



Arboricultural Safety and Condition Report

Prepared for:

Mrs Sheila Turner

The Old Vicarage

23 Back Lane

Holmfirth

Huddersfield

HD9 1HG

Date of report: 14th October 2019

Reference: OWA0142

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1.0. Instructions

We have been instructed by Sheila Turner to inspect and report on the condition of the trees at The Old Vicarage, 23 Back Lane, Holmfirth, Huddersfield, HD9 1HG.

This report seeks to investigate the condition of 10 trees which are within the front garden of the property. My instructions are:

- 1 To determine the condition and safety of the trees.
- 2 Ascertain if anything can be done to improve the television reception for the couple living in the property to the west of The Old Vicarage.
- 3 Recommend any immediate and future management of the trees, based upon my assessment and on my personal experience as an arboriculturist.

2.0. Introduction

The property is a large detached period property formerly used as a Vicarage. There is a large front garden with a sweeping driveway, and a large rear garden.

Some of the trees line the road (Back Lane) and some bound the perimeter with Glebe Land, and also the property to the west of The Old Vicarage.

The surveyed trees are drawn and numbered on the plan at the back of this report in **Appendix 1**. They are numbered **T1-T10**.

3.0. Report Limitations

The tree inspections were made from ground level and the trees were not climbed.

A plan of the site has been produced, but please note this plan is not to scale.

All other relevant data is presented within this report together with any recommendations for further analysis, as appropriate.

As vegetation grows and ground conditions may change, this report is valid for a maximum of 5 years.

4.0. General advice

When appointing a tree surgeon, it is recommended for your own protection that you only use a properly qualified and experienced company, as it is important to check that they carry adequate Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurance. All tree work should be carried out according to British Standard 3998: 2010 – *recommendations for tree work*. I am happy to supply you with a leaflet called 'Choosing an Arborist' upon request and can recommend one for you.

5.0. Findings

From an enquiry with Kirklees Council on 7th October 2019, there is no tree preservation order on the site, but the property is within Holmfirth Conservation Area, at the eastern edge of it. As such all trees which are 7.5cm or greater in diameter (when measured at 1.5 metres) are afforded protection on the site.

The inspection was undertaken on 16th September and the weather was calm and cloudy with some sunshine.

5.1. Condition of the trees

The trees appear to be in a fair/good condition in terms of physiological health (greenery and general health of the foliage) and structure. Full details are in **Appendix 2 – Tree Data Schedule**.

Tree 1 (T1)

T1, the Beech has twin stems at 1 metre with a large bole which holds water. The depth of the bole extends deeper than 30cm (the length of the metal probe). The fact that the bole is water tight is good, as fungi require damp conditions as well as oxygen to survive. The presence of pooled water indicates anaerobic conditions and this is not favourable to support decaying fungi.

The tree is suppressed by **T2**, and the 2 main stems are leaning away from T2 and towards the house/parking area because of this suppression; very little of the crown exists towards the Sycamore (**T2**).

It has been pruned in the past to raise the crown, and it was noted that the crown is extending over the house but not touching it.

There is a large wound on the south side with moss growing over it; when probed it was hard on the outer surface, and has some long old nails bent over in the surface of it. The surface of the wound measures 70cm long x 20cm wide and the top of the wound is 1.4 metres from the ground.

Beech are not so good as dealing with decay, but in this situation the decay appears to be progressing slowly due to the hard outer surface I noted; this is where I would expect to see the decay progress from, forming a cavity/hollow.

Tree 2 (T2)

The Sycamore tree is situated close to **T1** and the driveway of Glebe Land.

There are stubby epicormic growths at the base, which have been pruned to remove them, leaving small stubs.

Of note within the crown are blackened pruning wounds at 6.2 metres from pruning in the past. There is also evidence of a small cavity from this flush cut pruning at about 1.2 metres below the blackened area where the fruiting bodies of Dryads Saddle were; (these were noted at the time of the site visit to quote on 5th August). Dryads Saddle generally colonises dead wood and is commonly found at wound sites such as these.

It is only a cause for concern if the cavity is produced over time is a third or more in size compared to the radius of the entire portion of the tree in that locality. This would then create a weak point. From the assessment, we do not think that the size of the wounds/ cavities constitutes this amount as it appears not to be advanced at present.

The lateral limb which is growing towards the direction of the house (The Old Vicarage) at 7.6 metres, has a wound that is facing upwards at the union.

