



Chartwell Tree Consultants Ltd

2 Greencroft Cottage, Farley Lane, Westerham, Kent, TN16 1UB
sam@chartwelltreeconsultants.co.uk
07789907861

Arboricultural Report

Tree Condition Survey

At

**36 Tile Kiln Lane
Dartford
Kent
DA5 2BB**

**By
Sam Bateson**



**Date
22nd August 2023**



Site As above
Inspection Date 18.08.2023
Reference: CTC/36/AR1

Terms of Reference

To carry out a visual inspection to one tree to the rear of the above address. The inspection is to provide a preliminary condition assessment of the tree and advise on any remedial works and ongoing maintenance requirements.

Instructions

- I received instructions from Mr Marshall to carry out an inspection of the tree to the rear of the above address.
- Preliminary checks show the site is not within a Conservation Area and there are no Tree Preservation Orders (Bexley Council website search 21.08.2023).
- The inspection is to consider and assess the following:
 - Structural condition
 - Physiological condition
 - Pests and diseases
 - Impact of development
 - Priority safety work requirements
 - Long-term management advice

Third Party Disclaimer

- Any disclosure of this report to a third party is subject to this disclaimer. The report was prepared by Chartwell Tree Consultants Ltd at the instruction of, and for the use by, our client named within the report. This report does not in any way constitute advice to any third party who is able to access it by any means. Chartwell Tree Consultants Ltd excludes to the fullest extent lawfully permitted all liability whatsoever for any loss or damage arising from reliance on the content of this report.

Scope of Report

- A preliminary visual assessment of each tree was carried out from ground level noting external faults and features only.
- This preliminary assessment did not include a detailed examination of tree root systems, decay detection or aerial access. A further supplementary Detailed Report may be advised as a result of the findings herein.

- The inspection was carried out with the aid of the following equipment:
 - Sounding mallet
 - Metal probe
 - 30m measuring tape
 - Rounded down diameter tape
 - Compass
 - Digital camera
 - TruPulse 200 Laser clinometers

- All significant findings, along with recommendations for tree work are presented in detail within this report.

- A tree owner is advised to have all trees in their ownership regularly inspected; trees are to be re-inspected after strong winds.

- Chartwell Tree Consultants Ltd generally observes the National Tree Safety Group Guidelines and BS3998:2010 'Tree Work Recommendations' in regards to tree surveying/inspection. Any pruning or removal works should be justified with a sensible balance between tree benefits and risk being considered.

- A site visit was undertaken by Sam Bateson (Level 4/5 Arboriculture, TechCert(ArborA), Lantra Professional Tree Inspection). An initial visual inspection was undertaken from ground level following the principles of the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) Method detailed by Mattheck & Breloer, 1994. Tree measurements were recorded using a TruPulse laser measure and a rounded down metric diameter tape and a Thor hammer used to assess the integrity of the stem through basic acoustic sounding.

- The information contained in this report is provided without prejudice and is based upon the authors knowledge, experience, qualifications and public research. The author cannot be held responsible for the consequences of a difference of opinion for example, from the Local Planning Authority or the Planning Inspectorate.

Site Overview

- The tree is situated in the Baldwins Freeholder's Association & Club to the rear of the property. The inspection was prompted by concerns raised by the Local Planning Authority with regards recent landscaping within number 36.
- The client is also concerned with regards the size of the tree and its excessive lean.
- Numerous mature Pine trees in close proximity to T1 were removed from the garden of 36 in 2017 by the previous owner of the property.

Target

- Property and gardens – moderate target potential.

Tree No.	Species	Age Range	Height (m)	Average Crown Spread (N,S,E,W) m	Physiological Condition	Structural Condition
T1	Austrian Pine (<i>Pinus nigra</i>)	M	19	4.7, 5.2, 1.8, 9.3	Good	Poor

Findings:

Rooting Area:

- Consists of recently laid hard surfacing to the south with open ground to the North. Root flare is exposed, soil level has not been changed. No evidence of recent root disruption or radial trenching is evident. I have been informed by the client that:
 - No roots >2.5cm were severed when the new slab was installed.
 - The garden was generally built up, and then a small amount excavated for the slab to create a lower level
 - A small digger was used during the construction
 - A heavy-duty polythene membrane was used to prevent concrete leaching?

