**THE GREEN OAK CARPENTRY COMPANY LTD (GOCC)**
**TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND FRAME INFORMATION.**
**02/10/2014. PLEASE READ CAREFULLY.**

***The purpose of this document is to inform and to establish a working understanding for GOCC clients, and applies to all GOCC contracts unless agreed otherwise.*** **Please read them carefully. In making a decision to build in Oak it may be a good idea to study existing Oak framed buildings, both old and new, to get a feeling for their style and appearance as well as the centuries old carpentry tradition to which they belong. The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum in Singleton has a well preserved collection of vernacular buildings dating from the 15th century and is a mine of useful information.**

***Deposit and stage Payments***
Over 90% of the work involved in the design and fabrication of an oak frame is carried out in the framing yard, the assembly often requiring only a few days for the carpentry team to complete. For this reason we suggest the following payment schedule. A 10% deposit is required to reserve a slot in our construction programme and to get drawings underway. Unfortunately we cannot reserve a slot until an order has been placed and a deposit paid. Once design and engineering work is completed a firm quotation can be given. Please bear in mind that design changes may cause cost variations from the estimated sum as agreed at the time of placing an order. Once timber arrives fabrication can commence and we ask for a further 30%. Usually two stage payments are taken as the work progresses of 25% each to cover work completed, with the final payment of 10% due after assembly on site. Terms are strictly 14 days.

***Late Payments***
The majority of our clients pay very promptly however some don't, and hence we need to be clear that out terms are strictly 21 days from date of invoice, unless agreed otherwise. We reserve the right to charge interest at 6% above bank base rate on a monthly basis for all overdue payments.

***Discounts***
The sum offered on our estimate letter does not include any main contractors discount or any other deductions unless specifically agreed with GOCC. GOCC does not permit the taking of deduction from our final account unless terms for so doing are agreed in writing between the parties at the time of placing the order. Some clients levy late delivery penalties on an ad-hoc basis. Whilst GOCC does all within its power to ensure programme is maintained we do not accept late delivery penalties unless agreed in writing before the works commence.

***VAT Issues***
In order for work to be VAT exempt work must be a new build dwelling which is unoccupied. For ancillary structures such as a garage or annexe we are unable to VAT exempt payments unless it forms part of a new dwelling prior to occupation. A copy of the local authority planning consent will be required before paying a deposit. Listed buildings are no longer VAT exempt as the rules on this changed in 2012. VAT on conversion of outbuildings or other no habitable structures to a dwelling may now be charged at 5%.

Please note that without satisfactory documentation we are obliged to charge VAT. Design and drawing fees and other consultancy work may only be exempted if it is part of a supply and fix package of works to follow later. We reserve the right to charge VAT retrospectively where circumstances may change and we incur a VAT liability on behalf of the client.

***Statutory Requirements***
It is the client responsibility to ensure that all local authority and other statutory requirements have been met with regard to planning and listed building consent etc., before proceeding. GOCC can accept no responsibility for costs or delays caused by lack of proper consents etc.

***Cancellation***
In the event of the cancellation of a project GOCC will charge the full value of works completed up to that point. Deposits and stage payments are not usually refundable, but we will always try to be reasonable and fair in this respect.

***Engineer's Checking***
We usually supply engineer's checking for our frames. Please note that this will usually take the form of an engineer's letter of certification and will state that the oak frame is adequate for its intended purpose. This is deemed suitable for a building control submission for well tried and tested structures that are traditional in their scope under BS5268. Should calculations be required retrospectively, this will be charged extra at cost. More

complex structures may require a more formal approach to the engineering. We will discuss this with you at the time of placing the order.

***The frame Drawings***
Our frame drawings represent an agreement between the client and GOCC as to the style and extent of the oak framing work to be carried out. As such they should be studied carefully by the client, or his representative to ensure they meet requirements. We do not undertake sprockets, tilt fillets, facias, glazing cappings and other second fix or non-structural items, if unsure please discuss. We will require that our drawings are signed off as 'for construction' before we are able to proceed to manufacture. Please note once the drawings are signed off late design changes can be expensive and difficult, especially if the frame is in manufacture, and should be avoided if at all possible.

