

Visual Tree Assessment

6a & 6b Belmont Road
Wrexham

Ref:

VTa/BRW/02/22

Date:

10th February 2022

Commissioned by:

Mr M. Derosa

Prepared by

S. Shields

Tree Condition & Risk Assessment Update

6a & 6b Belmont Road

Wrexham

Contents

1.0	Instruction
2.0	Introduction
3.0	Scope & Limitations
4.0	Statutory Controls & Obligations
5.0	Site Description
6.0	Tree Survey Findings and Recommendations

Instruction

- 1.1 Shields Arboricultural Consultancy received instructions from Mr M. Derosa to undertake an inspection of the trees at 6a & 6b Belmont Road, Wrexham. The purpose of the survey was to assess the condition of the trees and advise on any remedial work required.

Introduction

- 2.1 It is recommended that all tree owners should have their trees inspected for safety purposes on a periodic basis. The frequency of these inspections will depend on the location of the tree in relation to roads, footpaths and buildings or structures. This is confirmed by HSE guidance relating to managing the risk of falling trees which states that *'there is the duty to do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that people are not exposed to risk to their health and safety. Doing all that is reasonably practicable does **not** mean that all trees have to be individually examined on a regular basis. A decision has to be taken on what is reasonable in the circumstances and this will include consideration of the risks to which people may be exposed.'*

Scope and Limitations of the Survey

- 3.1 The survey was undertaken on 3rd December 2022 by Stephen Shields, principal consultant with Shields Arboricultural Consultancy.
- 3.2 The survey was carried out from the ground in accordance with the principals of tree inspection and assessment described in Lonsdale 1999 and using Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) techniques as described in Mattheck & Breloer 1994. This term describes an approach to tree surveying using visual observation which allows the surveyor to evaluate the stability and structural condition of a tree. The basis behind VTA is the identification of symptoms, which the tree produces in reaction to, for example, a weakness in its structure, or as a result of external stress factors e.g. drought.
- 3.3 The trees were inspected from the ground level using field glasses and basic equipment such as a soft faced hammer and steel probe. The inspection followed a set procedure; firstly, the site conditions are assessed to establish if any environmental factors are present that could affect the stability of the trees. This includes an evaluation of the soil conditions to establish if there are any aspects that could inhibit root growth, such as water logging or shallow soils. The exposure and elevation of the site are considered along with any changes to the tree's environment that could affect the tree. Next the root plate and area around the tree are visually inspected for signs of instability or decay, followed by a visual examination of the trunk and branch structure to identify structural defects or decay. Finally, the vitality of the tree is assessed and any significant pest and diseases identified. Where defects or health issues were identified, these are noted in the report and any required remedial measures recommended. Where no comment is made, it can be assumed that no defects were identified.

- 3.4 The findings of the survey are limited to the date of inspection. The seasonal nature of fungal and decay organisms and other symptoms of stress such as late or early leaf emergence or fall means that indicators of disease and decay may not have been present on the date of inspection.
- 3.5 The risk assessment evaluates the risk of failure in all weather conditions up to and including Beaufort Scale Gale Force 8. All trees are at risk of failure through exceptional weather conditions.

Statutory Controls & Obligations

- 4.1 Forestry Act; the felling of trees is controlled under Forestry Act, which requires that a felling licence is obtained prior to cutting down any trees. The Forestry Act does not apply to the felling of trees growing within an orchard, private garden, churchyard or public open space. The Forestry Commission has the responsibility for enforcing the Forestry Act.
- 4.2 Tree Preservation Orders & Conservation Areas; Local Authorities have specific powers to protect trees through the use of Tree Preservation Orders. Where trees are protected under such orders it is a criminal offence to (subject to any exemptions for which provision may be made by the order) undertake, cause or permit the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees except with the consent of the local planning authority. Similar controls apply to all trees growing within a designated Conservation Area.
- 4.3 Bats, wild birds and other protected species; The Wildlife & Countryside Act & the Conservation (Natural Habitats & C.) Regulations make it an offence to disturb or destroy bats and bat roosts and wild birds and their nests. Other species of plant and animal are also protected. These creatures often inhabit trees and sufficient care must be taken to ensure they are not affected during forestry and arboricultural works.

Site Description

- 5.1 6a and 6b Belmont Road are residential properties in a Victorian era housing area. The trees are within the gardens of the properties and comprise a mixture of self-set specimens and legacy trees from the original landscape plantings.
- 5.2 The site and surroundings are urban in character and target values are high to very high and include roads and residential properties. There have been no significant changes to the immediate environment that would have implications for the exposure of the trees and no significant recent disturbance to soils within the root zones of any trees. Soils at the site appear to be free draining, with no evidence of prolonged water logging. There are numerous structures and surfaces that would affect root development. The site is at an elevation of 80 m AOD and is sheltered.

