STARLING HOUSE, BIRKS LANE, MILLHOUSE GREEN

Preliminary Bat Roost Inspection Survey of Trees

Prepared for: WHp Residential Limited

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1.0 Introduction

SLR Consulting Ltd was commissioned by WHp Residential Limited to assess the potential bat roosting value of a group of trees situated on land within the grounds of Starling House, Birk Lane, Millhouse Green, South Yorkshire S36 9NL (OS grid reference SE 22027 02996) hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.

Planning permission is being sought for two residential properties, which requires the reduction in the amount of existing tree cover within the Site boundary, as illustrated in Appendix A.

2.0 Methodology

The survey was undertaken on the 4th August 2020 by Mr Daniel Alexander, Ecologist with SLR consulting. Mr Alexander is a Class 1 bat license holder (2020-4654-CLS-CLS) and has 3 years' experience within ecological consultancy.

The survey involved a detailed ground level roost assessment of those trees due to be felled or otherwise impacted, for example, by pruning, to ascertain whether any features were present that may be used by roosting bats.

The survey methodology followed the good practice guidance as set out by Bat Conservation Trust[1], and was aided by the use of a telescope, bridge camera with 100x optical zoom, and a powerful Clulite torch. Potential roosting features (PRFs) were graded as being of low, moderate, or high potential for roosting bats.

Trees with no apparent PRFs, and therefore no potential to support roosting bats, were classified as having negligible potential for roosting bats.

For trees with low, moderate or high potential for roosting bats, the outcome of the grading determines the requirement for additional surveys, or appropriate soft felling procedures.

3.0 Results

Table 3-1 overleaf presents the results of the survey with respect to trees having above negligible potential for roosting bats.

The location of the trees, and the numbering system used, is provided in Appendix B.

In total seventeen trees were assessed, of which six were assessed as having low potential for roosting bats, with the remaining eleven having negligible potential.

Two bird nests were also identified, one active and one defunct. The active bird nest relates to a woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*) on the eastern side of tree 218.61, a sycamore (*Acer psuedoplatanus*) (Plate 1).

The disused nest was likely a carrion crow (*Corvus corone*) nest, found in the southern branches of tree 217.45, also a sycamore.

[1]Collins, J. (ed) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Tree Number and Species And Feature Description	Roost Suitability	Potential Roosting Feature
217.72 – Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) • Dead limb on the northwestern side 5-metres elevation, contains numerous cracks and holes.	Low	
217.65 – Sycamore • Shallow hole on western side of the main trunk, 5-metres elevation.	Low	

217.74 – Horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) • Shallow hole on northern side of main trunk 7-metres elevation.	Low	
217.45 – Sycamore • Shallow knot hole on the underside of the northern branch, 6 metres in elevation.	Low	

217.49 – Sycamore • Patches of dead wood and platy bark through trees medium circumference. • Shallow knot holes on east (top photograph) and west side (second photograph), both approximately 3-metres elevation.	Low	 

217.87 – Cherry (*Prunus avium*) • Multiple patches of flaky bark around small, shallow knot holes, on 4 branches.	Low	  

Plate 1: Nesting wood pigeon within tree 218.61

Plate 2: Defunct crow's nest on tree 217.45.

4.0 Recommendations

No trees were graded as having above low potential for roosting bats, and no further evidence of bat roosting activity was found (for example, droppings or staining).

Due to the low roosting potential associated with six of the trees present on Site, it is pertinent that sensitive felling measures are adopted by the arborists and that pruning and/ or felling is conducted in a sensitive manner.

This shall require a soft felling approach, where necessary, removing the branches and/ or trunk from the top down. As part of this process, the arborist may investigate those features identified within this report as having bat roosting potential to ascertain whether the features have sufficient depth to potentially support roosting bats; if not, then a soft felling approach need not be undertaken for that particular features. For features that do have sufficient depth, care should be taken when removing the associated branch/ section of trunk, which should be carefully lowered to the ground using ropes and left for two days before being removed.

Alternatively a dusk emergence or dawn re-entry bat detector survey of the trees could be carried out immediately prior to felling (if felling is proposed within the mid-April to mid-September period) and if no roosting bats are found (and no active bird nests are present) the trees could be felled from ground-level, without the need for a soft felling approach.