***Access to Site for Assembly – Trucks and Cranes***
Our quotation assumes close access and suitable hard standing to the site for delivery of timber, and a siting a crane for assembly. Soft or made up ground must have sufficient hard-core well compacted into it to allow the safe setting up of a crane. If in doubt we can get the crane company to check this for you. We need to be informed of the location of any drainage runs, cesspools etc., liable to damage by heavy machinery. Power cables must be moved or made safe before erection begins. Space will be required around the site for timber prior to assembly. It is the client's or their representative's responsibility to ensure that access to the site and the operational area is suitable for these machines. In exceptional circumstances we reserve the right to hire additional crane pads or track for the safe operation of these machines if the ground conditions are unsuitable. These costs are to be borne by the client. GOCC cannot accept any responsibility for damage to drainage or other underground services where not made aware of their existence prior to commencing assembly

***Scaffold and other site provisions***
It is the responsibility of the client or builder to supply access scaffold for assembly. This may take the form of a ring scaffold and/or a bird-cage scaffold, or occasionally mobile alloy towers and staging. Costs associated with this remain the clients responsibility. All access equipment must conform to current safety requirements. We also assume supply of Acrows, timber for shoring and temporary ply boarding for safe access to unfinished floors for assembly works, etc., unless agreed otherwise. We assume the provision of normal site welfare, power and water.

***Supporting the Frame***
It is our experience that occasionally cavity work is inadequate to support the oak frame, therefore we request that cavity work should be closed, or otherwise robustly constructed to allow adequate support for the oak frame sills or plates. We will take all due care but cannot accept responsibility for damage to fragile cavity work. We will require all cut outs in existing masonry, and any other support structures pre-prepared prior to attending site for the assembly. All support structure is deemed to be adequate to support the oak frame and remains the clients responsibility.

***Setting Out on Site – Who Checks***
It is the client or his representative responsibility to ensure the accurate setting out and construction of plinths, post feet pads, etc. GOCC will clearly state the dimensions of the completed frame in our workshop drawings. These should be checked and double checked against the as built dimensions. If inaccuracies or errors occur in the masonry, once the frame erection begins, we are unable to stop progress to make changes, unless additional costs can be agreed in writing with the client on the day. Where posts sit onto a brick or stone pier we advise that the pier be built up after the frame is assembled to allow fine adjustment. Pad stones or staddle stones should be placed in oversized pockets to allow fine adjustment once the exact column position is established.

***Raised Tie Trusses***
Raised tie trusses such as the sling brace or arched collar braced truss are prone to spreading over time as the shrinkage in the beams takes place and the structure takes up load from the roof etc. Where they are tied into masonry or other hard finishes cracking and movement may occur, the detailing of the truss interface to the structure should be designed so as to minimise the risk of damage to masonry etc., through spread. Their use in entire timber structures is much less problematic as the envelope is inherently flexible. If you have any doubts as to their suitability please discuss.

***Tannic Acid***
Tannin is a natural product contained within green oak, and contributes to its durability. It cannot be removed or sealed into the timber, and may leach out. This will only happen in contact with water. After the frame is assembly tannic acid may leach onto brick piers, stone plinth etc in wet weather. This can be unsightly and

whilst it generally weathers off external faces after some months, it may leave a residual stain. If you are using a pale coloured limestone of marble or other similar material either internally or externally that is prone to staining, then it is essential that adequate protection is in place prior to commencing the assembly of the frame. GOCC cannot accept responsibility for damage to masonry or other surfaces caused by tannic acid run-off.

***Materials on Site***
Materials not fixed into the building, remain the property of GOCC and will be taken off site on completion unless agreed otherwise.

***Finishing the Frame – Sandblasting***
We strongly recommend sand blasting the finished frame to remove dirt and band saw staining. There is a strong reaction between the steel of the band mill and the tannins in the oak which cause an unsightly blue staining which is difficult to remove by other means. The ideal time to sand blast is after covering in and before the completion of other finishes susceptible to damage by the sand blasting process. Please note the cost of this is not included in our estimate. In the interests of neighbourliness we advise you inform neighbours of the day you intend to sand blast your frame due to the dust and noise. Where exposed to the weather the Oak will weather back to a silver grey colour and the hence we do not generally recommend sand blasting of externally exposed structures.

You may wish to consider beam planing which we can do whilst the frame is in the workshops. This surface may then be sandblasted or left without further treatment. If untreated do please bear in mind that whilst the frame is in storage in our yard, and during transportation and assembly it will water stain, and be prone to dirt and occasional scuffs, etc. Whilst we take all due care we recommend that you make some allowance for sand blasting or other cleaning processes of beam surfaces once the building envelope is complete.

