



Arboricultural Report on the Revised Planting Proposal

at

**Maltings Farm,
Malthouse Lane,
Hurstpierpoint,
Hassocks,
West Sussex.
BN6 9JZ**

15th July, 2024



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LOCATION	Maltings Farm, Malthouse Lane, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks. West Sussex. BN6 9JZ	REF:	AR/4415/jq
CLIENT	Mr Chris Gargan, address as above	DATE OF REPORT	15 th July, 2024
REPORT PREPARED BY	J. Quaife, AA Registered Consultant Dip.Arb.(RFS), F.Arbor.A, CEnv.	DATE OF INSPECTION	5 th June, 2024
SURVEY INSPECTOR(S)	J. Quaife, AA Registered Consultant Dip.Arb.(RFS), F.Arbor.A, CEnv.	SHEET No.	1 of 7

LOCAL AUTHORITY	Mid Sussex District Council Planning reference - DM/24/0013
CONTACT	Emma Rivett Assistant Tree Officer - Development Management

Please note that abbreviations introduced in [square brackets] are used throughout the report.

INSTRUCTIONS

Issued by – Joseph Pearson, Lewis and Co Planning, 2 Port Hall Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 5PD on behalf of the applicant.

TERMS OF REFERENCE – To visit the site to provide advice with regard to the planting required to screen the eastern boundary wall to the House in response to the Council's concerns about the initial proposal.

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Summary

The property is a farm with several paddocks and is run as a livery. The new house has a large garden and a new eastern boundary wall has been constructed to provide visual and acoustic separation from the public right of way and a busy road beyond. The retrospective application for the creation of a walled garden was refused consent primarily due to the visual appearance of the wall, and the proposed planting scheme has been adversely criticised by the Council's tree officer. This report sets out the detail of a revised planting scheme which accommodates those concerns.

I have given due consideration to the specific screening requirements, the local soil type and drainage limitations with a planting method to overcome them, an emphasis upon the use of native tree species of commensurately modest potential mature sizes, and to soften the appearance of the new wall with flowering climbing plants.

As such these proposals are appropriate and sustainable in site-specific and ecological terms.

Documents Referred to:

- Mid Sussex Notice of planning refusal reference DM/24/0013 dated 17th May 2024
- British Standard BS 8545:2014 trees from Nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations
- Tree Design and Action Group - Tree Species Selection for Green Infrastructure 2019.

Scope of the Report

- 1.1 This report is concerned with the arboricultural and planting aspects of the site only.
- 1.2 I have not explored or discussed the applicable policies as my input is about species choice, planting methods including the practicalities of establishment, the visual appearance of the site and the necessary screening from the public right of way and particularly the noise from the busy main road.
- 1.3 This report does not invoke BS5837 (relating to the integration of trees with development) but the planting will be in accordance with BS 8545:2014 trees from Nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations.
- 1.4 Mindful that the planting is for the long term this report sets out the working specifications of the tree and screening planting with species selection to accommodate the need for sustainability in the terms encouraged by the Tree Design and Action Group.

Survey Method

- 2.1 The survey was conducted from ground level with the aid of binoculars. The principle subject trees are numbered and listed at Appendix A, together with RPA determinations. These and the less important trees are identified on the plan at Appendix B.
- 2.2 No tissue samples were taken nor was any internal investigation of the subject trees undertaken.
- 2.3 The stem diameters [SD] were measured or estimated in centimetres at 1.5 metres above ground level and otherwise in accordance with Annex C of BS5837.
- 2.4 The crown diameters were estimated by pacing or visually where access was restricted.
- 2.5 The positions of the subject trees are plotted at Appendix A derived from the supplied plan. Please note that the attached plan is for indicative purposes only.

The Site

- 3.1 With reference to the plan at Appendix A, the subject site is the band of land between the main road A273 and the newly constructed boundary wall to the garden. There is a strip of land within the site between the wall and the Green Circle Walk public right of way (Appendix A, photograph 1), with a close-board wooden fence along the property boundary (Appendix A, photographs 2 and 3).

