Tree Condition Assessment

The Meadows

Hoseley Lane

Marford

Wrexham

LL12 8YE

Ref:
TCA/MHM/06/26

Date:
2nd June 2026

Commissioned by:
Mr T. Baker

Prepared by
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Tree Condition & Risk Assessment

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Instruction

1.1 Shields Arboricultural Consultancy received instructions from Mr T. Baker to undertake a detailed assessment of one Corsican pine tree at The Meadows, Hoseley Lane, Marford. The purpose of the survey was to establish the condition of the tree, assess the level of risk it may pose to property and persons and to make recommendations for work where 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 28th June 2026 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 A risk assessment was undertaken in accordance with Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) methodology (See appendices for details).

Methodology

3.4 The tree was inspected from the ground level using field glasses and basic equipment such as a soft faced hammer and steel probe. Where required an IML Resi FD 400 micro drill was used to examine the internal quality of the wood. 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

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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.

3.5 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.

3.6 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 The Meadows site comprises a residential property and associated garden located on the eastern side of Marford Hill. The property occupies a sloping plot, with ground levels rising towards the west of the garden where the subject Corsican Pine is situated in the northwest corner adjacent to the highway boundary. The garden is arranged over a series of terraces that descend towards the dwelling, creating a marked change in level between the tree and the main built form. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character, comprising detached dwellings set within mature gardens containing a variety of ornamental trees and shrubs. The tree forms a prominent landscape

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feature within the local streetscene and contributes significantly to the established treed character of Marford Hill.

Tree Survey Findings and Recommendations

6.1 Full details of the tree inspections and work recommendations are provided in the Arboricultural Inspection Record at appendix A and are summarised below.

6.2 The tree is a well-established specimen, in good health and with above average vitality for its age, situated in a reasonably sheltered location with. The union on the main stem does not appear to be at a high risk of failure and the management of this defect through selective reduction, reduces the probability of any failure occurring.

6.3 From the inspection it is recommended that the work specified below is carried out within 6 months of the date of this report.

Tree Work Specification

Summary of Tree Work

Operation: Selective Crown Reduction, Deadwood and Damage Removal.

Objective: To reduce end loading and encroachment of the large south-western limb over the highway, maintain structural integrity and safety, and promote long-term health of the tree.

7.1 Selective Crown Reduction

- Reduce the loading on the primary limb on the south-western aspect of the crown by reducing the crown by approximately 1.5–2.0 metres, cutting back to suitable secondary growth points to alleviate end loading and improve clearance.
- Retain sufficient live foliage to maintain physiological balance and branch viability.
- All pruning cuts to be made to appropriate points in accordance with BS 3998:2010 – Tree Work – Recommendations.
- Resulting crown form to appear natural and balanced, maintaining the species' characteristic outline.
- Maximum final wound diameter should not normally exceed 75 mm.

7.2 Deadwood and Damage Removal

- Remove all dead, dying, fractured, or hanging branches ≥30 mm diameter throughout the west portion of the crown.
- Remove minor crossing or rubbing branches where practical, ensuring no excessive loss of live material.
- All arisings to be removed from site or chipped and spread as mulch where appropriate and agreed.
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7.3 Aftercare and Monitoring

- Carry out annual visual inspections to monitor crown condition, bifurcation stability, and effects of any nearby ground disturbance.
- Undertake more detailed inspections every three years, or following significant storm events.
- Reassess bracing and pruning requirements as necessary.

Planning and Legal Compliance

7.4 The tree is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Permission to undertake pruning works on the tree must be obtained from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) Wrexham County Borough Council, and no tree works should be undertaken until Full Permission has been granted and all pre-commencement conditions have been discharged.

Contractor Competence, Health & Safety, and Environmental Standards

7.5 Competence and Insurance

- All works shall be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced arborist, ideally an Arboricultural Association Approved Contractor (see: www.trees.org.uk/find-a-professional/Directory-of-Tree-Surgeons).
- Contractors must hold a minimum Public Liability Insurance cover of £5,000,000 and Employers' Liability Insurance cover of £10,000,000.
- All operators must hold relevant NPTC / City & Guilds Certificates of Competence for the equipment and operations being undertaken (minimum Units 201, 202, 203, and 308 or equivalent).
- All tree works will be undertaken in accordance with current UK plant biosecurity guidance issued by the UK Government and the Forestry Commission. Prior to arriving on site, all equipment, tools, vehicles and footwear will be cleaned and, where necessary, disinfected to remove soil, organic debris and potential pathogens. During operations, reasonable precautions will be taken to prevent the spread of pests and diseases, including avoiding the movement of contaminated material between sites and ensuring that any arisings are handled and disposed of appropriately.

7.6 Health & Safety Compliance

- A site-specific Risk Assessment and Health & Safety Method Statement must be prepared and approved prior to works commencing.
- All work must comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and relevant HSE Arboriculture and Forestry Safety Guidance (e.g. HSE publications AFAG 401–403).
- Appropriate PPE must be worn at all times, including head, eye, ear, hand, and leg protection in compliance with PUWER and LOLER regulations.

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- Machinery and climbing equipment must be inspected and certified for safe use.

7.7 Environmental Protection

- Works should be planned to avoid disturbance to nesting birds, bats, or other protected species in accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- If evidence of protected species is found, works must cease immediately and Natural England or a qualified ecologist should be consulted.
- Fuel and lubricants must be handled and stored to prevent spillage or contamination of soil or watercourses.
- All arisings should be removed from site or disposed of sustainably, avoiding burning unless permitted.

