



28th June 2021

Ms K Skyrme
Housing Manager
Housing 21
The Rise
George Lane
Plympton PL7 1LJ

Our ref: GJ/A993/0621

Dear Karen,

Re: The Rise, George Lane, Plympton PL7 1LJ

We visited the above site on Friday 25th June 2021 and undertook a ground based visual survey of all the trees growing at the property ("the site"). The purpose of the survey was to assess the health and safety of the trees and to give recommendations for any risk management of the trees that may be required. The site was walked over and the trees assessed from ground level unless otherwise noted. Where we have noted defects associated with an individual tree that could lead to a risk of harm being caused to persons or property, we have undertaken a detailed inspection of that tree. We have then given recommendations for managing the tree so as to reduce any risk of harm to an acceptable level. Details of those trees subject to a detailed inspection are given at Appendix A of this report. Trees within the survey remit but not individually recorded are considered a low enough risk to not require an individual assessment. A site map, showing the approximate location of the inspected trees, is attached at Appendix B. Photographs of selected trees are attached at Appendix C.

Our survey of the trees on this site was undertaken using the principles of Visual Tree Assessment (VTA). VTA is a systematic, non-invasive method of examining the health and structural condition of individual trees. By visually examining a tree, an arboriculturist can gather information on the condition of its roots, trunk and crown in order to make an assessment and draw conclusions about its general condition, health and vitality. If serious disease or mechanical weakness is suspected that cannot be confirmed using VTA techniques, then there may be a need for more detailed investigation, such as using specialist decay detection equipment or climbing techniques. Where necessary we will recommend the use of specialist equipment or other more detailed investigations. If these techniques will not add any significant new information for our consideration then we will not recommend their use.

advanced:

progressive *adj.*
forward-thinking
forward-looking
unconventional
cutting edge
innovative

higher *adj.*
superior
highly developed
sophisticated
complex

Accessible cavities or decayed areas within trees may have been probed using a 60cm long thin metal probe to investigate the depth of any decay. Trees may also have been sounded using a rubber mallet to help detect the presence of internal decay or to assist in the determination of the extent of any suspected decay. Where appropriate the use of these tools will be detailed below.

We have assessed tree risk by relating any observable defects to the likelihood of those defects causing harm, using our knowledge and experience of tree hazard assessment and management, and have used this to inform a hazard rating for each inspected tree as detailed below. In essence we have considered any observed defects and their probability of failure in relation to the nearby land use (or “target”). Whilst any one tree may exhibit significant defects, the likelihood of that tree causing significant harm will be related to the size of the affected part, the probability of failure and the value of the target and/or the likelihood of persons being present within influencing distance of that tree at the time of failure. Risk cannot be reliably quantified in all situations and is therefore viewed in the context of a spectrum, with High and Low representing the extremes and Moderate being everything that falls in between.

In some cases we may advise non safety-critical works to trees where we consider that such works may help prolong the safe useful life expectancy of a tree or where they are in the interests of good arboricultural management. Such works will generally be given a Works Priority 4 within the Table of Recommendations. Appendix A includes a description of the Work Priorities and all the other abbreviations used within the data tables. We have also viewed neighbouring trees (as far as it is realistic to do so) from the site and we will inform you if we consider that any of these neighbouring trees require urgent works to reduce risks to your property or to persons using the site.

Trees are dynamic organisms and their safety cannot be absolutely guaranteed under all weather conditions. This report has been prepared using all reasonable skill and care. Opinions are provided in good faith.

All measurements have been estimated from ground level and should be considered as indicative only. Inspected trees have been tagged on site with small yellow tree tags affixed at approximately 2 metres above ground level where feasible to do so and their locations have been shown on the attached site map. Above ground inspection only. Soil type has not been ascertained on site. This report is not concerned with tree related subsidence risk issues.

A check on the Plymouth City Council online mapping facility reveals that all of the trees on this site are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). The site does not fall within a Conservation Area. Where trees are covered by a TPO then most works will require an application to be submitted to the local planning authority (LPA). These works can then be permitted, refused or amended by the LPA as relevant. The LPA should deal with any application within 8 weeks of receipt, but if a decision is not issued within that time then the works should be deemed to have been refused. We will advise where an application or notification is required to enable any work recommended within this report.

Observations and Conclusions

In general the trees on this site appear to be in a good condition. The site contains a number of large mature trees, including a significant Copper Beech (T11 on the supplied map), an avenue of mature Lime trees bordering the footpath from the driveway entrance and other mature Limes and Sycamores near the western end of the site. A specimen of the rare Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) is also present on site.