Trunk:

- Dense ivy at base up to 4m is obscuring the trunk. Diameter at 1.5m is 730mm. Trunk sounding and probe found no abnormalities at the base. Old decayed *Phaeolus schweinitzii* bracket fungus at base of root flare to the West – this is known to cause internal brown rot.
- The trunk has a current lean of 25 degrees off vertical and there is no evidence of adaptive growth on the stem or in the upper canopy. There has always been a slight lean with this tree due to historical pressure from neighbouring trees; however, looking at previous and current photos I estimate that the lean has increase by 9 degrees since 2017. This is clearly evident from looking at the vertical telephone pole that has been present since at least 2017.

Crown:

- The excessive lean is identifiable by the pronounced downward sloping lateral limbs to the East with no evidence of adaptive growth in the trunk or upper canopy.
- Minor deadwood.
- All the trees are showing signs of been having previously reduced in height at around 16-17m.

Conclusions:

- Historically T1 and the surrounding trees established and matured as a group with multiple trees previously in the garden of 36 and in the land to the North. Looking at the historical photo provided there were 4 mature Pines removed in 2017 from number 36.
- This group of trees have grown in symbiosis with each other and will have adapted to wind conditions as a single unit.
- It is generally considered poor arboricultural practice to remove individual trees within a group as this will expose the remaining trees to unusual wind conditions with no time for their rooting areas to adapt which is clearly the case in this instance. This has been exacerbated by the retained trees being fully exposed to the predominant South-westerly winds which has led to the movement of T1.
- The excessive movement has most likely lead to the opening of pathways for fungal fruiting bodies as evidence by the *Phaeolus* bracket at the base of T1.
- In my professional opinion the risk of whole tree failure in the future is considered high.

Recommendations:

- To remove the Pine T1
- I would recommend the remaining Pine trees be inspected by a competent arboriculturist.

Timescale:

- Within 3 months – High priority



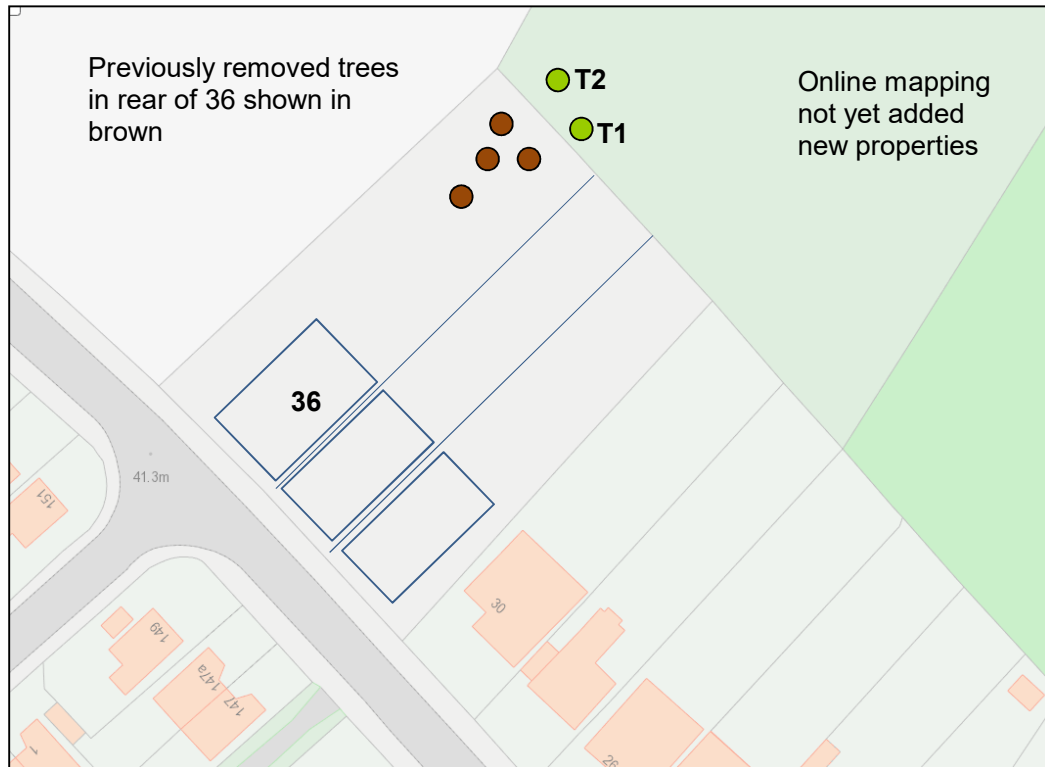
Photo 1: 4 x Pine trees removed from 36 in 2017
(Picture courtesy of previous owner)



Photo 2: Pine tree T1 with current lean
which has increased since 2017.



