

Keiron Moore
Nuvu Developments

The Annex
Willow Hill
School Lane
Burwardsley
Chester
CH3 9NX
Tel: 01829 770075

Simon Brain
BA RFS Cert Arb Tech
Cert Arb PG Cert
Chartered
arboriculturist
amenitytree.com

RE: Ten Acres – breeding bird checks Version 3

13.05.2022

Dear Keiron

Executive summary

The Ten Acres site-based tree clearance works have been ongoing from December 2021 to April 2022 and will finish week commencing 25th April 2022. The appended plan details site clearances carried out before and during the recognised breeding bird season (March), and those areas of clearance carried out in March and those carried out in April. I can confirm that the works have now ceased due to the presence of breeding bird species, this was effective from 20th April 2022.

The site was split into sixty-four squares for ease of management prior to site clearance as shown on the appended site clearance plans. A total of forty-one of the squares were removed prior to March, eleven squares were removed in March and 5 removed in April.

Therefore, the bulk of the works on the site have been undertaken outside the breeding bird season (blue hatched areas). The blue and magenta hatched areas have all had the tree canopies removed prior to March with processing occurring in March. The sequencing and methodology of the site clearance has reduced the potential for trees to be taken up by breeding bird; this is because the machines used to clear the site have removed the tree canopies leaving the main tree stems to be removed where necessary by manual felling. Typically, the tree canopies are used by breeding bird as single stems exhibit very little habitat for nesting birds and are generally not taken up.

Within the first two weeks of April the temperatures outlined below confirm the works undertaken were done so in periods of inclement weather that was largely unsuitable for breeding bird hence the 11acre squares removed over this period have had a negligible risk of breeding bird occupation at the outset. The JPW areas were cleared in the first two weeks of March following delays from storms / knotweed supervision. Those works that have been undertaken in March and April have been closely supervised by an avian ecologist with ongoing site visits. In short, these breeding bird surveys (detailed below) have not found evidence of breeding bird (in terms of general avian behaviour or physical signs of nest building, for example) and hence there has been no need to implement aversion measures such as netting.

Breeding bird surveys - Methods

Bird surveys shall take the form of dawn and daytime observations that shall examine avian behaviour such as songbird identification, nest building, territory defence/holding, courtship displays, adults visiting nest sites, or adults carrying foetal sacs. An assessment shall be made as to the behaviour being classed as non-breeding (for example song), probable breeding and or confirmed breeding behaviour.

Recommendations shall be made where behaviour is breeding related that shall compromise the establishment of a Precautionary Zone and no arboricultural works shall commence until breeding has ceased.

Simon Brain shall undertake all surveys. He has attained a Post Graduate Certificate in Biological Recording with Manchester Metropolitan University and attended FSC courses for songbird identification, advanced bird survey techniques (Level M) and a CIEEM barn owl course. He regularly compiles precautionary breeding bird surveys for construction projects and has been a practicing ecologist for ten years.

A written report shall be compiled following the dawn observations indicating which birds have been identified on site and whether the behaviour is classed as breeding or not. The report shall confirm which trees can be removed without contravention of Wildlife legislation. The report will be compiled and issued to the client for formal planning condition discharge.

To inform the precautionary bird surveys an initial walkover survey was undertaken by Simon Brain on the 25.02.22 to provide baseline data for the site within the active season. As a result of the February inspection breeding bird walkovers were scheduled at appropriate timing intervals given breeding bird urges are directly linked to temperature.

The survey was undertaken using random point stations throughout the study area and the surveyor moved from point to point throughout the study area every ten minutes.

Results

Dawn and day time observations did take place within the site in conditions which were deemed suitable for the survey to be valid.

During the early part of March the daytime high temperatures didn't reach 15 degree until the 10th and did not return to 15 degree until the 18th. Site visits on the 3rd, 10th and 18th March recorded common bird species foraging and no breeding bird behaviour was recorded.

After three days of 18 degree daytime highs over 22nd to 25th March a breeding bird survey was undertaken on the 25th and the following bird species were identified during the survey by song identification (+) or visual means (*) or both (+/*):

Wren (+/*), Robin (+/*), Jackdaw (+), Woodpigeon (+), Blue Tit (+/*), Carrion Crow (*), Blackbird (*/+), Great Tit (+), Magpie (+) Goldfinch (+/*)

Several of the species named above were observed to be in pairs but those birds on the site were typically passing through the site.

