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19th May 2023

Justin Gentleman, Director,
Foreland Homes,
Forelands Field Road,
Bembridge,
Isle of Wight,
PO35 5TP.

Dear Justin,

Re: Ash Trees at Land off Chatfield Road, Niton, Isle of Wight, PO38 2DR.

Following our meeting at the above site on the 17th May 2023, I can make the following observations and comments.

The trees in question are close to the eastern most corner of the site, and are labelled tree nos. T1 and T2 in the tree location plan at Appendix 1 of this letter (produced by others). Both are Common Ash trees *Fraxinus excelsior*, and both were shown to be retained in the latest grant of planning permission to develop the site. You have become increasingly concerned about the structural condition and general health of these trees, which is why you consulted me.

On closer inspection of the two trees, it became clear there are in fact three trees, with a smaller and heavily asymmetric Ash tree located to the south west of tree no. T1, see Figure 1 of Appendix 2 of this letter. This additional tree is of very little value in arboricultural planning terms, and would not be sustainable as an independent tree given its crown asymmetry and significant lean away from tree no. T1. Therefore, I do not consider that the non-inclusion of this tree in the tree report used as part of the planning application bundle for the site is significant planning issue.

Cont'd.....



(2)

Tree no. T2 is illustrated in Figures 02 and 03 of Appendix 2 of this letter. In comparison to tree no. T1, the crown of tree no. T2 is very thin. There is extensive peripheral crown dieback, and the leaves that are being produced are smaller than I would normally expect. I believe these symptoms are strongly indicative of Ash Die Back caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*. This exotic fungal pathogen is invariably fatal for the Common Ash, although the length of time taken for an individual tree to succumb varies widely. Of more significance is the fact the timber of an infected tree becomes significantly more brittle, even in the early stages of infection, and this leaves the tree more prone to branch, and even trunk, failure <https://www.forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/chalara/FAQS> & <https://rfs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Managing-ash-dieback-Vol-2.pdf>. This increased risk of branch failure can pose significant risks of harm to persons and/or property in certain circumstances.

In the original context of the site, i.e. as an agricultural grass field, the risk of harm posed by the increased risk of branch failure in tree no. T2 would not pose a significant risk of harm to persons and/or property as there would only a low chance that any person or property would be under the tree if and when it failed. However, as the site has now been developed for residential use, the tree is now within falling distance of a dwelling and its crown overhangs a domestic garden, and there is a much higher chance that a person or property will be under the tree and vulnerable to damage or injury if and when the tree fails. Therefore, tree no. T2 poses a significant, and I believe unacceptable, risk of harm to persons and/or property, and it should be removed on the grounds of health and safety.

In comparison to tree no. T2, the crown of tree no. T1 seems full and healthy, see Figure 03 of Appendix 2 of this letter. However, the crown of tree no. T1 is asymmetric as a result of competition for light and space with tree no. T2, and the crowns of both trees form a single, unified and mutually interdependent structure in aerodynamic terms. The necessary removal of tree no. T2 will expose tree no. T1 to new and increased wind loads that it had previously been protected from by the companion shelter of tree no. T2. This increased exposure will increase the risk of branch, trunk or root plate failure, and this will increase the risk of harm posed by T1 to persons and/or property.

The trunk and branch bole of tree no. T1 is significantly decayed, see Figure 04 of Appendix 2 of this letter. This decay is compromising the structural integrity of the trunk and branch bole, and the branch attachments around the branch bole. This decay is currently sufficient to raise significant health and safety concerns given the proximity of the tree to a dwelling and garden, and this decay will only worsen over time as Ash trees have little resistance to internal decay (Lonsdale 1999). The necessary removal of tree no. T2 will leave tree no. T1 exposed to new and increased windloads, and this will increase the risk of branch and/or trunk failure to a seriously high level. Therefore, tree no. T1 should be removed on the grounds of health and safety at the same time as tree no. T2 removed.

(3)

The additional Ash tree to the south west of tree no. T1 is also showing clear symptoms of Ash Die Back and the comments made above in respect of this fungal pathogen can also be applied to this tree. The necessary removal of tree nos. T1 and T2 will leave this additional tree exposed and semi-prostrate, and it is almost inevitable that this tree would fall towards the south west shortly after the removal of tree nos. T1 and T2. Therefore, this additional tree should also be removed on the grounds of health and safety at the same time as tree nos. T1 and T2 are removed.

In summary, the Ash tree nos. T1 and T2, and the additional Ash tree to the south west of tree no. T1, should all be felled on the grounds of health and safety, and their retention would pose an unacceptable risk of harm to persons and property.

I trust the above and enclosed is of interest and assistance to you. If you have any questions regarding these matters, or wish to discuss any of them further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Carter

FICFor. MRICS M.Arbor.A Dip. Arb. (RFS)

References:

Lonsdale 1999 = Lonsdale, D. (1999) *Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management*. In: Forestry Commission, Department of Transport Local Government Regions; Research for Amenity Trees. TSO, England. p348.

Appendix 1 – Tree Location Plan (produced by others).

NOTES.

