

TREE RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

Location of the Tree

20 Damfield Lane, Maghull L31 6DD

Report prepared by

Dr Dealga P O'Callaghan, FICFor., F Arbor A., MISA
Chartered Arboricultural Consultant

On Behalf of:

Mr Lee Coward

On the instructions of:

Mr Lee Coward

Date of Site Visit:

31 August 2023

Report Date:

1st November 2023

Project Ref:

DTCL.2000.TPO.2023



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General - Trees

Unless otherwise stated tree inspections have been undertaken from ground level and using non-invasive techniques only. Comments on the condition and safety of any tree relate to the condition of the tree at the time of survey. It should be recognised that tree condition is subject to change due to, for example, the effects of disease, wind, or nearby development works. Changes in land use are also significant in respect of risk assessment. Trees should therefore be inspected at intervals relative to identified site risks.

Unless otherwise specified, no checks have been carried out in respect of statutory controls that may apply, e.g., Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas or Planning Conditions. In addition, prior to undertaking any tree works, it is necessary to ensure due diligence is followed in respect of protected species and habitats.

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1 Introduction & Instructions

1.1 I am instructed as a Chartered Arboricultural Consultant in the matter of a mature beech tree growing within the property at 20 Damfield Lane, Maghull L31 6DD which is owned by Mr Lee Coward. As a prudent landowner, Mr Coward is concerned about the level of risk the tree might pose to people and property and has instructed me to assess the level of risk that the tree might pose and to make management recommendations to mitigate any risk as appropriate.

1.2 The Limitations of this report are as follows:

1. Only those trees specified in the scope of work were assessed, and the assessments were undertaken within these limitations.
2. Tree Risk Assessment (TRA) considers only the identified targets and detectable tree defects.
3. Tree Risk Assessments represent the condition of the trees at the time of the inspection.
4. The timeframe for failure categorisation should not be considered a guarantee period for the risk assessment.
5. Any tree, whether it has a visible weakness or not, can fail if the forces exerted upon it exceed the strength of the tree or parts of the tree to resist those forces.
6. This report does not include assessment of subsidence risk as this is not part of the instructions.

1.3 The risk assessment methodology used is that recommended by the International Society of Arboriculture¹ (ISA) as follows:

1. Identify the targets and estimate the occupancy rate of those targets as *Rare, Occasional, Frequent* or *Constant*.
2. Identify the trees or parts of the trees that could fail and impact the targets.
3. Evaluate the likelihood of each tree, or parts of the tree failing, i.e., the 'Likelihood of Failure' as *Improbable, Possible, Probable, or Imminent*.
4. Evaluate the likelihood of the tree, or parts of the tree impacting the identified targets using a matrix formula.
5. Estimate the consequences of failure as *Negligible, Minor, Significant* or *Severe*.
6. Using a second matrix formula the risk category can be designated as *Low, Moderate, High, or Extreme*.

1.4 The Inspection Cycle

For a tree risk assessment to be meaningful, it is required that the trees be assessed for risk on a set cycle of inspection. For most trees, a 3-year cycle of inspection is adequate. However, where big old trees are in areas of high/frequent use, a shorter cycle of 18-months is recommended with additional inspections after periods of high winds.

¹ Dunster, J A, E T Smiley, N Matheny & S Lilly (2013). Tree Risk Assessment Manual. ISA Publications, Atlanta, Georgia USA. ISBN 978-1-881956-77-8

1 Introduction & Instructions (Continued)

- 1.5 Statutory Protection: The property at 20 Damfield Lane, Maghull is within the Damfield Lane Conservation Area. In addition, the trees within the property are the subjects of a Tree Preservation Order, (TPO), i.e., *Sefton Council – St Andrews Church Tree Preservation Order 112*. The tree in question is identified within the TPO as T1-Sycamore. If any remedial work is required, then a formal application for consent must be made to Sefton Council.

