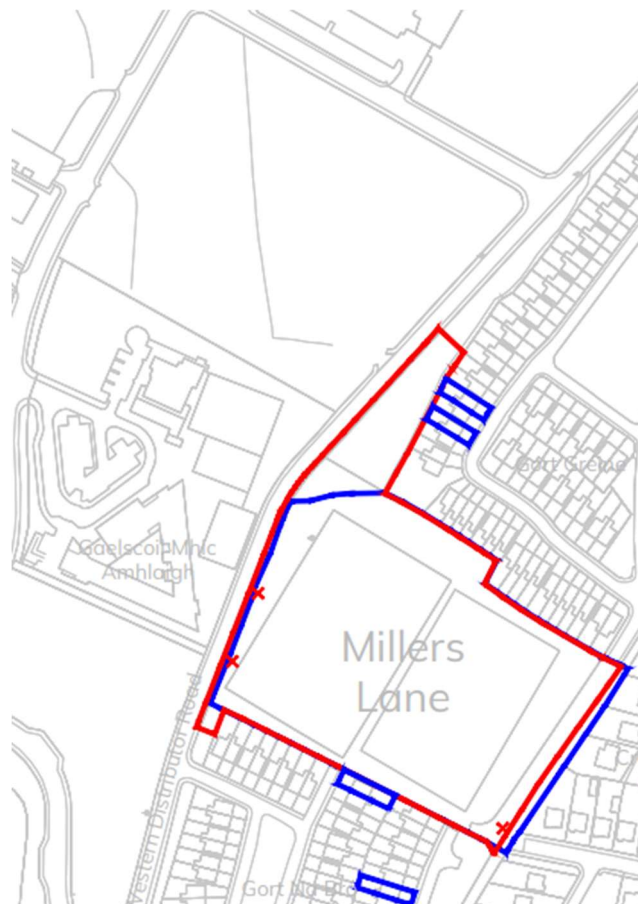
Specimen condition 3-tier rating system

- Poor- 1-30%
- Fair- 31-60%
- Good- 61-100%

2.0 Initial Tree/Site Survey Overview

2.1 The site is a green area with playing pitches. There are few trees of quality on the site

Figure 1 Site location in red



3.0 The Trees

A breakdown of the Tree Categories on site as per BS 5837 2012 is set out in the table 1 below:

Category	Quantity	Category %
A-Tree of high quality	0	0%
B-trees of good quality	0	0%
C (Low quality or trees less than 75mm diameter)	10	100%
U (remove due to poor condition)	0	0%
Total Trees	10	100%



*In accordance with *BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations.*

Category C signifies those trees/hedgerows of "a low quality and value that are currently in an adequate condition to remain until new planting could be established"

4.0 Planning Policy

The National Planning Framework (NPF)

The National Planning Framework (NPF) seeks to ensure that new development is sustainable and underlines the importance of Green Infrastructure, of which trees form an integral part. This encompasses recognition of the importance of trees in relation to the management of air, soil and water quality along with other associated ecosystem services and climate change adaption. The NPF also seeks to achieve the protection and enhancement of landscapes and a net gain in biodiversity.

Regional Policy

The survey area is located within the jurisdiction of Galway City Council. The Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to consider both the protection and planting of trees when considering planning applications. The potential impact of development on all trees (including those not protected by a Tree Preservation Order or other statutory designation) is therefore a material consideration.

Galway City Council Development Plan 2023-2029

I have reviewed the policy document and there are no Tree Preservation Orders on the site. However, Chapter 5 Natural Heritage, Recreation and Amenity y. Objective 5.61 relates to Urban Woodland Parks and Trees. It states: *Urban woodland parks and trees are important recreational amenities and natural features in the city. These natural assets contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community. Woodland and trees enhance the aesthetic quality of the landscape, provide valuable habitats for wildlife, contribute to carbon capture and storage, improve air quality and reduce the impact of noise. Woodlands, trees, stands of trees, and hedgerows form important ecological corridors and stepping stones enhancing biodiversity in the urban environment and need to be valued and protected. The Council will, where possible, protect trees, woodlands and hedgerows of special amenity or environmental value*

