Arboricultural Report and Tree Condition Survey

for the Proposed Development

at

Mawles Farm,

Sibford Gower,

Banbury.

0X15 5RW

Prepared for: Ian O'Brien Studio



A trading name of RG Consultancy Ltd

Peter Wilkins BA (Hons) MArborA Our Ref 1119-8073 November 2019

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared following instructions received from Ian O'Brien Studio to inform a full planning application for the proposal is for conversion of the existing stone and brick barn range to create one new dwelling and the conversion of the existing steel barn forming a second dwelling house. Hard and soft landscaping include the provision of off-street car parking and the removal of the disused outdoor swimming pool to create a garden area.
- 1.2 The issues to be addressed in this Arboricultural Report and Tree Condition Survey include the;
 - The species, size and position and amenity value of the trees growing within and close to the site.
 - The impact of the proposed development on the trees resource including the vegetation removals
 - Outline information on the protection of retained trees during construction works.
- 1.3 We visited the site in September 2019 to undertake a Pre-Development Tree Condition Survey (See Appendix
 1). We have subsequently been provided with a copy of the copy of the proposed plans prepared by lan O'Brien Studio which are to be submitted as part of this planning application.

2.0 Site Description and Description of Proposed Development

- 2.1 The site and proposed development is described in detail within the Design and Access Statement. In summary the current use is agricultural (Sui Generis). The proposed use is Class C3 residential dwelling houses and ancillary accommodation.
- 2.2 The stone and brick barn ranges on the perimeter of the site, forming the west and south street elevations will be retained and converted for residential use. The converted agricultural accommodation will be principally on one level, with the tallest portions of the barns on the south-west corner being used for upper level bedroom accommodation.
- 2.3 It is proposed to convert the existing steel pole barn with the use of Cotswold stone and vertical timber cladding. The new dwelling will form a better connection with the steeply sloping site. This dwelling will have bedrooms on lower ground floor at the current farmyard level with the living accommodation on the upper ground floor at garden and field level. The garden level is currently occupied by a disused outdoor swimming pool.
- 2.4 The tree resource consists of relatively poor-quality trees including hollies, cherries, hazels planted around the swimming pool area, a number of these trees have become overgrown with ivy. To the south-western corner of the swimming pool there is a willow stump which is regrowing.
- 2.5 Due to the size of the vegetation and the presence of buildings on the highway boundaries of the site, the public amenity value of and its contribution to the character and appearance of the wider area is very limited.

3.0 Statutory Protection

- 3.1 The site is located within the Sibford Ferris, Sibford Gower and Burdrop Conservation Area Conservation Area. Therefore all the trees (unless exempt) with a stem diameter in excess of 75mm are subject to protection under the Conservation Area. Notwithstanding specific exemptions in general terms, a Conservation Area (CA) prevents the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees or woodlands without submitting 6 weeks prior notification to the local planning authority.
- 3.2 Once the Conservation Area tree works notification is submitted to the LPA, if the LPA wish to stop works from proceeding then a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) must be served, if 6 weeks pass from submission of the CA tree works notification then providing a TPO has not been served the tree works can be undertaken.
- 3.3 The Conservation Area status does not preclude the presence of Tree Preservation Orders which may also serve to protect the trees.
- 3.5 It should be noted that the granting of full planning permission where approved drawings show trees to be removed over-rides the Statutory Protection. No vegetation works should be undertaken prior to determination of the planning application without submitting the necessary Conservation Area notification or for any TPO'd trees obtaining necessary consent from the Local Planning Authority.
- 3.6 Prior to any treeworks or vegetation clearance being undertaken the possible presence of nesting birds or protected species needs to considered and if necessary specific ecological advice should be sought. Nesting birds and protected species (including bats and their roosts) are protected from disturbance under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 2017 (as amended), The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010.
- 3.7 Where possible vegetation clearance should be scheduled to be undertaken outside the bird nesting season. The 'Bird Nesting Season' is from March until August (Natural England) and it is recommended that vegetation works (tree or hedge cutting) or site clearance should be done outside of the nesting season. When tree or vegetation clearance work has to be undertaken during the nesting season, a pre-treeworks survey needs to be carried out to check for nesting birds by a suitably competent person.
- 3.8 It should be noted that in addition to the Conservation Area status of the site, damage to any trees shown to be retained is a potential offence and may be a breach of planning conditions, damage to retained trees and their rooting environment may result in enforcement action or criminal prosecution by the Local Authority.