The last week in March temperatures reduced to daytime highs between 15 and 7 degree and no other bird behaviour was noted other than what had been recorded previously during a visit on the 31st March.

Daytime highs of average 11 degree followed in the first week of April and no records were made that were different to those previously recorded.

From the 11th April to 15th April the site has been largely cleared of all vegetation and the remaining trees were some poplar on the canal boundary and whilst temperatures crept up to an average of 15 degree and signs of corvid carrying nesting material were observed these birds were passing through site to adjacent structures such as the buildings near the canal (textile factory).

A planned inspection is due to take place on the w/c 25th April to check the few areas of trees remaining on the site.

Summary

Whilst contact calls were made between various species during flight this behaviour was not considered to be indicative of breeding. Pairs of birds were observed which can be considered to be indicative of breeding behaviour but after extensive observation these pairs were found to be passing through the site on route towards retained vegetation off site. The only behaviour classed as breeding was corvid family birds (crow and jackdaw) carrying nesting material on the site which largely came to rest off site.

Within the site itself no birds were considered to exhibit probable or actual breeding behaviour as outlined in the Breeding Status Codes provided by British Trust for Ornithology (Atlas 2007-2011) such as; nest building, territory holding, agitation calls, courtship calls, and visiting probable nest sites or confirmed breeding signs such as food carrying, distraction displays, nesting sites observed, yolk sacs being carried or recently fledged young observed.

Conclusions

As a general overview I believed no breeding bird behaviour was present on site during the winter tree works. This is largely because habitat used for breeding is no longer present and removed before the breeding season began this year, along with the low temperatures throughout March and April.