APPENDIX 1: PROPOSED SITE PLAN

1:200 SCALE BAR

0m 1m 2m 5m 10m 20m

WHp ARCHITECTURE

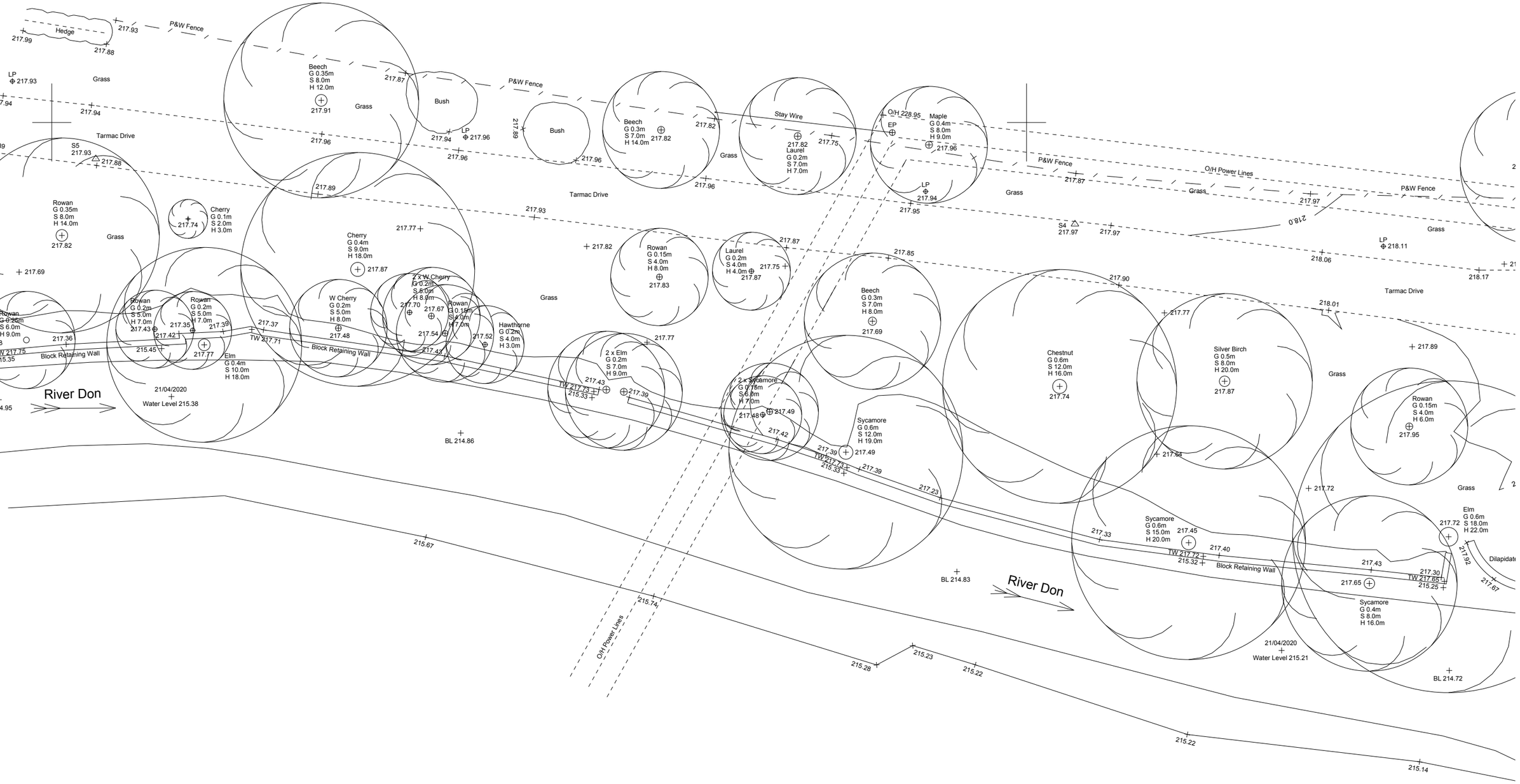
CLIENT
MR & MRS CREEK

PROJECT
STARLING HOUSE, BIRKS LANE, MILLHOUSE GREEN

DRAWING TITLE
SITE PLAN - PROPOSED

JOB NO	DRG NO	REV	SCALE @ A2	DATE