4.0 Arboricultural Background Information

- 4.1 For all trees but particularly those growing in urban areas, root growth is not predictable. Tree roots are opportunistic they grow most prolifically in areas where conditions are favourable and will be deflected by natural features and man-made structures, when hostile conditions are encountered root growth will be limited.
- 4.2 It is generally agreed that the majority of tree roots, even for a mature tree are found in the top 90cm of the soil and these roots are vulnerable to sudden changes in the rooting environment. These roots absorb the moisture and nutrients needed for growth and contrary to popular belief mature trees in the UK do not have a deep taproot that obtains moisture from great depth.
- 4.3 An ideal soil for tree root growth is about 50% pore space (in urban areas this is often significantly reduced), these pores, the spaces between soil particles, are filled with water and air. Construction activity can compact the soil and can dramatically reduce the amount of pore space. This not only inhibits root growth and penetration but also decreases oxygen levels within the soil and reduces the available soil moisture that is essential to the growth and function of the existing roots.
- 4.4 For retained trees it is essential that the structurally important roots will remain undisturbed, these important larger roots radiate outwards from the trunk, they are characterised by being relatively few in number and tapering rapidly from the base of the tree. Even for mature trees they are only 2-3m in length, at this length they are likely to be 2-5cm in diameter and they have lost their rigidity and physical strength. (See Tree Root Systems AAIS 1995).
- 4.5 The two main possibilities for injury to trees during and following the construction process are from direct and indirect damage.
 - Direct Damage can be defined as injury resulting from physical contact including contact with machinery or fire, and excavation of the root area.
 - Indirect Damage can be defined as injury resulting from activities that take place near the tree such as level changes, compaction of the soil, or contamination by chemical spillage in proximity to the root plate.
- 4.6 The British Standards Institute published BS5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction Recommendations' this document gives clear and current best practice recommendations and guidance on the principles to be applied to achieve a satisfactory juxtaposition of trees with structures. Where development is proposed, the standard provides guidance on how to assess the value and quality of trees and to decide which trees are appropriate for retention.
- 4.7 The BS5837 (2012) also provides information on the protection of trees during the development process. It includes a calculator for Root Protection Areas (RPA) which aims to ensure a sufficient volume of soil and proportion of the root system is protected to maintain the health and vigour and ensure the longevity of the trees.

- 4.8 The Root Protection Area is not related to the canopy spread of the tree; in simple terms it is an area calculated as a multiple of the trunk diameter. For trees with a trunk diameter in excess of 1250mm the Root Protection Area is capped at a total area of 707m². See Attached Tree Survey Plan in Appendix 1 for further details.
- 4.9 The RPA is in effect a theoretical area that if all the soil and roots around the periphery of the circle were removed there would be sufficient area around the tree to maintain the tree in a healthy condition. The RPA does not show the expected extent of root growth but indicates an area of ground considered necessary to support the tree both at the time of surveying but into the future. Post development the tree will adapt to the changes in its rooting environment providing it has retained a sufficient proportion of its root system and a sufficient area/volume of soil area is available for the tree.
- 4.10 The relative sensitivity of different species of trees to development works is well known and acknowledged within BS5837 (2012) but the RPA formula in BS5837 does not give any weight to different tree species. The RPA is based on the trunk diameter and would be the same for trees of the same trunk size regardless of species. This results in RPAs which for trees which are tolerant to disturbance is very conservative but would be an appropriate size for the more sensitive tree species.
- 4.11 Trees have a natural resilience to disturbance and root loss, so many fallen trees will continue to grow for many years, consider the recumbent mulberry tree, or fallen woodland and parkland trees (which if not removed) will continue to grow.
- 4.12 The BS Categories referred to in this report are described in detail in Appendix 1. In summary the quality of the trees resource is assessed, and the trees are divided into 4 categories based a number of factors including; their condition, remaining life-expectancy, landscape, arboricultural and cultural/conservation value;

Category U:	Those in such a poor condition that they cannot realistically be retained
Category A:	Trees of high quality
Category B:	Trees of moderate quality
Category C	Trees of low quality

4.13 Appropriate tree surgery works, the provision of tree protection measures and appropriately specified, supervised and implemented construction works can reduce the risk of damage to the retained trees.