Policy 5.4 Green Spaces: Urban Woodlands and Trees

1. Manage and develop woodlands in the ownership of Galway City Council for natural heritage, recreation and amenity use, including Terryland Forest Park, Merlin Park Woods and Barna Woods/Lough Rusheen City Park.
2. Make Tree Preservation Orders for individual trees or groups of trees within the city, where appropriate.
3. Integrate existing trees and hedgerows on development sites where appropriate and require tree planting, as part of landscaping schemes for new developments.
4. Continue to promote partnerships with the community for the management and improvement of biodiversity in local open spaces, through schemes such as the Green Flag Awards.

5.0 The Proposed Development :

Brief Summary Development Description

The refurbishment and expansion of the existing park (site area 2.44Ha) located on Millers Lane, including:

I. Relocation and replacement of the 2 no. existing football pitches with: 1 no. new 4G synthetic turf multi-sport pitch (designed to soccer pitch dimensions) with associated fencing and 6 no. floodlights; and 1 no. new 2G sand-filled synthetic multi-sport pitch (designed to hockey pitch dimensions) with associated fencing and 6 no. floodlights.



II. New two-storey, multi-functional building which includes public and sports team changing rooms, showers and toilets; multi-purpose sports hall; multi-purpose activity rooms; kitchenette; 2 no. viewing terraces; first-aid room; store rooms; plant rooms; reception area; and roof-mounted solar panels.

III. New public spaces and amenities including fenced children's play areas; internal paths; multi-use games area; climbing wall; calisthenics area; public plaza; pitch spectator areas; equipment storage shed; green space for passive recreation; public lighting; and public seating.

IV. Extensive landscape planting (including native genus and species) and nature-based drainage measures including pollinator-friendly raingarden/ bioretention areas and reinforced grass paving, as well as planting areas with typologies including native and naturalised wooded areas, avenue tree planting, clipped hedges, short-flowering meadow, and pollinator-friendly perennials.

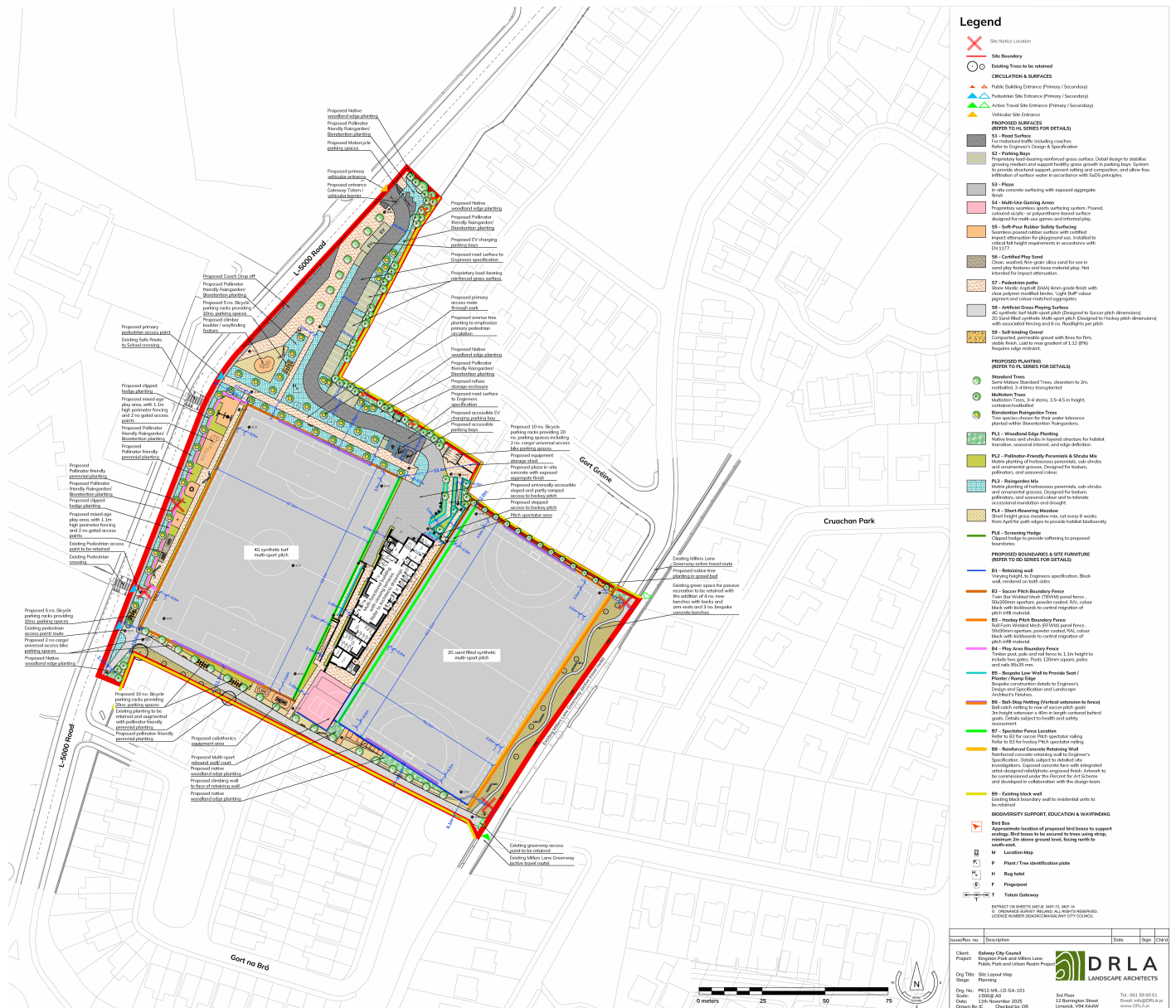
V. Relocated vehicular access on the L-5000 Road; 2 no. new active travel accesses from the L-5000 Road; and enhanced pedestrian / cyclist access from Millers Lane.

