

Health & Safety Duty of Care Report©

Site: 79th Reading Scout Group. Armour Hill. Reading. RG31 6JH

Client: Reading Scout Group c/o Andy Scot Date: 05/07/2024 Surveyor: Danny Konstantinidis.



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HERITAGE TREE SERVICES ARBORICULTURAL HEALTH & SAFETY SURVEY

Instruction:

Heritage Tree Services Ltd received instructions from Andy Scot to carry out a Health & Safety appraisal of trees at the above site in July 2024.

Inspection:

The **VTA** (Visual Tree Assessment) was carried out in accordance to *Mattheck & Breloer 1994* and *Lonsdale 1999* methodology, from ground level and catalogues all significant trees on site. Where considered appropriate, the trunk may have undergone percussive hammering using a rubber mallet to assess hollowing, and basal defects carefully prodded using a steel probe and air spade excavation of soil surrounding buttress roots. The potential Target Hazard factors are recorded and will dictate the level of risk in terms of size of part that may fail, likelihood of failure and human occupancy, dwellings and property, highways and pedestrian footpaths, etc-target area of occupancy. The Works Priority Rating is concluded upon date of survey, and will be listed as an action relative to the score giving some measure of quantified risk, a timeframe to carry out works will be given by the arborist, according to criteria. Please see explanations in key below for clarification. This document will be accompanied by a Tree Location Plan (TLP) to aid identification.

Weather: Dry. Overcast. Light breeze.

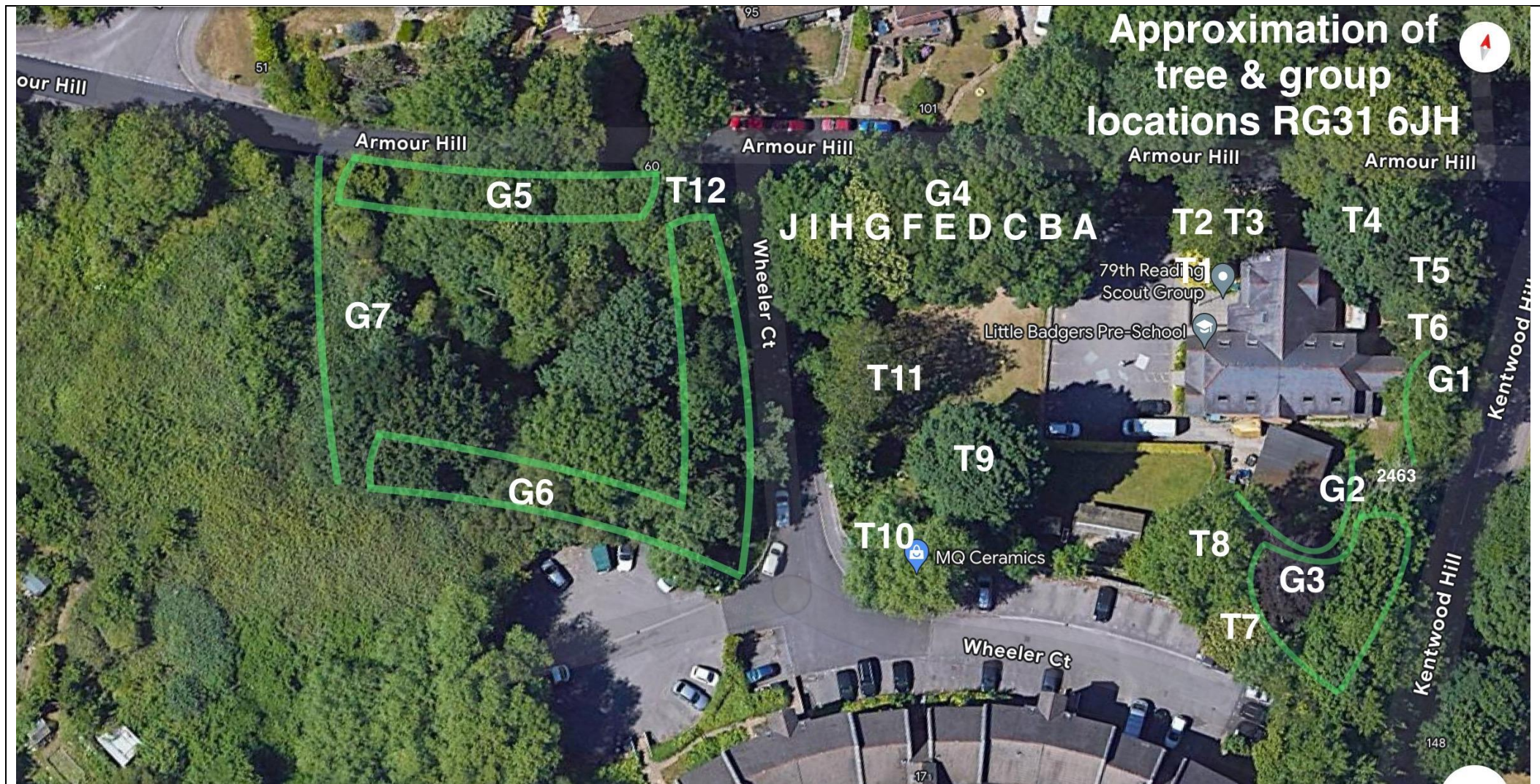
Tree Group Hedge or Shrub No.	SPECIES	AGE	H e i g h t S- VL	PHYSIO LOGICAL STATUS Good Fair Poor Dead	STRUCTUR AL STATUS Good Fair Poor Dead	ARBORICULTURISTS OBSERVATIONS	RECOMMENDED WORKS	S.O.P + L.O.F + T.A.O 1-3	Action Relative To Score 3-9	Advised Time Scale In months from date of survey
T1	Lawson Cypress	Em	M	G	G	Stem division at approximately 3m from ground level (fgl) & again at 4m. Unions appear stable Low branches over footpath	Maintain a clearance over footpath of approximately 2.75cm fgl	2 1 3	5	6
T2	Cherry	Em	M	G	G	Branch ends in contact with overhead service cable	Prune branches in contact with overhead services to provide clearance of up to 1m	1 1 3	5	4

