ArborShadow

Exporting to AutoCAD as a Script File

I have used 2008LT for this tutorial; you may have a later AutoCAD with a different appearance.

ArborShadow produces AutoCAD script files which must be 'Run' within AutoCAD. You can do this by typing SCRIPT into the command line and then select the file from the file list. Or you can run them with a single click by creating a custom button to go on its own toolbar.

ArborShadow by default creates the script file in its Work space folder, normally found in My documents This is, by default, given a standard filename "arbshad_autocad_script.scr". Using scripts is a simple & fast procedure, and when used in conjunction with the custom run button, is faster still. I will run through a typical export procedure below.

The image below shows AutoCAD with a section of site displayed where I plan to plot some tree data. Always plot data into Model Space although the script will force plotting into this mode even if it's not selected.
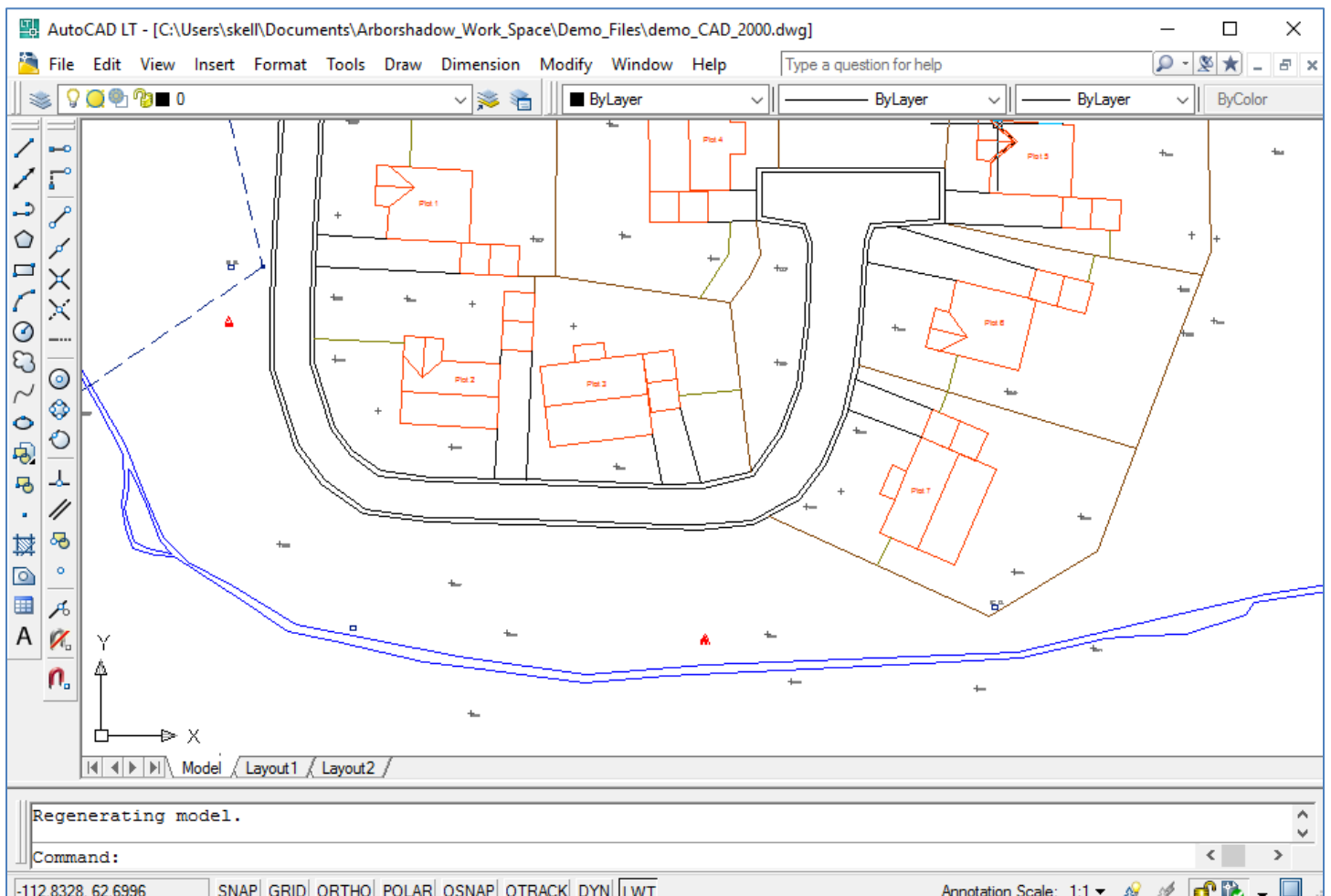
I have already loaded the same CAD file into ArborShadow and plotted three trees and one target area onto it (see below).
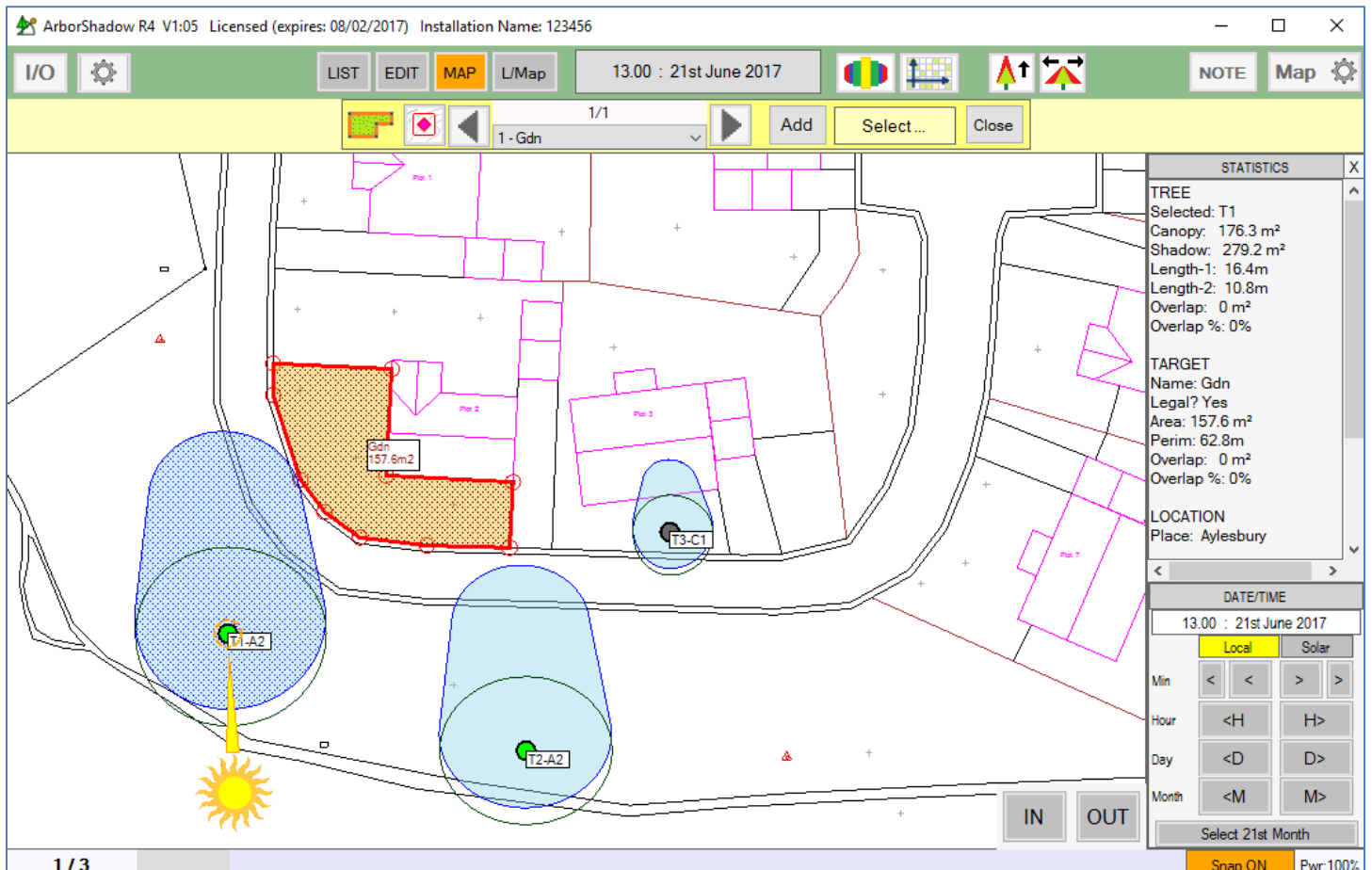