Tree Survey Findings and Recommendations

Summary of Tree Work

Tree Tag#	Operation	Priority
T1 & T2	Crown reduce away from adjacent building and crown raise over road to provide clearance of 5.5m.	High
T3	Remove and replace tree because of on-going impact on wall	High
T4	Remove ivy and sucker growth, re-prune tree over road back to previous pruning points, prune tree away from telephone wires. Remove deadwood.	High
T5 & T6	Consider removal and replacement of trees to improve residential amenity at property and provide sustainable long-term planting at the site.	Moderate

NB These trees are in a Conservation Area and Protected by a Tree Preservation Order and formal written consent for any works must be obtained from Wrexham Council prior to commencement. See 4.2 above

- 6.1 Full details of the tree inspections are provided in the Arboricultural Inspection Record, along with work recommendations.
- 6.2 Ensuring that the trees within the property remain in a reasonably safe condition, can normally be achieved through periodic inspections and monitoring of trees that may have progressive defects. In addition to inspections by the owner it is recommended that a professional inspection is undertaken every 2 years or after any storm where wind speeds exceeded gale force 8 or where damage is noted.
- 6.3 The management of any aerial deadwood should also be given careful consideration as it provides an important habitat. Deadwood should only be removed where there is a high value target, such as over buildings, seating areas or the highway and it is large and unstable.

Arboricultural Operations

- 7.1 Subject to obtaining any required permissions it is recommended that the work should be undertaken by a suitably qualified person, holding public liability insurance for the sum of £5,000 000. All operators must hold relevant NPTC certificates. A site-specific risk assessment must be prepared, and operators must work to a health and safety method statement. The use of Arboricultural Association Approved Contractors www.trees.org.uk/find-a-professional/Directory-of-Tree-Surgeons is recommended.
- 7.2 The contractor undertaking the work is responsible for site bio-security, environmental protection and ensure that all statutory legislation relating to the work is complied with.

- 7.3 The contractor undertaking the work is responsible for any loss or damage arising as a result of the operations and agrees to indemnify the owner against such occurrences.
- 7.4 All work must be undertaken in accordance with BS3998: 2010 Tree Work – Recommendations, unless specifically stated.

S.J.A. Shields

Uni Cert For. & F.P. (Bangor)

P. Dip. Arb. (RFS), MSc. Arb. & Urban For. (UCLan)

M.Arbor.A, MICFor.

Chartered Forester

6th February 2022

Arboricultural Inspection and Recommendations**Location:** 6a Belmont Road, Wrexham**Weather:** Overcast, calm**Date:** 3rd December 2021**Surveyor:** Stephen Shields

Tree ID	Species	Size Class*	Age Class*	Strut. Con.	Health & Vitality	Notes from Inspection	QTRA Score
T1	Copper Beech	L	LM	G	G	Forms visual and aerodynamic group with T2 (to north), tree has been grafted onto root stock. No evidence of incompatibility with graft point. Large roots starting to impact on walls and gate posts. Grows on single stem to 3.5m then bifurcates into two primary stems forming upright crown. Old pruning wounds present on primary and secondary limbs, occluded. Tree encroaching over highway and onto adjacent building. No indication of decay or instability, no defects noted and displaying good vitality. Recommendations: Requires crown raising to 5.5 meters over highway, and crown reducing away from building. All work to comply with BS 3998: 2010 guidance.	400K Low
T2	Copper Beech	L	LM	G	G	Forms group with T1, tree has been grafted on to root stock. No evidence of incompatibility with graft point. Grows on single stem to 2.5m bifurcates with one primary stem extending to the northeast over the highway. No indication of subsidence at union, however the branch is extended and at an angle of 45 deg. Tree encroaching over highway and onto adjacent building. Tree displays good vitality and there is no indication of instability or significant decay. Minor infestation of woolly aphid, but unlikely to impact on this tree. Recommendations: Requires crown raising to 5.5 meters over highway, and crown reducing away from building. All work to comply with BS 3998: 2010 guidance.	400K Low