***Quotations***
Any quotation supplied by us is valid for three months and subject to revision thereafter.

***Main Contractors***
We reserve the right to put on 5% to cover costs for administration where we are sub-contracted to a main contractor, and where retentions and other contract conditions apply.

***Insurance of the Frame on Site***
It is the client and/or the builder's responsibility to insure the timber and the frame as soon as delivered to site, as site conditions and security are beyond the control of GOCC.

***Finished Building Insurance.***
Sometimes it is a condition of a mortgage provider that NHBC, Premier, Zurich, Building Life Plans or similar, underwrite the building. This can present difficulties depending on whom you are dealing with, however most insurers accept the use of green oak within certain parameters. The surest route is to employ a qualified architect to design and supervise of the construction and hence cover is provided under their PI insurance.

We recommend you employ an architect or other suitably qualified professional to carry out the detailed design and BC submissions stages of your project. On site project management should ideally be carried out by a suitably qualified professional. Self builders will need to be aware of the complexity and technical aspects of construction, as well as the considerable real time demands of building.

***Programme***
Please try to be realistic in setting your programme. We are affected by the weather and other factors, hence delays may occur in delivery of the frame to site. We strongly advise that you build in contingencies into your programme. In our view putting pressure on the construction team to meet tight demands on programme can be counter productive, unless good reason exists for doing otherwise. Whilst we do our best to ensure delays do not occur we cannot accept claims made against our final account for late delivery. If programme is critical please discuss.

***Design Development***
We recommend that you talk to us early in the design process, so that we can assist in the design and development process prior to planning. We often look at schemes that have got planning where it is too late to make any significant input. If you have made the decision to use an Oak frame then it would be a shame not to exploit some of the wonderful features a well designed frame has to offer such as galleried floors and mezzanines, integral conservatories, glazed areas of roof to create light wells, open plan living spaces, loft

rooms, Juliet balconies and so on. An early meeting is free so why not take advantage of our knowledge and enthusiasm.

***Engineering Oak Frames***
Engineering Oak structures is a specialised field and sometimes challenging for conventional engineers who work predominantly with steel and concrete. For this reason we recommend you employ us to carry out this aspect of the work for you. Our specialist engineer has a vast amount of experience in timber structures and will not for example revert to steel unnecessarily or oversize beam sections. This not only ensures more elegant design solutions but also better value for money. For the majority of schemes we do not supply calculations instead providing a letter of certification. This is adequate for the majority of Oak frames "of traditional styling and well tried and tested methods of construction which have been employed over a long time." (BS 5268). More complex or unusual structures will require full calculations, if unsure as to the best route, talk to us.

***Why Green Oak?***
Green or fresh sawn Oak is used for several reasons. Seasoning an 8" x 10" (200 x 250mm) beam will take over 8 years, even in a centrally heated room. The rule of thumb for drying hardwoods is half an inch (12.5mm) per face per annum. The structure of Oak is hard and dense making drying slower than other timbers. To set aside a stock of dry beams would be expensive, difficult and require a lot of space in order to carry enough stock over the time required. There would be no guarantee that the stock sizes carried would meet the clients requirements as the component sizes in traditional frames very enormously, unlike in softwood. The drying process causes the beams to fissure and distort requiring re-sawing of all surface to true up, in order that the carpenters can work to reasonably flat and true surfaces, hence buying air dried beams will not obviate checking and fissuring of the surfaces. Finally true air dried beam sections of any quality are very hard to come by. Sawyers make all sorts of claims as to the dryness of their stock which is difficult to verify, our experience is that at best you may get 'part air dried oak' or 'steady oak' which frankly is expensive and achieves very little.

Jointing the frame and assembling it green is not only cheaper and easier, but also the components are locked together in such a way so as to contain the shrinkage and distortion. Use of green Oak has been the norm for centuries and we at GOCC are convinced that this is still the best way to fabricate these structures.

***Drying of Oak Frames***
The timber in Oak frames will shrink once completed, the gentler the drying process, the better it will be for your frame as surface checks and splits will develop more evenly over the surfaces. Sometimes frames are assembled and left in the weather for some years before being covered in, this does them no harm at all, quite the opposite, it allows the frame to dry gently. Please remember that beams will move and develop surface checking during drying. Shoulders of joints will tend to open and show gaps as the drying process develops, especially at the brace joints where green. We accurately fit and draw-bore all our mortise and tenons to mitigate this and do not take short cuts.