4103	03	A	AS	15 05 20

APPENDIX 2: PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF TREES



1:200 SCALE BAR

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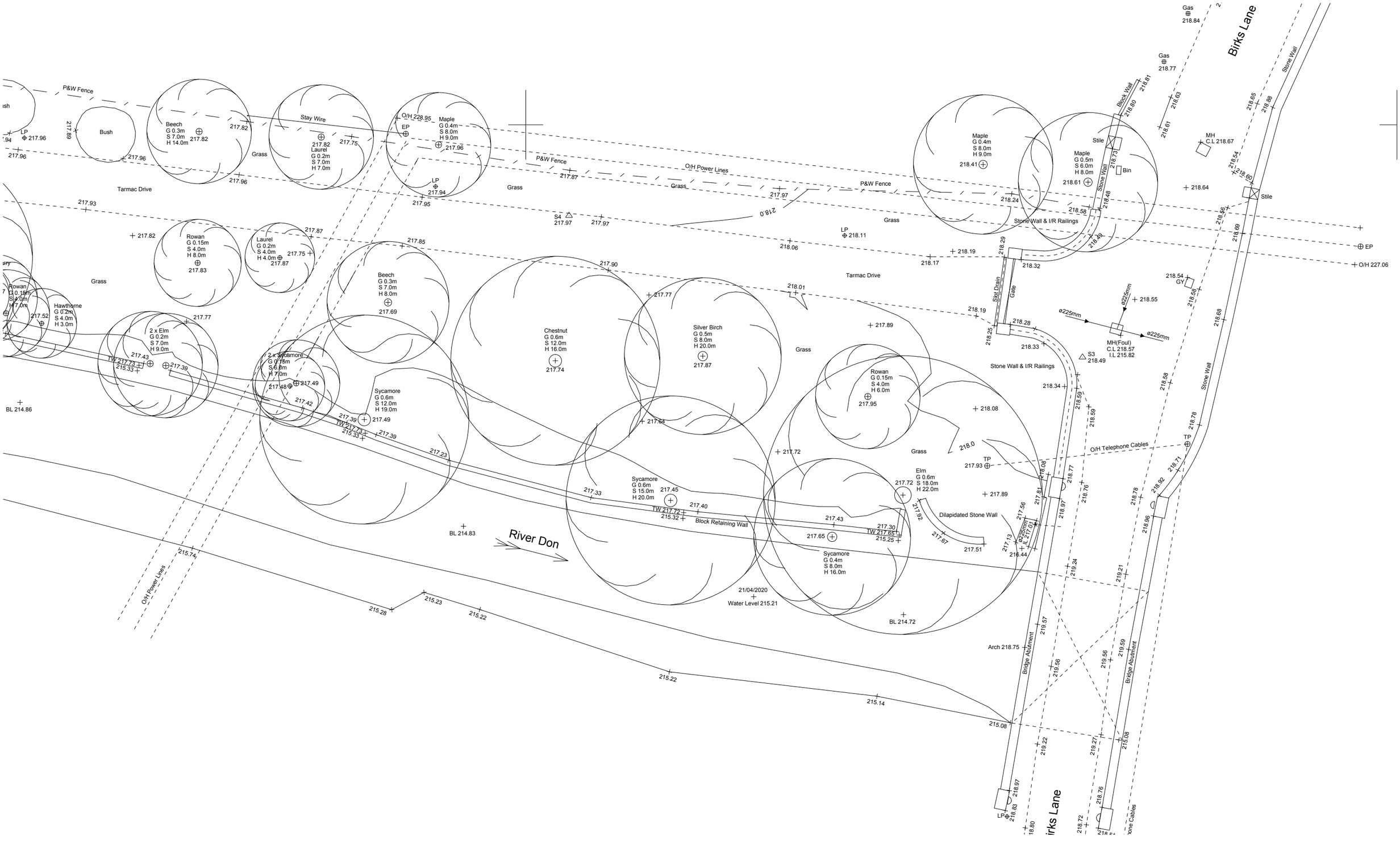

1:200 SCALE BAR

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