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Arboricultural Report

Tree Condition Assessment

Site
210 Dover Road
Walmer
Deal
Kent
CT14 7NB

Client
Mr R Rotter

Prepared by
Curtis Barkel
RCArborA, DipArb (RFS), F.Arbor.A

Ref: SA/2192/23

Date: 03 November 2023



Arboricultural Consultant: Curtis Barkel - RArborA, DipArb(RFS), FArborA
Fellow and Registered Consultant of the Arboricultural Association

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Site	210 Dover Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent. CT14 7NB.
Inspection Date	12 October 2023
Report Date	03 November 2023
Inspected by	Curtis Barkel

Terms of Reference

To carry out a visual inspection of one tree located on the front boundary of the property. The inspection is required to provide a preliminary condition assessment of the subject tree and to advise on any required remedial works or ongoing maintenance requirements.

1.0 Instructions

- 1.1 Sylvanarb has received instructions from Mr Rotter, of 210 Dover Road, to carry out an inspection of one tree located to the front of the property.
- 1.2 Mr Rotter explained that the assessment is required in order to identify any potential risks presented by the subject tree and, if necessary, to provide management recommendations in order to minimise such risks.
- 1.3 Of particular concern to Mr Rotter was that the upper canopy of the tree appeared to be showing signs of declining health, in addition the owner of the neighbouring property had notified Mr Rotter of concerns raised by the residents that the tree was interfering with light levels to rooms.
- 1.4 Mr Rotter has therefore sought an independent arboricultural assessment to determine the condition of the tree and to advise on tree management requirements.

2.0 Scope of Report

2.1 A preliminary visual assessment of the tree was carried out noting external faults and features. The assessment was carried out from ground level only.

2.2 The assessment did not include a detailed examination of the tree root system or the use of internal decay detection equipment. A further supplementary Detailed Report may be advised as a result of the findings.

2.3 The assessment considers and advises on:

- Structural condition
- Physiological condition
- Pests and diseases
- Priority safety work requirements

2.4 The inspection was carried out with aid of the following equipment:

- Sounding mallet
- Metal probe
- Laser measure
- Rounded down diameter tape
- Digital camera

2.5 All significant findings, along with recommendations for tree work are presented in brief on the Survey Data Sheet (Appendix A) and explained in detail within this report.

2.6 A tree with internal structural faults will often display associated external evidence of such faults, these would be noted in a visual tree inspection. However, such signs are not always apparent at all times of the year. The following findings and recommendations have been drawn from the evidence present on the day of inspection.

2.7 This report remains valid for the period specified for the re-inspection of the subject tree provided in the survey schedule at Appendix A, or until extreme weather conditions affect the locality, whichever is sooner. A tree owner is advised to have all trees in their ownership regularly inspected, it is recommended that trees are re-inspected after strong winds.

2.8 All measurements taken are approximate.

3.0 Site Details

- 3.1 The property is located on the A258, close to the centre of Walmer and within the Dover District Council administrative area.
- 3.2 The property accommodates a two-storey detached house with parking to the front; a border of trees and shrubs along the front boundary; and the subject tree located adjacent to the driveway entrance.
- 3.3 The majority of the property frontage has been hard surfaced, as has the frontage of the adjacent property, this resulting in the entire root zone of the tree being covered by impermeable hard surfacing.
- 3.4 The adjacent property is a part two/part three-storey building that has been converted into flats (no's 204/206).
- 3.5 Dover District Council have confirmed that the subject tree is protected by Tree Preservation Order Ref: 21/00009, served in May 2021.

4.0 Observations & Considerations

4.1 Observations

4.1.1 A mature, single-stemmed purple leaved Beech located on the property frontage.

Photo 1: General view of tree



4.1.2 The main stem divides at 7m to form an open and balanced primary branch structure, with the canopy extending the full width of the main road and across the frontage of the neighbouring property which is used as resident's parking.

Photo 2: Showing overhang to neighbour's property.



Photo 3: Showing tree in relation to highway.