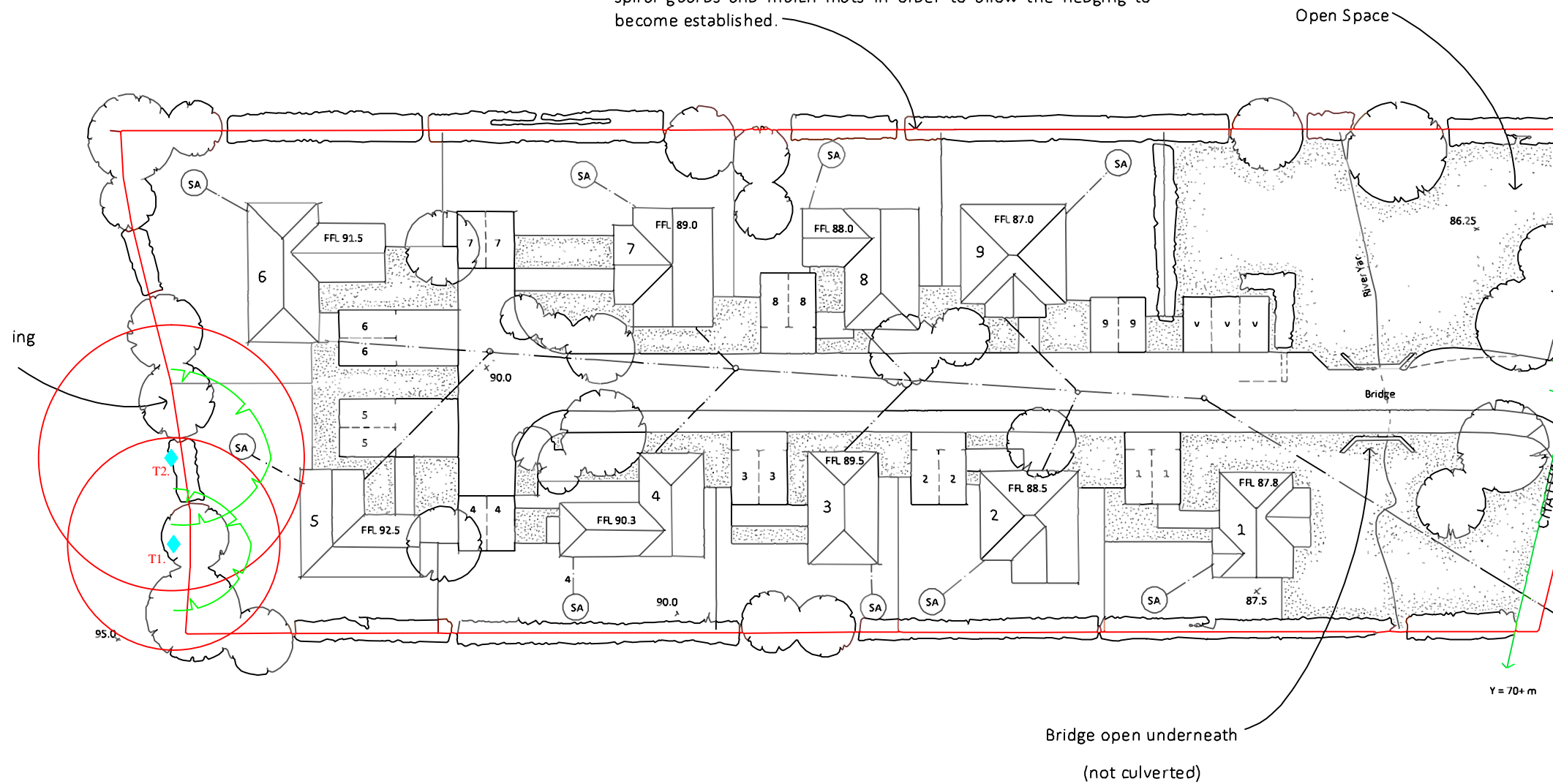
1, Tree Root Protection Areas have been added to survey drawing as supplied.

2, This drawing should be read in conjunction with the written Tree Report and associated Schedules

Proposed landscaping to be a 33:33:33 mixture of hawthorn, field maple and hazel whips, at least 60cm in height to be planted so the species are mixed with double row 50cm staggered spacing. The new hedging planting will be protected for the first two years with spiral guards and mulch mats in order to allow the hedging to become established.

KEY.

- GRADE "A" TREE (HIGH GRADE TREES)
- ◆ GRADE "B" TREE (MEDIUM GRADE TREES)
- GRADE "C" TREE (LOW GRADE TREES)
- ⊙ GRADE "R" TREE (TREE TO BE REMOVED)
- ROOT PROTECTION AREA
- ⊗ INDICATIVE CROWN SPREAD



This drawing as 1:500 at A3

Issue	Amendment	Date
Contractors must verify all Dimensions on site before commencing any works or making any shop drawings.		
 M Jones Arborist IW LTD. <i>The Professional Tree Service for the Isle of Wight</i> Telephone (01983) 520075 Email admin@treecareiw.plus.com		
Contract		
Land off Chatfield Road, Niton, Isle of Wight		
Title		
TREE CONSTRAINTS PLAN SHOWING PROPOSED LAYOUT		
Scale	Dwg No	
1:500	TCP/S/01.	
Date April 2017		

Appendix 2 – Site Photographs.

Figure 01 – Additional tree not recorded in the Tree Location Plan



Additional Ash tree to the south west of tree no. T1.

Ash tree no. T1.

Figure 02 – Tree no. T2 viewed from the north east.



Figure 03 – Tree no. T2 viewed from the south east.



Thinning crown of additional Ash tree to the south west of tree no. T1.

Full and seemingly healthy crown of Ash tree no. T1.

Very thin and dying back crown of Ash tree no. T2.

Figure 04 – Decayed trunk and branch bole of tree no. T1.



Decay and cavitation extending upwards into the branch bole with openings at past branch removal wounds that have rotted out.

Extensive trunk decay and cavity formation visible through large, open and longitudinal bark wound.