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REPORT ON INSPECTION OF TREES

AT

**FERN COTTAGE
BONFIRE LANE
HORSTED KEYNES**

BY

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CONTENTS

Page No.

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION	1
3.	SCOPE OF TREE SURVEY	1
4.	DATA COLLECTION	1
5.	RISK ASSESSMENT - INFORMATIVES	2
6.	RESULTS OF TREE INSPECTIONS	3
7.	BS CALCULATED ROOT PROTECTION AREAS (RPAs)	4
8.	SUMMARY	5

APPENDICES:

1. EXPLANATORY SHEETS, TREE INSPECTION SHEET
2. TREE CONSTRAINTS PLAN, DRAWING NO. J66.67/01

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Broad Oak Tree Consultants Ltd. received instructions from Mr M. & Mrs L. Oesterlin to undertake an inspection of trees located at Fern Cottage, Bonfire Lane, Horsted Keynes. The purpose of the inspection was to produce a base inventory of the tree stock, calculate BS root protection areas and produce a Tree Constraints Plan that can be used for advising potential development layouts.
- 1.2 The trees were inspected on 5th March 2025 by Tim Laddiman, BSc.(Hons) M.I.C.For. M.Arbor.A., Chartered Arboriculturist and Principal Consultant of Broad Oak Tree Consultants Ltd.

2. GENERAL SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 Fern Cottage is an extended semi-detached two storey house located on the south side of Bonfire Lane in a relatively level rectangular plot, narrowing to the west. The main gardens are to the west with lawns and shrub beds within maintained boundary hedges.
- 2.2 To the south is an area of garden with planting beds with a further residential garden to the south.

3. SCOPE OF TREE SURVEY

- 3.1 All trees and shrubs of 75mm diameter or more at 1.5m above ground level were included in the survey. This included trees immediately adjacent to the site.
- 3.2 For the offsite trees estimates of location, dimensions and condition had to be made.

4. DATA COLLECTION

- 4.1 All trees were inspected from the ground and no climbing or specialist investigations were undertaken. Only those trees within the site boundary could be basally inspected, with the structural integrity of the trees located outside the site unconfirmed. Each tree was inspected to the requirements of Section 4.4 of BS 5837:2012 "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations".
- 4.2 The tree survey followed the numbered sequence from T1 to G9 inclusive. Tree numbers, together with BS recommended colour coding of condition, have been added to the Tree Constraints Plan, our drawing no. J66.67/01 in Appendix 2. This drawing also includes crown spreads based on four compass points and BS calculated root protection areas.

4.3 The following categories of information were obtained for each tree. A separate detailed tree survey sheet is attached in Appendix 1, together with comprehensive explanatory sheets which cover the details of the categories listed below.

- (1) Tree reference number
- (2) Species
- (3) Height in metres
- (4) Stem count
- (5) Stem diameter or equivalent in millimetres
- (6) Branch spread in metres
- (7) Age class
- (8) Height of crown clearance in metres
- (9) Physiological condition
- (10) Estimated remaining contribution in years
- (11) Category grading
- (12) Structural condition
- (13) Preliminary management recommendations

4.4 Within the assessment of physiological condition and remaining contribution, a visual inspection of each tree was undertaken to assess the crown and stem for any weak structures, deadwood, hollows, forks or other defects that might affect its stability and safety. The base of each tree was also visually inspected, together with tapping and probing, to search for signs of root lifting, bark death or decay. Where stems were heavily ivy clad, no full assessment of structural integrity could be undertaken. Clearance of the ivy would be necessary for confirmation of tree condition.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT - INFORMATIVES

5.1 Although the potential risk to someone passing beneath a tree when the tree or part of it fails is relatively remote, the risk is present. This increases significantly in areas of consistent and regular usage on a year round basis, such as footpaths, gardens and roadways. Where static structures exist, the risks become constant and an assessment is made as to whether complete or partial failure of a tree could potentially cause physical damage to such structures.

5.2 Within the scope of any tree survey it is a fact that not all risks of stem or crown failure can be covered, particularly in relation to freak occurrences of weather when even healthy trees can suffer stem snap or windblow. There is also a well known propensity for mature trees to occasionally shed limbs for no discernible reason, even on calm days. Although relatively rare, limbs may occasionally be shed and this should be acknowledged as a risk that cannot entirely be mitigated.