4.1.3 The tree was originally planted within a walled planter that has subsequently been removed as the tree has increased in size. This has resulted in a dense root mass developing at the base of the stem due to natural growth having been restricted by the planter during the early years of tree establishment.

Photo 4: Root mass at base of tree



4.1.4 The upper canopy is showing signs of decline, evidenced by: small leaf size; early leaf fall; development of deadwood; development of 'stag-headed' branch structure with formation of lower canopy.

Photo 5: Showing loss of vigour through upper canopy viewed from south.



Photo 6: Showing loss of vigour through upper canopy viewed from north.



- 4.1.5 Google Streetview photographs are available from 2009, these show that the decline in upper canopy health has been progressive since at least 2009, with the June 2009 photograph showing a full canopy with only a minor loss of vigour through the upper section; and the May 2014 photo showing a notable decline, with this decline progressing over subsequent years.

Photo 7: Google Streetview - June 2009



Photo 8: Google Streetview - May 2014



- 4.1.6 Reduced leaf size, canopy density and early leaf fall were also noted through the northern section of lower canopy, this also potentially a sign of reduced vigour.
- 4.1.7 The lower branches of the canopy over the neighbouring property are at 3m from ground level, windows to the adjacent flats are at positioned at ground level, at 4.5m and at 7.5m. The radial canopy spread is currently within 2m of the building.
- 4.1.8 The radial spread has also developed over the roof of no. 210, with pendulous branches now being very close to the roof of the building.

Photo 9: Asymmetric lower canopy over house.



- 4.1.9 The canopy clearance over the highway is at approximately 5m, providing just about sufficient clearance for double-decker buses, although high sided vehicle damage was noted on one lower branch to the south-west.
- 4.1.10 Overhead telephone cables from a telegraph pole on the opposite side of the road pass through the outer western canopy.
- 4.2 Considerations
- 4.2.1 The tree is a prominent feature contributing to the streetscene and the wider character of the setting.
- 4.2.2 However, minimal periodic maintenance has been carried out over past years and the lower canopy has come to dominate the adjacent dwellings and is becoming low over the highway.
- 4.2.3 This has resulted in complaints from neighbouring residents relating to light loss to the habitable rooms of their flats.
- 4.2.4 Whilst evidence of high-sided vehicle damage to a low branch shows that the tree is presenting an illegal obstruction of the highway and potentially presenting a risk of liability for any resulting damage to passing vehicles.
- 4.2.5 The movement of branches growing through the phone lines also presents a risk of damage to the lines during strong winds.
- 4.2.6 The root mass at the stem base, resulting from the removed walled planter, does not present any structural concern and no evidence of basal decay or dysfunction was noted.
- 4.2.7 The tree is at a transition stage between full maturity and late-maturity. This is a natural process known as retrenchment, which involves a reduction in vigour through the upper canopy and the development of a smaller more compact canopy structure.
- 4.2.8 The tree appears to be adjusting to this transition well, with a relatively vigorous lower canopy having developed; albeit slightly asymmetrical and with the radial spread, having previously been in balance with the original tree height, now being out of proportion with the newly developed canopy height.
- 4.2.9 The tree is clearly still within this transition period, with some potential reduction in vigour noted through the northern canopy, as such the continued monitoring of tree health is recommended in order to assess the progress of any further decline.
- 4.2.10 With minimal tree maintenance works having been carried out over recent years and considering the physiological changes that the tree has gone through, management works are recommended in order to address the noted risks and nuisance factors, as well as managing the retrenchment process in order to promote the development of a structurally balanced canopy.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 No evidence of concerns relating to the general health and safety of the tree were noted on the day of inspection.
- 5.2 The tree is considered to have reached mature height and has now entered a phase of canopy retrenchment, where the canopy size is reducing to form a more compact lower canopy structure.
- 5.3 This is considered to be a normal process for mature trees to go through, although due to the relatively harsh environmental conditions this tree has been exposed to, the process is a little premature for a beech of this apparent age.
- 5.4 Under normal circumstances a tree will develop a lower, more compact canopy and continue to thrive for many years. However, depending on circumstances, there is a risk that the decline of the upper canopy becomes progressive and results in the overall demise of the tree.
- 5.5 If located in a low risk location it would be preferable to allow the tree to go through this re-adjustment phase without intervention. However, considering the high risk location of the tree, along with the other noted concerns relating to: overhang to buildings; light loss to neighbouring flats; low branches over the highway; and risk of damage to telephone cables, a variety of tree work operations have been recommended.
- 5.6 It should be noted that the permission of the Local Authority will be required prior to carrying out the recommended works.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Tree Works