- 3.2 Between the A273 and the Green Circle Walk is a wooded shaw of mixed semi-mature tree species with a significant number of dead and dying trees (Appendix A, photographs 5 and 6).
- 3.3 I did not take any soil samples but with reference to the British Geological Survey drift map the site is on a clay-based soil with some loam content and noted to have impeded drainage. This much was clearly evident as illustrated in photograph 4 at Appendix A.
- 3.4 I am not an expert on soils and although I have some working knowledge of them, if accurate soil analysis is required then a soil specialist should be contacted. However, I am content to offer a choice of species based upon the geological data and my own observations.

The Proposed Planting in the Planning Application

- 4.1 This is rejected by the Council for the reasons set out by Emma Rivett in her note to Caroline Grist of May this year, which I have reproduced below, numbering the paragraphs for ease of reference.
- i) I have been reviewing this application and in particular, the landscape plans and have some issues with them.
 - ii) The holly suggested to be standard trees, wouldn't be suitable. They are typically understorey, woodland plants, and not standard trees. Further to that, horses and people walking alongside the prickly, hedge would mean that it probably isn't an appropriate selection. Other species may be more appropriate, but adequate space to grow and thrive is questionable.
 - iii) The hornbeam hedge, although native, would still need adequate space to grow and develop.
 - iv) The space allowed for these plants looks very restricted.
 - v) I am concerned that the space between the wall and the fence is very limited and don't think that there is sufficient space for the trees to grow. Any tree that is planted in this location will be under constant pressure to be pruned, to ensure that the Public Right of Way (PROW) [*Green Circle Walk*] is accessible, as well as the private track/ path. That would mean having to prune trees from both sides to ensure accessibility. Over pruning trees makes them weak and potentially dangerous, and that could create a safety issue concerning the PROW and future maintenance of these trees/ hedges.
 - vi) There are also further concerns that any species selected to soften the imposing nature of the wall, could undermine the wall, therefore making it unstable and dangerous.

The Proposed Revised Planting Scheme

5. Trees

- 5.1 I have taken account of these concerns and will take each in turn. At Appendix A I have listed my suggested species along with a cross-section of the wall and the mound planting. There are two distinct elements;
- a, the planting of the strip of land between the wall and the PROW, and
 - b, the screening to be afforded to the wall.

- 5.2 The criticism of a hornbeam hedge is justified and so to me the more pragmatic solution is to renew the existing fence so that there is a clear boundary demarcation without the need for a hedge and the on-going maintenance it would require. A hedge would be softer in appearance and have some habitat benefit, but there is very little of that currently along the fence line, (Appendix A, photographs 1, 2 and 3).
- 5.3 A fence is far more effective at encouraging users of the path to stay on it.
- 5.4 The full revised planting proposal will have much greater habitat benefit and consequently there will be a considerable net ecological benefit increase.
- 5.5 The proposed planting of trees between the fence and the wall is also criticised:
- v) I am concerned that the space between the wall and the fence is very limited and don't think that there is sufficient space for the trees to grow. Any tree that is planted in this location will be under constant pressure to be pruned, to ensure that the Public Right of Way (PROW) [*Green Circle Walk*] is accessible, as well as the private track/ path. That would mean having to prune trees from both sides to ensure accessibility. Over pruning trees makes them weak and potentially dangerous, and that could create a safety issue concerning the PROW and future maintenance of these trees/ hedges.
- 5.6 The requirement for trees is as far as I am concerned essential. There is limited space and so I have selected species with naturally modest mature heights as listed under 'Mound Planting' at Appendix A. They are all suited to the soil type and of limited mature height. Whereas Field maple is capable of considerable growth, the cultivar of it I have specified has a very compact crown form and does not grow to much more than 30 feet in height (photo right). The other species, the wild apple and Bird cherry, are of obvious benefit, and I have included hazel because it can be coppiced regularly on a 4-5 year cycle which is beneficial as a stool. The multiple shoots from the stool which trap leaf litter is a good environment for invertebrates. The pruned stems can be cut into short lengths and heaped to provide more decaying material. A single stem can be retained as a small tree.
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- 5.7 In fact all pruned material should be cut into short lengths and allowed to decay on the ground. Whereas this might be construed as being "untidy", in fact nature is "untidy" and decaying ground cover is an important ecological resource. Added to which it will be behind the boundary fence.
- 5.8 Ground *flora* will also grow and in a very few years this linear strip will be colonised by a whole range of organisms and smaller wildlife.
- 5.9 As I mention in paragraph 5.4 above, the trees to be planted will be on mounded soil simply because this area is prone to water-logging. This is a very long-established forestry planting technique used in these situations, ranging from "ditch and dollop" where the spoil from ditches parallel to the planting lines is mounded alongside at the planting distances. Where ditch excavation needs to be relatively deep creating a larger volume of spoil, it is heaped continuously alongside.