VI. 27 no. car parking spaces (2 no. standard EV charging spaces, 1 no. accessible space, 1 no. combined EV and accessible space, 1 no. family space, and 1 no. age-friendly space), 2 no. coach drop-off spaces with automated access control, 3 no. motorcycle spaces, and 64 no. cycle spaces (40 no. standard short-term spaces, 2 no. short term cargo-bike spaces, and a secure bike shed with 20 no. standard and 2 no. cargo-bike spaces).

All other associated and ancillary works.

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) has been prepared in respect of this Proposed Development.

Figure 2: Proposed Development



6.0 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

6.1. Analysis of Analysis of the Proposal in Respect of Trees

All vegetation as per this report and survey will require removal. As stated within this report the area consists of low category trees of poor quality. It presents an opportunity to plant site appropriate trees and vegetation that will enhance the arboreal footprint of the site and improve the local bio diversity.

6.1.1 In the context of the overall development works the following points are also noted:

- Arboricultural works –remove the trees as set out in this report upon receipt of full planning permission
 - Following the completion of the development, a tree condition assessment will not be required .
 - Tree protection measures – None required as all trees will be removed,
 - Site access. The site will be accessed from existing site entrances
 - Daylight and sunlight levels - Shading by trees have not been assessed in relation to this proposal.
 - Boundary/Landscape treatments – Please refer to the landscape plan for further information.
-
- **Arboricultural works** –Remove the trees as set out in this report upon receipt of full planning permission
 - Following the completion of the development, a **tree condition assessment** will not be required out on all retained trees for health and safety purposes.
 - **Site access.** The site will be accessed from existing site entrances
 - **Daylight and sunlight levels** - Shading by trees have not been assessed in relation to this proposal.
 - **Boundary treatments** – Please refer to the landscape plan for further information.



7.0 Discussion & Conclusion

General Change

My assessment is that given the low quality of the vegetation to be removed there will be little amenity loss. With the comprehensive landscape plan there will be a net gain in local biodiversity and arboreal value.