T3	Ash	M	M	F	F	Open grown tree in very close proximity to boundary wall with highway. Tree grows on a single stem to 2.5, bifurcates into 2 primary stems. Tree is impacting the wall causing significant deflection of the wall over the adjacent footpath. No indication of any instability, however presence of old fungal bracket of <i>Inonotus hispidus</i> found close to tree indicates decay in upper crown, probably associated with old pruning site on primary limbs. Vitality appears to be reduced with poor shoot extension. Potential to contract ash die-back. Impact on and requirement to rebuild wall along with condition of the tree makes long-term retention unviable in this location. Recommendations: Fell tree and replace with alternative species in a suitable nearby location.	40K Mod. - Low
T4	Lime	L	M	G	G	Significant sucker growth on base and stem and ivy hinder inspection. No indication of instability or significant decay but ivy and suckers require removal to allow for more thorough examination. Tree has previously been reduced over highway and new growth is beginning to become over extended. Telephone wires pass through crown of tree. Deadwood in crown. Recommendations: Remove ivy and sucker growth, re-prune tree over road back to previous pruning points, prune tree away from telephone wires. Remove deadwood.	<1M V. Low
T5	Ash	S	EM	G	G	Significant ivy growth on tree hinders inspection, however no significant defects note. Vitality appears good at this time. Tree has potential to contract ash die-back, which would significantly limit its life expectancy and may not be sustainable in this location in the long-term, owing to proximity to boundary wall and adjacent properties. Recommendations: Remove ivy, consider removal and replacing tree with alternative species in a more suitable location.	<1M V. Low

T6	Ash	L	M	F	F	Tree bifurcates from around 0.5m into two stems with the east stem bifurcating again into two. Very significant ivy cover on tree hindered inspection. Tree is in close proximity to boundary wall. No indication of instability or decay or other defects however presence of ivy significantly restricted inspection. Tree is displaying reasonable Vitality but has the potential to contract ash die back. Tree is very dominant in the small back garden Recommendations: Remove ivy to allow for more detailed inspection. Consider crown reduction or removal and replacing tree with alternative species to reduce impact of tree on residential amenity.	400K Low
----	-----	---	---	---	---	--	---------------------------

KEY

Size Class

- S Less than 5m height and / or 150mm trunk diameter
- M 5m– 15m height and /or 150mm – 500mm trunk diameter
- L 16m – 25m height and / or 501mm -1000mm trunk diameter
- VL Over 26m height and or over 1001mm trunk diameter

Age Class:

- NP - New Planting less than 5 yrs
- Y - Young Trees less than 1/3 life expectancy
- EM - Early Mature 1/3 – 2/3 life expectancy
- M - Mature over 2/3 life expectancy
- LM - Late Mature exceeds normal life expectancy for species
- VET - Veteran Tree has characteristics of veteran tree, see Read (2000)

Health & Vitality:

- Good - No significant health problems
- Fair - Some health problems that will reduce vitality
- Poor - Significant health problems that are affecting the tree's ability to survive
- Dead - Dead

Structural Conditions:

- Good - No significant faults
- Fair - Some faults that can be rectified through surgery
- Poor - Major faults that can not be rectified through surgery
- Env - Environment in which the tree stands.

Hazard Rating:

- Low Re-assess within 5 yrs if adjacent to public access, schedule work as required*.
- Mod. Re-inspect annually/after storms (Force 10+), undertake work within 12 months*.
- High Remediate within 3 months, or as specified.
- V. High Remediate within 1 month.

* Unless otherwise specified

Numeric rating refers to QTRA score



Belmont Rd

Belmont Rd

Belmont Rd

Fairy Rd

Fairy Rd

Fairy Rd

Google

What is Quantified Tree Risk Assessment?

A Non-technical Summary

Tree safety management is a matter of limiting the risk of significant harm from tree failure whilst maintaining the benefits conferred by trees. Although it may seem counter intuitive, the condition of trees should not be the first consideration. Instead, tree managers should consider first the usage of the land on which the trees stand, which in turn will inform the process of assessing the trees.

The Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) system applies established and accepted risk management principles to tree safety management. Firstly, the targets (people and property) upon which trees could fail are assessed and quantified, thus enabling tree managers to determine whether or not and to what degree of rigour a survey or inspection of the trees is required. Where necessary, the tree or branch is then considered in terms of both impact potential (size) and probability of failure. Values derived from the assessment of these three components (target, impact potential and probability of failure) are combined to calculate the probability of significant harm occurring.

The system moves the management of tree safety away from labelling trees as either 'safe' or 'unsafe', thereby requiring definitive statements of tree safety from either tree surveyors or tree managers. Instead, QTRA quantifies the risk of significant harm from tree failure in a way that enables tree managers to balance safety with tree value and operate to a predetermined limit of reasonable or acceptable risk.

Quantified Tree Risk Assessment Ltd.
9 Lowe Street
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK11 7NJ
United Kingdom

www.qtra.co.uk