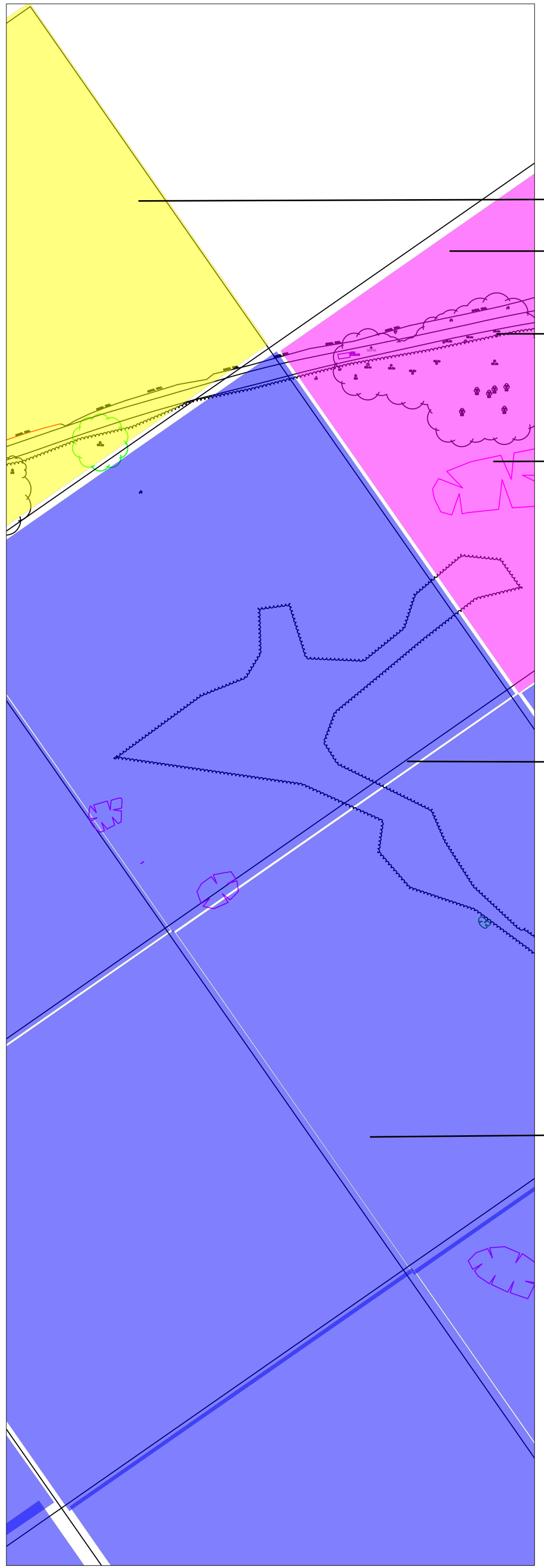
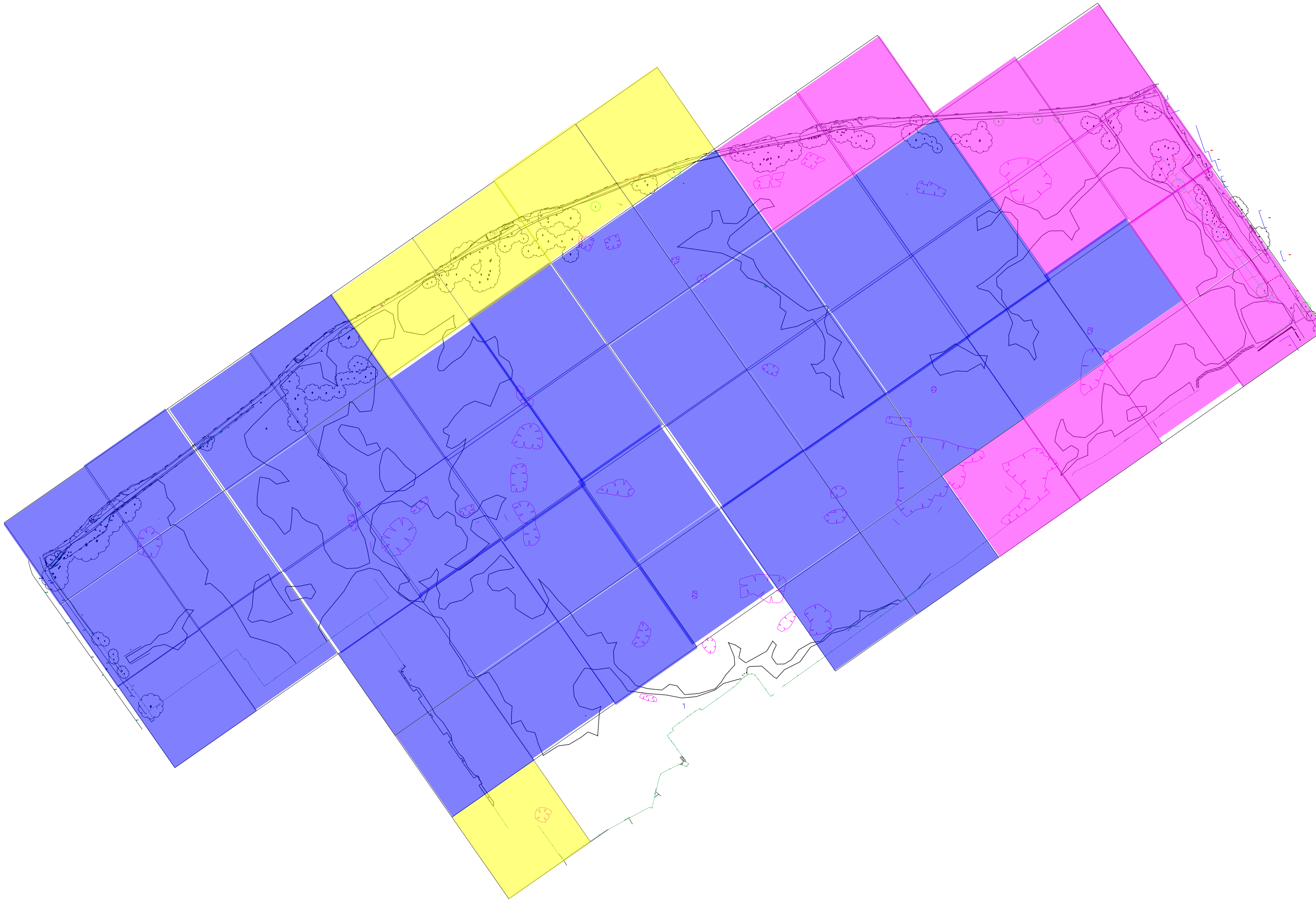
Please do let me know if there is anything further, I can assist.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Brain', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Brain *Ba. RFS Cert Arb. Tech Cert Arb. PG Cert (Bio Rec)*
ICF Registered consultant Chartered arboriculturist
Managing Director

Site clearance plans



April Works

March Works

Existing vegetation

Japanese Knotweed extents - Works in March

1 acre grid squares

Dec, Jan, Feb works



The Annexe, Willow Hill Cottage, School Lane,
Burwardsley, Chester. CH3 9NX
Tel. 01829 770075

Client:
Your Housing

Project:
Ten Acres

Detail:
Clearance Plans

Drawn By: BB Date: 08 12 2021 Scale: 1:500 - A0

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