2 The Site & the Trees

20 Damfield Lane, Maghull, formerly The Old Rectory, stands at the junction of Damfield Lane and Northway (A59). To the rear of the property is an enclosed rear garden occupying a truncated triangle with side boundaries adjacent to both roads. Immediately to the south of the property is St Andrews Parish Church with open grounds

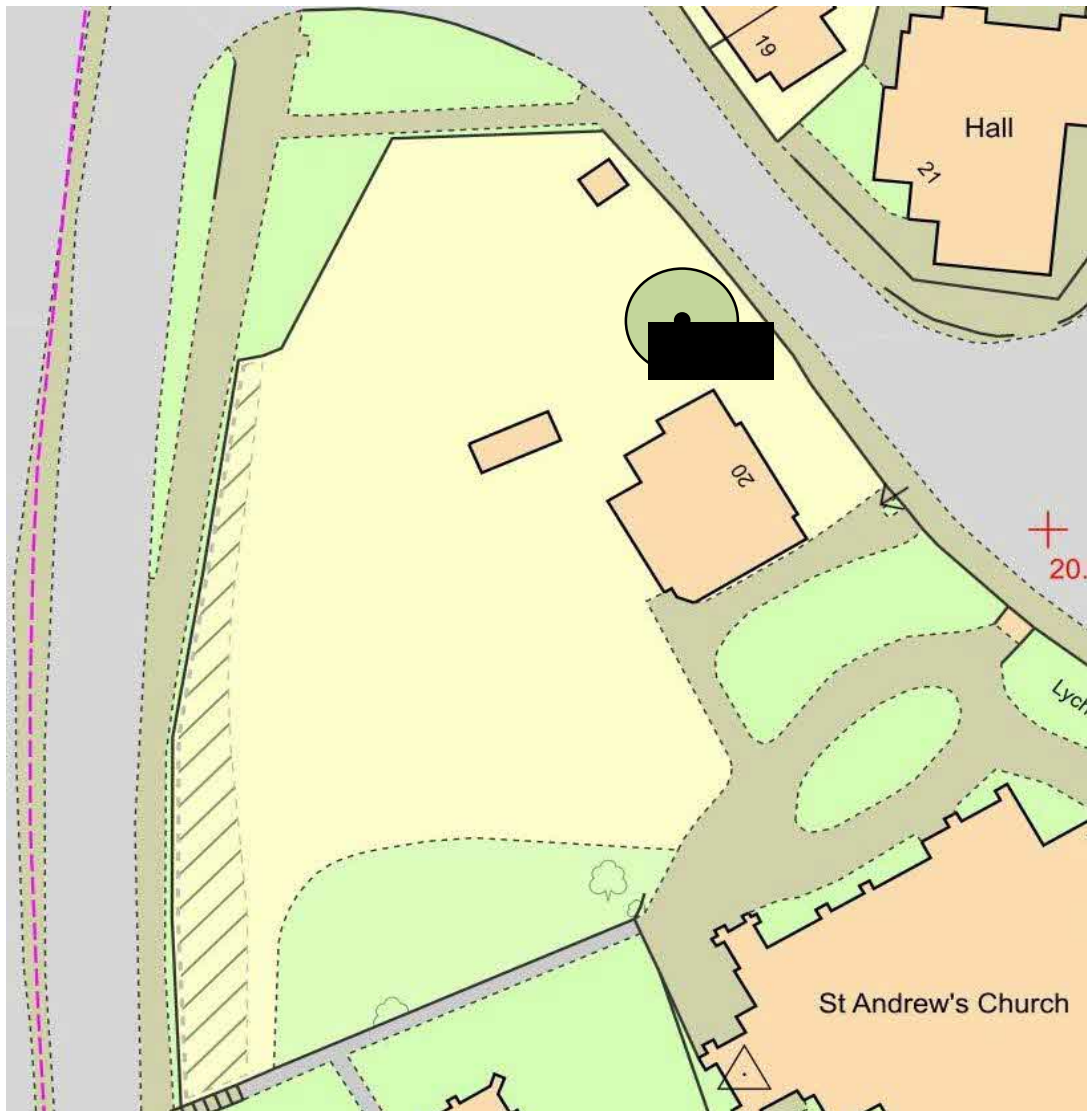


Figure 1 - An Ordnance Survey map of the property at 20 Damfield Lane, Maghull with the Sycamore tree (T1) marked.

