



ARBOR-FOLIA, 62 MANOR GRANGE, LANCHESTER, DURHAM, DH7 0LT



Arbor-Folia

ARBORICULTURAL CONSULTANCY

DUTY OF CARE: Tree Condition Survey & Report

Client: Ashbrooke Tree Services

Site location: Order of Women Freemasons, 18 Brookside terrace,
Sunderland, SR2 7RN.

Date: Monday 20th November 2023

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Scope & Brief

A survey was carried out at the request of John Burton (Ashbrooke) to assess the safety level of the trees at Order of Women Freemasons. The purpose was to identify specific trees within the site boundary with regards to their risk level to public health and safety.

Hazards within each tree surveyed would be recorded with subsequent works recommended to alleviate these issues and provide a plan for the management of these trees from a health and safety perspective.

Trees requiring works were categorised as high, moderate, or low priority and a prioritised work schedule was created based on the methodology stated in [section 3.7](#)

The data recorded included, species (common name), height, age, condition. Detailed explanations of these criteria are in the methodology section of this report ([section 3](#)).

The data is recorded in the Tree Survey Schedule section ([section 4](#)) of this report and includes comments identifying faults and hazards with respect to crown form, condition, storm damage and disease. A recommended action was given for each tree.

All works recommended should be carried out in accordance with BS 3998:2010 Tree Work - recommendations.

Individual trees are plotted on maps within a separate document including a prioritised work schedule to accompany the tree survey schedule ([section 4](#)).

1.2 Limitations

Trees with extensive ivy cladding were not thoroughly observed due to the difficulty to assess cavities and any hidden defects positioned underneath. With respect to this, the ivy should be severed to restrict its future growth and where applicable, removed to allow a detailed inspection to be carried out.

All observations were from ground level without detailed inspection and were not inspected from an aerial perspective. As trees are living organisms their health and condition can change rapidly. All statements made about the trees were based on the status of the trees at the time of inspection.

Note: Healthy trees may sustain significant damage during extreme weather systems, such as excessive wind or torrential rain. Following such events, it is advised that the landowner (with whom duty of care resides) ensures that no trees within their care have sustained significant damage.

1.3 Site Location

18 Brookside terrace, Sunderland, SR2 7RN.

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2.0 Statutory Protection

2.1 Tree Protection

A variety of statutory restrictions apply to felling, pruning or damaging of trees with preservation orders (TPO) or within conservation areas (Department for communities and local government, 2014). With exceptions of these restrictions available.

Any trees that require arboricultural works should be checked for any restrictions prior to works commencing.

Applications should be made for trees restricted with a TPO and a six week notification made for works in a conservation area.

Where works are deemed exempt, a submission of a 5 day notification of works should be made in accordance with section 198 (6)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2.2 Wildlife Protection

As part of the survey tree was inspected from ground level with the use of binoculars for signs of wildlife habitation, in particular birds and bats.

All bats and their roosts are protected by law (The Wildlife and countryside Act 1981 & conservation of Habitats as Species regulations 2010).

Penalties and prosecution for causing damage to bats or roosts is up to £5,000 per bat and a prison sentence, plus confiscation of vehicles plant and machinery involved.

In the UK all wild birds and their nests are protected by law (The wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 & The Countryside Act 2000).

The presence of Bats/roosts or birds nesting will be noted within the survey, where possible all works should be carried out to avoid the bird nesting season.

Prior to any tree works, a visual inspection should be carried out by a qualified person to ensure that there is no loss of protected wildlife habitat.

3.0 Methodology

Individual trees were assessed using visual tree assessment methods (VTA). This is a systematic approach involving visually observing the tree in sections. Root systems were observed for stability and signs of decay/disease (fungi). Stems, limbs, and branches were observed for defects, decay, disease and deadwood and the foliage (or buds depending on species and season) were observed for general vitality (vigour).

The following data was collected for each tree.

- Species (common name)
- Age
- Height
- Stem Diameter (DBH)
- Condition- Structural (Str) and Physiological (Phys, vigour)
- Comments
- Action
- Priority

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Trees were given a sequential identification number

3.1 Age

The age of each tree is expressed using the following terms:

- Y Young
- SM Semi-mature
- EM Early-mature
- M Mature
- OM Over-mature

3.2 Height

The height was estimated visually and is expressed in metres (to the nearest metre).

For groups/woodland areas the height of the tallest specimen was recorded.

3.3 DBH (Stem Diameter)

The diameter of individual trees was estimated at from a height of 1.3m from ground level.

For groups/woodland areas a range is given using the largest estimated stem.

E.g., ^50 = up to 50 cm. Only stems measuring 15cm and above were recorded.