- 5.10 In this instance soil will be imported to form a continuous mound. It will be friable general purpose topsoil¹ which suits tree root growth and will allow unrestricted, intermingled linear root development along the bund. In many cases this can encourage root growth to enter the water-logged zone, albeit to a limited depth, but in maturity trees can and do change their growing environment.
- 5.11 For logical and justifiable reasons I have selected trees with modest mature heights so that they are not compromised by the restricted space. Despite being of modest size their crowns will form a combined canopy. I have indicated a planting separation distance of about 4 metres as this will provide space for the trees to develop and allow the trellis planting to be seen.
- 5.12 Another criticism of the previous planting scheme is that the proposed use of holly was inappropriate because they are "understory species". I have not chosen holly because it has a relatively large growth potential, and would not harmonise with my species choice.
- 5.13 That my species choice could also be described as understory species is not a conflict. In fact quite the reverse because tree species which would achieve a high storey would be demonstrably inappropriate for the limited space available. As I have mentioned, my species choice is precisely to be harmonious, and importantly sustainable, in the specific site circumstances.
- 5.14 The comments at the Council's paragraph v) "Over pruning trees makes them [the trees] weak and potentially dangerous" is not explained. Frankly I am at a loss as to understand this. Pruning carried out with poor practice can of course cause harm to trees, but as Mr Gargan will be going to considerable effort and expense to plant, establish and maintain the proposed trees, I fail to see that commensurate with his wish for successful effective and ecologically sound tree growth, that as and when pruning is required he would not use a qualified arboricultural contractor. Such a contractor would be well-versed in carrying out pruning in compliance with British Standard 3998: 2010 - Tree work.
- 5.15 Finally the suggestion was made at the Council's paragraph vi) that; There are also further concerns that any species selected to soften the imposing nature of the wall, could undermine the wall, therefore making it unstable and dangerous.
- 5.16 The likelihood of the species I have chosen causing damage to the wall by undermining it is in my opinion sufficiently unlikely so as to be disregarded.
- 5.17 There are two distinct reasons for this. First the wall is very substantial and has a footing foundation depth of a metre, and the footing is solid concrete with steel reinforcement. In full maturity none of the proposed trees has the capability of dislodging such a comparatively massive structure.

¹ British Standard 3882:2015: Specification for Topsoil - 'General Purpose grade'

- 5.18 The second reason is the high water table which causes the water-logging. Tree roots need soil moisture but they also need aeration. The fibrous roots which take in moisture and a few minerals cannot function alone. They have evolved a symbiotic relationship with specialised mycorrhizal fungi which facilitate such absorption. These fungi have to have atmospheric oxygen to survive. This is why I have specified the mound planting, so that the root systems can grow in a sufficient depth of aerated soil.
- 5.19 In short, the roots of the tree species I have proposed will not damage the wall.

