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Arboricultural Management Plan
Tormarton Pond, Tormarton
October 2009
SAC 041

silverback
arboricultural consultancy

1.0 Instructions/Aims

- 1.1. I have been instructed by John Wells, to compile a management plan for trees situated around the village pond at Tormarton, South Gloucestershire
- 1.2. The arboricultural survey and report which accompany this management plan contain recommendations for works that should be undertaken to address current faults or health and safety issues caused by the trees. The management plan, however, addresses possible issues regarding the longer term retention of the trees and offers replanting options to ensure the long term amenity and wildlife value of the site.
- 1.4. The aims of this management plan are to:
- Ensure the longevity and viability of the retained tree stock
 - Enhance the amenity and wildlife value of the area around the pond
 - Reduce the potential health and safety risks the trees may pose in the future.
 - Establish a tree stock which requires minimal management

2.0 Context

- 2.1 When assessing the trees and making recommendations for their management, a large amount of consideration has been given to their situation and the potential targets should they fail. Potential replanting options to retain and enhance the area have also been considered.
- 2.2 The majority of significant trees on the site were found to be within a very narrow age range, being either mature or over-mature. It was felt that due to the advanced age of the major trees, replacement planting to ensure continual tree cover for the future will be essential.
- 2.3 To facilitate new planting it will be necessary to either fell or pollard a number of the existing trees to allow light to reach the ground. Potential new planting areas will need to be cleared of existing ground vegetation to reduce competition.
- 2.4 At present the area under the tree cover is relatively dark. This would lead to new planting becoming leggy and malformed in its attempt to gain sufficient light to become established. If new planting was undertaken without suitable vegetation clearance the young plants would be suppressed and probably overwhelmed by the existing vegetation.
- 2.5 There is limited species diversity in the area, with the majority of existing trees being Ash. New planting, with native species, should be undertaken to increase the variety of species and enhance the bio-diversity

- 2.6 Rather than the removal of overmature/mature trees, pollarding has been recommended. Pollarded trees offer a variety of habitats encouraging colonisation by invertebrates, which in turn attract larger species of animals and birds enhancing the biodiversity of the area. Woodpeckers and bats may then frequent the area feeding on the invertebrates.
- 2.7 Pollarded trees represent an easy management option. Once the trees are pollarded the re-growth will need to be removed at regular intervals, possibly 3-4 year rotations. As the regrowth will be relatively small the works can be done by volunteers using loppers as apposed to the expense of employing tree surgeons.
- 2.7 The introduction of a native shrub layer will help control weed growth through suppression, and increase the habitats available for wildlife. Native shrubs can also offer year round interest with Spring flowers, Summer fruit and stunning Autumn colour.
- 2.8 To further enhance the visual amenity and biodiversity of the area, native flowers could be planted under the trees and around the pond area
- 2.9 Tree and shrub planting is best done from November to March when plants are dormant and therefore do not suffer so much from transplanting shock. Wildflower and bulb under-storey planting is best carried out in the Spring, although some bulbs require autumn planting.
- 2.10 New plantings should be protected during establishment from rabbits, other pests, pedestrian traffic etc. They should also be inspected frequently during the first year

and extra care given, such as irrigation, to ensure good establishment, where necessary.

- 2.11 Ivy was found in the canopies of the majority of the trees surveyed. Ivy is not a parasitic plant, it uses the trees as a climbing frame to gain more light. Dense Ivy growth ties tree branches together increasing the sail effect and making the trees liable to wind damage or failure. The weight of excessive Ivy growth can cause branches to snap. Ivy growth can also cover possible defects within the tree which could be affecting their structural integrity.
- 2.12 What appeared to be the fruiting bodies of Honey Fungus were found at the southern end of the pond, the fungi was severely desiccated making positive identification difficult. Honey Fungus can cause extensive decay of the root systems of trees and shrubs making them liable to wind throw or stem failure.
- 2.13 Honey fungus produces rhizomorphs, underground roots, which travel through the soil colonising any woody material they encounter including tree and shrub root systems and any decaying wood in or on the surface of the soil.
- 2.14 The fungus is a natural feature of any wooded environment. Control is extremely difficult due to the sub surface habit of the rhizomoprphs. The removal of any stacked, decaying wood could help in containing the spread of the fungi, however it is felt that in this situation any control would be unfeasible due to the amount of woody material in the soil.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 Priority tree work recommendations have been made in the accompanying arboricultural survey report. The recommendations contained within this management plan are aimed at creating a viable, low management tree stock around the pond area to ensure continual tree cover and enhance the biodiversity of the area.

