



Mrs S Lewis
Stable Cottage
Westend
Wickwar
GL12 8JZ

23 August 2021

Unit 60, Aston Down, Stroud
Gloucestershire GL6 8GA
Tel 01285 760466
sales@treemaintenance.co.uk
www.treemaintenance.co.uk

Stephen Cullis, Managing Director

Ken Sheppard, Senior Arboricultural Consultant
MICFor FArborA Dip Arb (RFS) Tech Cert (Arbor A) CUEW

Dear Mrs Lewis,

TREE CONDITION INSPECTION REPORT. Single Mature Horse Chestnut (to the right of the back gate)

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 1 tree was inspected.
- 1.2 1 tree requires work for reasons of good arboricultural management.
- 1.3 Overall, the tree inspected is of good/fair quality. Only moderate works are required to ensure the tree does not pose an unacceptable risk to persons or property.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 I am Nick Organ a consultant for Tree Maintenance Ltd; I have been involved in the care of amenity trees since 1985 and I am an estimator and a consultant for Tree Maintenance Ltd. I hold the Technician's Certificate in Arboriculture (Arboricultural Association). I am also a qualified Professional Tree Inspector as assessed by the industry lead body Lantra.
- 2.2 In accordance with our quotation 15340/66037 dated 02/08/2021, I have carried out a visual ground level safety inspection of 1 roadside tree within the grounds of Stable Cottage.
- 2.3 I carried out the inspection on 09/08/2021 and was accompanied by Mrs S Lewis who identified the tree to me. The weather was overcast with a moderate breeze.

3.0 Tree Inspection Method

- 3.1 The tree was visually inspected from ground level using a steel probe, sounding mallet, pocket-knife and binoculars where necessary. A system of Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) was used to assess both the health and structural condition of the tree. No detailed inspection of suspected defects was carried out using specialist diagnostic equipment at this stage, where this is considered necessary it will be detailed in the recommendations.
- 3.2 Recommendations are based on an assessment of risk (the likelihood of harm occurring). Risk assessment considers the size of the hazard (anything with the potential to cause harm), the value of the target (persons or property that could be injured or damaged) and the frequency of occupation (the time which the target is within the impact area). The targets to be considered here are:
- Residents and visitors to the property.
 - Users of The Downs Road along the South/West boundary.
 - Neighbouring residential/commercial/ industrial properties and gardens.
- 3.3 Works are also specified for reasons of good arboricultural management and include: abating a possible source of nuisance or to improve the future growth of the tree or adjacent trees.
- 3.4 Work requirements have been prioritised based on the level of risk they pose. Works are described as being:
- Immediate. Trees which are found to be in such poor condition that they pose a significant and imminent threat to high value targets. Works should be completed as soon as is reasonably practical and within the time limit specified (normally less than 14 days).
 - Urgent. Trees with significant defects that pose an identifiable risk to the target and which require works to be completed within the specified time period (normally 1-3 months).
 - Routine. Trees that contain identifiable but low level or long-term risk to the target. Works necessary but which can be completed over a longer time period (normally between 3 -24 months)
- 3.5 For this site where tree safety is of paramount importance, I recommend a professional inspection every two years. Inspections at 18-month intervals can be useful as this allows the inspection to alternate between the trees being in leaf and out of leaf as different information can be evaluated.
- 3.6 As indicated in section 8.3 healthy trees can be subject to damage as a result of even moderate weather conditions. I would therefore recommend that in addition to the regular professional survey you carry out a quick visual inspection of all of the trees following any heavy snow fall or storms which exceed near gale force winds (Beaufort scale 7). This should quickly identify any hazards to users of the site which have recently developed and require immediate attention.

4.0 Site Description

- 4.1 The property is located to the North/West of Wickwar.
- 4.3 The site gently slopes from the North to the South. The inspected tree stands at the edge of a larger woodland situated in the Southeast corner of the property.

5.0 Findings and Recommendations

5.1 Tree 1



5.1.1 Mature Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) standing approximately 27.0m tall. This tree is twin stemmed from approximately 1.25m with these 2 stems being co dominant.

The crown is very flat and exposed on the west side following the removal of the adjacent, equally large Horse Chestnut. This has left the crown to suffer several significant branch losses, which may well be attributed to the increase of exposure (and being subject to winds from a previously protected direction).

There are some minor bark wounds at the base, these are relatively minor and of low significance. There are also some strips of dead bark extending up both stems, these are associated with historic bleeding canker damage and again, are of low significance.

The recent branch loss is from high in the crown of the roadside stem, it is one half of a forked secondary branch that has failed at a healthy branch fork union, possibly due to damage sustained in the recent high winds.