I am drawing the BS5837 category symbol, tag number, canopy, shadow and the target area.

The export script will contain the same data but be formatted for AutoCAD. The background map is not exported so it is essential to have the same map loaded into AutoCAD. However, you can plot to a blank drawing and the same map coordinates will still be used.

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To build the export script, we need to click the I/O icon, and select the Export tab. Now click the Export to CAD button.
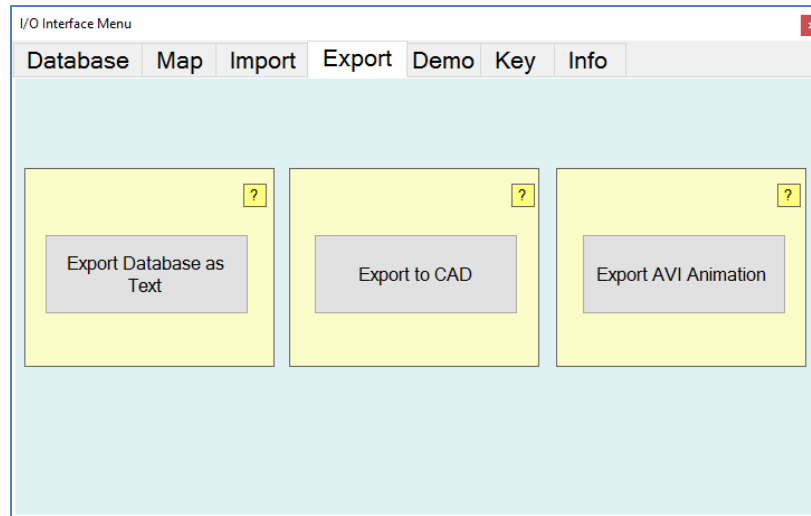
And the export window opens. Make sure you are using the Export AutoCAD Script tab.
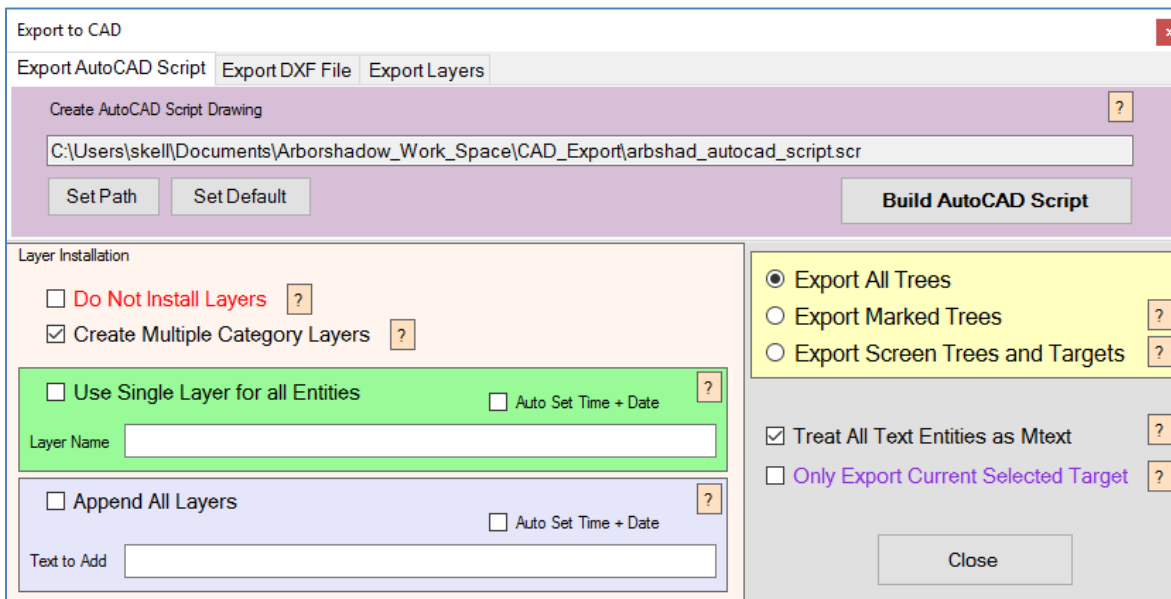
The [?] buttons will give information regarding the settings available. Most importantly the long folder & filename text line represents the place where the script will be built. This is the file which we will ultimately load and run within AutoCAD.

Other options allow you to choose what's to be exported and enables specific layer control (such as using a single layer or appending layers with a specific batch name).

All items such as text, shadow, canopy, hatching are drawn to CAD on their own layers so items can be hidden once plotted if required.

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Select the 'Build AutoCAD Script' button and the file is created in the folder and with the filename as defined above.

If you are interested you can navigate to the file using the Windows file system. I wouldn't recommend opening it from here as a number of programs may use the .scr filetype and attempt to open it!