7.8 Liability

- The contractor undertaking the work is responsible for any loss or damage arising as a result of operations and agrees to indemnify the landowner against such occurrences.

S J A Shields

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

Dip. Arb. (RFS), MSc. Arb. & U For.

MICFor, M.Arbor.A

Chartered Forester

2nd June 2026

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Photo 1

(T1)



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Photo 2

(T1 Cavity)



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Photo 3

(Fiber Buckling)



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Record of Arboricultural Inspection

Location: The Meadows, Hoseley Lane, Marford
Site Type: Residential
Zone: Red
Exposure: Sheltered
Soils: Cultivated Brown Earth

QTRA Target Score: 1
Date 28th June 2026
Inspector: S. Shields
Weather: Calm, clear, some high cloud
Notes:

Tree #	Species	Size Class*	Age Class*	Struct. Con.	Health & Vit.	Notes	QTRA Score*
T1	*Pinus nigra* (Corsican Pine)	L	M	F	F	**Environment:** The tree is located on raised ground at the north-western corner of the property, immediately adjacent to the highway boundary. The surrounding landform falls away from the tree towards the dwelling, with the house positioned at a lower elevation and the rear (western) garden arranged as a series of terraced levels descending further downslope. The tree is situated approximately 25 metres from the western elevation of the dwelling. The area beneath the canopy is characterised by an accumulation of leaf litter and organic matter, although patches of grass and ornamental shrubs remain established. Garden steps are located to the south of the tree, providing access between the different garden levels, whilst a small outbuilding is positioned on the adjoining property to the north. Based on the available evidence and the apparent age of these structures, there is no indication that significant root disturbance occurred during their construction, both features appearing to have been established for a considerable period and coexisting with the tree without any obvious adverse effect on its condition. **General Description:** T1 is a large mature, evergreen conifer, that is exotic to the British Isles. Based on its size, form and landscape context, the specimen is estimated to be approximately 120–150 years old and represents a significant arboricultural feature within the local area. Overall, the tree is in generally good physiological and structural condition, notwithstanding some	**100K (Low)**

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						localised defects and a degree of reduction in canopy density consistent with its age. **Structural Condition:** *Structural Root System & Root Buttress:* Examined visually and sounded using a soft faced hammer. Root buttresses appeared sound, with no evidence of decay or any indication of fungal activity and on evidence of root plate lifting or instability. *Main Stem* The stem remains singular to approximately 2.5 metres above ground level, where it divides to form a substantial south-west orientated scaffold limb. Immediately above this union there is evidence of a historic pruning wound or branch tear-out, measuring approximately 500–600mm in height, 200mm in width and extending to a depth of approximately 300–350mm. The wound has resulted in the formation of a localised cavity; however, visual inspection indicates that the decay is effectively compartmentalised and confined to the margins of the wound. Sounding of the surrounding stem tissue identified no significant extension of decay into the principal structural union, which appears sound and free from signs of movement, separation or cracking. A degree of fibre buckling is present on the underside of the large secondary limb extending southwards over Marford Hill. This feature is likely attributable to long-term loading associated with the branch's considerable length, estimated at approximately 12–15 metres. Whilst indicative of adaptive growth and localised stress, no evidence of active failure, progressive cracking or significant structural instability was identified at the time of inspection. *Crown Structure* No significant defects, crown has a level of asymmetry from the extension of the secondary limb to the southwest. There are some minor pruning wounds where deadwood or broken branches have been removed as part of routine maintenance and a secondary branch extending west from the crown has suffered a recent tear-out wound. *Foliage* Normal size, colour, slightly reduced density.	

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						Health & Vitality: The crown exhibits a moderate reduction in density within the upper canopy, with foliage coverage estimated at approximately 70% of that expected for a specimen of this size and age. Notwithstanding this reduction, needle size, colour and distribution remain consistent with a tree in good physiological condition, with no obvious symptoms of significant pest, disease or environmental stress. **Conclusions and Recommendations:** The tree is a well-established specimen in good health, exhibiting above-average vitality for its age. It occupies a reasonably sheltered position. In view of the tree's age, condition and landscape significance, management should be limited to essential works only. It is recommended that selective branch reduction is undertaken on the larger limb extending to the southwest over the highway on Marford Hill, in order to provide appropriate clearance and reduce end loading. In addition, a smaller branch extending to the northwest should be reduced away from and overhead Openreach apparatus and the damaged branch adjacent should also be reduced. In addition, dead-wooding should be carried out within the western side of the crown to remove dead branch material from over the highway and maintain good arboricultural management. No further pruning or crown reduction works are recommended at this time. Given the tree's mature form and existing structural balance, excessive intervention could adversely affect its appearance, stability, physiological condition and long-term retention prospects. Sufficient live foliage must be retained to maintain the physiological viability of the pruned limbs. Pruning should be to appropriate pruning point and pruning wounds limited to 75mm diameter underbark. All work must be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of **BS 3998:2010 – Tree Work – Recommendations**. The tree should continue to be monitored annually, with more detailed inspections undertaken on a five-year cycle or following any significant storm events.	

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KEY

Size Class	Stem	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
		OM - 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 or are not significant at this time
		Poor - Major faults that cannot be rectified through surgery
Hazard Rating:		Green - Very Low
		Yellow - Low
		Amber - Moderate
		Red – High

Numeric rating refers to QTRA score and should be multiplied by 1000 (1k) to get risk of harm. E.g. 1k x 1000 = 1 in 1 million.