

Glendale

Leading a Greener Future

Tree Survey Report:

Burgess Hill Town Council - Poveys Allotments -
PICUS Assessment

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A 'Duty of Care' in relation to tree inspection is owed to persons who may be reasonably contemplated (by tree owners, tree managers and tree inspectors) to be affected by their action or inaction. This duty means that the actions of these persons need to meet a standard of care. If they do not, then negligence in Common Law may be proved and result in a claim for damages.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Burgess Hill Town Council is the local government for the town and civil parish of Burgess Hill in West Sussex, England. They manage local services such as parks, allotments, and community facilities.

1.2 Ownership

Burgess Hill TC has land ownership and holds liability of the subject tree within this report.

1.3 Duty of Care

As tree owners, Burgess Hill TC has a duty of care to all those who may be reasonably contemplated to access these sites and an additional duty of care over their employees who access sites to undertake works.

1.4 History

Burgess Hill TC manages their tree stock in line with industry best practice for regular inspection.

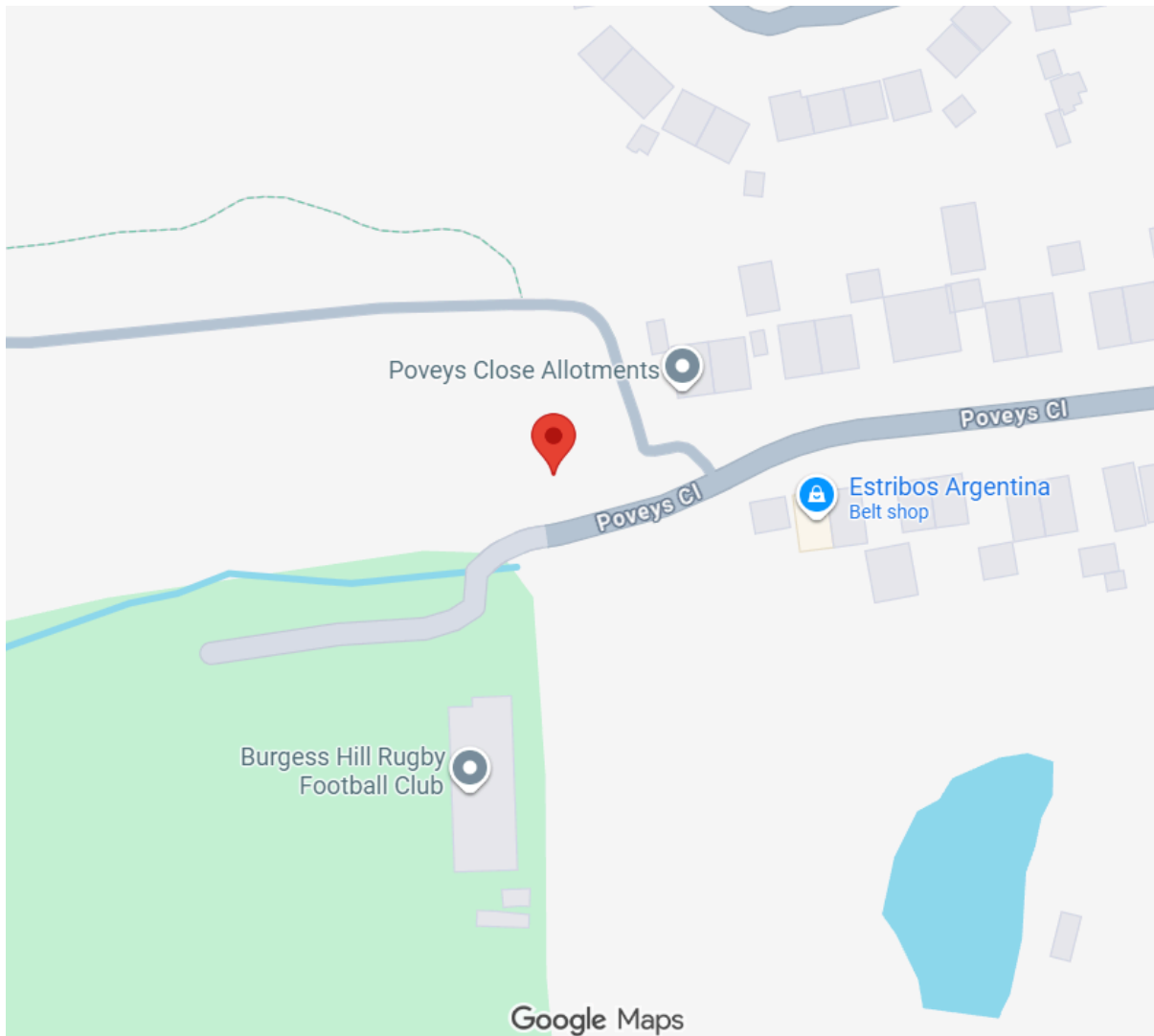
Glendale Countryside Ltd have been instructed to undertake a detailed inspection of the following tree(s):

