Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

Land Adjacent to The Beeches, Spring Gardens, Whitland, Carmarthenshire, SA34 0HP

Prepared on the instructions of
Mr G. Phillips

Based on inspections carried out on
8th February 2021

***By* Alan Webster, MArborA**
Our Ref: ARW 1095

arw tree consultancy

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Drawings

1 Introduction

1.1 **Instruction:** I am instructed by Mr Gwynne Phillips to provide an arboricultural impact assessment, in accordance with BS5837:2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*, to support a planning application at The Beeches, Spring Gardens, Whitland.

1.2 **Qualifications and experience:** I have based this report on my site observations and the provided information. I have come to conclusions in the light of my qualifications and experience in arboriculture summarised in Appendix 1.

1.3 **Documents and information provided:** Mr Vaughan-Harries of Hayston Developments and Planning provided me with copies of the following documents:

- Location Plan
- Topographical Survey PDF and DWG
- Proposed Site Layout
- Design and Access Statement

1.4 **Scope of this report:** This report concerns the trees and their environment on and adjacent to the proposed development site, in accordance with British Standards Institute, BS 5837: British Standard for trees in relation to design, demolition and construction- Recommendations (2012).

1.4.1 No arboricultural method statement or tree protection plan is included with this report and is expected to be required in the reserved matters application if outline is approved.

1.5 **Report limitations:** This report is valid at the time of the inspection; deliberate or accidental harm, severe weather conditions, pests and diseases can all effect change in the condition of trees.

1.5.1 Where adjacent properties contain trees overhanging the site these have only been included in this survey if a safety or nuisance issue is clearly present or if development proposals have an impact upon them. These trees could not be inspected fully as they are within different ownership. Only defects obvious from a visual inspection from within the site are noted. Any works to such trees may require the consent of the owner.

2 Site visit

2.1 **Site visit:** I carried out my unaccompanied site visit on the 8th of February 2021. All my observations were from ground level without detailed investigation and I estimated all dimensions unless otherwise indicated. The weather at the time of my inspection was dry and clear allowing good visibility.

2.2 **Site description:** The B4328, Spring Gardens runs east to west through Whitland in west Carmarthenshire. The proposed development site lies to the north of the road and to the east of a development in Maes Abaty. Access is directly off Spring Gardens.

2.2.1 The site has a partially constructed access drive to an uninhabited large detached dwelling that appears to not have been finished. Apart from the access and the area around the dwelling the rest of the proposed site is an arable field.

2.2.2 The field slopes to the north and west and indicator plants indicate that these parts of the field are wet. Drainage channels are present on the eastern and western (shallow channel) boundaries, as well as at the lowest point to the north inside the red line.

2.2.3 The site has numerous mature trees concentrated on the site boundaries.

2.3 **Identification and location of the trees:** The trees in question are shown on the tree location plan included as Drawing ARW 1095:01. This plan is for illustrative purposes only and it should not be used for directly scaling measurements. All the relevant information on it is contained within this report and the provided documents.

2.4 The Local Authority has not been approached to check for statutory tree protection.

2.5 **Statutory tree protection:** A TPO makes it an offence to top, lop, uproot, take down, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a tree, trees or woodland such that its amenity value is diminished, unless it is by agreement with the Local Planning Authority (LPA). This is not a ‘blanket ban’ on all tree work. Tree work may proceed under the following circumstances:

- Normal arboricultural maintenance work to preserve, enhance or mitigate nuisance aspects of the tree’s habit carried out to professional standards with LPA agreement.
- Elimination of hazards presented by dead or damaged trees or limbs to the extent required to mitigate the risk where the tree is not immediately dangerous. Significant harm must be both foreseeable and be expected to arise within eight weeks. At least 5-days’ written notice must be given to the LPA.
- Elimination of immediately dangerous hazards presented by dead or damaged trees or limbs to the extent required to mitigate the risk.
- Removal of dead branches.

