



Soho Farmhouse – Hedge to west of the existing gym complex

ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Site: Soho Farmhouse
Postcode: OX7 4JS
Client: Soho House UK Ltd
Project: Gym Extension

Document Ref: 36-GYM-RPT-AIA
Revision No 1
Date: 7th June 2021
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Plans and Schedules to be reviewed in conjunction with this report:

Name	Reference	Version
Tree Schedule	36-GYM-INF-SCH	1
Tree Constraints Plan	36-GYM-DRW-TCP	1
Arboricultural Implications Plan	36-GYM-DRW-AIP	1
Tree Protection Plan	36-GYM-DRW-TPP	1

1. INSTRUCTION

- 1.1 I have been instructed by In House Design & Build Ltd to prepare an assessment of the impact on the existing tree stock by the proposed extension to the existing gym complex at Soho Farmhouse ('the Site').

2. TREE SURVEY

- 2.1 A tree survey was undertaken on 17th November 2020 in accordance with the guidance provided by BS5387 (2012) *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* ('BS5837').
- 2.2 The tree survey included a larger area than is the subject of this application, so this report only refers to those trees that are within influencing distance of the proposed construction works. The tree numbering is retained from the original survey.
- 2.3 The tree survey identified five trees, one hedge and one group of trees as having the potential to present a constraint to any development scheme.
- 2.4 All the recorded features have been categorised in accordance with Table 4 of BS5837 which provides guidance on the quality and non-fiscal value that trees have to offer over a 40-year time frame. All seven features have been categorised at Grade B trees (trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining contribution of at least 20 years).
- 2.5 The Root Protection Area ('RPA') of each tree was calculated in accordance with the formula defined in BS5837. This provides for an area of ground equivalent to 12x the stem diameter of the tree at 1.5m above ground level. The RPA forms an initial Construction Exclusion Zone ('CEZ'), and the default position is that there will be no development within this area. The RPA is plotted as a circle around each tree and is identified on the tree plan by a magenta line with the text 'RPA' inscribed.
- 2.6 The RPA for the groups and hedges has been calculated using an average stem diameter of the stems that form the group or hedge and plotted as a polygon around the group or hedge.
- 2.7 The above ground constraints are defined as the canopy spread of each tree, measured on the cardinal points from the tip of the live growth at the outer edge of the canopy, to the stem of the tree. This is plotted on the tree plan as a hatched area in the corresponding BS5837 tree category as detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Summary of BS5837 categorisation colours

Category	Colour	Description
A	Green	Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years
B	Blue	Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years
C	Grey	Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years
U	Red	Those trees 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

3. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The development proposal for an extension of the existing gymnasium to provide extra flexible studio space and a plant area plus other associated works including landscaping.
- 3.2 The site for the development is an area of open ground to the south-east of the existing established hedge boundary (see Plate 1).



Plate 1: The existing hedgerow is well established

- 3.3 In April 2016, the Council approved an application under reference 16/04398/S73 for the variation of condition 2 of planning permission 15/00195/FUL to allow changes to the hotel and leisure facilities at Soho Farmhouse including changes to some of the buildings approved by 15/00195/FUL which, amongst others, included an extension of the approved Gym building. This includes a small extension to the west elevation of the gym building which is in the same location as the extension previously approved under planning reference 16/04368/FUL (see JPPC Planning Design & Access Statement for full details of the planning history).

4. ARBORICULTURAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 This section of the report should be read in conjunction with the tree plan (36-GYM-DRW-AIP-01) and schedule of recorded trees (36-GYM-INF-SCH-01) that accompany this report.
- 4.2 The proposed scheme does not require the removal of any trees or hedges and all construction activity can be completed without encroachment of the RPA of the trees.
- 4.3 The retained trees and hedges will be protected throughout the development through the use of barriers that will create a defined Construction Exclusion Zone (CEZ). The CEZ will ensure that all construction activity occurs outside the RPA of any retained tree or hedge.

4.4 While this specific proposal does not require the removal of any of the existing tree stock, landscape enhancements in proximity to the gym are being made through the planting of a new woodland in the open space to the north of the buildings. This enhancement has been proposed as part of a separate application submitted for the Farmhouse Huts on the western side of the hedge (H48) and as such, no additional enhancements are proposed through this application (see Portus & Whitton Landscape Masterplan Ref. 1351 L. 169, an extract of which is produced below):



Plate 2: Extract from Landscape Masterplan

5. TREE PROTECTION MEASURES

- 5.1 The tree protection measures will be through the use of barriers that will be erected prior to any development commencing, including the mobilisation of machinery or materials. The fencing will form the boundary of the defined CEZ and there will be no access into this area during the development phase.
- 5.2 The location of the fencing has been illustrated with a dashed black line on the tree protection plan that should be read in conjunction with this report (36-GYM-DRW-TPP-01). The CEZ has

been highlighted with striped hatching. The fencing has been set back at least 2m from the proposed extension in order to ensure that the construction team have the required working space for the buildings works.

5.3 Within the CEZ there will be:

- No storage of materials, or access for construction workers or machinery.
- No level changes.
- No excavation.
- No fires.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The development proposal will have no impact on the existing tree stock on site.

6.2 Tree protection measures will be implemented to ensure that construction activity will not harm the trees and the design of the fencing layout has been considered with the access needs of the construction team.

6.3 It is my opinion that the arboricultural impact of this development scheme is neutral, and although there no loss and no gain proposed, landscape enhancements for this area are offered through the Farmhouse Huts application.

7. ABOUT THE AUTHOR

7.1 I am a director of Tree Frontiers Ltd and a chartered arboricultural consultant, with a first-class honour's degree in arboriculture from Myerscough College, accredited by the University of Lancaster.

7.2 I have 19 years' experience working in the sector and am a chartered member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters. I am also a professional member of the Arboricultural Association and abide by the code of ethics and professional standards of these institutions.

8. REFERENCES

8.1 This report has relied upon the following external reference sources:

- British Standards Institution (2012) BS5837: *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – recommendations*. London: BSI
- Matheck, C. & Breloer, H. (1994) *The Body Language of Trees – A handbook for failure analysis*.