ITEM	POSITION	SPECIES	WORK REQUIRED
T01775	Poveys Allotments, Burgess Hill 50.958853, -0.153202	Pedunculate Oak	PICUS Assessment

2.0 Site Details

2.1 Location

The tree in question is situated within the car park of Poveys Allotments on Poveys Close in Burgess Hill.



The subject tree is within falling distance of the access road, car parking bays and fence line of the allotments.

As the access road is low use we did not request the GB Traffic Data Explorer (Transportation Research Group) statistics.

The adjacent car park is the main target which equates to a QTRA target range of *Property - 2* (£20,000 -> £200,000).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Survey Selection

The primary focus of the detailed survey was to establish the risk presented by the tree by examining a basal cross section for decay or signs of decay. There are several techniques available to undertake this work utilising sonic conductivity, electrical resistance and micro drilling.

The selected method (Sonic Tomography) was chosen due to its non-invasive nature, the significant usage history in the UK which has allowed higher accuracy of result interpretation and availability of equipment.

3.2 Sonic Tomography

Sonic Tomography is a process which measures the velocity of sound along numerous pathways within the cross section of a tree trunk.

Sound travels more slowly through decayed wood or around cavities than through the more solid wood present.

Consolidation of all the travel times for all the pathways via software allows images of (apparent) decay and damage patterns to be derived.

3.3 Limitations

3.31 Sonic tomography does not “see” decay, rather it identifies areas of wood in which sound is conducted more slowly than other areas. It is usually the case that these areas are in fact areas of decay, however in cases of marginal indications then care should be exercised in interpretation.

3.32 Sonic Tomography has in this case been carried out as close to ground level as possible. This is in order to try to identify instances of butt rot. This technique takes no account of stem decay spreading downwards from the sites of previous ‘topping’ works.

3.33 No detailed examination of underlying soil or root systems has been undertaken.

3.34 This report represents the state of the trees on the day examined. Where no timed recommendations are made then the currency of this report will expire after 3 years from the date of inspection.

3.35 Trees are dynamic living organisms, whose health and condition can be subject to rapid changes, depending upon a number of internal and external factors. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based on the trees at the time of inspection. It should be noted that even apparently sound, healthy looking trees, can fail.

4.0 Survey

4.1 T01775 - Pedunculate Oak - *Quercus robur*



Figure - Photograph showing the whole tree facing west towards the allotments and parked cars.

4.1.1 Tree Data

DBH - 83 centimetres
Height - 16 metres
Average crown spread - 14 metres
Age - Mature

4.1.2 Defects/Observations

Location/Defects:

- Cavity opening at ground level south-east between sensors 7-8, mallet indicates some internal dysfunction around the opening up to 0.3m.
- Old darkened Fungal Fruiting Body (FFB) (likely *Pseudoinontus dryadeus*) between sensors 4-5.
- Old darkened detached FFB (likely *Pseudoinontus dryadeus*) located on adjacent grass. Attachment point looks to be under sensor 10.

Wounds and Structural Issues:

- Multiple partially and fully occluded wounds up to 250mm diameter from 1.5m up.
- Large partly occluded wound at 4m north with young FFB (*Aurantiporus fissilis*).