- A number of other specific circumstances that don't apply here but which include grant of full planning permission, compliance with Acts of Parliament, activities of Statutory Undertakers (for example, utility providers), horticultural maintenance of trees for fruit production and so on.

Any work not falling within any of these exemption categories requires a formal application to be made to the LPA using the standard 1App form for tree work. Similar restrictions apply to all trees over 75mm in diameter when measured at 1.5 metres from ground level if they are in a conservation area.

3 Observations

3.1 **Development plan:** The proposal is for Outline (Major) Application For Residential Development (Including Affordable Element) Together With New Vehicular Access And Associated Parking And Landscaping (All Matters Reserved Except Highways)

3.2 **Trees:** The surveyed trees were assessed either as individuals or as groups where appropriate.

3.3 **Root morphology:** *Tree roots will exploit the most suitable conditions that they can find, migrating to ideal conditions i.e. nutrient levels and available water. Obstructions or poor conditions will force roots to grow alongside, around, under or over.*

3.3.1 Trees on the eastern boundary will have a curtailed root spread into the proposed development space due to the drainage ditch.

3.3.2 For all other trees a symmetrical root protection area is a reasonable assumption.

3.4 **Branch spread:** The branches of the trees internal to the site have broadly symmetric crowns that encroach into the site.

3.4.1 The trees along the western boundary have undergone significant pruning due to their proximity to houses in Maes Abaty. The crowns of these trees have both been reduced and crown lifted.

3.5 **Wildlife:** I did not observe any suitable features that could be used as bat habitat during my survey.

4 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

The following impact assessment is based on the provided Proposed Site Plan P03.

4.1 **Tree removal:** Trees in the table below should be removed for reasons of good arboricultural management and their removal should not be considered when determining the proposal.

Tree	Reason for removal
T2	Decay at base
T6	Declining, moribund.
T8	Dead
T15	Advanced ash die back
T17	Moribund
T24	Storm damage to main stem
T25	Moribund

4.1.1 Tree T14 has a basal cavity and has damage to the main buttress roots on its southern side. Further assessment using invasive techniques is required to establish if this tree cab be retained in the developed context.

4.2 **Effects of new development on amenity value on or near the site: No significant impact** on visual amenity as all healthy trees can be retained.

4.3 **Direct impact to retained trees**

4.3.1 There are no direct above ground impacts to the retained trees.

4.3.2 The direct below ground impacts to the trees are listed below.

Trees	Below ground Constraint	Impact
T3	The roots of T3 encroach into the proposed parking area.	Traditional construction will sever roots and cause compaction of the ground reducing water and nutrient uptake which in turn reduces photosynthesis and potential energy production. **However, in this case the area affected is small and there is sufficient compensatory rooting environment contiguous to the measured RPA.**

4.4 **Construction processes of the proposed development:** *Development processes that lead to soil compaction in tree rooting zones and physical damage to trees can adversely affect long-term tree health. This can lead to unnecessary tree loss if not controlled properly on site during the construction.*

4.4.1 Ground compaction caused by movements of construction traffic and indiscriminate storage of materials could have a **high impact** on all the retained trees. Uncontrolled vehicle and pedestrian movements in the root protection areas of the trees' will compact the pore space in the soil, reducing the trees ability to uptake water, nutrients and its ability for root growth, thus leading to their premature decline and eventual death. if they are not protected during construction.

4.4.2 Compaction to the soil and direct damage to the trees can be prevented by using a combination of protective fencing and ground protection.

4.5 **Modifications proposed to accommodate trees:** No recommendations.

4.6 **Infrastructure requirements:** Not applicable.

4.7 **Proximity of trees to structures:** Leaf fall is an expected problem when building near trees, although its effects can be mitigated by the use of gutter guards. Using gutter guards and considering the small leaf size of the trees most likely to cause these problems, the resulting impact of the trees on the proposed dwellings will be low.