5.0 Arboricultural Considerations

- 5.1 The site is previously developed; the majority of the site is either occupied by buildings or covered in hardstanding. The vegetation is located within the area of ground to the north-eastern corner of the site is occupied by a disused swimming pool which had hardstanding around the pool surrounded by typical garden planting and a small garden area to the eastern side of the pool.
- 5.2 The proposed development is for the conversion of the existing buildings to provide 2 new dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping including the provision of off-street car parking and the removal of the disused outdoor swimming pool to create a garden area.
- 5.3 The vegetation is located on the eastern, northern and western boundaries of the swimming pool. It is proposed to retain the vegetation along the northern boundary whilst removing the vegetation to the western boundary to allow the new garden which occupies the swimming pool area to connect with the proposed barn conversion.
- 5.4 The trees and shrubs to be removed to allow for the proposed development are identified within the Tree Condition Survey and shown on the attached Tree Removals Plans. The trees to be removed include the regrowing willow stump T1, 2 Hollies T2 and T3, an area of snowberry shrubs and a Viburnum shrub S1.
- 5.5 With regard to its size and location the removal of these trees and shrubs will have no impact on the character and appearance of the area and nor on the quality of the tree resource in the wider area .
- 5.6 The principal of removing trees to allow for an appropriate layout is supported in all relevant planning policies, planning guidance and in BS5837 (2012) which states that:

5.1.1 The constraints imposed by trees, both above and below ground (see Note to 5.2.1) should inform the site layout design, although it is recognized that the competing needs of development mean that trees are only one factor requiring consideration. Certain trees are of such importance and sensitivity as to be major constraints on development or to justify its substantial modification.

- 5.7 I do not consider that any of the trees to be removed are of 'such importance and sensitivity as to be major constraints on development or justify its substantial modification'.
- 5.8 The trees to the northern boundary of the swimming pool and to the eastern boundary of are to be retained within the proposed development.
- 5.9 Providing the retained trees are subject to appropriate protection as outlined in BS5837 (2012) and as described in Section 6 of this report the proposed development can be constructed without detriment to the health, longevity or stability of the retained trees.

6.0 <u>Summary of Tree Protection Measures</u>

- 6.1 Prior to any enabling works commencing the Tree Protection Fencing will be erected. All plant or vehicles engaged in the construction works will operate outside the fenced-off Root Protection Areas.
- 6.2 The Tree Protection Fencing will be installed as per the Tree Protection Plan (a preliminary version of this plan is attached in Appendix 1), which subject to planning will be agreed with the Local Authority Tree Officer.
 The proposed specification can be found in Appendix 2.
- 6.3 A copy of the tree protection plan should be on display in the site office.
- 6.4 The site office, welfare facilities, storage area and contractors parking area need to be located within an area of the site that is outside the Root Protection Area (RPA) of retained trees. Due to the topography of the site the site office, welfare facilities, storage area and contractors parking area will be located on the lower part of the site which is remote from the retained trees.
- 6.5 All excavated soil will be removed from site or stored in a location remote from any tree protection areas.
- 6.6 Within the fenced-off Tree Protection Zones:
 - 1. No Pedestrian, Machinery or Vehicular Access unless authorised by the Arboricultural Supervisor.
 - 2. No storage of plant or materials.
 - 3. No storage or handling of any chemical including cement washings within 5m of the fenced-off areas.
 - 4. No fires within 10m of the Tree Protection Fencing.
 - 5. No excavation below existing soil level by any means.
 - 6. No level increases >100mm within the fenced-off area and no increase within 2m of the stem of any retained tree, without agreement from the Arboricultural Supervisor.
 - 7. Any works within the fenced-off area to be agreed and overseen by the Arboricultural Clerk of Works.
- 6.7 The swimming patio area and pool shed base will all be carefully removed using light machinery located on the existing hardstanding, all hardstanding will be pulled away from the trees and only the hardstanding and inert sub-base will be removed as part of these works. For these works the tree protection will be temporarily moved back.
- 6.8 Any voids within 4m of the retained trees created by the removal of existing hardstanding I'll be filled with clean topsoil. The swimming pool is beyond the Root Protection Area of any retained trees and providing the Tree Protection Fencing is in-situ as per the Tree Protection Plan the pool can be removed, backfilled without impacting on the retained trees.
- 6.9 The underground services will be located outside the Root Protection Area of the retained trees.
- 6.10 If the subsoil is found to be plastic, the foundations will be specified to take into account the potential influence of the existing and proposed vegetation on the moisture content and volume of the subsoil.