A number of trees require attention and these are detailed in the Table of Findings at Appendix A. Three trees require minor works. Trees T1983 and T1985 (both Cherries) are small, almost dead specimens within falling distance of footpaths or roadways. Although, due to their small size, these trees pose a low risk of causing harm I recommend that they be removed before they collapse completely. Cypress T1984 is in a fair condition but does exhibit some significant deadwood within its crown. The tree is heavily infested with ivy and I recommend that this ivy be severed and cleared from the base of the tree, so as to allow for a more detailed assessment at the next scheduled inspection of the site.

Four other trees growing near George Lane require more significant works. Elms T1986 and T1987 (photograph 1, Appendix C) are both dead and both are sited immediately above the bus stop on George Lane. These trees are likely to have died as a result of infection with Dutch Elm Disease. The two trees have already been identified as hazardous and permission has been given from Plymouth City Council to remove them as a matter of urgency. I advise, when removing these trees, that the appointed contractors also cut back the hedgerow alongside George Lane where obstructing the footpath. These hedge cutting works should not require the prior permission of Plymouth City Council. I have not tagged this hedgerow or marked it on the site map, but the works concerned are self-evident on site. Part of the hedgerow affected is visible in photograph 1.

A further, currently healthy Elm T1989, is growing just to the north of T1987, near the entrance to The Rise. This Elm has been suppressed by the adjacent trees to the west and hence leans heavily over the roadside (photograph 4). Nearby is a larger Red Oak, T1988. This tree exhibits dieback within its crown and, upon examination of the tree's trunk, it became clear that this tree presents significant decay within its base. A strip of decayed wood is visible on the western trunk aspect, extending from ground level up to around 1.5m above ground level. Probing with a metal rod revealed that the decay extends at least 50cm into the base of the tree (photograph 3). Sounding with a hammer also suggests that decay is present throughout the trunk. Fungal fruiting bodies of the decay fungus *Ganoderma applanatum* are visible on the base of the tree near the site of decay (photograph 2). The tree leans significantly and is weighted over the driveway and roadside; I therefore consider that this tree requires removal as soon as reasonably possible. The tree is covered by the site TPO and hence any works will require the prior permission of Plymouth City Council. Given that the removal of T1988 will expose the heavily leaning T1989 to new wind stresses and that this Elm tree is also very likely to succumb to the effects of Dutch Elm Disease in the near future, I recommend that Elm T1989 also be removed at the same time as Red Oak T1988.

Ivy is present on many of the larger trees on site, in addition to the Cypress T1984 identified above. Ivy (*Hedera helix*) does not directly damage trees. It can, however, obscure defects within the trunk of the tree and increase the windage on the crown of the tree. Ivy can prevent an effective inspection of trees, particularly the lower trunk where decay can often have serious consequences. For this reason all trees requiring an

inspection for safety reasons should be kept clear of ivy. In this case it will be sufficient to sever the ivy at the base of the affected trees and allow it to die off. In the first instance I recommend that the ivy be severed from all the larger trees growing towards the western end of the site and any within falling distance of George Lane. In particular, some of the trees that directly abut the western boundary are very heavily infested with ivy, preventing an adequate inspection of these boundary trees.

Finally, I note that the hedgerow bordering the rear access lane requires cutting back off this lane. I understand that this hedgerow falls within the ownership of Plymouth City Council. I consider it unlikely that Plymouth City Council are liable for the cutting back of this hedgerow, but that I do advise that you are entitled to cut back the hedgerow to your boundary as required. I advise that this hedgerow be cut back to the boundary as required to clear the driveway. These hedge trimming works should be exempt from requiring a TPO application and therefore do not require the prior permission of Plymouth City Council's planning department. I have not tagged this hedgerow or shown it on the site map at Appendix B but photograph 5 at Appendix C shows a view of the length of hedgerow concerned.

Recommendations

Table of recommendations and works priorities

Tree No	Species	Recommendations	WP
T1983	Cherry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fell 	3
T1984	Cypress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sever at base of tree and remove up to 2m above ground level 	3
T1985	Cherry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fell 	3
T1986	Elm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fell. Cut back all low overhanging vegetation back to path edge 	1
T1987	Elm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fell. Cut back all low overhanging vegetation back to path edge 	1
T1988	Red Oak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fell 	2
T1989	Elm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fell 	2
-	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut back all low overhanging vegetation so as to extend no further than in line with yellow rail 	3
-	Various	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sever ivy at base of western boundary trees and any larger trees within falling distance of George Lane 	4

See Appendix A for a list of abbreviations used

Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 & Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 it is an offence to recklessly damage or destroy the nest of a wild bird whilst in use or being built. Trees and shrubs on this site may contain nesting birds between early March and late August. It is recommended that vegetation clearance works are avoided between these dates if there is a reasonable potential for the disruption of nesting birds. If works need to be undertaken during the nesting season then it is advisable that a survey of the site be undertaken by a competent person before commencing any tree or shrub removal, to ensure that no nesting birds are present. Other species, including bats, are also protected under this legislation.