There are smaller leaves than expected on the tree, and it appears most Sycamore are exhibiting this symptom now although the cause is possibly drought related.

Tree 3 (T3)

The Beech tree is set amongst dense Laurel and these prevented a detailed inspection. Other than this, the only other thing of note is that there is a cable running from Glebe Land and The Old Vicarage which runs through the tree. The function of utility supplies is paramount to the safety and comfort of people and so it is always prudent to ensure that are not detrimentally affected by vegetation.

Tree 4 (T4)

This tree is a Beech and is situated on the bank top about 1 metre away from the edge and set in amongst the Holly.

The Beech has smaller leaves than expected and a relatively sparse crown indicating a decrease in full health.

There is small deadwood in the lower crown that would fall into the garden if it fell, and a hung up branch was noted in the crown.

Tree 5 (T5)

The Horse Chestnut tree has twin stems at 2 metres, and sparse leaves. It is situated on the edge of the retaining wall. From talking to Mrs Turner, the boundary wall was rebuilt around 10 years ago and the wall was displaced by around 60cm outwards into the road. It appears likely that there was been removal of rooting material to enable this to be re-sited in its original position.

There is still some living Ivy on the tree despite the fact that most of it has been severed in the recent past.

The large stem near to the road (South east side) has active Bleeding Canker of Horse Chestnut with cracking from 2 metres to 3.4 metres along the branch over the road. The extent of this is partially obscured by Ivy, but most is just about visible. There is a cable obstruction over the road, and it was noted that the tree has significant new leaf growth in the middle of the crown rather than at the ends.

It was observed that a limb has been lost in the past on the roadside also, as there is a cankerous wound there.

Tree 6 (T6)

The Beech tree is situated about 1 metre from the wall and has also recently had the Ivy severed.

The tree is very heavy within the main crown with a dense cluster of limbs on the eastern side. I am concerned about the structural strength of the tree where the cluster of limbs grow, as it is quite a rare thing to observe and we are unsure what to advise. The growth is vertical and appears to have sufficient compensatory growth supporting the structure at present; the owner wishes for maximum tree retention, so the recommendations have been made with this in mind.

As with **T5**, there is also a cable obstruction over the road and there is a long hung up branch over the garden.

Tree 7 (T7)

The tree has twin stems at 1.8 metres with a wet bole.

There is cavity at the base of this Beech on the eastern side of the tree. It is 25 cm deep and extends downwards as a dry cavity. Relative to the size of the tree the stresses appear to be within acceptable known tolerances at present. When the cavity extends to two-thirds of the radius, leaving one third sound wood then the tree will have reached its tolerance limit and risk of failure becomes predictable.

Tree 8 (T8)

The Sycamore tree has a very sparse crown with lower deadwood present. There is only a leafy crown at the top of the tree.

The tree has twin stems at 2.4 metres approximately with vertical growth, and adaptive growth at the union (sometimes known as elephants ears).

As Sycamore appear to be affected physiologically this year, it is not known whether there is anything else going on with this tree. We have recorded this tree as being in fair to poor condition generally, and as there were no symptoms to indicate a cause, the recommendations have been made in order to identify any observable cause over a period of time.

Tree 9 (T9)

The Turkey Oak has twin stems at 2.7 metres and has occasional deadwood throughout the crown. The crown hangs low over the driveway in front of the house, at around 2.7 metres.

Tree 10 (T10)

The Turkey Oak tree is situated close to the boundary with the adjacent property (to the west) and at the top of the footpath that leads to the house from the main road.

There is an ash pile beside the base of the tree on the north, west and eastern sides where there is no buttress at all indicating raised ground levels.

The crown appeared relatively sparse.

6.0. Rights and Responsibilities of Owning and Managing Trees

The laws pertaining to owning and managing trees are: the common law duty of care and the statutory Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984.

As stated in *Micklewright vs Surrey County Council* 2010; Judge Reid QC says, 'Neither the law nor statute requires an owner or occupier to make his land completely safe. His duty is to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable. What is reasonable varies with circumstances. It follows that the owner or occupier must make an assessment of the potential risk presented by any tree on his land. He must therefore inspect trees at regular intervals. In ascertaining how frequently the trees need to be inspected, the owner or occupier must have regard to the size of the risk involved and the difficulty of counteracting that risk.'

...'The owner or occupier must distinguish between routine maintenance and the necessary reasonable specialist inspections.'