The following works are recommended to maintain the subject tree within the setting so as to: manage the retrenchment of the canopy; improve living conditions for adjacent flats; and to reduce the risk of potential damage to structures, cables and vehicles.

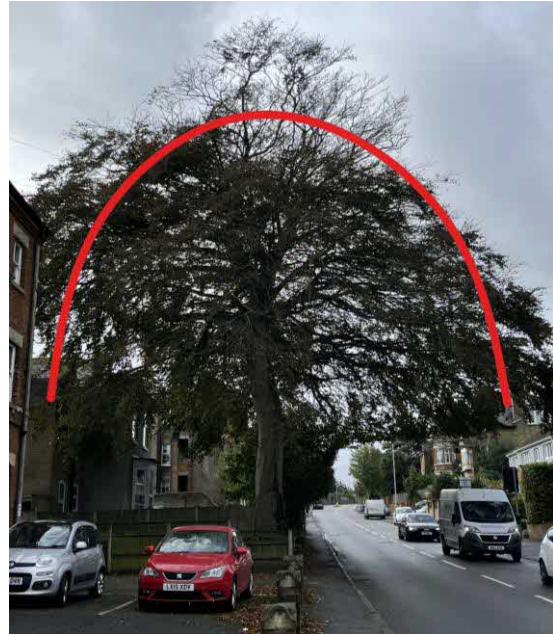
Table 1: Recommended Management Works

Tree No.	Species	Recommended Works	Reasons for Works
T1	Purple Beech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove pendulous growth over road to provide 6m clearance and to clear phone cables. - Reduce lower roadside radial canopy (at/below telecom pole hgt) by 3m to clear cables. - Remove low (damaged) branch to SW over driveway entrance. - Remove pendulous growth over neighbouring property to provide 6m clearance over ground level. and to clear cables. - Reduce lower half of canopy over neighbouring property by 3m. - Remove pendulous growth over driveway to no. 210 up to gutter height. - Remove deadwood. <p>Additional work to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out a retrenchment reduction of upper canopy and reshape of lateral spread to form a compact and balanced canopy structure (see Photos 10 & 11). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve living conditions for adjacent flats and to reduce the risk of potential damage to structures, cables and vehicles. • To manage the phase of structural change that the tree canopy is going through.

Photo 10: Approx. recommended retrenchment reduction from south.



Photo 11: Approx. recommended retrenchment reduction from north.



6.2 Enhancement Recommendations

- 6.2.1 A young sycamore is developing within the shrub bed lining the front border. This tree has a suppressed form and is impacting on the development of the subject beech, as well as competing for moisture and nutrients. The tree will ultimately come to dominate the beech, as well as the property frontage. It is recommended that this tree be removed.
- 6.2.2 In addition, the cherry adjacent to the sycamore is also suppressed and is likely to look misshapen when the sycamore is removed, consideration for the removal of this tree should also be given.
- 6.2.3 With these trees removed it would be beneficial to the beech if the driveway was widened to the south, this allowing some of the hard surfacing around the tree to then be removed and converted to soft landscaping and/or replaced with permeable surfacing such as resin-bound gravel.
- 6.2.4 The above actions would help enhance the root zone of the subject tree, helping to improve tree health and longevity.