Photo 3: *Phaeolus schweinitzii* bracket fungus at base of root flare to the West



Map – 36 Tile Kiln Lane – not to scale

- T2 – Black Pine has a Root Protection Area of 4.2m (350DBH) and is 4.5m from the property. The new slab in the rear of 36 is outside its RPA.

Survey Range & Limitations:

- A formal inspection was carried out from ground level using the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) methodology; a rubber mallet and simple probe were used to assess the extent of any decay found. Defects or issues in relation to targets have been used to inform the risk rating and thereby the recommendations and priorities.
- Should any further investigations be required they will be highlighted in the recommendations. This assessment did not include aerial access, soil sampling, or any form of excavation. A further supplementary Detailed Inspection may be advised as a result of the findings herein. All measurements are estimated and tree locations on the maps should be considered as indicative.
- Where climbing inspections have been recommended, these should be undertaken by arborists with appropriate qualifications, experience and insurance.
- A tree with internal faults will often display associated external evidence that would be noted during a visual tree assessment. However, such signs are not always apparent at all times of the year, for example fungal fruiting bodies or leaf size and condition. The following findings and recommendations have been drawn from the evidence present on the day of inspection.

- Where access to a tree was limited e.g. due to the presence of fencing, dense basal growth or Ivy, this has been noted in the survey report. Recommendations may include the removal of any obstructions to allow a more thorough inspection.
- Only one tree has been inspected as per instructions received. It is recommended that the owners of any adjacent land site seek appropriate professional advice on the inspection and management of any trees likely to affect your property. Where ownership is unclear, this should be established before any works are undertaken.
- If noted during the site survey the presence of a visible Invasive Weed will be highlighted, however this report is in no way considered an Ecological or Invasive Weed survey and Chartwell Tree Consultants Ltd does not offer any advice in regards identification, 'Duty of Care' and or treatment and in all such cases a recommendation to seek specialist advice will be given.
- The information contained in this report is provided without prejudice and is based upon the authors knowledge, experience, qualifications and public research. The author cannot be held responsible for the consequences of a difference of opinion for example, from the Local Planning Authority or the Planning Inspectorate.
- It should be noted that trees are dynamic, living organisms that are subject to an ever-changing environment and that *"no tree can be guaranteed to be safe"* (National Tree Safety Group 'Common sense risk management of trees' (Landowner Summary), p.11) where failure can occur without defect or in excessive weather conditions. However, a reasonably practicable and proportionate approach consistent with the duty of care can preserve the enjoyment and benefits of trees. Where local management decisions are made which vary from any arboricultural advice then the reasoning behind this should be recorded.
- The Local Planning Authority (Bexley Council) must be consulted prior to any works being carried out to establish whether any Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) or Conservation Areas apply to the site. Failure to obtain written permission may result in a substantial fine and criminal conviction.
- Full consideration must be given to current legislation by anyone proposing to carry out works to trees, particularly with regards to the presence of European Protected Species (including bats). Arboricultural ("tree surgery") contractors should be adequately trained, experienced and carry appropriate insurance. All works should be carried out to the current edition of British Standard BS3998 'Recommendations for Tree Work', 2010 or current industry best practice.
- No investigation of the drainage system has been undertaken. Drainage / water supply systems, if damaged, may allow for root infiltration. If the system is sound, or after repair, roots have little capacity to enter or damage drainage systems. A drainage expert can provide specialist advice. If you, or your advisors have any information to suggest that the property has or is suffering from any structural defect, you should (a) release the information to us, and (b) seek the advice of a structural engineer, if you have not already done so.

- A detailed assessment has not been made of any of the trees' potential to cause damage to the buildings or their foundations. This survey expressly excludes any liability for any direct or indirect structural damage that the trees may cause to property including any structural movement, subsidence and heave. The potential for heave to occur following the removal of any significant trees and vegetation can be assessed using a soil sample should the need arise and any new foundations should be designed taking into account the recommendations of the current edition of NHBC Chapter 4.2 'Building Near Trees'). Where necessary a structural engineer, building surveyor or drainage specialist should be consulted for specific advice.
- New tree and shrub planting should take into account the distances suggested by the current edition of NHBC Chapter 4.2 'Building Near Trees' and Table A1 of British Standard BS5837:2012.
- The information contained in this report should be considered valid for a period not exceeding **1 Year** from date of issue assuming that any recommendations are carried out within the stated timescales. Additional inspection is recommended following exposure to extreme weather, significant wounding or damage (e.g. additional trenching within the rooting zone, vehicle impacts, etc.), sudden decline in tree condition, non-prescribed works or any other event giving cause for concern.