In terms of my personal recommendations based upon professional training in trees and the law, I recommend that trees are routinely (annually) inspected by the owner or occupier; as they are familiar with the trees and able to note any changes they may observe with them.

Additional to this, an in-house inspection should also be carried out as soon as possible after inclement weather, e.g. strong winds, storms or heavy snow, if visual changes are evident; E.g. broken branches, lifting root plate or signs of wounding or decay, then the services of specialist should be brought in to quantify the significance of these changes to tree health and the general safety of the users of the site.

In the absence of visual changes to the tree (as outlined above), I recommend contacting a specialist such as myself to routinely assess the tree every 5 years to fulfil your duty of care.

The responsibility also lays with the owner or occupier to undertake any recommended works to the trees made by the specialist in a timely manner, and as specified in order to fulfil their duty of care.

6.1. Television reception being affected by trees

We know that Mrs Turner does not feel pressure to prune her trees in order to provide a better TV reception for her neighbours, and has only enquired so that they can be considered whilst making an assessment of the trees.

Having assessed the trees on the site, as well as the fact that the affected property is situated at a lower level than The Old Vicarage, we deduce that a significant amount to tree pruning/removal may well be required to enable a clear route for the transmission.

Given the protected status of the trees, it is unlikely too that permission would be granted by the Local Planning Authority to have works carried out for this reason. After having researched this a little, I wonder if there is a difference in the reception in the summer months and an improvement in the winter months when the leaves are no longer on the trees? If there is, then this would indicate that deciduous greenery is playing a part in the loss of quality of reception.

There is also the possibility of old cabling and other things that could affect the quality of the reception.

Just for the record, in law there is no right to a TV reception from vegetation, and given the presence of the trees over a considerable period of time, the people living nearby are expected to have considered the implications of the presence of the trees prior to occupying the land surrounding it. Therefore, despite any

pressures to prune the tree to provide a better TV reception, there is no duty in law for the owner to do this.

7.0. Recommendations

The trees appear to be in a fair to good condition in terms of physiological health and structural condition.

All works should be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Works – Recommendations.

The following recommendations have been made.

Monitor the tree

T1, T2, T4, T5, T6, T7 and T8 have been identified to be monitored to see how they progress in the coming years. Trees can react very slowly to things and by checking them we are able to see any changes that would then warrant action. All the trees are recommended to be monitored annually (**High Priority**).

T1 – Monitor the bole of the tree for cracks and water escape as this would indicate structural weakness in this area. Also monitor the wound at the side of the tree to see if it progresses at all.

I recommend that you contact me if you note any fungal fruiting bodies near or on the tree. Often a photo of the fungi from the top, side and beneath is most helpful as I will then check if it is a decay causing fungi.

T2 – Given the condition of the tree generally, I recommend that the tree is monitored to see how it fares over the coming years.

T4 – The tree has a relatively sparse crown, with smaller leaves than expected. It is possible that the lack of rooting space can be the cause of the condition of the tree, as it is on the corner of the retaining wall. Or it could be an effect of last years drought. By monitoring the tree, we can observe if there is further decline or whether the tree will recover.

T5 – The tree is a very mature Horse Chestnut which has been present on the land for a long time. Historically the wall was re-built close to the tree as the wall had been displaced. The tree has active Bleeding Canker of Horse Chestnut and

this can lead to branch loss where it occurs. The symptoms of a decline in health is also further evident by sparse leaves on the outer canopy. The tree is trying hard to sustain itself as new leaves are present in the inner canopy.

Mrs Turner wishes for maximum tree retention across the site and so rather than remove the tree, we can monitor the tree regularly in order to get the most safe life out of it, and then make the decision to have the tree replaced at the most appropriate time.

T6 – Monitor the structure of the tree annually.

T7 – The cavity at the base of the tree on the eastern side will benefit from annual monitoring to see how it changes over the years. It may be that the tree can safely stand for many more years with this wound at the base. Until the cavity extends to two-third of the radius of the tree, it is deemed to have enough structural integrity to remain standing.

T8 – This tree has a tight twin union at 2.4 metres with vertical growth of the main stems from this point. There is good adaptive growth to strength this area and over time it is prudent to monitor the tree to ensure that it remains structurally sound.

Pruning work

Trees **T2, T3, T5, T6, T8, T9** and **T10** have all been recommended for pruning works as a **High Priority**.

T2 has a limb with an upward facing wound at 7.6 metres and this should be removed as a precaution to manage the risk of limb failure in the future.

