



Connick Tree Consultants

Specialist in Arboricultural Assessment

ARBORICULTURAL CONDITION ASSESSMENT (Health & Safety)

OUR REFERENCE	207005/JH
CLIENT	Mitie Landscapes Ltd
SITE	The Birches Trading Estate, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 1XZ
SURVEY & REPORT BY	Mr Joe Howard TechArborA
DATE	1 st May 2024
DATE OF INSPECTION	11 th April 2024
NEXT RE-SURVEY DUE BY	11 th April 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INSTRUCTION

Connick Tree Care were instructed by Ms Louisa Pullen of Mitie landscapes to undertake a ground level visual assessment and report of all trees located within the site of The Birches Trading Estate in East Grinstead. This report will detail the condition of all trees assessed, including any recommended management requirements on those identified with defects.

- 1.1.1 The principal objective of the survey was to identify trees, or parts of trees, which appear to be in a hazardous condition and to advise remedial action to ameliorate the risk they could represent to users of the site and adjacent areas.

1.2 SCOPE OF REPORT

- 1.2.1 The survey included all established trees/groups of trees with a stem diameter greater than 150mm. Unless specifically instructed to, newly planted or self-set trees less than 150mm in diameter or shrub species were not included.
- 1.2.2 The inspections were carried out from ground level using the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) method (Mattheck, C and Breloer, H, 1994) examining the external features of each individual tree. All measurements, proportions and assessments of age are approximate, except where stated.
- 1.2.3 The report and recommendations relate to the condition of the trees and their surroundings at the time of inspection. Trees are living organisms whose health and condition can change rapidly and all trees even healthy ones, are at risk from unpredictable climatic and man-made events. This report and recommendations relate to the condition of the trees and their surroundings at the time of inspection only.
- 1.2.4 The conclusions and recommendations in this report are only valid for one year. Any changes to the site as it stands at present will invalidate this report, e.g. construction works, excavation works, importing of soils, extreme weather events etc.
- 1.2.5 The re-inspection frequency is specified on an individual tree basis and is recorded in the survey data in Appendix I. The recommended site re-inspection frequency is specified on the title page.
- 1.2.6 No decay detection equipment either invasive or non-invasive was employed.

1.3 SUMMARY OF LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

- 1.3.1 A considerable body of case law has established that, to be in a position to foresee and attempt to prevent harm arising from a tree failure, it is necessary to subject the tree or trees in question to 'regular inspection'. This inspection should be undertaken by someone competent both to identify any defects present and to interpret their significance for public safety.



- 1.3.2 Within the United Kingdom the owner of the land in which a tree stands has a duty in relation to the health and safety of those on or near that land. This duty is covered by both civil and criminal law and would leave the owner responsible for any liabilities arising from the falling of a tree or branch either financially or through prosecution (NTSG, 2011).
- 1.3.3 The breach of or infringement of this duty can lead to potential liabilities to pay damages within civil law under the Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 and 1984 or to the risk of prosecution within criminal law under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.
- 1.4 **QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**
 - 1.4.1 I have based this report on my site observations and investigations. I have come to the conclusions in light of my qualifications gained and experience obtained whilst working in the field of arboriculture. I have qualifications and practical experience in arboriculture and list the details of these in Appendix III.
- 1.5 **LIMITATIONS AND USE OF COPYRIGHT**
 - 1.5.1 All rights in this report are reserved. No part of it may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means without our written permission. Its contents and format are for the exclusive use of the client. It may not be sold, lent out or divulged to any third party not directly involved in this situation without the written consent of Connick Tree Care.
 - 1.5.2 **DISCLAIMER:** I have no connection with any of the parties involved in this situation that could influence the opinions expressed in this report.



2 ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 SITE VISIT

- 2.1.1 A site visit was undertaken on the 11th of April by the author of this report, Mr J Howard. I am a qualified arboriculturist. The weather at the time of inspection was sunny with good visibility.

2.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.2.1 The Birches Trading Estate is located to the northwest of the town centre of East Grinstead. The site is within a predominately residential area. The site consists of large retail, office and industrial units with associated parking and landscaping features.
- 2.2.2 The majority of the trees are spread out throughout the site. A young, wooded area lies to the west of the site and a line of mature trees are adjacent to the north boundary.
- 2.2.3 The site is considered to be high use, and as such the majority of trees surveyed have a high target risk.