Crown & Canopy Condition:

- Previous crown reduction has left the tree with an asymmetrical crown.
- Significant dieback and sparse crown, major indicators of poor vitality, stress, or root/stem decay affecting nutrient and water transport.
- Deadwood over 150mm diameter scattered throughout the crown.

Fungal Fruiting Body Information

Common name/Scientific name

Eiffel Tower bracket/*Pseudoinontus dryadeus*

Location

Generally isolated to the stem base – in between buttresses / stem flutes. Rarely observed up the stem, to heights of 3-4m, for very large trees. Restricted generally to mature trees.

Description

Annual. Found growing most often singularly – rarely in tiers. A tan brown upper surface from inception clad with water droplets (see photo a,b). Pore surface white. Flesh and tube layer chocolate-coffee brown. Very tough and woody. Can become very large, in some cases. Blackens-off in autumn and often remains attached to the host either wholly or partly.

Significance

Associated with a selective white rot and linked to extensive buttressing in mature oaks ('bottle butt'). Decay is considered to be very slow though hollowing does ensue. Host trees can thus persist with this fungus by developing sound buttresses. Failure rarely observed on *Quercus robur*. Where no buttressing exists on the host tree, failure should be more of a concern. Investigations into stem hollowness / tree stability may need to be considered.

Common name/Scientific name

Greasy bracket/*Aurantiporus fissilis*

Location

Found from the base of the tree up into the crown. Usually located on sites of wounding / damage – principally, tear-outs and pruning wounds.

Description

Annual. Typically, off-white and somewhat slippery (greasy) to the touch when younger. Matures to sometimes form a golden-brown upper surface. The pore surface is white, and the pores are generally quite circular. White spore. White flesh.

Significance

This fungus is normally isolated to already-damaged areas of the tree, though no research has been undertaken on the pathogenicity of this fungus. Presence at the base of the tree and along the main stem may warrant hollowness investigations, should a target exist. Little research has been undertaken on this fungus and understanding is borne near-exclusively from anecdotal observation.



Figure - Photograph showing FFB (*Aurantiporus fissilis*) at XXm north.



Figure - Photograph showing base of tree north-east with old detached FFB (Pseudoinontus dryadeus)