T3 – prune to slightly reduce the crown over the driveway of The Old Vicarage to where the tree branch first forks.

T5 – prune to remove the limb with Bleeding Canker of back to leave a 1 metre long stub for now. This will ensure the wound size made is not excessive.

T6 – remove the branch stubs back to the main stem that have regrown, and remove the foliage around the cabling to give 1 metre clearance or to the most

appropriate pruning points, this should be adequate.

Trees **T8**, **T9** and **T10** have deadwood that is present within the crown. The priority of this are **moderate** (2-3 years) with the exception of T8, which is a **High Priority**.

Whilst the pruning works are taking place, it is recommended for the hung up branch to be removed from **T4**. It is a **High Priority**.

Pruning work to adjacent shrubs so a reinspection can be made.

There is a Laurel close to **T3** which is obscuring the tree. If it is pruned to give 30cm clearance of the tree, this should be sufficient to be able to reinspect it.

This is recommended as a **High priority**.

Ivy removal and reinspect

Remove the Ivy from **T5** as a **High Priority**. The tree can then be reinspected **T6** - Once the Ivy has died back, it is recommended to reinspect the tree. This is a **High Priority**.

A notice of intention to carry out works to trees within a Conservation Area will be required for pruning works and should be submitted to Kirklees Council. Please allow 6 weeks for the paperwork to be processed. In this time the Council will consider if the works are suitable for the trees, if they are then you will be informed. If they are not then the Council can assess the tree/s for a Tree Preservation Order, thereby protecting the tree further.

8.0. Conclusion

The tree is in a fair to good condition in terms of health and structure. There are numerous mature trees which add character to the property.

We have inspected the trees and assessed a robust system in which to manage them ensuring maximum tree retention in the short term.

We have also detailed the rights and responsibilities of owning and managing trees, and there is no right to television reception from nearby vegetation in law.

This concludes the report.

9.0. Glossary

Main stem – The main part of the tree which grows from the ground.
Commonly known as the trunk.

10.0. References / Bibliography

British Standard Institute – BS 3998:2010 Tree Works - Recommendations

Lonsdale, D. (2008) *Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management*
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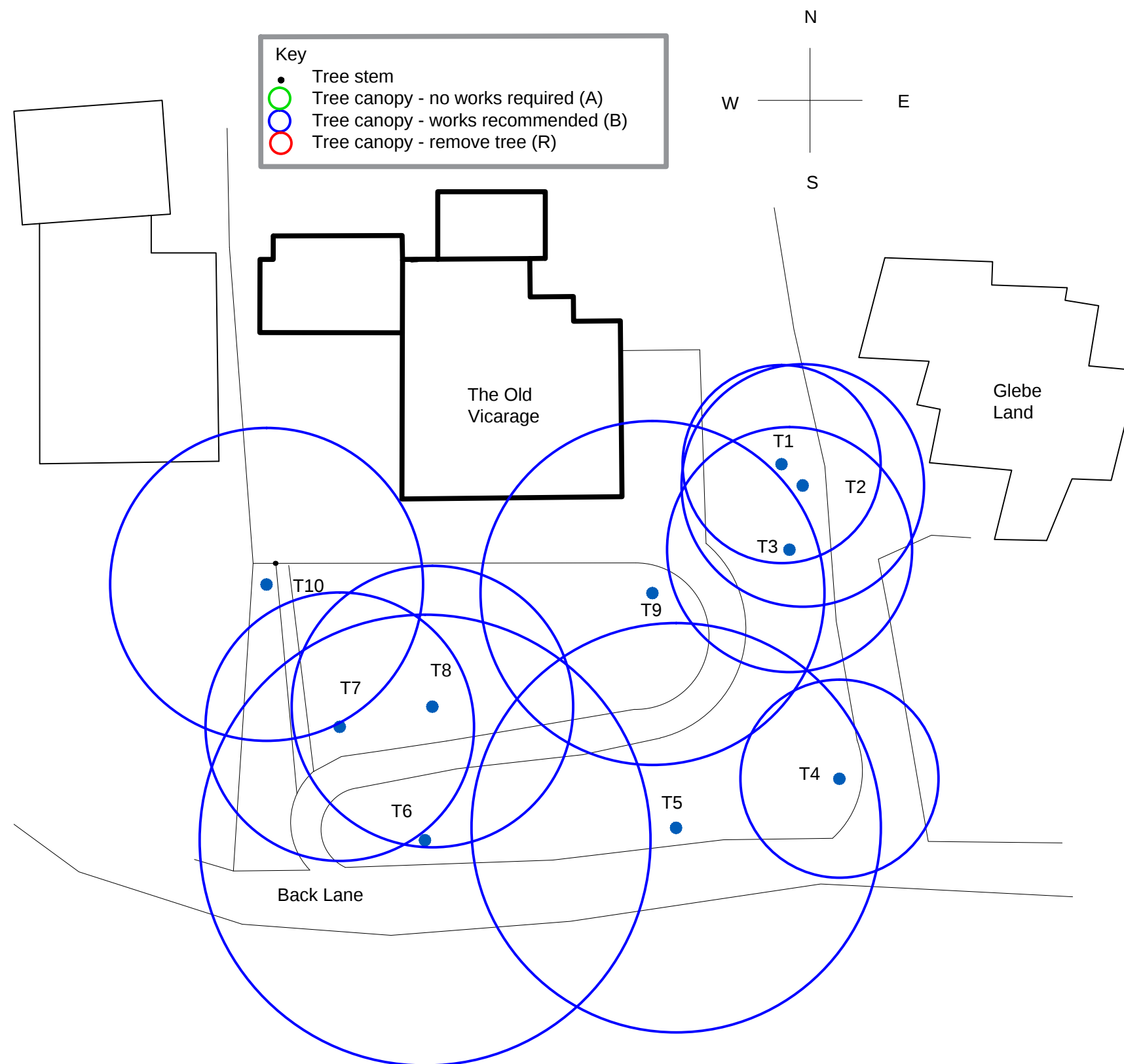
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Watson, B. (2006) *Trees Their Use, management, Cultivation and Biology*,
Wiltshire: The Crowood Press