6. The planted trellis.

- 6.1 Being new the wall's appearance is a little stark, but it will tone down in due course.
- 6.2 That it is described as being incongruous is an entirely subjective matter.
- 6.3 Walls of various different materials are commonplace on landed estates and accepted as being entirely appropriate. I'm not suggesting that Maltings is a landed estate in historical terms, but the reasons for such a wall are privacy and noise attenuation from the busy main road. The main garden is behind the wall.
- 6.4 There is a shaw of trees along the road edge (plan at Appendix A) but traffic noise can be heard and is worse in the winter when the trees are not in leaf. This is the driving criterion for the wall's height.
- 6.5 To soften the wall's appearance the proposal is to face it with a trellis which will support a range of climbing plants. At Appendix A I have shown a diagram with the trellis fixed to the wall, and also a photographic example of a free-standing trellis. The choice is of no particular moment visually as in time it will be largely hidden and the wood colour will tone down. However, fixing it to the wall is a less expensive option, particularly given the proposed height.
- 6.6 Whether the trellis matches the height of the wall or not is a subjective choice, but my advice would be for it to stop short of the top.
- 6.7 I have suggested a selection of climbing plants which flower and will be an attractive feature. They are not native to the UK, but nevertheless attract a wide range of insects, and when fully grown will be used for nesting.
- 6.8 The tree planting mound will be extended to the wall which will be faced with a damp proof membrane to prevent deterioration of the brickwork pointing.

Conclusion

- 7.1 The Council is concerned about the proposals for tree planting on the ground between the PROW and the wall boundary wall, and the visual prominence of the wall.

- 7.2 I have proposed tree planting of indigenous species to be planted on a linear mound to compensate for the water-logging of the ground. The intention in landscape terms is to provide visual variation rather than uniform planting, and of species with modest mature height growth so as to remain proportionate.
- 7.3 The appearance of the wall will be mitigated with climbing plants on a custom-made trellis, planted into the linear mound which will extend to the wall. The species choice is to provide visual interest and diversity, and although not indigenous the plants are flowering and attract a wide range of insects which in turn attract birds.
- 7.4 The separation of the PROW from the planting area will be sustained with a replacement of the existing fence to the same style. Having a physical barrier is important.
- 7.5 In summary, the revised planting scheme and installation methodology I am proposing answers the concerns of the Council in sustainable terms.



Photograph 1. View of RoW Path looking NW



Photograph 2. View of the ground between the wall and fence looking NW



Photograph 3. View of the ground between the wall and fence looking SE



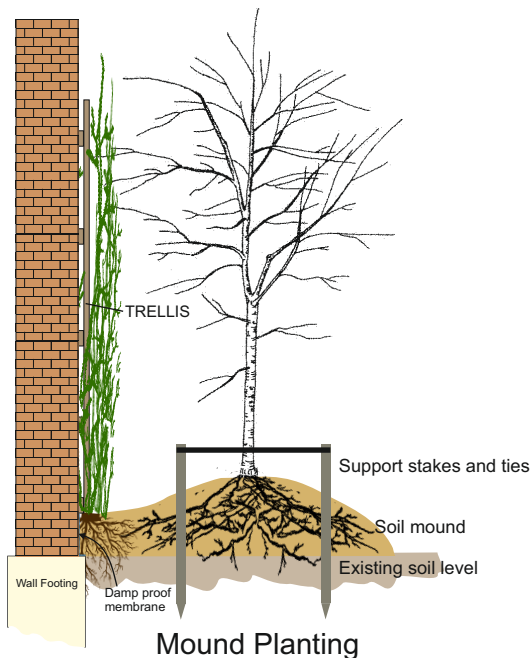
Photograph 4. View of the water-logged ground north of the wall



