



BRIEFING NOTE

Prepared for:	WS Planning & Architecture
Prepared by:	David Archer
Re:	Little Cottage, Ridge Lane, Meopham, Kent DA13 0DP Arboricultural Impact Assessment on ASNW

Thursday, 07 December 2023

This note is to assess any adverse impacts that a proposed development will have on trees adjacent to this site. This site presently has no trees within the curtilage of the property but adjacent to the eastern and western boundaries is, according to the Natural England 'Magic Map', a Planted Ancient Woodland (PAWS), accordingly, all of Little Cottage and the area surrounding it, lies outside the PAWS area but still within the recommended 15m Buffer Zone. It must be acknowledged here that the boundaries of the PAWS woodland designation are very uncertain as a quick glance at the 'Magic Map' shows that there are several domestic properties and their gardens in the local area that are included within the mapping area for PAWS. This casts significant doubts on the accuracy of the mapping and the concomitant woodland designations.

The proposal is to demolish a small residential dwelling on the western half of the site and construct a new dwelling on the eastern half of the site to replace it; the current levels of soft landscaping in the western area will remain unchanged. The eastern end of the site is presently used as hard standing for caravans, car parking, small sheds and dog kennels all located on concrete pads. There is no existing soft landscaping in the eastern end of the site. The whole site is bounded by a 2.5m high Laurel Hedge.

The footprint of the proposed new dwelling will be located entirely within the hard standing area at the eastern end. From the photographs taken at the time of the ecology survey, there does not appear to be any tree adjacent to the footprint of the new house that will have a Root Protection Area (RPA) extending into it. None of the off-site tree crowns from the woodland areas overhang the site. Accordingly, the only issues to be considered are the potential for harm to come to the PAWS site from the demolition of the existing unit and construction of the new dwelling.

The present dwelling on the site is of a prefabricated timber construction located on a concrete slab. The demolition of this building should not cause any adverse effect on the woodland as any dust created will be minimal. Removal of the concrete slab should be carried with the use of dust suppression and by locating any excavator with a toothless bucket on the existing hardstanding and working backwards from the boundary line. The same applies to the kennels and associated concrete pads on the eastern end of the site. Removal of these structures should not cause any significant levels of dust and the removal of any concrete pads should follow the same methodology as the western end. Any noise generated will be temporary and limited to the working day of the construction period.



Construction of the new building could be carried out with similar mitigation systems to remove any possible temporary adverse effects on the adjacent woodland. A detailed method statement required by a reasonably worded planning condition should ensure this.

The potential for any future impacts on the PAWS would be at a similar level as that experienced now, i.e. one residential building substituted for another. The new building should have a number of features built into it reduce any adverse impacts, i.e., bat friendly lighting, bat and bird boxes.

Reasonable and carefully worded planning conditions to ensure the retention of the Laurel hedge would remove opportunities for domestic pets to travel into the woodland.

The hydrology for the site will remain unchanged. Future noise levels will remain in line with present levels.

The new proposal shows at least 50% of the eastern half of the site having the existing hard surface being removed and converted to a soft landscape area along with new tree planting. This is a significant uplift for the biodiversity value of the site, a factor dealt with in more detail by the submitted ecology report.

In conclusion, the proposed development will not have any long-term adverse effects on the PAWS woodland adjacent to the site. Reasonably worded planning conditions can secure this and ensure that they are enforceable.

David Archer | Practice Principal
M.Arbor.A.