Appendix 1 Plan of the site



Appendix 2 – Tree Data Schedule

Tree	Age, Species & Latin name	Height (m)	Crown Height (m)	Stem diameter (DBH) cm	Crown Spread (m)	Notes	General Physiology	General Structure	Life expectancy (years)	Target value	Recommendations	Priority for works	Re-inspection timing	Safety category
T1	Mature	17.1#	2.7	91@ 1.2	15.2	Twin stems at 1 metre, with a large bole, which holds water and extends deeper than 30cm (the length of the metal probe). It is growing towards the house (10.2 metres of the crown spread grows towards the house, and 5 metres grows towards Glebe Land). It is suppressed by T2. There is very little of the crown towards the Sycamore (T2). It has been pruned in the past to raise the crown, and it was noted that the crown is extending over the house but not touching it. There is a large wound on the south side with moss growing over it; when probed it was hard on the outer surface with some nails in it. The surface of the wound measures 70cm long x 20cm wide and the top of the wound is 1.4 metres from the ground. The 2 main stems are leaning away from T2 and towards the house/parking area.	Good	Fair	40+	Mod / High	Monitor the bole. If the bole cracks and water escapes then this would indicate a structural weakness in this area. In addition, monitor the wound to determine if the decay progresses at all. I recommend that you contact me if any fungal fruiting bodies (mushrooms etc) are seen on or close to the tree. I can then see if they are decay causing fungi.	High High High	1	B
	Beech													
	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>													
T2	Mature	17.1#	5.3	80	18.6	The tree is situated close to T1 and the driveway of Glebe Land. There are epicormics at the base which have been pruned to remove them, leaving small stubs. Of note within the crown are blackened pruning wounds at 6.2 metres from pruning in the past. There is also evidence of a small cavity from this flush cut pruning at about 1.2 metres below the blackened area where the fruiting bodies of Dryads Saddle were noted at the time of the site visit to quote (5th August). The lateral limb is growing towards the direction of the house (The Old Vicarage) at 7.6 metres, and has a wound that is facing upwards at the union. There are smaller leaves than expected on the tree, and it appears most Sycamore are exhibiting this symptom now although the cause is possibly drought related.	Good / Fair	Good / Fair	40+	Moderate	As a precaution remove the limb at 7.6 metres which has an upwards facing wound. Monitor the tree generally.	High Mod	1	B
	Sycamore													
	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>													
T3	Mature	18.6#	4.3	96#	18.9	There is a cable running from Glebe Land and The Old Vicarage which runs through the tree. The tree is set amongst dense Laurel and these prevented a detailed inspection.	Good	Good	Low	40+	Prune to slightly reduce the crown over the driveway of The Old Vicarage to where the tree branch forks. If possible, clear the Laurel to give around 30cm access around the base of the tree and reinspect.	High	1	B
	Beech													
	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>													
T4	Mature	21.8	3.2	88	15.2	Situated on the bank top about 1 metre away from the edge and set in amongst the Holly. The Beech has smaller leaves than expected and a relatively sparse crown. There is small deadwood in the lower crown that would fall into the garden if it fell. A hung up branch was noted in the crown.	Fair / Poor	Good / Fair	Mod	40+	Remove the hung up branch and monitor the tree to see how it recovers.	High	1	B
	Beech													
	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>													
T5	Mature	19.7	2.8	104	15.7	The tree is situated on the edge of the retaining wall and there is still some Ivy on the tree despite the fact that most of it has been severed in the recent past. Twin stems at 2 metres and sparse leaves. From talking to Mrs Turner the boundary wall was rebuilt around 10 years ago and the wall was displaced by around 60cm outwards into the road. It appears likely that there was been removal of rooting material to enable this to happen. The large stem near to the road (south east side) has active Bleeding Canker of Horse Chestnut with cracking from 2 metres to 3.4 metres along the branch over the road. The extent of this is partially obscured by Ivy, but most is just about visible. There is a cable obstruction over the road and it was noted that the tree has new leaf growth in the middle of the crown rather than at the ends. It was observed that a limb has been lost on the roadside also as there is a cankerous wound there.	Fair	Fair / Poor	Mod	10-20	As the client does not wish to remove the tree, it is proposed that in order to reduce the risk the following is recommended: Remove the Ivy, and the limb with Bleeding Canker back to leave a 1 metre stub and then monitor the tree annually.	High	1	B
	Horse Chestnut													
	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>													