3.4 Condition

The overall condition of the trees was assessed with regards to their structural integrity (i.e., stem condition, branch unions, crown form) and physiological condition (Vigour) and are expressed using the following terms:

- P (Poor)
- F (Fair)
- G (Good)
- D (DEAD)

3.5 Comments

Any hazards or defects observed within each tree were recorded. A definition of terminology used can be found in [section 6](#) of this report.

3.6 Action

An action was recommended for each tree to alleviate any hazards/defects identified in the comments section of the data collected.

3.7 Priority

The priority for each action required was based on individual tree locations (e.g., proximity to roads, footpaths, or buildings), and the severity of the hazards identified in the comments section.

Recommended actions should be undertaken within the following time restraints from the date of this report.

High (H) - as soon as possible within a 3-month limitation.

Moderate (M) – within 12 months.

Low (L) – if desirable or as part of a long-term management plan.

3.8 Tree Location Plan

An overview plan is included within this report ([Section 4.3](#)) and is a guide to the general tree cover within the site.

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4.0 Tree Survey Schedule

I carried out an unaccompanied site visit on Monday 20th November 2023. The weather that day was clear and dry with no visibility restraints.

4.1 Site description

4 large Sycamore trees located directly east of 18 Brookside Terrace.

4.2 Appraisal

T-Tree, **Y**-Young tree (no tag), **H**- Hedge, **S**- Shrub, **G**- Group of similar age/species trees, **W**- Woodland area comprised of mixed species and mixed age trees.

*- Additional works

Age key: **Y** – young, **SM** – semi mature, **EM** – early mature, **M** – mature, **OM** – over mature, **V** – veteran

Height: Estimated to the nearest metre (for groups/woodland areas ^ represents the height of the tallest specimen)

DBH: Stem diameter measured at 1.3m and estimated to the nearest 5cm

Condition key: (**Str**- Structural, **Phys**- Physiological) **D** – dead, **P** – poor, **F** – fair, **G** – good

Priority key: **High** – as soon as possible, **Moderate** – as part of a management program, **Low** - desirable but not essential



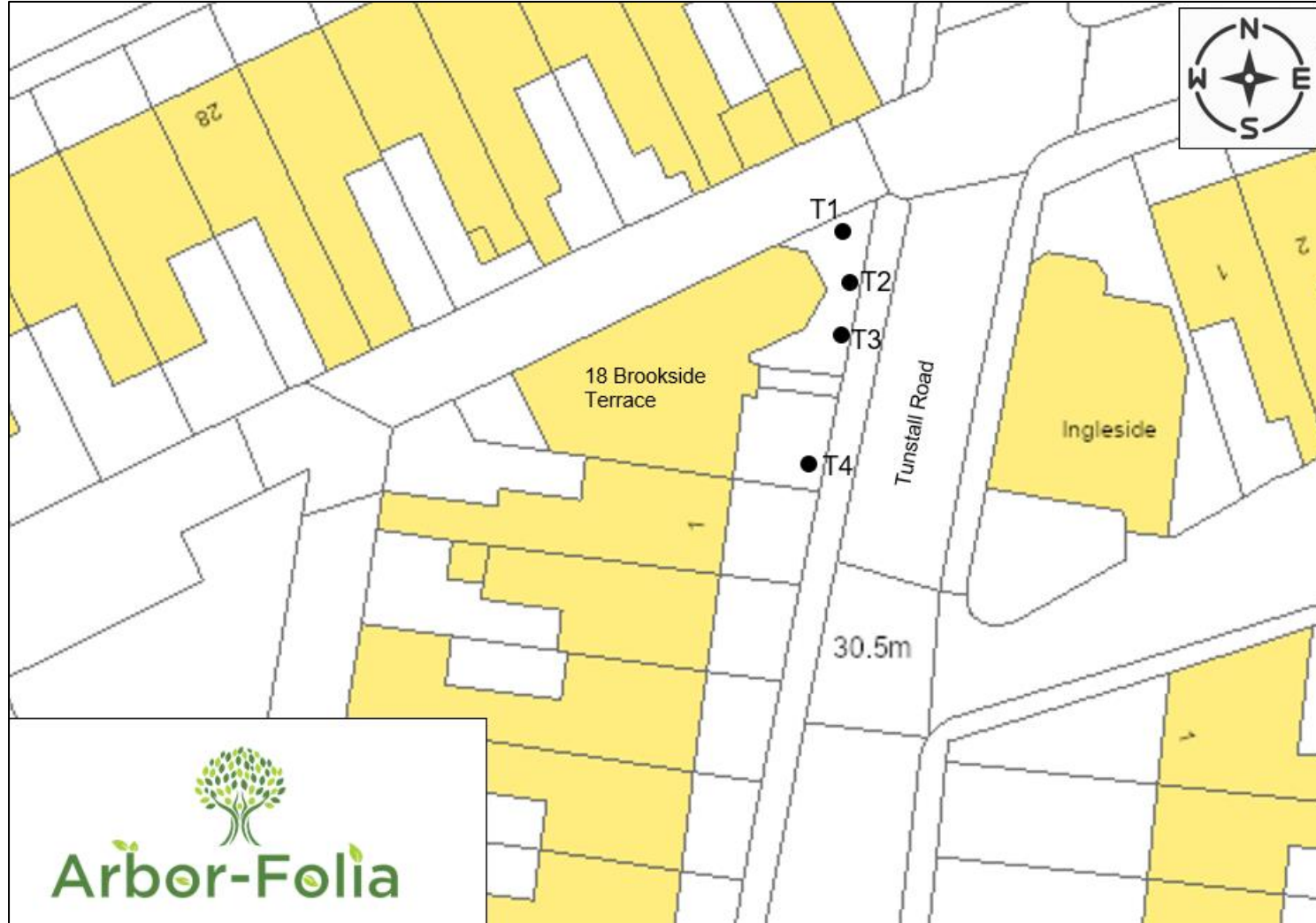
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Item No.	Species	Age	Height	DBH	Str	Phys	Comments	Action	Priority
T1	Sycamore	M	14	90	P-F	F	2 stems from 1.8m. Decay present on old pruning wounds (main stems). Previously crown raised to 8m with crown reduction evident on north side.	Crown thin by 20% to reduce overall crown weight	M
T2	Sycamore	M	14	75	F	F	2 stems from 2m. Previously crown raised to 8m with most wounds fully occluded. Small amount of minor deadwood within the upper crown.	No action required at present	-
T3	Sycamore	M	14	65	P-F	F	2 stems from 2m. Asymmetrical form weighted east over Tunstall Road. Previous pruning evident with decay present on some wounds.	Reduce eastern crown (over Tunstall Road) by 2-3m to balance crown/reduce overall weight	M
T4	Sycamore	M	14	80	F	F	Previous pruning evident with wounds fully occluded. Large crown spread with small amount of minor deadwood	No action required at present	-