6.3 General Recommendations

- 6.3.1 A tree owner has a legal duty of care to the visitors to their property and to their neighbours, this duty requires that their trees are regularly inspected and recommended management carried out. 'Regularly' is not defined in law, however an advised inspection frequency has been provided for each tree based on the condition of the individual and the potential target.

- 6.3.2 Tree work is to be carried out by a competent arborist in accordance with the British Standard for tree work BS3998:2010 'Recommendations for Tree Work', unless otherwise specifically prescribed herein to address health and safety issues.
- 6.3.3 Trees may provide host sites for legally protected wildlife such as birds and bats. It is essential that prior to works being carried out the tree work contractor is instructed to assess each tree for the presence of protected species such as bat roosts and birds nests. It is an offence to disturb or destroy such sites. Advice on bats can be obtained from the Bat Conservation Trust (tel: 0845 1300 2280), advice on nesting birds can be obtained from Natural England (tel: 0845 600 3078).

All advice given in this report is based on the information available on the day of inspection. Should additional information not available or apparent on the day of inspection come to light, the right is reserved to modify the conclusions found within this report. This report is valid for the period of re-inspection specified for the subject tree at Appendix A, notwithstanding change of site conditions, extremes of weather or other such overriding environmental changes.

Signed:  Date: 03 November 2023

Appendix A

Tree Survey Data

Survey Key

Tree No.	Tree Number - cross-referenced with tree numbers shown on Site Plans.	
Age Class	Young	Staked or recently established tree at the fast growing early stage of establishment.
	Semi mature	An established tree at a stage of rapid growth with increasing future growth potential
	Mature	A tree that is at a stage of constant growth nearing/at ultimate canopy size.
	Veteran	A mature tree, often of great ecological or heritage importance, that has reached a stage of natural decline.
	Over-mature	A tree in an advanced state of decline, moribund with minimal live growth.
Hgt (m)	Height range estimated in metres. 0-5m; 5-10m; 10-15m; 15-20m; 20-25m; 25-30m	
Recommended Mgt	Management recommendations to bring the trees to an acceptable and safe standard in the current site context.	
Work Priority	U Urgent	Works required immediately to make tree safe.
	H High	Works required within 90 days.
	M Medium	Works to be carried out within 12 months.
	L Low	To be carried out as required.
Inspection Frequency	1 Every year	High risk tree considering size/condition/location/use of target area.
	2 Every 2 years	Moderate risk tree considering size/condition/location/ use of target area.
	5 Every 5 years	Low risk tree considering size/condition/location of tree/ use of target area.

Tree Survey Data





TPO ID No	SPECIES	HEIGHT (m)	STEM DIA.	AGE CLASS	NOTES / CONDITION	RECOMMENDED MGT.	WORK PRIORITY	INSPECTION FREQUENCY
T1	Purple Beech	15	1010	Mature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crown break at 7m. - Root zone hard surfaced. - Originally within walled planter. - Upper canopy reduced vigour: early leaf fall, small leaves, deadwood. - Also reduced leaf size and early leaf fall to north. - Good development of lower/internal canopy. - Canopy down to 3m over neighbours parking area. - Canopy within 2m of neighbours building. - Canopy growing over roof of no.210. - Occ. deadwood to 50mm. - Impact damage on branch over road to SW. - Asymmetric canopy due to upper dieback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Remove pendulous growth over road to provide 6m clearance and to clear phone cables. - Reduce lower roadside radial canopy (at/below telecom pole hgt) by 3m to clear cables. - Remove low (damaged) branch to SW over driveway entrance. - Remove pendulous growth over neighbouring property to provide 6m clearance over ground level. and to clear cables. - Reduce lower half of canopy over neighbouring property by 3m. - Remove pendulous growth over driveway to no. 210 up to gutter height. - Remove deadwood. <p>Additional work to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carry out a retrenchment reduction of upper canopy and reshape of lateral spread to form a compact and balanced canopy structure (see Photos 10 & 11). 	L	2

Appendix B

Tree Location Plan

Tree Location Plan 210 Dover Road, Walmer, Kent. CT14 7NB.



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