6.11 Dismantling the protection barriers will be required to allow completion of final landscaping. The removal of the Tree Protection Fencing is not an opportunity for machinery to access the previously fenced-off area. No further excavation will be carried out during this process and soils levels will not be raised above that existing by greater than 100mm and not at all within 2m of the trunk.

7.0 <u>Conclusion</u>

- 7.1 The proposed vegetation removals associated with the proposed works are restricted to removing some poor-quality vegetation growing near the existing swimming pool. The removal of this vegetation will not have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the wider area.
- 7.2 Provided that the site works are undertaken following our guidelines and advice as outlined in this report, with the Tree Protection Fencing installed as per the Tree Removals and Tree Protection Plan the proposed development can be constructed without adversely impacting on the health and long-term future of the retained trees.
- 7.3 The successful protection of retained trees on this site during the proposed development works can be achieved by following the guidelines outlined in this report and by following the recommendations in BS5837:2012.

Peter Wilkins BA (Hons) MArborA. Ruskins Tree Consultancy a trading name of RG Consultancy Limited November 2019

Appendix 1

Tree Condition Survey

Tree Condition Survey for Mawles Farm, Sibford Gower, Banbury. 0X15 5RW

Prepared for: Ian O'Brien Studio Limited



A trading name of RG Consultancy Ltd

Peter Wilkins BA (Hons) MArborA Our Ref 0419-8059 Rev 1 September 2019

Tree Condition Survey for Mawles Farm, Sibford Gower, Banbury. 0X15 5RW

1.0 Introduction

We have been instructed by Ian O'Brien Studio Limited to assess the condition of trees located within and close to the boundary of the site. The site was visited in September 2019 and an assessment of the trees' condition was made in accordance with BS5837 2012.

Following submission of our initial tree survey we have been provided with a copy of the proposed layout and have updated the tree survey to reflect the tree removals necessary to implement the proposed development.

2.0 Survey Methodology

We have surveyed all the individual trees and groups of trees located within and close to the boundary of the site. The objective of the survey is to collect tree data relevant to the proposed redevelopment of the site and to categorise individual trees or tree groups in accordance with BS 5837 (2012) 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations' based on their condition, quality and future potential.

The purpose of the categories within BS5837 2012, is not to determine whether retention of trees is desirable, '*The purpose of the tree categorization method, which should be applied by an arboriculturist, is to identify the quality and value (in a non-fiscal sense) of the existing tree stock, allowing informed decisions to be made concerning which trees should be removed or retained in the event of development occurring.*' (BS5837 2012 Section 4.5.2). This survey should therefore be regarded as an initial appraisal and observations, assessments or recommendations relating to tree protection zones, remedial tree works, protective fencing, foundation design, material specification are beyond the scope of this report.

The location of the trees is shown on the attached drawing. It should be noted that all trees within the gardens of adjoining residential properties have been viewed only from within the site. A detailed inspection of individual trees with respect to decay, defects and hazard is not included. However, trees found to be in a structurally dangerous condition are identified.