***Storage of Frames and Hot Weather***
During hot weather delays in bringing a frame to site can be a problem as splits may occur in the tenon ends of beams for example. Ideally a frame should be assembled as soon as it is ready, however we understand that delays do happen. We will do what we can to mitigate this, but the client should be aware of occasional quite marked end grain splitting. Where very long delays occur due to circumstances beyond our control additional costs may be incurred to re-fit joints affected by end grain splits and shrinkage.

***Are Other Finishes Required***
We do not recommend any other form of finishing apart from sand blasting and to a lesser extent beam planing. Sometimes clients wax or oil the frame after assembly, but the vast majority prefer to leave the surface in its natural state. Sand blasting raises the grain and gives the surface an attractive pale straw colour that fits well into most schemes. Be careful if you do decide to oil a frame as the colour can be rather strong, so we would advise trying out some samples first. Please discuss.

***Grouting Beneath Sills after Assembly***
Your builder will need to grout beneath the sills and post feet of our frames once we have finished assembly, as we will leave the frame on 12mm thick oak slips. This enables us to make adjustments to the levels of the sills if required.

***Sapwood***
The sapwood is the outer living part of the tree which is found beneath the bark and is usually 2" wide (50mm) All the nutrients of the living tree are carried within this zone, hence it is not durable and may be prone to insect attack. In externally exposed structures we generally avoid sapwood as it is perishable and can decay in a few

years, however, in interior situations some should be tolerated. Bear in mind that economic conversion of square beams from round logs makes the inclusion of some sapwood inevitable, so will occur on the corners (arris') and outer faces of the beams.

***Timber Treatment***
We do not recommend treatment of our oak frames, as the timber is very durable and resistant to wood boring insects. However occasionally wood-boring beetles may infect the sapwood of an oak frame, most commonly Powder Post – (Lyctus Brunneus). It must be emphasised that they do not eat the Oak heartwood of the frame (or your furniture or structural softwood!) and therefore will not affect the structure of the frame. If holes and dust appear, talk to us before taking further action. On no account have the frame treated by a so called specialist. Local brush treatment of affected areas is all that is required. If in doubt talk to us first.

***Panel Infilling and Exposure of Joints to the Weather***
Please be aware that if you expose timber frame joints to the weather they may leak, especially on elevations to the weathering side of the buildings (south and west). We can help mitigate this but can offer no guarantee of long term weather and air tightness, as after the frame shrinks it also experiences ongoing seasonal movement. In panel infill systems this will cause the breakdown of the seals at the panel edges, however well they may be formed. For this reason we do not recommend this form of construction, where the structural frame is exposed both externally and internally. That said that there are good alternatives, for example the frame can be fabricated from 100mm thick beams so as to sit onto the outer leaf of a masonry only, the panels may then be in-filled with render or brick panels without fear of ingress of water as the cavity vents away any moisture, and the inner leaf gives the required air tightness and thermal performance. In addition if required, an internally visible structure may be created inside the building envelope avoiding thermal performance and weathering issues. Keeping the timber structure within the envelope is good practice and should be achieved wherever possible with the notable exception of porches and balconies.

***Glazing Oak Frames***
Oak frames make wonderful structures combined with lots of glass, but care needs to be taken to ensure the glass panels can accommodate the movement of the frame. We have acquired much experience over the years of glazing Oak frames and have created working details for you or your architect to adopt. Please note that whilst we offer these details in a spirit of cooperation we cannot accept liability arising from their use. Please discuss.

***Timber Quality***
Timber quality is vital in producing frames of high quality. In general we use QPA / QP1 grade timber, though occasionally we default to the higher grade. We don't require joinery grade timber (that would be wasteful) but knot size, ring shake, heart rot etc., can cause difficulties and in most cases should be carefully controlled. An awareness of where each component fits into the building is important, columns have different structural requirements to beams which in general should be of better quality. Some sapwood is allowable but should be kept within reasonable limits. *NB Timber Treatment notes above.*

***Sourcing Timber***
All our timber is sourced from forests that adopt the highest standards in environmental management. We buy most of our timber from France where quality and price are better than that available from home grown sources. Most of our suppliers will be PEFC accredited. Talking of 'wood miles' a sea crossing is much more environmentally friendly than road miles which are comparatively low from Normandy to our yard on The Hampshire Sussex borders.

**These Terms and Conditions and Frame Information will be incorporated into any contract between the client and GOCC Ltd unless agreed otherwise. Terms strictly 14 days from date of invoice**

I have read and understood and agree these terms and conditions and the frame information.

Signed …….  Date ……..……