



ANDERSON

TREE CARE

Arboricultural Contractors and Consultants

Anderson Tree Care Limited,
Garden Cottage, Park Street,
Barlborough,
Chesterfield, S43 4TJ.
Phone; 01246 570 044
Fax; 01246 570 045
e-mail; info@andersontreecare.co.uk
company registration no. 5872995

**Tree Impact Appraisal: Site at Guyder Bottom Farm, (Contour House)
Cooper Lane, Hoylandswaine.**

Client: **Mr & Mrs A Jones,
Via Steve Burlaga,
Axis Architecture, Sheffield**

Planning application No. **Barnsley MBC; 2015/1338. 2013/0745**

File reference: Guyder Bottom Farm 02

- Appendices:
1. Drawing 26935(02)01 C
 2. Drawing 26935(04)02
 - 3.

Report author: W L Anderson. Dip Arb.(RFS) M.Arbor.A.

Checked by: Gary McCarthy. BSc (Hons). Dip LM.

Situation.

Planning permission has been granted for a contemporary building on this site. (Barnsley MBC ref 2013/0745) Mr & Mrs Jones have bought the plot and now seek to alter the approved plan to accommodate their family more suitably. An application has been submitted (Barnsley MBC reference 2015/1338) and the matter of the proposal's impact upon the site's trees has been raised.

This report will consider all the tree-related matters which do not appear to have been considered in the previous application. I have seen drawing 26935(04)02 (Axis Architecture) and 26935(02)01. I have also seen various items relating to both applications on the Barnsley MBC website. I visited the site on December 11th 2015. At this time the site had been cleared of vegetation in the driveway and build area.

The project.

The site is roughly diamond-shaped and adjoins Cooper Lane to the north (the lane running roughly northwest - northeast at this point) with established hedgerows on the western and northern boundaries. The eastern boundary has shrubs and trees in the general area and the southern boundary, which adjoins the existing Guyder Bottom Farm has a tall Cypress hedge. The proposal is to install a new driveway along the western boundary and then construct the new property in the southern half of the site. The soil levels will be slightly remodelled with the apparent result that the building will have a very low profile in the landscape.

The trees.

The main tree, or the one that's most prominent at least, is an Oak in the northernmost corner of the site. It is actually just off site in the grounds of Guyder Bottom Farm. It is prominent in that it is at the side of the drive and opposite the driveway to the property opposite.



Photograph 1.

Photograph 1 shows the tree. While it is something of an untidy specimen, it is fairly typical of this sort of tree in this sort of area. It appears to be a considerable age and seems to have survived many decades of passing farm traffic, as well as the vagaries of the local climate (storm damage).

The trunk diameter is approximately 750 mm and it is approximately 16 metres tall. The crown spreads approximately 20 metres. I suspect the rather strange crown shape is due to "retrenchment."

It is not unusual to find Oak trees in agricultural areas retrenching; something causes a check in the tree's growth, perhaps drought or disease, but the tree recovers and proceeds to grow more vigorously again. In this case it looks as though a companion tree (to the left) might have been removed in the past, which might have given rise to the left hand branches (to the south) having been reinvigorated as they suddenly received more sunshine. This of course is highly speculative and I only mention it as a possibility. However it came to be this shape doesn't matter; while it's untidy it has character and will no doubt add to the neighbourhood's biodiversity, even if there's no particular shortage of biodiversity hereabouts.

The site's layout calls for the tree to be retained and while the new entrance to the site is due to be inserted where the gap in the wall has been created, it appears to have been put there deliberately to keep away from the tree. A tree of this size requires a root protection area (as defined by British Standard 5837 2012 Trees in relation to design demolition and construction – Recommendations) of radius 9 metres and it seems that the proposed site layout will accommodate this fairly comfortably.

The site layout calls for a new drive to be installed that runs parallel to the northern boundary hedge. This hedge is largely Hawthorn and Holly. It has been reasonably well-maintained and the position proposed for the drive means the hedge has a reasonable RPA. Also the proposal means that future access for maintenance, perhaps with a tractor-mounted hedge cutting device (flail) will be relatively straightforward.



Photograph 2.

Photograph 2 is a view of the hedgerow along the western boundary. The trees beyond, Oaks, are the other side of the farm drive. The Oak in photo 1 can just be seen at the extreme right.



Photograph 3.

Photograph 3 is a view of the south-western corner of the site. The Pines (a Scots and a Corsican) behind the outbuilding are relatively young and should be tolerant of nearby work; they're just outside the site's boundary.

The outbuilding is to be replaced with a car port. The Oaks in the background are the continuation of the row visible in photo 2.