TABLE 1

Tree No.	Species	Hgt (m)	Dia. @ 1.5m (m)	No of stems	CS N (m)	CS E (m)	CS S (m)	CS W (m)	ER CY	Vig.	Form	Age Class	Description	Proposed Works	BS Cat
T1	Willow	4	700	1	3	3	3	3	20-39	A	А	SM	A stump from a willow tree that is regrowing. This stump is located close to the south-eastern corner of the barn. This stump is located beneath overhead cables and if retained ongoing management would be required	Remove to allow for proposed development.	C2
T2	Holly	6	150	1	2	2	2	2	40+	A	A	SM	A semi-mature holly growing within the unmanaged shrub bed TG1 which runs to the western side of the swimming pool.	Remove to allow for proposed development.	C2
тз	Holly	8	250*	1	3	3	3	3	40+	А	А	EM	An ivy-covered, early-mature holly growing to the northern end of the unmanaged shrub bed TG1 which runs to the western side of the swimming pool. This tree has a limited live canopy and is covered in dense ivy. It is immediately to the northern side of the pole for the overhead cables with the pump house to the eastern side.	Remove to allow for proposed development.	C2
T4	Cherry	9	260	1	5	4	5	4	40+	A	A	SM	A mature tree growing within the unmanaged vegetation which runs along the northern side of the swimming pool. This tree is in close proximity to the pump house for the swimming pool. There is a low stone /concrete retaining wall running to the southern side of this tree.	No Works	C2
T5	Holly	5	150	1	2	2	2	2	40+	A	A	SM	A semi-mature tree growing within the unmanaged vegetation which runs along the northern side of the swimming pool. There is a low stone /concrete retaining wall running to the southern side of this tree.	No Works	C2

Tree No.	Species	Hgt (m)	Dia. @ 1.5m (m)	No of stems	CS N (m)	CS E (m)	CS S (m)	CS W (m)	ER CY	Vig.	Form	Age Class	Description	Proposed Works	BS Cat
T6	Holly	5	150	1	2	2	2	2	40+	А	А	SM	A semi-mature tree growing within the unmanaged vegetation which runs along the northern side of the swimming pool. This tree has a limited live canopy and is covered in dense ivy. There is a low stone /concrete retaining wall running to the southern side of this tree.	No Works	C2
Т7	Pear	8	250*	1	2	3	3	2	0-9	Ρ	Ρ	ОМ	A declining, ivy-covered fruit tree with a limited live canopy. T7 is growing within the vegetation to the northern side of the swimming pool. The dense ivy prevents a full inspection of this tree.	Sever ivy to allow full inspection of this tree.	C2
Т8	Hazel	2	200	m/s	2	2	2	2	40+	A	А	SM	A small, multi-stemmed hazel growing within the vegetation to the eastern side of the swimming pool.	No Works	C2
Т9	Hazel	4	450	m/s	4	4	3	4	40+	A	А	М	A multi-stemmed hazel growing within the vegetation to the eastern side of the swimming pool.	No Works	C2
T10	Hazel	3	200	m/s	2	2	2	2	40+	А	A	SM	A small, multi-stemmed hazel growing close to the south-east corner of the swimming pool.	No Works	C2
S1	Viburnum	2.5	150	m/s	3	3	3	3	10-19	А	A	М	A multi-stemmed shrub growing within the vegetation to the eastern side of the swimming pool.	Remove to allow for proposed development.	C1
TG1	Snowberry and Damsons	2.0	50	m/s	2	2	2	2	10-19	A	A	М	A dense narrow unmanaged shrub bed running to the western side of the swimming pool. This is dominated by snowberry towards the northern end are some young damsons.	Remove to allow for proposed development.	C1

