1.0 Brief:

1.1 This report has been commissioned by Tom Pratt of Bespoke Design in connection with a proposed development at Arden View, Sibson Road, Sheepy Magna. The site presently contains a detached dwelling within mature grounds, including a number of trees. The proposal is to demolish the dwelling and replace it with one slightly larger but more sympathetic to the setting. The purpose of this report is to assess the arboriculture implications of the proposed development on the trees, identifying those worthy of retention and any measures they would require to mitigate the impact of the construction works. The trees will be surveyed to BS 5837: 2005.

2.0 The Site

2.1 Arden View is a detached residence situated in its own grounds on the edge of the village of Sheepy Parva. It is understood that the property was constructed in the 1950s for use as an agricultural worker's cottage. The property has been functional in design and is now redundant. It is set to the rear of the plot with a lawned area across the front. The grounds contain a mixture of mature shrubs and ornamental trees, some native trees and a collection of fruit trees. The main feature of the site is a substantial, spreading Cherry tree which dominates the grounds and the locality. There is also a substantial Lombardy Poplar on the left hand boundary which has already grown above the property and has considerable future potential growth.

2.2 The property is set behind a mature hedge. This consists of a group of several mature Hawthorn and then several young cherry, to the left. A feature of shrubs, most likely to be Hebe, has formed a screen of approximately 1-1.5m height. There is a small pedestrian gate providing the only access to the site. To the right is the start of a stretch of mature field hedging consisting of Field Maple and Blackthorn which has grown to create a vigorous, spreading feature some 4-5 metres in height.

2.3 There is an established mature hedge of Hornbeam to the right of the house, forming a boundary feature. It has reached a height of 4-5 metres. It is in good vigour and has potential to become a key feature within the re-development.

2.4 The visit was undertaken during the afternoon of Wednesday 17th June 2010 in the company of Tom Pratt. Conditions were clear, sunny and very warm. The trees were inspected from the ground level only in line with the guidelines outlined in British Standard 5837: 2005.

2.5 This report has been based upon Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) methodology, as devised by Mattheck (1993) in addition to Hazard Evaluation devised by Matheny & Clark (1993). Guidance is also taken from Lonsdale (1999) *Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management.*

3.0 Summary

3.1 There seems to have been little active management of the various trees and shrubs in recent years. It is understood that the property has been vacant for the past four years, which is reflected in the deteriorating condition of the contents of the garden. There appears to be a random element to the selection and planting of some trees in recent years, which has limited their amenity and arboricultural value.

3.2 There are several trees on site that are in decline with evidence of decay. The mature Cherry to the front provides considerable screening, and consequently, few of the trees within the grounds contribute visually to the amenity of the locality. The Lombardy Poplar is visually prominent due to its height. However, it is not a solitary specimen and is of a species considered generally unsuitable to modern residential settings.

3.3 With the exception of one of the Hawthorn (Retention class B1), none of the trees is considered to be of arboricultural value, with the mature Cherry showing early signs of decline. However, its landscape contribution is appreciated. There is a desire to minimize the impact of the development on the locality. For this reason, and the desire of the client to retain maturity as far as possible, the Cherry is included for retention (class B2). Cherry trees are noted for having spreading surface roots. As such, they are vulnerable to compaction associated with construction works.

3.4 The driveway as proposed will necessitate some encroachment within the crown spread of T1. The impact of this can be mitigated by the installation of a road surface membrane. GeoWeb is suggested and its use can be conditioned, with supervision by an arboricultural consultant, prior to commencement of non-arboricultural site works.

4.0 Tree Protection

4.1 It is believed that none of the trees on site is subject to a Tree Preservation Order. This should be confirmed with the Local Planning Authority prior to undertaking any work. The site may be within a Conservation Area. If this is the case, then 42 days Notice of Intent to undertake work is required. Recommended work is detailed in appendix 1 and this report should be presented to the planning department as the notification. It is recommended that the agreement of the Local Planning Authority is obtained prior to undertaking any recommended work.