3.2 Whilst the recommendations for tree removal may appear quite dramatic, it was felt that the site is beyond routine management and a drastic approach should be taken.

3.3 T3 has been crown reduced in the past. Once a crown reduction has been undertaken it is good management to re-reduce the tree on a 3-4 year rotation. As the trees are within the area found to contain Honey Fungus the proposed works will contain the size of the trees where there is the potential of Honey Fungus infestation.

Recommendation:- T2 is reshaped at the same time as T3 is re-reduced.

3.4 T4 & T6 Holly - These trees were found to be poor specimens with poor form. They are also stunting the growth of T5. The removal of these trees would allow T5 to grow a balanced crown, and also create an area for possible replanting.

Recommendation:- T4 & T6 are felled and replacement planting is undertaken

3.5 T8, T14, T22, T31, T32 Elder- These are poor specimens exhibiting poor form. None of these trees represent a viable option for the future either due to their position or poor form.

Recommendation:- These trees are removed and replaced with new Elders in positions where they can mature and will offer long term benefit to the site.

- 3.6 T9 Ash- This is a significant tree offering high visual amenity to the area. The crown is slightly asymmetric due to competition from other trees. There is a large limb overhanging the pond. It is proposed that this is cut back to reduce the weight of the limb. The weight reduction should be undertaken as part of a 30% overall crown reduction. This will reduce the risk of any limb failure and rebalance the canopy of the Ash tree.
- Recommendation:-** 30% crown reduction to include weight reduction of large branch overhanging the pond. .
- 3.7 T11 Ash- This is a self set tree showing a very poor growth habit. The tree has been suppressed by the neighbouring trees resulting in it growing with a major lean towards the main road. As the tree increases in size it will become a major health and safety risk to the road.
- Recommendation:-** Fell and replant
- 3.8 T12 Cockspur Thorn. This is a non-native species but offers year round interest with flowers, fruit and Autumn colour. The tree has a bushy habit which should be contained by pruning.
- Recommendation:-** Formative pruning to contain the size of the tree and balance it crown for the future
- 3.9 T13 & T15 Crack Willows. These trees are significant to the area but are offering very little visual amenity. They have a very poor branch structure with the majority of main limbs having been either removed or severely cut back in the past. It is proposed that these trees are pollarded to 3metres and allowed to re-grow a canopy. This regrowth will need to be re-pollarded on a 3/5 year rotation. The pollarding of these trees will allow more light to reach the ground and the proposed new tree, shrub and wild flower planting.
- Recommendation:-** Pollard the two trees to 3m

- 3.10 T16 Ash This tree has two large limbs: one extending to the north overhanging the driveway of the neighbouring property, and one limb growing east across the road. These limbs should be cut back 20% to reduce the end weight of the limbs and re-shape the tree crown.
Recommendation:- Reduce the two branches by 20%
- 3.11 T17 Ash It is recommended in the accompanying Arboricultural Survey that this tree is felled due to its poor form and potential to fail. If this course of action is undertaken it is suggested that a replacement Yew tree is planted. This will mirror the Yew tree at the other end of the site. Yew is a native evergreen species and valuable to birds and other wildlife for its berries.
Recommendation:- Once felled replace with a Yew tree.
- 3.12 T19, T20, T21 These appear to be three self set Ash trees growing on the edge of the pond. They all have very poor form with a major lean; T19 across the pond and T20, T21 over the neighbouring property. It was felt that as these trees mature the possibility of them failing will increase creating an unacceptable health and safety hazard to the neighbouring property. If these trees were felled replacement planting with alternative native species could be undertaken.
Recommendation:- Fell the three trees and replant with alternative species.
- 3.13 T24 Ash. The tree has poor form with a totally asymmetric crown growing over the pond. If the tree was removed, new planting with different species could be introduced which could increase the biodiversity of the area.
Recommendation:- Fell and replant with alternative species.