Tree	Age, Species & Latin name	Height (m)	Crown Height (m)	Stem diameter (DBH) cm	Crown Spread (m)	Notes	General Physiology	General Structure	Life expectancy (years)	Target value	Recommendations	Priority for works	Re-inspection timing	Safety category
T6	Mature	23.5	2.6	79	17.3	The tree is very heavy within the main crown with a dense cluster of limbs on the eastern side. It is situated about 1 metre from the wall and has recently had the Ivy severed. There is also a cable obstruction over the road. I am concerned about the structural strength of the tree where the cluster of limbs grow as it is quite a rare thing to observe. The growth is vertical and appears to have sufficient compensatory growth supporting the structure; the owner wishes for maximum tree retention, so the recommendations have been made with this in mind. There is a long hung up branch over the garden.	Good	Fair / Poor	Mod	40+	Remove the branch stubs back to the main stem that have re-grown. Once the Ivy has died back reinspect the tree with particular note of the heavy side and monitor the structure annually. Remove the obstruction around the cable to give adequate clearance.	High	1	B
	Beech													
	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>													
T7	Mature	21	1.5	69	10.3	There is cavity at the base on the eastern side of the tree which is 25 cm deep and extends downwards as a dry cavity. The tree has twin stems at 1.8 metres with a wet bole.	Good	Poor	Low	20-40	Monitor the cavity every year for signs of any changes.	High	1	B
	Beech													
	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>													
T8	Mature	21#	4	66	10.8	The tree has a very sparse crown with lower deadwood present. There is only a leafy crown at the top of the tree. The tree has twin stems at 2.4 metres approximately with vertical growth, and adaptive growth at the union (sometimes known as elephants ears).	Fair / Poor	Poor	Low	10-20	Remove the deadwood and monitor the adaptive growth annually.	High	1	B
	Sycamore													
	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>													
T9	Mature	20.8	2.5	62	13.2	The tree has twin stems at 2.7 metres and has occasional deadwood throughout the crown. The crown hangs low over the driveway in front of the house, at around 2.7 metres.	Fair	Fair	Mod	20-40	Remove the deadwood.	Mod	5	B
	Turkey Oak													
	<i>Quercus cerris</i>													
T10	Mature	21.2	4.1	63	12.0	The tree is situated close to the boundary with the adjacent property and at the top of the footpath that leads to the house from the road. There is an ash pile beside the base of the tree on the north, west and eastern sides where there is no buttress at all indicating raised ground levels. The crown appeared relatively sparse.	Fair	Good	Mod	20-40	Remove the deadwood.	Mod	5	B
	Turkey Oak													
	<i>Quercus cerris</i>													

Produced by:



and assisted by Andrew Booth

Date 17th October 2019



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