5.0 Recommended work

5.1 The Cherry, T1, requires pruning:
removal of dead wood, decaying and crossing and rubbing branches.
Raise crown to 4 metres to improve access, by selected removal of branches, maintaining overall structure.
Pruning work should be undertaken by a professional arboricultural contractor to BS 3998: 1989 'Recommendations for Tree Work. The work should be undertaken during the summer months to minimise the risk of the tree contracting the fungus '*Chondosterum purpurea'*, to which cherry is particularly vulnerable.

5.2 The Cherry, T1, shows early signs of decline. Whilst no structural weaknesses were observed during the visit, to indicate safety concerns, it is recommended that the tree be re-inspected by an experienced arboricultural inspector within three years of this report.

5.3 The GeoWed surfacing needs to be installed prior to commencement of construction works to ensure that the rooting area of the Cherry tree is protected from compaction during site works. It is recommended that this work be supervised by an arboricultural consultant.

5.4 Fence protection as proposed in appendix two (Tree Protection Plan) needs to be installed prior to commencement of construction works, and retained for the duration of works. It is aimed at protecting the Cherry, Hawthorn and the Sweet Chestnut hedge at the rear of the site.

5.5 The proposals only require the removal of trees whose condition does not merit retention within the site. However, it is acknowledged that replacement planting will be beneficial to the setting, and appropriate species are identified in the drawing in appendix two. The Beech is proposed as a replacement for the Cherry, which is a mature specimen and as such has approximately 10-20 years of life remaining. It is recommended for planting on the road frontage to maximise its visual impact on the setting.

5.6 The replacement trees should be container grown specimens, with a trunk girth of 10-12cm. They should be planted by an arborist or under the supervision of an arboricultural consultant, and sourced from a reputable supplier.

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Mark Chester

Consulting Arborist, 30th June 2010

Tree survey explanatory notes

Dbh Diameter at Breast Height (1.2m). This measurement is used to calculate the Root Protection Zone

Vigour An assessment of the vegetative growth in the current growing season. It will include the number and size of leaves.

Dead Dead
Poor A tree of low vigour with sparse growth
Fair A tree of average growth
Good A tree of high vigour and vitality

Retention Categories

R: Includes trees that are dead, in decline or structurally unsound, or that will be detrimentally affected by the removal of neighbouring specimens.

A: Trees of high quality likely to make an important contribution to the setting for a minimum of 40 years. This will include specimens of outstanding arboricultural condition, those providing local benefits such as screening and those of historic, cultural and conservation value. Retention should be prioritised.

B: Trees of moderate quality and value, likely to make a useful contribution for at least 20 years. They may be affected by condition, lack of space to fully mature, poor pruning or species unsuitability.

C: Trees of low quality and value, unlikely to make a contribution beyond 10 years, where retention is desirable until replacement planting has become established. This can also include younger trees

Within the three retention categories, trees can be retained due to

(i) their arboricultural qualities
(ii) their landscape benefits
(iii) conservation, social or historic values

Consultant Mark Chester has a degree in Landscape and Amenity Horticulture and holds the Arboricultural Association's Technician's Certificate. A Chartered Environmentalist, he is a Professional Member of the Arboricultural Association and the Institute of Horticulture. He has more than thirteen years experience in tree management.

Mark is recognised as a Consulting Arborist and is Chairman of the Consulting Arborist Society.



(Above) The site viewed from the right showing the strong screening to the road frontage. The Hawthorn (G1) and Cherry (G2) are central.



(Above) The site viewed from the right with the Cherry, T1, dominating centrally and providing screening of the property. The mature hedge of Field Maple and Blackthorn is to the right.
(Below) An internal view of the site viewed from in front of the house showing the spreading form and screening of T1, the Cherry.





The right hand side of the garden, showing the suppressed Larch and two young apples in the background (above) and declining apple (below). This indicates the limited impact of these trees and general lack of maintenance.





(Above) A close view of the Cherry, T1, showing ivy spreading up the trunk, and dead wood
(Below) The mature Sweat Chestnut hedge on the rear boundary; a key feature of the site