2 The Site & the Trees (Continued)

- 2.3 The tree was assessed visually from the ground; the tree was not climbed, and, unless otherwise stated, no samples were taken for further analysis. The assessment was a Level 2 Basic Risk Assessment which is a detailed visual inspection of the trees and the surrounding site, and a synthesis of the information collected. The risk assessor walks completely around the tree, looking at the site, the buttress roots, trunk, and branches. No invasive techniques were used, and the only tools used were a diameter tape, an IML Probe™ and a Thor Sounding Hammer™.

3 The Tree - Analysis

- 3.1 Tree T1 is a mature Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) circa 16m in height with crown spread of 17 - 18m. The tree has a single main trunk up to 5m where the primary scaffold divides into four main leaders. It is situated adjacent to a detached garage and borders with a lawn area and tarmacadam hard standing area. The tree is sited 9m from the rear of the property.



Figure 2 - Tree T1 viewed from outside the site

- 3.2 Inspection of the crown revealed significant dieback and the presence of an abnormal quantity of deadwood. This suggests that the tree is stressed and in decline.



Figure 3 - Deadwood in crown



Figure 4 - Deadwood in crown

- 3.3 Inspection of the base revealed dysfunctional wood and fruiting bodies between the buttress indicative of internal decay.



Figure 5 - Decay between buttress roots.



Figure 6 - Fungal fruiting bodies and dysfunctional wood

- 3.4 Samples of the fruiting bodies were recovered and independently identified by the R.A. Bartlett Research Laboratory as being visually similar to the species from the Clavariaceae or Gomphaceae. Members of these groups recorded in the UK all appear to be saprobic, sometimes on dead wood, and therefore should not be a direct concern in terms of tree decay. However, no firm identification was possible.
- 3.5 The fruiting bodies were identified as saprobic meaning that they derive nutrients from decaying organic material. While they are not regarded as a principal decay fungus it is clear by their presence that the structural wood between the buttresses is necrotic and as such dysfunctional.
- 3.6 While it was not possible to identify the exact cause of the necrosis it is structurally significant and combined with the evidence of crown die back, concerning.
- 3.7 The identified targets should this tree or parts of it fail, are (1) the property; (2) driveways; (3) vehicular and pedestrian traffic using Damfield Lane. The occupancy rate is classified as '*Frequent*'.

The likelihood of the tree, or parts of the tree failing is 'Probable' and therefore the likelihood of failure and impact is 'Likely', and the consequences of any failure should a failure occur, would be 'Significant'. Using the risk matrix, the risk category is designated as 'High' and the tree should be removed.

- 3.8 The Sycamore tree (**T1**) can be replaced with another tree on the property. The replacement should be planted in accordance with the guidance contained in **BS8545:2014** 'Trees from the nursery to independence in the landscape – Recommendations' and sourced from a reputable nursery that has an implemented, auditable, and nationally recognised **Biosecurity Policy**.

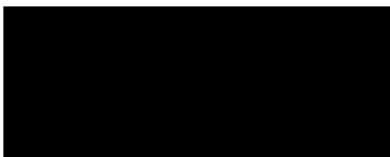
3.9 **Summary of Proposed Works**

Tree #	Proposed works
T1	Fell to ground level and replace with a specimen/location to be agreed with Sefton Council

4 Formal Application

- 4.1 It is respectfully requested that Sefton Council grants consent to undertake the works set out in the table at 3.7 above subject to conditions, (1) that the tree work is done in line with the guidance in **BS3998:2010** 'Tree work – Recommendations'; and (2) provision of a replacement tree as specified in 3.8. above.

Attachments: Plant Diagnostic Report



Dr D P O'Callaghan FICFor., F Arbor A., MISA
 Chartered Arboricultural Consultant
1st November 2023



The R.A. Bartlett Research Laboratory

PLANT DIAGNOSTIC REPORT

27th September 2023

Client: Dr Dealga O'Callaghan, Dealga's Tree Consultancy Ltd, Suite 9, St Andrews Business Centre, 91 St Mary's Road, Garston, Liverpool, L19 2NL

Your Reference: DTCL.2000.TPO.2023

Sample Description: "fungal samples taken from the base of a mature Sycamore tree on 31 August 2023"

Tree Location: 20 Damfield Lane, Maghull, L31 6DD.