2.3 TREE SURVEY

- 2.3.1 The survey was carried out from ground level using the Visual Tree Assessment method (Mattheck, C and Breloer, H, 1994), examining the external features of each individual tree. The tree survey data was recorded at the time of inspection on purpose made Arboricultural software and digital mapping using a handheld tablet.
- 2.3.2 In total 97 individual trees, 9 groups of trees and 1 woodland were surveyed within the site. The information obtained during the survey process is recorded within the tree survey schedule attached as **Appendix I**.
- 2.3.3 The trees are identifiable via their unique tree number within the tree location plan attached as **Appendix II** and by their tree tag number on site. Identifiers are as follows: T= individual tree, TG= a group of trees with similar attributes, W= a woodland; a postfix of 'p' indicates third party ownership.
- 2.3.4 Trees located near to public thoroughfares, frequent pedestrian use and within striking distance of property have a high 'target risk' associated with them. They may cause harm or damage should they fail as a whole or in part. Where such trees have been recorded as having defects the 'target risk' is highlighted within the comments section of the survey data.
- 2.3.5 The majority of the trees within the site are fully accessible, although those trees situated outside the boundary fences and trees within or behind hedges were viewed to be surveyors' best ability.



2.4 CONCLUSIONS

- 2.4.1 Having undertaken a site inspection and assessment of the trees within The Birches Trading Estate it is believed that they are generally in a good condition. Due to their locations, age and size it is recommended that they are continued to be inspected on a frequent basis as specified on the title page. Trees which require inspection before this date are included within the recommendations.
- 2.4.2 A number of trees have been identified during the survey as having significant defects which require remedial action. These trees are detailed in section 2.5 below.

2.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.5.1 The tree survey has identified a total of 20 individual and 1 groups of trees which require some form of management. These recommendations have been made to mitigate against identified, possibly hazardous defects, and/or on the basis of sound Arboricultural management. The management recommendations are identified in the Tree Survey Schedule attached as Appendix I. and summarised in the table below.

Table 1.

Tree ID	TagNo	Species	Recommendations	Priority
T2	Not Tagged	Hawthorn	Sever Ivy	6 Months
T10	1399	Sweet Chestnut	Fell to ground level	6 Months
T24	1412	Ash	Fell to ground level	6 Months
T28	1416	Oak	Raise crown to 3.0mH	6 Months
T50	1430	Prunus	Sever Ivy	6 Months
T58	1432	Willow	Coppice to 0.5m stumps	6 Months
T71	1444	Birch	Fell to ground level	6 Months
T76	1449	Prunus	Sever Ivy	6 Months
T91	1460	Oak	Sever Ivy	6 Months
T92	1461	Oak	Sever Ivy	6 Months
T93	1462	Oak	Sever Ivy	6 Months
T94	1463	Oak	Sever Ivy	6 Months
T104p	Not Tagged	Willow	Cut back growth to boundary line	6 Months
T107p	Not Tagged	Willow	Fell to ground level	6 Months
TG9	1398	Sweet Chestnut	Fell to ground level	6 Months
T6	1395	Birch	Reduce crown by 30%	1 year
T80	1450	Willow	Fell and treat stump(s)	1 year
T81	Not Tagged	Willow	Fell and treat stump(s)	1 year
T87	1456	Oak	Fell to ground level	1 year
T97	1465	Oak	Fell to ground level	1 year
T102	Not Tagged	Fir	Fell to ground level	1 year

- 2.5.2 The recommended works are prioritised, and it's recommended that they are carried out within the given time frames.
- 2.5.3 Except for minor works such as the severing of ivy at ground level, all works should be undertaken by appropriately qualified Arboricultural Contractors. This should be to BS3998 Recommendations for Tree Work 2010 or current Industry Best Practice.