Appendix A: Tree Survey

Key abbreviations used in the survey

Ref No	Specific identification number given to each tree or group. T=Tree/H=Hedge/G=Group/W=Woodland/S=Shrub.	
Tag No.	Tree marked with individual tree tag of this reference number on site.	
Species	Common name followed by botanical name shown in <i>italics</i>	
RPA	Root Protection Area (As defined by BS5837)	
Stem diameter	Diameter of main stem, measured in millimetres at 1.5 m above ground level. (MS = Multi-stem tree measured in accordance with BS5837 Annexe C)	Av / Average: indicates an average representative measured dimension for the group or feature
Spread	The width and breadth of the crown. Estimated on the four compass points in metres.	
Crown clearance	The estimated height (in metres) above ground level of the lowest significant branch attachments.	
#	Estimated dimensions	
*	Indicates estimated position of tree (not indicated on topographical survey).	
P	Privately owned tree (e.g. tree not located in the public highway or adjacent public land).	
Category	Categorisation of the quality and benefits of trees on Site as per Table 1 and 2 of BS5837:2012. 1=Arboricultural quality/value 2=Landscape quality/value 3=Cultural quality/value (including conservation) A=High quality/value 40yrs+ (light green). B=Moderate quality/value 20yrs+ (mid blue) C=Low quality/value min 10yrs/stem diameter less than 150mm (grey). U=Unsuitable for retention (dark red).	
Life stage	Young (Y): Newly planted tree 0-10 years. Semi-Mature (SM): Tree in the first third of its normal life expectancy for the species (significant potential for future growth in size). Early Mature (EM): Tree in the second third of its normal life expectancy for the species (some potential for future growth in size) Mature (M): Tree in the final third of its normal life expectancy for the species (having typically reached its approximate ultimate size). Over Mature (OM): Tree beyond the normal life expectancy for the species. Veteran (V): Tree which is of interest biologically, aesthetically or culturally because of its condition, size or age.	
Structural condition	Good: No significant structural defects Fair: Structural defects which can be resolved via remedial works. Poor: Structural defects which cannot be resolved via remedial works. Dead: Dead.	
Physiological condition	Good: Normal vitality including leaf size, bud growth, density of crown and wound wood development. Fair: Lower than normal vitality, reduced bud development, reduced crown density, reduced response to wounds. Poor: Low vitality, low development and distribution of buds, discoloured leaves, low crown density, little extension growth for the species. Dead: Dead Fair/Good = Indicates an intermediate condition Fair – Good = Indicates a range of conditions (e.g. within a group)	
Preliminary management recommendations	Works identified during the tree survey as part of sound arboricultural management, based on the current context of the Site (where relevant reference has been made to tree management based on the potential future context of the site).	
Works to facilitate the development	Tree works identified as necessary to facilitate the Proposed Development following a desk top analysis of the proposals in relation to tree constraints.	

Appendix A: Tree Survey Schedule-Millers Lane

Tree #	Species Botanical Name	Age class	Size (mm)	Height (M)	Crown Sp. (M)	Crown Cl.(M)	Condition	Structural/Physiological Observations	Impact of the development	PMR	Category	R.P.A. Meters
T1	Willow	M	100	6	N=3 S=3 E=2 W=2	.5	Fair	a multi-stemmed willow	Remove to facilitate the scheme	Remove	C2	
T2 x 2 Birch	Hawthorn	SM	70	3	N=1 S=1 E=1 W=1	1	Good	Two semi-mature birch	Remove to facilitate the scheme	Remove	C2	
T3	Willow	EM	75	3	N=1 S=1 E=1 W=1	.5	Good	An early mature multi-stemmed willow	Remove to facilitate the scheme	Remove	C2	
T4	Willow	EM	75	3	N=1 S=1 E=1 W=1	.5	fair	An early mature multi-stemmed willow it has suffered stem damage and is in decline	Remove to facilitate the scheme	Remove	C2	
T5	Willow	EM	120	6	N=2 S=2 E=2 W=2	.5	Good	An early mature multi-stemmed willow	Remove to facilitate the scheme	Remove	C2	
Group 1	Common alder x 4	SM	100	3	N=2 S=2 E=2 W=2	1	Good	A row of alder growing within dense bramble	Remove to facilitate the scheme	Remove	C2	



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Yours in Conservation,

Michael Garry.

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