3.14 T26 Large Crack Willow in the centre of the withy bed. Firstly, it is suggested that the large willow, along with the other willows in the bed, are re pollarded at 2 metres. The regrowth will provide screening for Withy Cottage, whilst the new height of the stems will allow easy management. The withy bed appears to have been over run with various ground cover plants and weeds. It needs to be established whether it is desirable to retain this area as a withy bed or just leave it as a boggy area. If a withy bed is the desired option, a large amount of vegetation clearance will need to be undertaken to increase the amount of water available to new withy plantings. Expert advice should be sought from an ecologist prior to the commencement of works to ensure the safety of any amphibians that may be present. Alternatively, the area could be enhanced with new shrub and tree planting. This planting around the edges, once established, will screen the container unit

Initial Recommendation:- Re pollard all the Willows at 2m

3.15 T28 Multi-stemmed Ash. This tree appears to be an old low pollard. There are approximately six stems originating at, or just above, ground level. The tree is in a very poor structural condition with included bark at the base, ivy throughout the canopy and numerous dead branches and stems. It is felt that the tree is in such a condition that remedial tree works would not help and the removal and replacement of the tree is the most viable option. The removal of this multi stemmed tree will create a large amount of space for replacement planting.

Recommendation:- Fell and replant

3.16 T29 Ash The tree has poor form with a totally asymmetric crown growing over the pond. If the tree was removed, new planting with different species could be introduced which could increase the biodiversity of the area.

Recommendation:- Fell and replant with alternative species.

3.17 T30 ,T31 Ash. It has been recommended in the arboricultural survey that T30 is re-pollarded, and that T33 is pollarded to 4m due to its poor structural integrity. Once pollarded these trees will be in a condition where they should offer long term amenity to the site without any associated health and safety concerns. The pollards will require minimal management of re-pollarding on a 4/5 year rotation.

Recommendation:- As stated in the arboricultural survey report.

4.0 Work schedule

4.1 The majority of the works recommended in this management plan can be implemented in any order according to budget and community preferences.

4.2 The prime time for undertaking remedial tree works will be in mid to late summer while the trees are still photosynthesising and prior to their dormant period.

4.3 Replanting or additional planting should be undertaken between November and March to ensure the best possible conditions for plant establishment.

5.0 Planting recommendations

5.1 A list of native trees, shrubs and flowers has been included in the management plan to aid selection of suitable replacement planting. *denotes resistance or partial resistance to Honey fungus

5.2 A Weeping Willow (*Salix x chrysocoma*) could be planted on the island in the centre of the pond. This will enhance the visual amenity of the area and would be an appropriate species for the pond

5.3 Following our meeting, where the screening of Withy Cottage was discussed, the planting of shrubs/trees that offer colour and year round interest and can also be coppiced were recommended. Suggestions of suitable plants are:-

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| Hazel | <i>Corylus avellana</i> - Catkins and nuts |
| | <i>Corylus maxima</i> 'Purpurea' - Purple catkins, nuts and leaves |
| Dogwoods | <i>Cornus alba</i> - Red stems |
| | <i>Cornus stolonifera</i> 'Flaviramea'- Yellow stems |
| Willows | <i>Salix caprea</i> Pussy willow |
| | <i>Salix alba</i> 'Chermesina' - Bright Scarlet stems |
| | <i>Salix alba</i> 'Vitellina' - Golden yellow stems |

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Native species for planting around the pond

Trees

Small leafed Lime (*Tilia cordata*) *

Wild service tree (*Sorbus torminalis*).

Mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*)

Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)

Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)

Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)

Holly (*Ilex aquilolium*)(EG) *

Yew (*Taxus bacata*) (EG) although poisonous, yew is a common woodland tree.*

Goat willow (*Salix caprea*)

Shrubs

Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*)

Wayfaring Tree (*Viburnum lantana*)

Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)

Box (*Buxus sempervirens*) (EG) *

Dogwood (*Cornus alba*) *

Flowers

Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*)

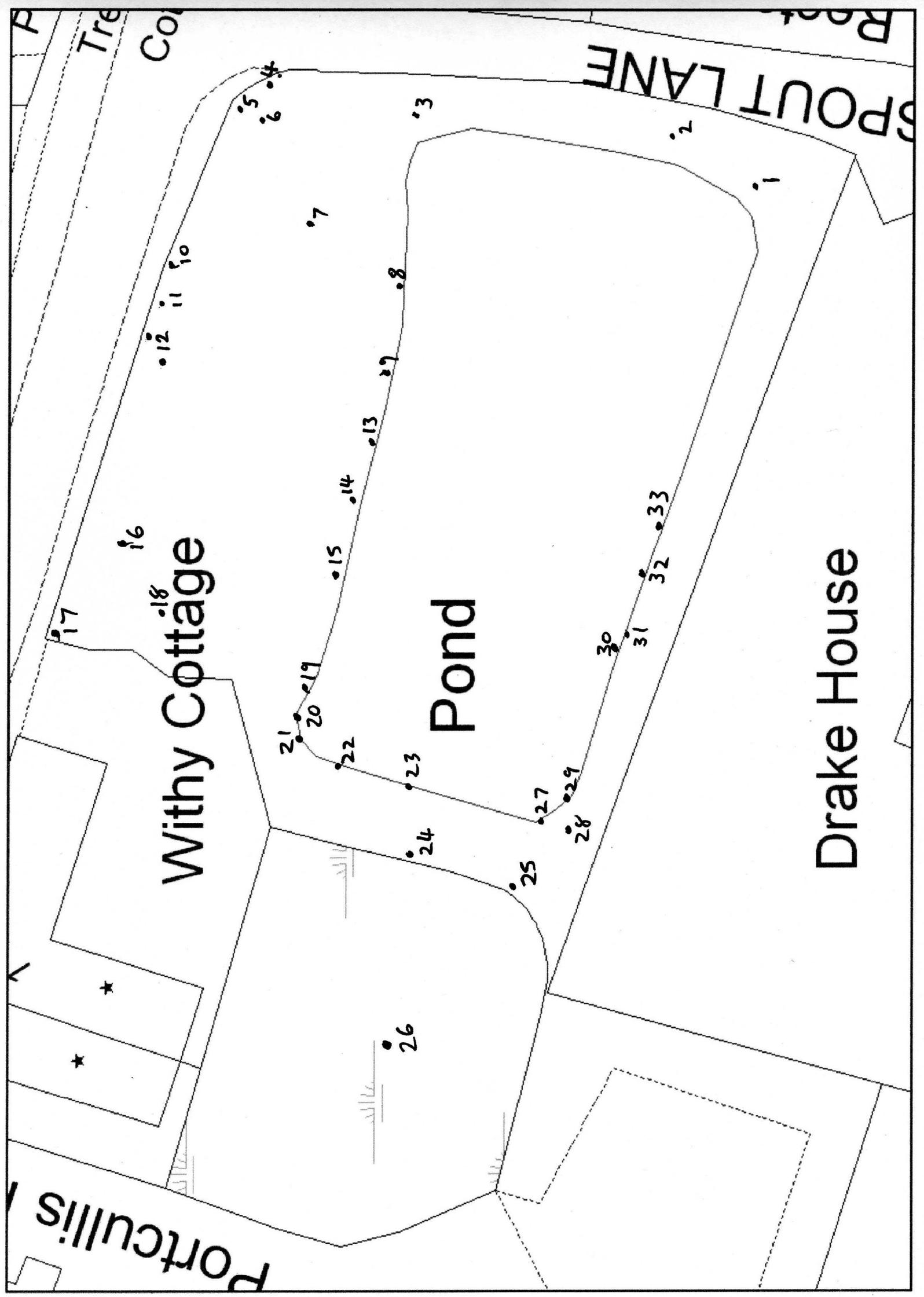
Snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*)

Anemones (*Anemone nivalis* / *blanda*)

Foxgloves (*Digitalis purpurea*)

Primroses (*Primula vulgaris*)

Violet (*Viola* spp)



Withy Cottage

Pond

Drake House

SPOUT LANE

Portcullis

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