- 2.5.4 The environmental implications of hazard and disease management must be considered in relation to the need to conserve biodiversity in the deadwood fauna and flora. Our recommendations for remedial tree works are intended to strike a reasonable balance between the need for tree safety and the encouragement of biodiversity.
- 2.5.5 **The Local Planning Authority has not yet been contacted to establish if a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) covers any of the trees or to determine if the site is situated within a Conservation Area (CA). It would be necessary to determine whether either of these planning controls are in place before any work commence. Should they be in place, the appropriate notification or permission will need to be obtained from the local planning authority.**



3 TREE RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS

- 3.1.1 The level of risk of harm or damage rises as the use of a site increases.
- 3.1.2 The re-inspection frequency for the whole site is based upon my assessment of the level of risk in relation to the trees surveyed.
- 3.1.3 A qualified Arboriculturist is required to perform the formal scheduled inspection, while grounds staff could undertake intermediate inspections as part of their general duties. The ground staff may require some basic instruction and reporting forms to enable them to carry out this function. The arboriculturist may be called in (other than for the specified inspection) if there was a situation in which the on-site staff were unsure of how to proceed.
- 3.1.4 A walk-round survey following any major storm event should be undertaken by grounds staff to identify from lay-persons perspective, new hazards, uprooted / partially uprooted trees, major branch fractures, breaking out of parts of the crown etc.
- 3.1.5 Any emergency situations would require action immediately generally without consulting the Arboriculturist. The Arboriculturalist should be informed of these situations as it may impact the safety of remaining trees, e.g. increased exposure to prevailing winds.
- 3.1.6 The above approach allows the day-to-day management of tree risk to be with those who are in close proximity to it and who can respond quickly. The overall strategic risk and detailed assessment of risk associated with individual trees is kept at the technical level during the formal inspections.
- 3.1.7 This system allows a detailed picture of the condition of the trees to be recorded over time. It then becomes possible to provide more accurate analysis of the hazards and level of risk associated with the tree population on site. This approach assists with management strategies and budgets enabling them to be planned rather than reactionary.
- 3.1.8 Risk Management Strategy is now a common policy area for all those who are involved in managing any public or private facility. The assessment of the hazard associated with trees and the management of the risk is no different than that of ensuring that buildings are in good repair and that action is taken to prevent accidents that would be considered 'reasonably foreseeable'.



4 REFERENCES and BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anon, British Standard BS 3998 (2010), "Recommendations for Tree Work", British Standards Institute. London.

DOE, "Tree Preservation Orders - A guide to the law and good practice", Department of Environment, 1994.

David Lonsdale. (2001), Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management. London, HMSO.

Mattheck, C. and Breloer, H. (1994) The body language of trees, Research for Amenity Trees No.4 HMSO.

National Tree Safety Group. (2011), Common sense risk management of trees, Guidance on trees and public safety in the UK for owners, managers and advisers. Edinburgh, The Forestry Commission.

R.G.Strouts & T.G Winter (2009), Diagnosis of ill-health in trees. The Stationary Office – Research for Amenity Trees No.2

O.Johnson & D More (2004), Tree Guide. Collins

T. Moy (2018). TMA Fungi. Software application



APPENDIX I QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

Joe Howard

1. QUALIFICATIONS

Subjects	Level	Dates
Technician member of the Arboricultural Association		2023 ongoing
Professional Tree Inspection (LANTRA)	Pass	April 2023
Level 3 diploma in forestry and arboriculture	Distinction	2015
NPTC cs30, cs31, cs38, cs39	Pass	From 2015 ongoing.

2. CAREER SUMMARY

Beginning in 2015 I qualified with a level 3 diploma in forestry and arboriculture after a 2-year college course. From this I gained my practical competency qualifications to allow me to move into an arborist position at a local Arboricultural company. Through experience and training in this role I went on to manage the tree teams within the company. My passion for tree care and management led me to become a qualified professional tree inspector. This progression gave me the opportunity to work as an Arboricultural consultant at Connick tree care.

3. AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Tree hazard risk assessments for tree owners
Decay assessment and mapping
Tree management reports to prioritise maintenance programs.
Diagnosis of tree disorders
General arboricultural advice
Trees in relation to subsidence
Arboricultural surveys to BS5837

APPENDIX II**TREE SURVEY SCHEDULE**

See Document: 207005 - The Birches Trading Estate Tree Survey Schedule 2024

APPENDIX III
TREE LOCATION PLAN