4.7.1 Trees T5, T18. T19, T20, T21, T22, T23 and those in G1 may give rise to fears of dominance to future inhabitants due to their size and proximity to the proposed dwellings. To prevent indiscriminate pruning the Local Authority can protect these trees by serving a tree preservation order.

4.8 **Shading:** Trees in G1 will shade the adjacent plots as they are on southern boundary of them. This is expected to be tolerable as the crowns have been lifted that will allow light to pass under the canopies.

4.8.1 The canopy of T5 does not directly shade the adjacent plot using the segment described in the Standard; however, ambient light will be reduced due to the large overhang. This can be mitigated by some reduction of the western canopy; this will not adversely affect the amenity value of the tree.

4.8.2 Trees T18. T19, T20, T21, T22 and T23 will shade the adjacent plots; however, these trees have already been crown raised and have undergone crown reductions as this problem has already been experienced by the inhabitants in Maes Abaty on the other side of these trees. This previous work and a repeat of it will reduce the problem to a tolerable level.

4.9 **Services:** The services are assumed to follow existing routes into the site and therefore will have no impact on the retained trees.

The potential impacts of the development on the retained trees and vice versa can be adequately controlled by a suitable arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan.

5 Contacts

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Written by:

Alan Webster, MArborA
for and on behalf of ARW Tree Consultancy

Date: 17/02/2021

Appendices

Appendix 1

Qualifications and experience of Alan Webster

1. Academic qualifications:

Level 3 **Technicians Certificate in Arboriculture**: ABC

Level 6 **Professional Diploma in Arboriculture,** units:

- Tree risk management
- Tree and hedge management
- Selection, planting and design with hardy nursery stock for amenity and landscape purposes
- Arboricultural plant health
- Planning and development in arboriculture
- Management of special trees
- Woodland management
- Independent research project

2. Practical experience:

2003 – 2005

Freelance Chainsaw Operator. Mainly working as a Groundsman for TreeWorks (West Wales) Ltd. Duties including woodland felling and ground based arboricultural operations, in the private and commercial sector.

2005 - 2009.

Groundsman progressing to Lead Climber and Arboricultural Contracts Manager in 2007. Employed by TreeWorks (West Wales) Ltd. Continue to lead arboricultural team and control all chainsaw related operations within countryside teams. Made responsible for management and implementation of company Health and Safety systems.

2009- 2014.

Consultant Arboriculturist and Technical Director. Employed by TreeWorks (West Wales) Ltd, undertaking Tree Surveys and Health & Safety Management.

2014 – Present

Independent Arboricultural Consultant. Trading as ARW Tree Consultancy. Providing advice on risk assessment, development site issues and boundary disputes.

2015 – 2016

Tree Officer for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. Responsible for risk assessing Council trees, advising Development Control on trees in relation to planning, maintenance of TPO's and applications, managing project work where trees were identified as a problem.

2016 – Present

Tree Officer (Planning) City and County of Swansea Council. Advising Development Control on trees in planning context, representing the Council in planning appeals and hearings, TPO review, creation and determination.