If you really want to take a look at its contents, try right clicking the file, and select 'Open With' and use NotePAD to view it.
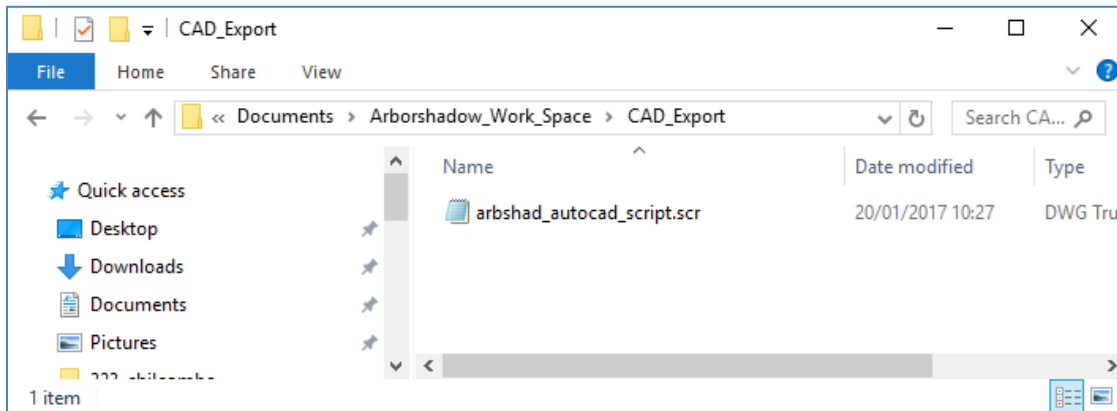
Now we return to AutoCAD. Type the word Script into the command box. A window will open requesting the selection of the script file. Navigate to the file and click Open.

You can also select 'Run Script' from the Tools menu. *And of course, if you are using a custom button then just click it for automatic load and run.*
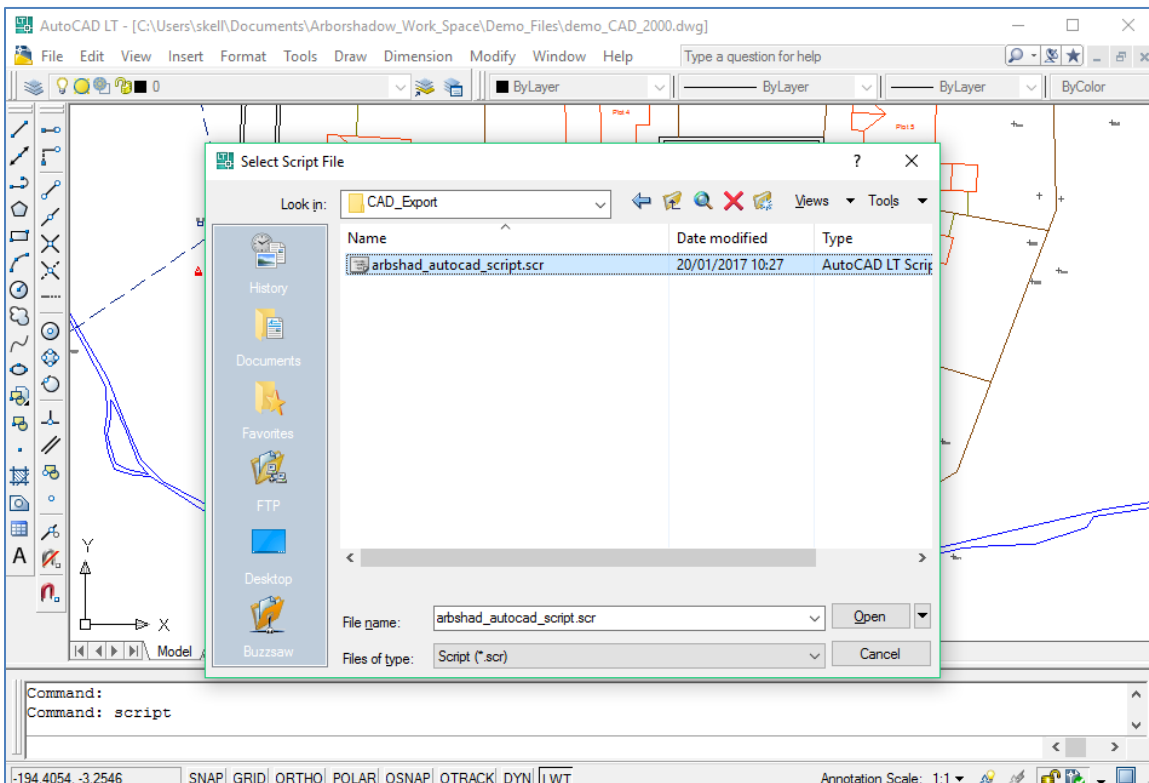
The script will run and draw items to the screen. If the area of the drawing where you are plotting too is not visible you may not see any items being drawn until the script is completed. Once the script has finished it will zoom into the plotted area.

It is important not to interfere with AutoCAD during the script run process. Just sit back until its finished or minimize the program and do something else! Attempting to use AutoCAD whilst a script is running may stop (break) the script and you will have to select Undo and start again.

If the finished plot is not quite right and you need to adjust text size or colours etc. Then just select the Undo function in AutoCAD, make the ArborShadow changes, build the script and then run once more within AutoCAD.

To improve clarity I now just need to change the hatch type to say dots or remove the hatch altogether (you can also switch the hatch off within ArborShadow).

The final plot.