Photograph 5. View of dead and dying trees in the Wooded Shaw



Photograph 6. View of dead and dying trees in the Wooded Shaw



Mound Planting



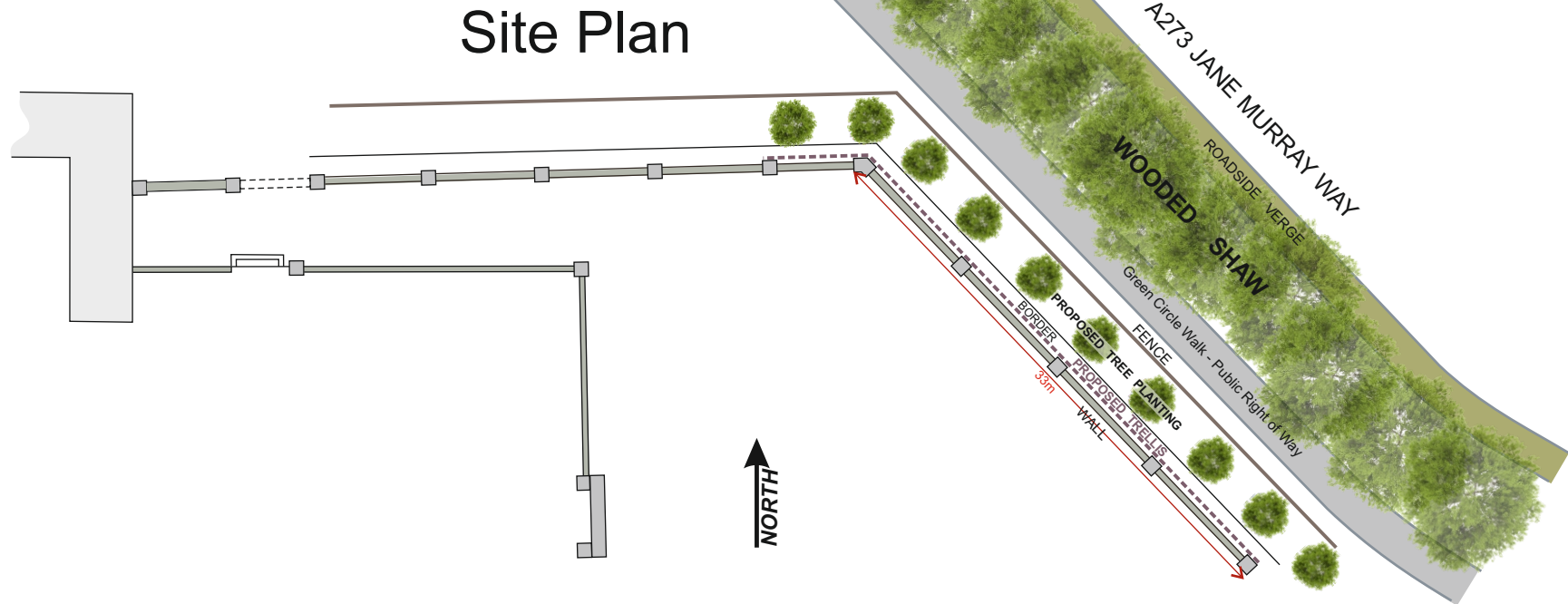
Example of a trellis to a robust specification with timber preservative treated for a minimum of 15 years life (QW installation at Sevenoaks School)

Mound Planting BS 8545:2014 trees from Nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations 10 trees at 4m spacing

Field maple	<i>Acer campestre fastigiata</i>	x 3
Wild Apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	x 2
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	x 3
Bird cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>	x 2

Trellis Planting

Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera Periclymenum</i>
Common hop	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>
Climbing hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea anomala glabra 'Crüg Coral'</i>
Wild rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Passion flower	<i>Passiflora sp.</i>
Jasmine	<i>Jasmine officinale</i>



Quaife Woodlands Arboricultural Survey AR/4415/jq

Maltings Farm, Malthouse Lane, Burgess Hill, BN6 9JZ

Site Plan - East Garden Wall - Proposed Landscape Planting

Plan scale 1:400 approximately @ A3

20th June 2014

0 10 20 30 40 metres

Scaling accuracy is sufficient for planning purposes but this drawing should not be used for construction
This plan is drawn in colour so monochrome reproduction may be unreliable



Local setting of the subject wall Google Earth extract

I am a Fellow and Registered Consultant of the Arboricultural Association and hold the Royal Forestry Society's Professional Diploma in Arboriculture¹, and a Chartered Environmentalist with the Society for the Environment. In the matter of determining TPO Appeals I spent 5 years as an Inspecting Officer for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and subsequently the Department of Communities and Local Government, and then 7 years as an Inspector for PINS determining TPO and High Hedge Appeals, until 2015 when all Arboricultural Inspectors were retired. In the summer of 2006 I appeared at the Public Inquiry for Phases 4 and 5 of the Bolnore Village Application and as part of my evidence the Inspector accepted my definition of the Ancient Woodland Buffer Zone which was subsequently adopted nationally.