There are multiple stubs and pockets of minor decay from historic branch loss throughout the crown.

5.1.2 Discussion

Further branch loss, like that experienced in the recent past, cannot be ruled out. While these are not predictable (we cannot say this or that branch is going to fail) the increased exposure the tree has, and the sail area of the crown make further branch loss inevitable.

The tree appears to be in good health both physically and structurally, it is suffering from an extensive infestation of Horse Chestnut Leaf Minor and no doubt later in the summer / autumn will suffer the fungal disease Horse Chestnut Leaf Blotch, neither of these are significant to the tree's health or its safety.

The tree overhangs a busy road with stationery traffic waiting for the traffic lights at peak time. Given the above to do nothing may be a little unwise.

5.1.3 Recommendations

- Reduce the overall height of the tree, to leave it no less than 20m tall.
- Reduce the overall lateral spread, to leave it no less than 7.0m and shape.
- Remove significant deadwood throughout the crown.
- Crown raise over the highway to approximately 5.5m.

I would describe these works as routine and recommend that this work is undertaken within 12 months.

6.0 Legal Constraints

- 6.1 I was not instructed to investigate if the site is located within a Conservation Area or if trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO). I recommend that this is investigated before starting works.
- 6.2 If trees are within a Conservation Area or are protected by a Tree Preservation Order failure to obtain written consent or give notification is a criminal offence and could result in a fine of up to £20,000 on summary conviction, unlimited fine if indicted to crown court and/or up to 6 months in prison.
- 6.3 Any pruning or felling of trees within a Conservation Area requires a 6-week notification to the Local Planning Authority. The Local Planning Authority may then allow this or impose some tree protection as part of the planning process, either as a 'condition of planning' or by the placement of a TPO.
- 6.4 Consents to carry out works to protected trees are valid for a period of 2 years from the date of LPA approval.
- 6.5 Certain exemptions apply to these planning provisions, and any trees clearly marked for removal on an 'approved' plan do not require a separate further consent. Replacement planting may well be a requirement of any applied landscape condition.

7.0 Wildlife Issues

- 7.1 Bats. Under current legislation it is an offence to 'intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat' or 'damage, destroy or block access to the resting place of any bat' (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2001 and further strengthened by other legislation).

Where work is being carried out and bats are present, or if the tree is a known roost, consultation must be made with the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation Natural England, www.naturalengland.org.uk.

A European Protected Species Habitat Regulations Licence is likely to be required. Work to trees with the potential for roosting bats is best done from late August to early October. March through to April is also suitable although this may conflict with nesting birds (see below).

- 7.2 Birds. It is an offence under section 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to kill, injure or take any wild bird; intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird or take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built. So work likely to disturb nesting birds should be avoided from late March to August.

7.3 All trees requiring work should be evaluated prior to work starting as part of a normal on-site risk assessment. If a bird, badger or bat issue is suspected then the tree works will be suspended and further advice from our office should be sought.

8.0 Limitations

8.1 This report has been compiled to assess the current health and condition of trees as specified in section 2.0 and shown to me by the client. The inspection considers the trees only within their existing setting and does not make assumptions in regards changes to the site following inspection.

8.2 This is an initial survey and no detailed tree inspection or invasive investigation to confirm suspected defects has been carried out. Where this is considered necessary, it will be highlighted in recommendations.

8.3 Due to the changing nature of trees – and possibly other site circumstances – this report and recommendations are limited to a two-year period. Trees are dynamic structures that can never be guaranteed 100% safe; even those in good condition can suffer occasional damage under only average weather conditions. A lack of recommended work does not imply that a tree will never suffer damage. This report could be invalidated if any alterations are made to the property that could change the conditions as seen at time of inspection.

8.4 Under certain circumstances, roots can affect foundations, drains and other underground services. I was not requested to investigate these issues which are therefore beyond the scope of this report.

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9.0 Arboricultural methods

9.1 All tree work should be carried out to the highest standards, based on British Standard 3998:2010 '*Recommendations for Tree Work*' and current best practice.

9.2 To ensure standards are met it is recommended that a contractor from the Approved List of the Arboricultural Association be used (01242 522152 www.trees.org.uk).

10.0 Costs for recommended works

10.1 Costs can be given if required, however this report is a stand-alone document. Please confirm which trees you would like costed and I will arrange for a colleague to visit site prior to preparing a quotation for the works, which can then be carried out by one of our very experienced and professional contracting teams.

Signed:



Nick Organ, Tech Cert (ArborA), TechArborA

Arboricultural Consultant

DATE: 18/08/2021