6. RESULTS OF TREE INSPECTIONS

- 6.1 A total of 7 individual trees/shrubs were inspected, together with two maintained mixed species hedgerows.
- 6.2 The majority of the trees are located in adjoining gardens to the south. The small Fig, T3, growing against the rear eastern boundary fence has been heavily pruned in the last year and the Camellia T7 has been regularly pruned, along with the boundary hedges.
- 6.3 All of the trees, shrubs and hedges appear to be in a reasonable condition, with several of the trees to the south having been pruned in the last one to two years.
- 6.4 Of the trees inspected, the following is a breakdown of the various numbers of trees and groups in each BS category.

BS Category	Tree No.	Sub Total
A	-	-
B	T1, T8	2
C	T2, T3, T4, T5, G6, T7, G9	7
U	-	-
	TOTAL	9

6.5 *Interpretation of table*

- Category A** Retention most desirable. Of high quality and value and in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution (a minimum of 40 years is suggested).
- Category B** Retention desirable. Of moderate quality and value and in such a condition as to make a significant contribution (a minimum of 20 years is suggested).
- Category C** Could be retained – of low quality and value. Poor crown form, heavily asymmetric, large numbers of similar species/size. Currently in adequate condition to remain until new planting could be established (a minimum of 10 years is suggested) or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm.
- Category U** Trees for removal. Dead/dying/dangerous trees due to structural defects, fungal decay or root plate uplift. Those in such a condition that any existing value would be lost within 10 years and which should, in the current context, be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management.

7. BS CALCULATED ROOT PROTECTION AREAS (RPAs)

- 7.1 To provide an indication of the critical areas of root plate necessary for tree survival and longevity, BS 5837:2012 requires the calculation of RPAs for trees in the BS Categories A, B and C. Calculations are not made for Category U trees which will require removal on safety grounds within 10 years.
- 7.2 The table below has been calculated using the measured stem diameters and the formula as described in Section 4.6 in BS 5837:2012. These are represented as basic circles on the Tree Constraints Plan. Where buildings, walls, services and hard surfacing exist within the indicated RPAs it is likely that the architecture of root systems will have been affected. Foundations to walls and buildings can completely obstruct root development, depending on their depth and the nature of the underlying soils. In the absence of detailed site investigations the indicated RPA circles should be used for guidance only within any development proposals.

Tree no.	Species	BS Category	Stem diameter or calculated equivalent (mm.)	BS calc. radial equiv. root protection area (m.)	BS calc. total RPA (m²)
T1	Bay	B2	c900	c10.8	c366
T2	Field Maple	C2	c400	c4.8	c72
T3	Fig	C2	150	1.8	10
T4	Sorbus sp	C2	c250	c3	c28
T5	Sycamore	C2	c350	c4.2	c55
G6	Mixed Species	C2	<100	<1.2	<5
T7	Camelia	C2	180	2.2	15
T8	Holly	B2	c600	c7.2	c163
G9	Mixed Species	C2	<100	<1.2	<5

8. SUMMARY

- 8.1 A total of 7 individual trees and shrubs were inspected, together with two maintained hedges.
- 8.2 All appear in reasonable health with a diverse range in species and dimensions.
- 8.3 Most have been maintained to varying degrees in the past and recently.
- 8.4 The Tree Constraints Plan produced provides guidance on the potential influence above and below ground elements of trees could have on any development proposals. Account should also be taken of future growth potential and shading by the trees.

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APPENDIX 1

TREE SURVEY EXPLANATORY SHEET

Height	in metres (estimated where ground uneven or access restricted).
Stem count	number of stems
Stem diameter	in mm. at 1.5m. above ground level.
Branch spread	radial spread in metres at four main compass points (estimated where no access).
Age class	Young - Y Semi Mature - SM Mature - M Over mature - OM Veteran - V
Height of crown clearance	in metres. Normally range of heights of outer branches above ground level, e.g. 2-4m.
Physiological condition	Good, Fair, Poor, Dead, Variable
Estimated remaining contribution	in years e.g. less than 10, 10-20, 20-40, 40+
Category grading	see attached sheet
Structural condition	comment on presence of defects, decay, crown form, past management, deadwood, other features worthy of note. N.B. If trees are ivy clad, no full structural assessment will have been possible.
Preliminary management recommendations	requirements of further investigations, works necessary to alleviate potential hazards based on current setting and levels of access. NB: Works that may be necessary in relation to development are not included here