Photograph 4

Photograph 4 is a view of two trees on the northern boundary alongside the road. The mound of topsoil is to the right. The left hand tree is an Ash, the right hand one a Sycamore.

Photograph 5 is a view of the trees from the road. The Hawthorn hedge alongside the road here has not been well-maintained recently. Fortunately it is not yet beyond restorative pruning.



Photograph 5.



Photograph 6.

Photograph 6 is a view of the eastern corner of the site with the water treatment site in the background. The tree is a Pussy Willow, which I presume belongs to the water company.

A public footpath is routed alongside this boundary and some trees from the site overhang; they will require regular maintenance if they are not to obstruct the right-of-way.

Photograph 7 shows the eastern boundary from within the site. This is only part of a group that contains young Sycamores, Sitka Spruce, Rowan and Cherry. The evergreen shrub is Cherry Laurel and while it screens the site of a view of the water treatment plant, I consider it would be best removed and replaced with something else. This is because Cherry Laurel is an invasive pest and it is almost certain to be included on the Government list of invasive species. (Usually called schedule 9, see below.)



Photograph 7.

I realise that many people still plant Cherry Laurel as there is no denying it can be a useful, fast-growing screen. Unfortunately it is becoming a pest in many woodlands almost as much of a nuisance as Rhododendron. The leaves can be toxic and it is significant that very little seems able to grow in its shade. I suggest that here it would be best removed and replaced with something else. I note that the site stripping has left it something of a Root Protection Area, but I consider it would have been better to get rid of it.

This completes my tour of the trees around this site. I apologise for the rather dark photographs only the light was rather poor at the time of my visit only a few days away from the winter solstice.

Discussion.

As far as I can gather from the information on the Council's website, no tree report was undertaken prior to the previous planning application being approved. I have to say that in this case a full tree survey would not have had much bearing on the site's proposed layout as the proposal is largely well away from any trees and I think it is fair to say that the proposal barely impacts upon them at all. This is unusual but understandable as this is clearly an unusual project; most development sites are concerned with efficient use of a site's available space and this is not the situation here.

Government legislation is designed to ensure that development does not unduly impact upon biodiversity and trees are automatically assumed to be of benefit to biodiversity. This is something of an overarching presumption and frequently does not bear close scrutiny. I have pointed out above that Cherry Laurel is an invasive pest because it replaces, out-competes, other plants that have greater benefit to biodiversity.

Biodiversity is not always a straightforward matter and for a tree to be of great benefit to biodiversity it really ought to provide a range of services. That is provide sustenance to a range of insects, provide cover for small mammals and birds, support a range of other plant species and hopefully be decorative as well. Oak is a plant of great benefit to biodiversity; it supports a large range of insects that feed on its leaves, flowers and seeds. And then indirectly by virtue of birds and bats eating the insects it nurtures them as well. In contrast Cherry Laurel does not support many insects at all, in fact in some cases its foliage poisons them. Furthermore other plants do not manage to survive in its shade or even nearby, due to allelopathic influences. Just to make things worse, its open growth habit means the cover it provides (perhaps for birds to nest) is not very good either, certainly not as good as Hawthorn or Holly.

As a general rule native plants are of more benefit to local biodiversity as they have been here (in Britain) for a long time and other species will have evolved to co-exist with them. While some alien plants have imported their cohorts with them, which might have meant their biodiversity value was raised, this has also given rise to diseases being imported that while not being significant to their original host have made the leap into the UK ecosystem with potentially devastating effects. (eg Ramorum disease of Larch for which Rhododendron is an asymptomatic pathway.)

Government planning guidance, in the form of the recently introduced National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) mentions trees mainly in relation to their value to biodiversity. From that point-of-view I think it is fair to consider this project's potential to affect the local biodiversity as being the major part of an Arboricultural Impact Appraisal.

I think it is fair to say that this project's effect on the area's biodiversity will be minimal. Furthermore if it means that some of the features, such as the hedgerows, are brought into more considered management, and the Cherry Laurel is removed, then the long-term effects will be largely positive. It should also not be forgotten that this area is largely rural and there is plenty of biodiversity in the immediate neighbourhood of the site. From that angle it could be reasoned that the small contribution that this site makes to local biodiversity is so small as to be irrelevant.

Conclusion.

1. I consider this project will have very little impact either on the trees on the site or on the area's biodiversity.
2. I note that the proposal drawings show the building set amongst newly planted trees, which is another beneficial outcome.
3. I see no reason for trees to stand in the way of this proposal.

W. L. Anderson. Dip.Arb. (RFS) M.Arbor.A.
ANDERSON TREE CARE LIMITED.

December 2015.