I have worked in woodland management and arboriculture since 1972 and following six years with English Woodlands Ltd. I was appointed as woodland manager at the Squerryes Estate in Westerham, Kent. My work there covered all aspects of lowland forestry and woodland management (also managing woodland on some of the neighbouring estates), land use integration and conservation, as well as the establishment of a successful contractual and advisory arboricultural service. I was also responsible for the management of two SSSIs (a pre-Roman ancient woodland, and a bat habitat in old mine workings in woodland), and a Scheduled Ancient Monument in woodland. I completed the Bat Conservation Trust three-day residential course run by Dr S. Sowler covering the biology and habitats of bats, their behaviour, and roost emergence and return surveying.

I began my own business in 1990, which is now a busy consultancy practice for arboriculture and woodlands.

In addition to clients ranging from national, regional and local authorities, the MoD, corporations, charities and private individuals, I have experience of acting as an expert witness at planning inquiries and for litigation in civil and criminal courts (including acting for the Crown Prosecution Service) and the Lands Tribunal. I was also a member of the panel of approved consultants over a period of three years acting for the Welsh Assembly through the Welsh Development Agency in the implementation of the country's "Timber II" woodland regeneration programme, my role being to appraise grant applications for added-value woodland enterprises. For five years I was the arboricultural advisor to the States of Guernsey and additionally assisted the Island Development Committee with the formulation of new tree protection ordinance (legislation) – Tree Protection Order 2007, and was instructed to assist with writing the States' Tree Policy. I was also a consultee to the UK Government's Arboricultural Officer Peter Annett in the formulation of the 2012 TPO Regulations. I was the arboricultural advisor to the Liverpool King's Dock redevelopment as part of that City's preparations for their year as European Capital of Culture for 2008.

Of particular interest, in 2013 Quaife Woodlands was instructed to survey all trees on a regular basis within Finsbury Circus, which was a main works access site for the Crossrail project, as there had been some concern for the trees due to some ground movement. In 2020 I was instructed personally to oversee the decommissioning and restoration of the site, which is surrounded by trees protected with a TPO, and in particular one large London plane (which was individually cited in the Crossrail Act) adjacent to the access hole (25 metres in diameter and 40 metres deep). All trees survived unharmed. I have also advised on specific arboricultural matters with HS2 in London.

I was a co-presenter of the national series of seminars run by the Arboricultural Association introducing British Standard 5837 2005, and participated in the review of the current 2012 Standard. Instructed by DCLG for the anticipated revision of Circular 11/95, I wrote the draft of arboricultural planning conditions (which was issued for public consultation through the PINS website), but the entire review was suspended in 2010 following a change of Government and has not been reinstated. I am a visiting lecturer at Greenwich University, and previously at Merrist Wood and Hadlow colleges. I have presented at numerous seminars and conferences, together with writing arboricultural articles, and television and radio interviews.

For ten years I was an examiner for the Royal Forestry Society's Professional Diploma in Arboriculture. I was a Trustee Director of the Arboricultural Association for 19 years and served as Chairman for two separate periods of office. I served on the Association's Professional Committee for some 12 years and I worked for seven years as the lead assessor for the Arboricultural Association's Registered Consultant scheme, leading the initial development of the current application and assessment process. I instigated and co-presented the Arboricultural Association's two-day residential course for consultants, which ran for ten years. I served on planning committees as an elected councillor for 24 years from 1983 and my past chairmanships at Sevenoaks District Council included Development Control.

¹ When I achieved the RFS PDA in 1998 there was no arboricultural consultancy degree course available, but it is recognised within the arboricultural profession as being at BSc level. (A BSc in arboriculture is now available.)