4.1.3 The Picus scan was carried out on this tree at 0.3m above ground level.

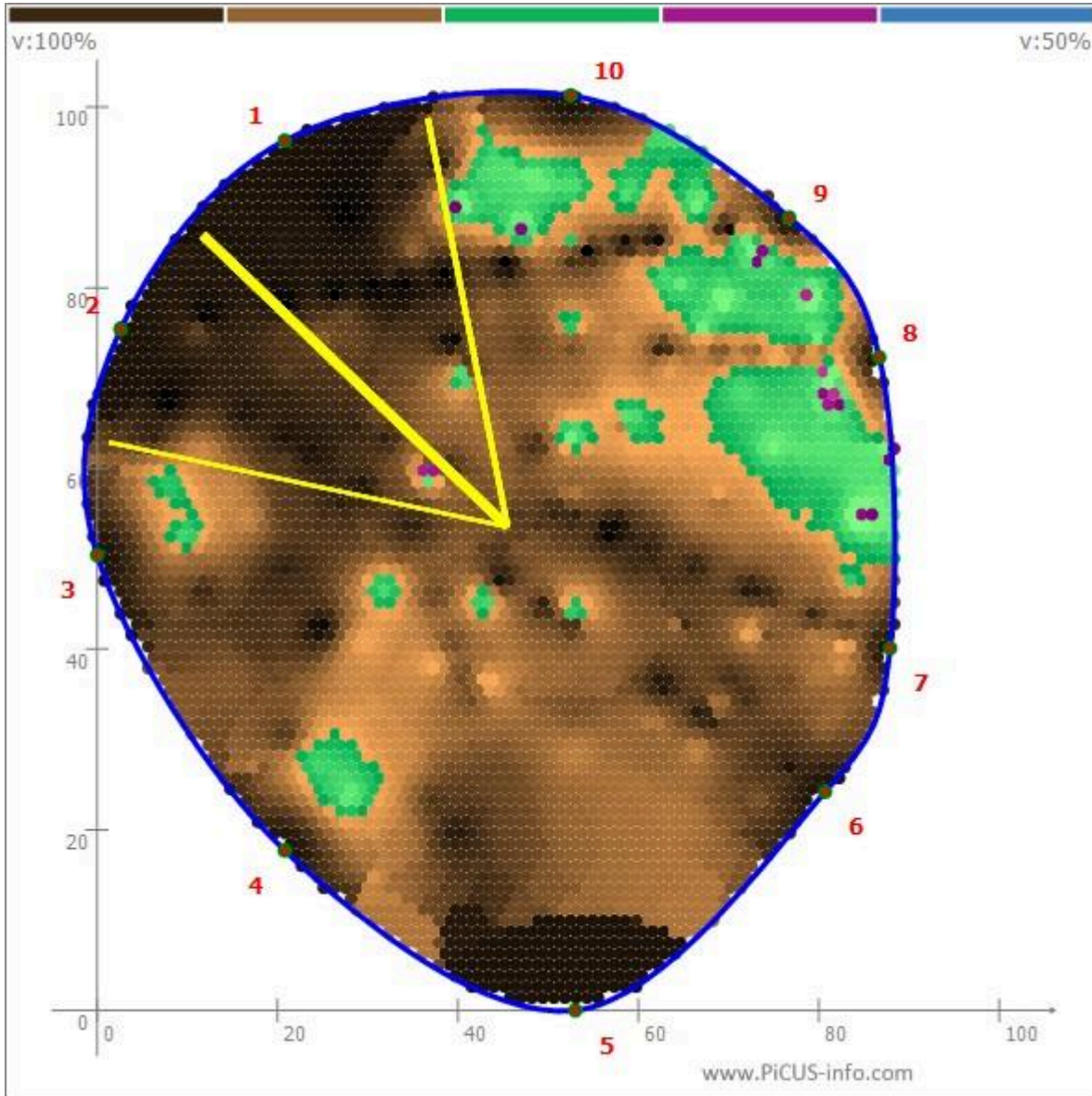


Figure - Tomogram from 0.3m

4.1.4 Picus Tomograph Results

The tomograph results were mostly normal, showing transmission speeds consistent with structurally sound wood and no significant internal decay. A small area of slower transition speed, indicating probable early decay, was recorded between sensors 7 and 10. This is not considered significant and aligns with both the Fibre-optic Bundle (FFB) attachment point and observations made during the inspection.

Furthermore, three lineal cracks were detected between sensors 3 and 10. These cracks are also not considered significant and are likely attributable to historic fibre buckling as the tree matures.

On this basis, no further investigation with the IML Resistograph drill was deemed necessary.

4.2 Conclusions

The assessment confirms that this tree presents a structural risk that is difficult to fully quantify from ground level. Testing highlights some basal decay, with a cavity opening between sensors 7-8 and the presence of the decay fungus *Pseudoinontus dryadeus*, confirmed by an FFB at sensors 4-5 and a detached FFB near sensor 10. While the tomogram results are largely normal, the slower transition speeds between sensors 10-7 suggest the decay is initiating a structural change in this basal region.

A large, partially occluded wound is actively supporting a young FFB of *Aurantiporus fissilis*, this defect at 4m introduces an unquantifiable (without further testing) instability in the structure.

Compounding these stem defects are multiple other large wounds, a severely compromised crown exhibiting significant dieback and a sparse appearance, and the presence of significant deadwood. Given the documented basal decay, the unconfirmed extent of decay at 4m, the presence of two active decay fungi, and the overall poor vitality, the tree is considered a high-risk specimen. Management intervention is necessary to mitigate the likelihood of failure.

4.3 Recommendations:

Given the tree's poor vitality, a crown reduction to reduce wind load and structural stresses is not recommended. The tree is currently unlikely to have sufficient energy reserves to successfully adapt to a significant pruning operation of this nature. Removing a substantial portion of its leaf-bearing canopy would place immense stress on an already struggling specimen and likely lead to a further decline in health, potentially accelerating its ultimate failure. Therefore, we would recommend the removal of this tree to mitigate future risk. We further advise that this removal is followed by the installation of appropriate replacement plantings nearby to ensure the continued ecological and aesthetic value of the area.

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Tree Survey Report:



End of Report