Diagnosis:

The submitted sample consisted of fragments of suspected fruiting bodies (fig 1) with spores present at the tip (fig 2). These are visually similar to the morphology of species from the Clavariaceae or Gomphaceae. Members of these groups recorded in the UK all appear to be saprobic, sometimes on dead wood, and therefore should not be a direct concern in terms of tree decay. However, no firm identification was possible.

The submitted sample also contained pieces of moss with no discernible fungal fruiting of relevance to tree health attached.

Further identification by our facility is not possible.

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Tel: 0118 9883618 scienceadmin@bartlett.com

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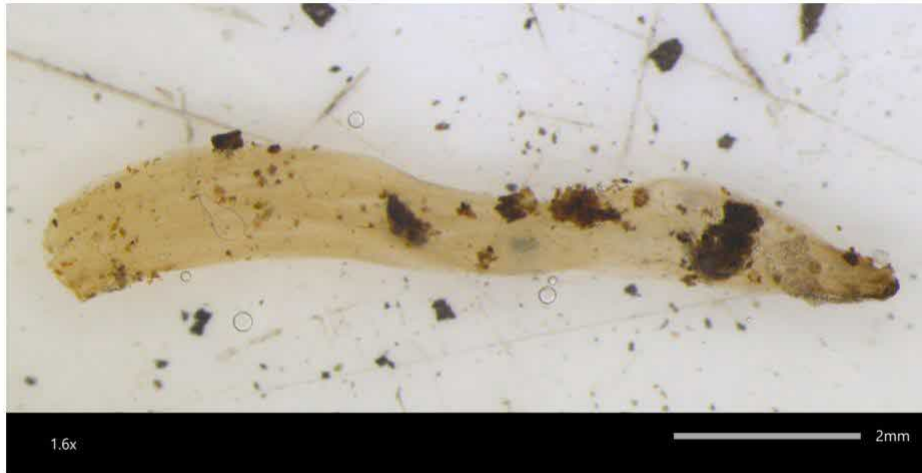


Figure 1. Suspected fruiting body of Clavariaceae or Gomphaceae fungus.

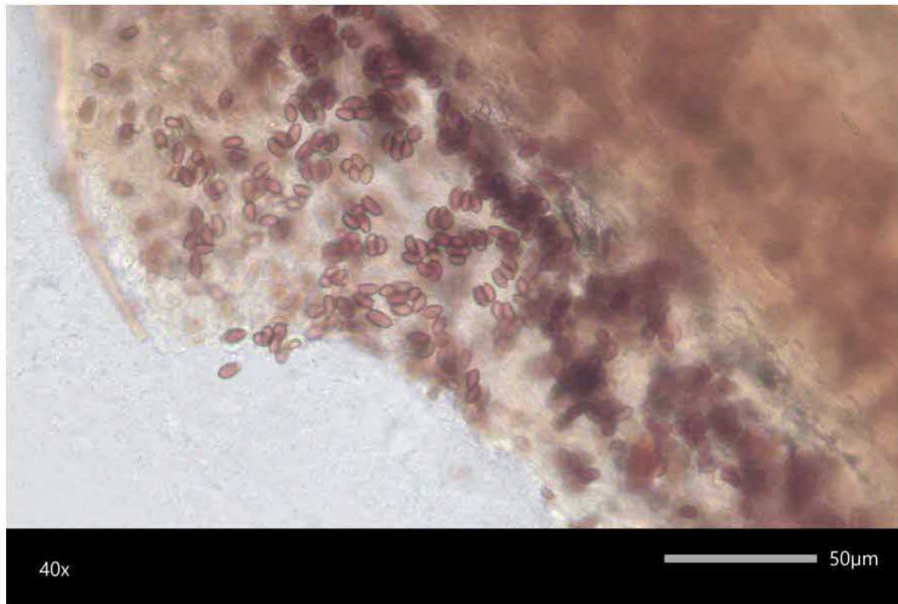


Figure 2. Spores at tip of suspected fruiting body.

Diagnostician: Dr Luke Hailey
Bartlett Tree Research and Diagnostic Laboratory

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