3. Professional qualifications and continuing professional development:

2007 **Certified Arborist**- International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).
2008 **Arboriculture and Bats**- LANTRA.
2008 **Managing Safely**- Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH).
2009 **Thorough Examination of Arboricultural Equipment** (LOLER '98 regs.)- NPTC.
2010 **Level 2 Computer Aided Design**. – City and Guilds.
2010 Recertification, **Certified Arborist**- (ISA).
2010 **VTA Update Seminar** - Prof. Claus Mattheck/Symbiosis Consulting
2010 **Quantified Tree Risk Assessment** – Mike Ellison
2011 **Professional Tree Inspection** – Arboricultural Association/Lantra
2011 **AA Getting to Grips with Subsidence** – Dr. P.G. Biddle and Dr. M. Dobson
2012 **AA Arboricultural Consultancy** – Jim Quaife and Jeremy Barrell
2012 **46th AA Amenity Conference** – Reading University
2013 **AA Pests and Diseases Road Show** – Guy Watson and Ben Abbatt
2013 **C.A.S. Experts Question Time- Tree Safety** – Jeremy Barrell and Dr. David Lonsdale.
2013 Recertification, **Certified Arborist**- (ISA).
2015 **PACE training** - PHF Training, Kevin Hall
2015 **4th Big Barn Conference** – Barchams
2015 AA **Valuing and Managing Veteran Trees** – Simon Cox
2015 **Green Blue Urban Seminar**
2015 **HTOF Subsidence Seminar** – Dr. P.G. Biddle
2015 **Tree Preservation Orders, Effective Application** - CAS
2016 **Trees in development** – AA –Barrell Tree Consultancy
2016 **Role of the Tree Officer** – AA – Richard Nicholson
2016 **Habitat Regulations in the Planning Process**
2016 **Environment (Wales) Act 2016** – Natural Resources Wales
2017 **Assessment of Tree Forks** – AA – Dr. Duncan Slater
2018 **Aspiring Registered Consultants Day** - AA

4. Relevant experience:

Since 2003 I have been pursuing my natural interest in trees, broadening my knowledge and the required skill range. These acquired skills and knowledge have been applied to projects for private customers, larger agencies and local authorities. I have inspected thousands of trees using accepted VTA methodology and have experience with the most up to date invasive decay detection devices. In the planning arena, I have experience of providing evidence for appeals and at planning hearings. I have recently authored Supplementary Planning Guidance and drafted tree policies for a local authority.

5. Professional affiliations:

Arboricultural Association (AA)- Professional Member
Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF)- Affiliate Member

Appendix 2

Tree Schedule

Explanatory notes:

- **Tree no:** Refers to the tree number shown on any included drawings.
- **Species:** The species identification based on visual observations and the common English name of what the tree appeared to be is listed first, with the botanical name after in brackets. In some instances, it may be difficult to quickly and accurately identify a particular tree without further detailed investigations. Where there is some doubt of the precise species of tree, it is indicated with a '?' after the name in order to avoid delay in the production of the report. The botanical name is followed by the abbreviation sp if only the genus is known. The species listed for groups and hedges represent the main component and there may be other minor species not listed.
- **Tree Height:** Height is an estimate to the nearest metre. Figures in brackets indicate lowest branch height.
- **Stem Diameter:** These figures relate to 1.5m above ground level and are recorded in millimetres. If appropriate, diameter is measured with a diameter tape.
- **Crown Spread:** The crown spread visually estimated to the nearest metre from the centre of the trunk to the tips of the live lateral branches, N= north, S= south, E= east and W=west.
- **Height & direction of 1st branch:** Height in meters of first significant branch and direction expressed as a cardinal point.
- **Min. Crown clearance:** Clear height in metres of ground clearance at the four cardinal points measured in metres
- **Life stage:** Age is an estimated range based on visual indicators and should only be taken as a provisional guide. . Y=**Young:** obviously planted/self seeded within the last three years (unless as a heavy or extra-heavy standard). SM=**Semi-mature:** recently planted and yet to attain mature stature; up to 25% of attainable age. EM=**Early mature:** almost full height, crown still developing and seed bearing; up to 50% of attainable age. M=**Mature:** full height, crown spread, seed bearing; over 50% of attainable age. OM=**Over mature:** full size, die-back, small leaf size, poor growth extension.
- **Physiological condition:** Physiological health G=good; F= fair; P= poor; D= dead or moribund
- **General observations/management recommendations:** Information based on visual observations that may influence management proposals or BS 5837 categorisation, where appropriate recommendations are offered.
- **Remaining contribution:** Estimated remaining contribution in years
- **Retention category:** The category awarded in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to construction- Recommendations, it is an indication of a trees condition and value.
- **RPA-R:** Radius of circle (measured from centre of trunk) required to achieve RPA-A, in metres
- **Text colour:** BS 5837 Category, Green=A, Blue=B, Grey=C, Red=U