Table 1 Cascade chart for tree quality assessment

Category and definition Criteria (including subcategories where appropriate										
Category U Those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years	 Trees that have a serious, irremediable, structural defect, such that their early loss is expected due to collapse, including those that will become unviable after removal of other category U trees (e.g. where, for whatever reason, the loss of companion shelter cannot be mitigated by pruning) Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate, and irreversible overall decline Trees infected with pathogens of significance to the health and/or safety of other trees nearby, or very low quality trees suppressing adjacent trees of better quality NOTE Category U trees can have existing or potential conservation value which it might be desirable to preserve; see 4.5.7. 									
Trees to be considered for retention										
	1 Mainly arboricultural qualities	2 Mainly landscape qualities	3 Mainly cultural values, including conservation							
Category A Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life-expectancy of at least 40 years	Trees that are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual; or those that are essential components of groups or formal or semi- formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue)	Trees, groups or woodlands of particular visual importance as arboricultural and/or landscape features.	Trees, groups or woodlands See Table 2 of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood- pasture)	Green						
Category B Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years.	Trees that might be included in category A, but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of significant though remediable defects, including unsympathetic past management and storm damage), such that they are unlikely to be suitable for retention for beyond 40 years; or trees lacking the special quality necessary to merit the category A designation	Trees present in numbers, usually growing as groups or woodlands, such that they attract a higher collective rating than they might as individuals; or trees occurring as collectives but situated so as to make little visual contribution to the wider locality	Trees with material conservation or other cultural value	Blue						
Category C Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150 mm.	Unremarkable trees of very limited merit or such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories	Trees present in groups or woodlands, but without this conferring on them significantly greater collective landscape value; and/or trees offering low or only temporary/transient landscape benefits	Trees with no material conservation or other cultural value	Grey						

From BS 5837 (2012) Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations

<u>KEY</u>

Tree No.	Species	Hgt (m)	Dia. @ 1.5m (m)	No of stems	CS N (m)	CS E (m)	CS S (m)	CS W (m)	ER CY	Vig.	Form	Age Class	Description	Works	BS Cat
No.	No. Tree number identified on copy of Tree Survey Drawing														
Speci	ies:	Common/English name													
Hgt (m)	Height of tree (measured to nearest whole metre)													
Dia (I	m)	Diameter of stem/trunk measured at 1.5 metres above ground level (or immediately above the root flare for multi-stemmed trees). If stem diameters have to be estimated a (*) will follow the numerical figure. (e.g. 450mm*)													
No. o	of stems	Number of stems													
Crow	vn Spread	Maximum branch extent measured at the four compass points													
ERCY	':		Estimat	ed Rema	aining C	Contrib	ution in	Years							
Vigou	ur	G Good A Average L Low D Dead													
Form	I	GGoodAAveragePPoorDDead													
Age (Class	YYoungSMSemi-matureEMEarly matureMMatureOMOver MatureVVeteran													
BS Ca	ategory	See Table 1 Cascade chart for tree quality assessment From BS 5837 (2012) Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendation													

Tree Survey Plan



Tree Removals and Tree Protection Plan





Tree to be retained Tree to be removed Extent of Tree Canopy BS 5837 Category (See Below) Tree Survey Number Tree Name

Tree Protection Zone / Construction Exclusion Zone Fence-off this area prior to any works commencing on site, no access during any enabling, demolition or construction works, all works within these areas to follow guidelines as outlined in the Arboricultural Report.

Mawles Farm, Sibford Gower, Banbury. 0X15 5RW

Tree Removals and Tree Protection Plan for Ian O'Brien Studio

Ruskins Tree Consultancy

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Scale	1 : 100 @ A1	Drawn by
Scale	0	PW
Date	13/11/2019	
Project No.	1119-8073	Checked by
Dwg. No.	TPP-01	JG

Appendix 2

Tree Protection Specification and

Tree Protection Notice

Tree Protection Fencing Specification



prior to any works commencing or materials being delivered to site.

www.ruskins-tree-consultancy.co.uk



PLEASE KEEP OUT

The trees in this area are protected by their ownership and/or Planning Conditions. Any works in this fenced-off area may result in damage to the above ground parts or root system of these trees.

Damage to these trees may lead to a criminal prosecution and or enforcement action.

Any works in this area must be undertaken as per the Arboricultural Report.

Please contact <u>info@ruskins-tree-consultancy.co.uk</u> for more information.