CASCADE CHART FOR TREE QUALITY ASSESSMENT

TREES FOR REMOVAL				
Category and definition	Criteria			Identification on plan
Category U Those in such a condition that any existing value would be lost within 10 years and which should, in the current context, be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management	- 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 R category trees (i.e. 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 (e.g. Dutch elm disease), or very low quality trees suppressing adjacent trees of better quality NOTE Habitat reinstatement may be appropriate (e.g. R category tree used as a bat roost: installation of bat box in nearby tree.)			DARK RED
TREES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION				
Category and definition	Criteria - Subcategories			Identification on plan
	1. Mainly arboricultural values	2. Mainly landscape values	3. Mainly cultural values, including conservation	
Category A Those of high quality and value: in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial construction (a minimum of 40 years is suggested)	Trees that are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual, or essential components of groups, or of formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue)	Trees, groups or woodlands which provide a definite screening or softening effect to the locality in relation to views into or out of the site, or those of particular visual importance (e.g. avenues or other arboricultural features assessed as groups)	Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture)	LIGHT GREEN
Category B Those of moderate quality and value: those in such a condition as to make a significant contribution (a minimum of 20 years is suggested)	Trees that might be included in the high category, but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of remediable defects including unsympathetic past management and minor storm damage)	Trees present in numbers, usually as groups or woodland, such that they form distinct landscape features, thereby attracting a higher collective rating than they might as individuals but which are not, individually, essential components of formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. trees of moderate quality within an avenue that includes better, A category specimens), or trees situated mainly internally to the site, therefore individually having little visual impact on the wider locality	Trees with clearly identifiable conservation or other cultural benefits	MID BLUE
Category C Those of low quality and value: currently in adequate condition to remain until new planting could be established (a minimum of 10 years is suggested), or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm.	Trees not qualifying in higher categories	Trees present in groups or woodland, but without this conferring on them significantly greater landscape value, and/or trees offering low or only temporary screening benefit.	Trees with very limited conservation or other cultural benefits	GREY
	NOTE Whilst C category trees will usually not be retained where they would impose a significant constraint on development, young trees with a stem diameter of less than 150mm should be considered for relocation			

Tree ref. no.	Species	Height (m.)	Stem Count	Stem diameter or equivalent (mm.)	Branch spread (m.)				Age class	Ht. of crown clearance (m.)	Physiological condition	Estimated remaining contribution (years)	Category grading	Structural condition and Notes	Preliminary management recommendations
					N	E	S	W							
T1	Bay	11	Multi	c900	6	7	c5	5.5	M	3.5+	Unconfirmed	20-40	B2	Multi-stemmed near ground level. Open crown. Past crown raising. Minor deadwood and crown thinning	
T2	Field Maple	7	1	c400	4.5	2	<5	4	M	2.2+	Unconfirmed	20-40	C2	Heavily reduced in past on several occasions. Crowded to E	
T3	Fig	2.6	Multi	150	2	0	1.5	2.5	Y	1.5+	Fair	20-40	C2	Heavily reduced recently. Multi-stemmed <1.5m	
T4	Sorbus sp	8	3	c250	3	4	<4	2	SM	2+	Unconfirmed	20-40	C2	Crowded. Three stems <2m	
T5	Sycamore	7	5	c350	3.5	2.5	c4	c4	SM	2+	Unconfirmed	20-40	C2	Part reduced in past year. Multi-stemmed <2m. Previously heavily reduced	
G6	Mixed Species	<2.5	Multi	<100	<1	<1	<1	<1	M	0+	Good	40+	C2	Mixed species evergreen hedge. Regularly maintained	
T7	Camelia	3	Multi	180	2.5	3	0.5	2	M	1.6+	Good	20-40	C2	Twin stemmed near ground level, multi-stemmed <1m. Pruned. Crowded to S	
T8	Holly	10	Multi	c600	4.5	6	c5	4	M	2+	Unconfirmed	20-40	B2	Multi-stemmed <1m. Slight crown thinning	
G9	Mixed Species	<2	Multi	<100	<1	<1	<1	<1	M	0+	Good	40+	C2	Maintained hedge.	

APPENDIX 2

T1 - G9 Tree numbers

- the root-coverage areas have been calculated using the measured stem parameters and the formula as described in BS5832:2012. These are presented as basic clicks on the Tree Constraints Plan. Where buildings, walls and hard surfacing exist within the footprint of root systems will have an impact on the development of root systems and the architecture of root systems will have an impact on the development of root systems. Foundations to walls and buildings are completely obstruct root development depending on their depth and the nature of the underlying soils. In the absence of any site investigations, the index can be used to indicate the need for site investigations. The index can be used for guidance within any redevelopment proposals.