Tree no	Species	Tree Height (m)	Stem Dia. (mm)	Crown spread (m)				Min. Crown Clearance (m)	Life Stage	General observations Management recommendation	Remaining Contribution	Retention Category	RPA R (m)	RPA A (m2)
				N	E	S	W							
T1	Wild Cherry	8	280	4	2	4	3		EM		10+	C1	3.4	36
T2	Beech	14	650	6	3	2	5		M.	Decay present on stem. Dieback in crown	<10	U	-	-
T3	Ash	14	400	7	6	7	5		M	Unbalanced crown shape	<10	C1	4.8	72
T4	Common Oak	16	700	4	8	6	7		M		40+	B2	8.4	222
T5	Common Oak	17	900	7	8	6	10		M		40+	A2	10.8	366
T6	Ash	10	220	3	3	3	3		EM	Low vitality. Declining.	<10	U	-	-
T7	Common Oak	14	600	7	5	6	6		M		20+	B2	7.2	163
T8	Common Oak	12	600	3	3	3	3		OM	Dead.	<10	U	-	-
T9	Common Oak	13	950	7	9	6	8		M		<10	A2	11.4	408
T10	Common Oak	14	700	7	7	7	3		M		40+	B2	8.4	222
T11	Common Oak	14	700	7	7	6	4		M		40+	B2	8.4	222
T12	Common Oak	12	450	4	8	4	0		M		40+	B2	5.4	92
T13	Common Oak	15	850	7	8	7	3		M	Cavity on stem. Dieback in crown.	20+	B2	10.2	327

T14	Common Oak	19	1000	8	10	3	9		OM	Cavity on stem. Major bark wounding on stem.	20+	C2	12.0	452
T15	Ash	12	800	8	10	7	8		OM	Low vitality. Declining. Epicormics on stem. Dieback in crown. Broken branches in crown.	<10	U	-	-
T16	Common Oak	10	720	6	7	3	7		M		10+	C2	8.6	235
T17	Holly	8	300 300	5	3	4	5		OM	Dead. Poor shape & form. Low vitality. Declining.	<10	U	-	-
T18	Common Oak	15	500	7	6	8	6		M	Ivy on stem. Not accessible.	40+	B2	6.0	113
T19	Common Oak	13	300 300	0	6	5	4		M	Ivy on stem. Not accessible.	20+	C2	5.1	81
T20	Common Oak	15	500	5	6	6	4		M	Ivy on stem. Not accessible.	20+	C2	6	113
T21	Common Oak	12	400	3	5	3	3		M	Ivy on stem. Not accessible.	20+	C2	4.8	72
T22	Common Oak	12	450	4	5	5	3		M	Ivy on stem. Not accessible.	20+	C2	5.4	92
T23	Common Oak	12	350	6	4	3	3		M	Pollard. Ivy on stem. Not accessible.	20+	C2	4.2	55
T24	Common Oak	12	400	8	3	5	5		M.	Cavity on stem. Major bark wounding on stem. Unbalanced crown shape. Not accessible	<10	U	-	-
T25	Common Oak	10	300	3	3	3	3		M	Low vitality. Declining Cavity on stem Major bark wounding on stem Unbalanced crown shape Not accessible	<10	U	-	-

G1	Beech	17	450	7	6	3	3	4	M		20+	C2	5.4	92
G2	Common Oak	10	350	4	3	3	5		EM		20+	C2	4.2	55
G3	Common Oak	10	300	4	3	3	5		EM		20+	C2	3.6	41

Category and definition	Criteria (including subcategories where appropriate)		
Trees unsuitable for retention			
Category U Those in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context or 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 may be desirable to preserve		
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 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 of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture)
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 a wider locality	Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood - pasture
Category C Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy or at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm	Unremarkable trees of a very limited merit or such an impaired condition that they so 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

Appendix 4

T1

T1

G1

T4 & T5

T14, T13, T12, T11, T10

T14

T17, T16, T15

T20

T23

T24

T25