LOCATION PLAN
1:500@A1



PROPOSED SITE PLAN
1:250@A1



C	PLANNING ISSUE	26-10-2015
B	SECONDARY ENTRANCE AMENDED / STEPS TO KITCHEN TERRACE INCLUDED	23-10-2015
A	UPDATED TO SUIT CHANGES TO LAYOUT. RISK NOTES ADDED	20-10-2015

AXIS
architecture
Talbot Chambers 2-6 North Church Street Sheffield S1 2DH
tel: +44(0)114 2490944 fax: +44(0)114 2490966 www.axis-architecture.com

COOPER LANE, HOYLANDSWAINE
CONTOUR HOUSE
MR & MRS JONES

SITE PLAN
LOCATION

A1 Scale	A3 Scale	Date	Drawn By
1:250	1:500	OCT 2015	A X I S

Drawing Number
26935(02)01

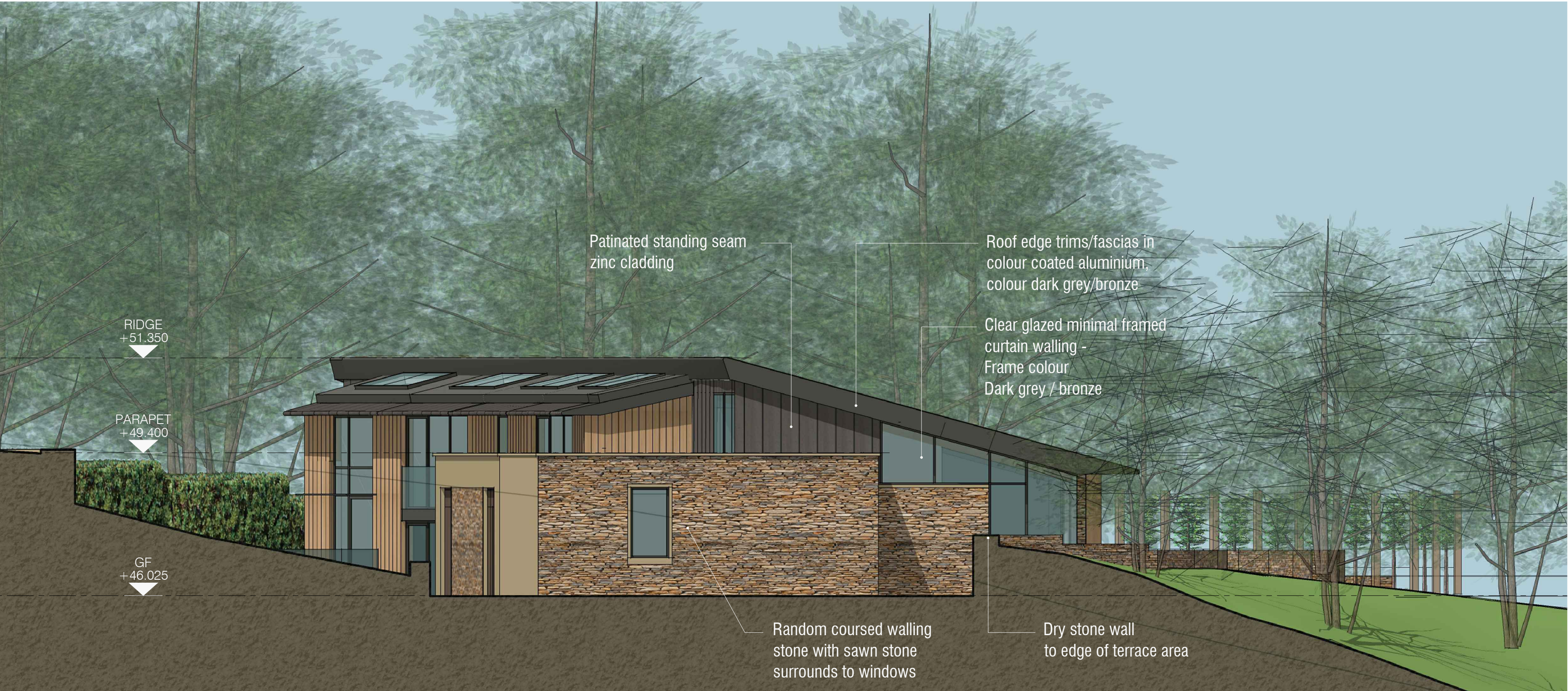
PLANNING

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DO NOT SCALE for construction and verify all dimensions prior to manufacture

Revision
C



ELEVATION 3



ELEVATION 4



KEY PLAN 1:500