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4.3 Tree Location Plan



5.0 Data Analysis

5.1 Trees Requiring Work

Analysis of the tree works recommended for the site during data collection shows that **2 items** require works to be performed to maintain adequate levels of safety (**high** and **moderate** priority). These trees were prioritised with respect to the level of danger or interference with structures, and with a view to future maintenance, to ensure good levels of arboricultural management.

No trees were identified as **high priority**

T1 and **T3** were identified as **moderate priority**, with a view to works being complete within 12 months as part of an on-going management plan.

5.2 Summary

Previous pruning was evident on all 4 trees with most pruning wounds having healed fully (occluded) within T2 and T4. Recommended actions for T1 and T3 are based on a minor concern with regards to the presence of decay on some wounds that may eventually become extensive enough to cause structural concerns. These actions will reduce the overall crown weight and sail effect that will in turn reduce strain on the overall main structural stems/limbs that currently have minor decay.

I am satisfied that on completion of the recommended tree works, the level of safety throughout the site where trees are concerned will be adequate. This statement is to the best of my knowledge based on the condition of trees observed during the date of survey.

Regular tree inspections are recommended to maintain a good level of safety therefore the trees should be re-inspected in October 2025.

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6.0 Glossary of Terminology & Definitions

Amenity- the pleasantness or attractiveness of a place.

Asymmetrical crown- unbalanced, one-sided.

Bracket- Fruiting body of a fungi.

Cavity- hole within a stem/branch of a tree, caused by decay or damage.

Crotch/fork/ union - region formed by a junction of two branches, or stem and branch.

Crown- overall branch and foliage cover.

Deadwood- dead branches within the crown of a tree. <30mm diameter classified as minor deadwood: >30mm classified as major deadwood.

Decay- area of degraded wood, Early referring to wood that is beginning to degrade: Moderate referring to wood that has deteriorated to further noticeable degrees than early stage: Extensive referring to wood that has significantly degraded.

Dieback- ends of branches with no leaf coverage. Can be a sign of decline.

Early-mature- a tree that has not reached maturity but is deemed to be 2/3 the way through its life expectancy.

Epicormic- shoot growth from dormant or adventitious buds on main stems or branches.

Fastigate- Upright crown form.

Good form- good crown shape and size expectant of specific species characteristics.

Limb- Large structural branch section between main stem(s) and tip branches.

Over-mature- a tree that has exceeded its life expectancy.

Occluding- the production of new wood around wounds.

Pathogen- bacterium, virus, or other microorganism that can cause disease.

Mature- a tree that has reached the final third of its life stage.

Semi-mature- an established tree that is the first 1/3 of its life expectancy.

Stem- above ground structure that supports the branches of a tree.

Support growth- Wood produced around areas of decay or degradation that provides structural support to the area affected.

Vigour- physiological strength and health of a tree.

Young- newly planted/not yet fully established tree.