Permission must be sought from Plymouth City Council with regard to the above works to Elm T1989 and Red Oak T1988. Cherry trees T1983 and T1985 may be too young to be covered by the TPO. If they are covered, then the works to these trees are likely to be considered as exempt works, as defined within the Town & Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012, and thus will require a five day notification rather than a formal application. We consider any works specified above as appropriate management for these trees and this should be acceptable to the local planning authority, however, they may consider alternative management options; they therefore have the option to modify or reject our proposals.

All tree works to be undertaken to BS3998:2010 *Tree Works - Recommendations*. Every effort has been made to ensure that any pruning specifications given above are achievable and specific to individual trees. I recommend that the appointed tree work contractor be Arboricultural Association Approved to ensure high standards.

I recommend that trees inspected for this report be re-inspected by a suitably qualified and experienced arboriculturist within two years of the date of this site inspection. The condition of trees can change following severe weather conditions or due to effects of pests and diseases or other abiotic factors and therefore may warrant re-inspection of affected trees at a shorter interval than recommended in this report. Where possible I would recommend that re-inspections alternate between summer and winter, so that the trees can be viewed at different stages of their annual growth cycles, allowing a more complete assessment of any given tree's condition.

Yours sincerely



Graham Joyce
BSc (Hons), Dip Arb (RFS), M Arbor A, Tech Cert Arbor A

Appendix A

Abbreviations used in the survey are as follows:

Tree No	Corresponding to tag and/or to number on attached Tree Location Plan.	
Species	Common name	
Age Class	Y	Young (grown to less than one third of life expectancy)
	MA	Middle Aged (grown to between one to two-thirds of life expectancy)
	M	Mature (grown to over two thirds of normal life expectancy)
	LM	Late Mature
	V	Veteran
Ht	Height range measured to nearest metre or estimated as below:	
	L	Low (0-10 metres)
	M	Medium (10-20 metres)
	H	High (20-30 metres plus)
LE	Safe Useful Life Expectancy:	
	D	Dead
	S	Short (less than 10 years)
	L	Low (10-20 years)
	M	Medium (20-40 years)
	H	High (40+ years)
AE	Amenity Evaluation:	
	L	Low
	M	Moderate
	H	High
Struct Cond	Structural Condition:	
	G	Good (tree with no significant defects)
	F	Fair (tree with some defects amenable to surgery)
	P	Poor (tree with significant defects)
Phys Cond	Physiological Condition:	
	G	Good (trees of good vigour)
	F	Fair (trees of reasonable vigour)
	P	Poor (trees of poor vigour)
	D	Dead
Haz Rate	Hazard Rating:	
	H	Higher, significant risk of failure causing damage to persons or property. Risk is unacceptable – reduce hazard or remove target
	M	Moderate risk of failure causing damage to persons or property. Risk falls between extremes of High and Low – reduce risk, taking other factors (amenity, ecological) into account
	L	Lower, insignificant risk of failure. Risk is acceptable
WP	Work Priority	
	1	1 st Priority, Urgent.
	2	2 nd Priority, suggest within 1 month
	3	3 rd Priority, suggest within 6 months
	4	Advisory. Non safety-critical works to be programmed when time and finances permit

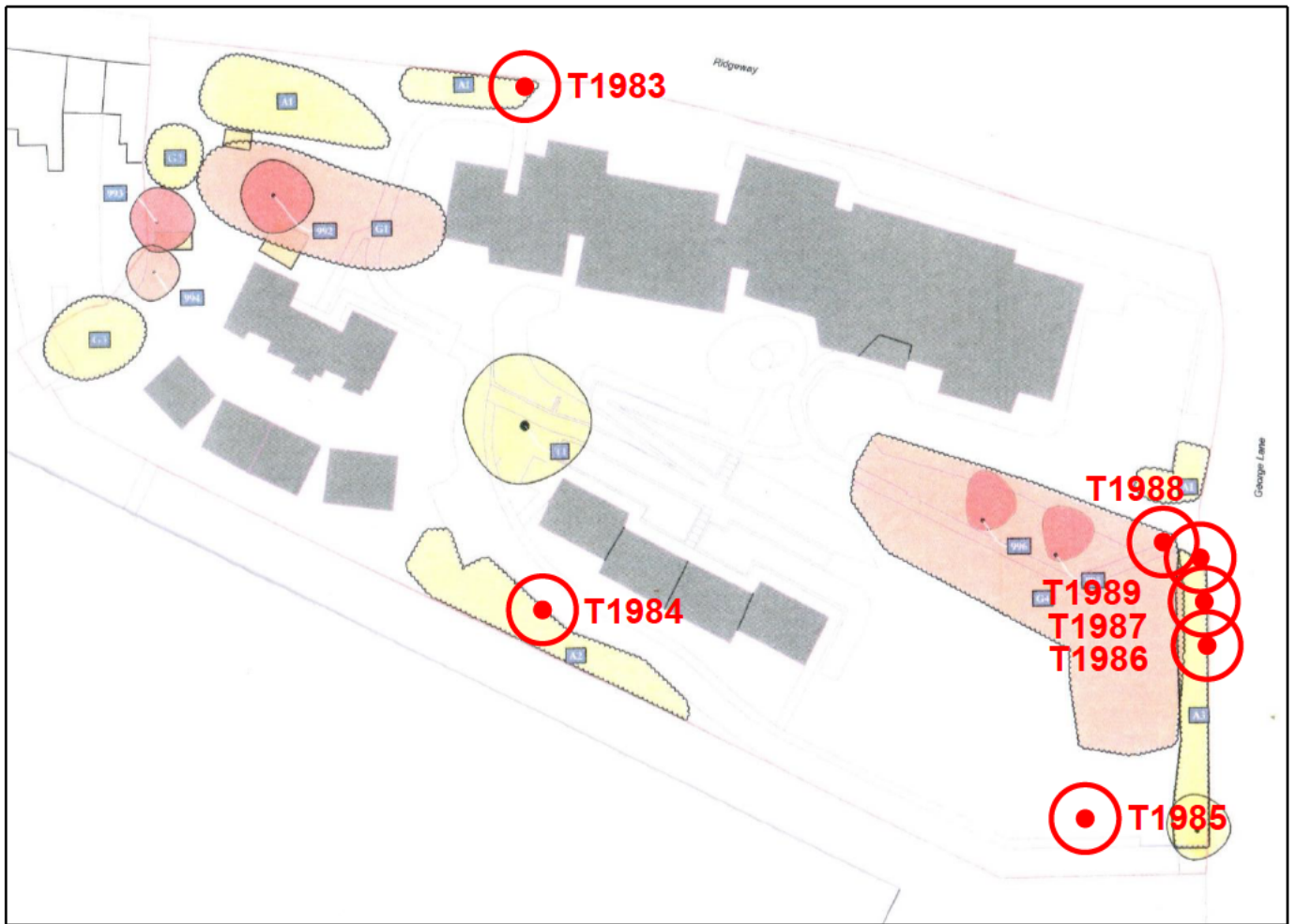
Table of Findings: The Rise

Tree No	Species	Age Class	Ht (m)	L/E	AE	Struct Cond	Phys Cond	Comments	Haz Rate
T1983	Cherry	Y	L	S	L	F	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almost dead 	L
T1984	Cypress	M	M	M	M	F	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree growing by path to flats 66 – 69 Twin stem tree, heavy ivy infestation on both stems Some dieback and deadwood in lower crown aspect 	L
T1985	Cherry	Y	L	D	L	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dead 	L
T1986	Elm	MA	L	D	L	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dead 	H
T1987	Elm	MA	L	D	L	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dead 	H

Tree No	Species	Age Class	Ht (m)	L/E	AE	Struct Cond	Phys Cond	Comments	Haz Rate
T1988	Red Oak	M	M	L	M	P	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree growing in wooded area and leaning over driveway Strip of decay and dysfunction on lower stem base, western aspect. Visible decay extends for 50cm around basal circumference and rises to a point at around 1.5m above ground level Probing with rod reveals decay extends to at least 50cm into trunk, diameter of trunk at this point 60cm. Sounding with hammer suggests decay throughout base of tree Fungal fruiting bodies at base of tree Tarry exudation from trunk of tree up to around 2m above ground level, particularly prominent on northern trunk aspect Trunk leans over highway to east and crown heavily weighted in this direction Dieback in crown 	H
T1989	Elm	MA	L	L	M	P	G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree infested with ivy Heavy lean over highway 	L
-	Various	Y	L	M	L	F	F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low branches overhanging driveway 	M

End table.

Appendix B



Appendix C



Photograph 1 – Elms T1986 and T1987



Photograph 2 – Base of Red Oak T1988



Photograph 3 – Base of T1988 showing rod extended 50cm into base of tree



Photograph 4 – T1988 and T1989



Photograph 5 – Neighbouring hedgerow overhanging driveway