T3	Cherry	Em	M	G	G	Branch ends in contact with overhead service cable	Prune branches in contact with overhead services to provide clearance of up to 1m	1 1 3	5	4
T4	Ash	M	L	G	G	Small branch regrowth from previously pruned limb, now encroaching onto building roof. Major & moderate sizes deadwood over pre school outdoor area & public footpath.	Prune x1 identified regrowth back to source to clear built structure. Remove significant sized deadwood (>35mm in diameter & 500mm in length)	2 2 3	7	3
T5	Sycamore	Em	L	G	G	Lacking root crown due to soil level change. Low branches over public footpath	Raise low branches over public footpath to statutory 2.75m fgl	1 1 3	5	6
T6	Birch	Em	L	G	G	Low branch in contact with building.	Remove secondary branch that is in contact with built structure to primary union junction. Reduce x2 slender branches over the roof of the building to provide a clearance of up to 1m	1 1 3	5	3
G1	Plum, Ash, Sycamore	Sm-Em	M	G	F	Ash & Sycamore branches in contact with building. Trees are growing on the other side of wire chain link fence (Council owned)	Prune branches that are in contact with building to provide a clearance of up to 2m.	1 1 3	4	3
Tag 2436	Ash	M	L	P	P	Mainly dead.	Remove to stem division at approximately 1.7m fgl	3 2 3	8	2

T7	Sweet Chestnut					Low branches in contact with neighbouring wooden fencing	Raise low branches to provide a clearance of up to 2m from tops of boundary fences	1 1 3	5	3
T8	Ash	M	L	G	G	Low branch in contact with wooden boundary fence. Major & moderate sized deadwood over desire line path into woodland area. Dead previously severed ivy present within the crown.	Prune low branch to clear fence by approximately 2m.	2 2 2	6	6
T10	Crack Willow	M	L	G	F	Ivy clad from ground level into upper crown. Unable to assess basal condition & branch/stem junctions. NVD in visible areas Low branches over wooden & chainlink fence. Branch ends obscuring light ark from neighbouring carpark lamp. Low lateral stem has been reduced with good regrowth response	Prune low branches to provide a clearance of approximately 2.75m fgl on carpark side of the tree only. Prune branches to provide a light arc to carpark area.	2 1 3	6	4
T11	Cherry	Em	M	G	G	Ivy into upper crown. NVD of visible areas. Low branches over flagpole area.	Raise low branches over grass area to approximately 2.75cm fgl.	2 1 2	4	5

G4	Sycamore x2 Sweet Chestnut x1 Ash x7	Em- M	L	G	F	(A) 1 moderate deadwood over lawn area lower crown (B) Major deadwood over lawn area lower crown (C) Moderate deadwood over public footpath & Road (D) Generally in a resonable condition (E) Moderate deadwood over lawn area (F) Moderate deadwood over lawn area (G) Moderate deadwood over lawn area (H) Moderate deadwood over lawn area (I) Moderate deadwood over rough ground but within striking distance of desire line to gate. Failed dead branch trapped in lower crown, resting on chain-link fence. Multi stemmed from approximately 2m, blunt rib formation from approximately 1.2m. Bark on bark attachment at approximately 1.6-2m. Unions thought to be stable. (J) Stem division from approximately 1.3m. Central cavity filled with organic detritus. Probe into middle downward for <40cm. Stems likely independent structures. Thought to be stable. One low branch over overhead service. Now in contact. (G4) Applicable to the entire group. Low branches over the Road.	Raise to statutory height over the carriageway, 5.5m from ground level over entire group. Prune end weight (approximately 500mm to secondary point of pruning) of x1 low branch from T(I)	2 2 3	7	6
T12	Sweet chestnut	M	L	G	F	Ivy from ground level into mid crown. Limited vta Low branches over street lamp.	Prune branches to provide a light arc to public footpath & road users.	1 1 3	5	6
G6	Mixed broadleaf & conifer species	Sm-M	M-L	G	F	Group runs alongside carpark area that services neighbouring blocks of flats. Group extent taken from boundary chainlink fence along the length from access road to top end of plot, inwardly for approximately 8m. Ivy clad trees within the group.	Raise low branches over boundary fence to approximately 2.75m fgl. This is to include the boundary fence passing the adjacent side of the road with T11 among the area.	2 1 2	5	6

						Ivy limits full inspection of basal areas & main scaffold union junctions. NVD areas that can be seen. Moderate deadwood throughout trees within the group, most of which is confined to the inner areas & not considered a threat to patrons of the carpark area. Low branches over the boundary fence into carpark area.	Prune branches in contact with street lighting, to provide adequate light arc to path & access road.			
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Recommendation for next Visual Tree Assessment to be carried out in 24 months unless otherwise stated in survey recommendations.

HEALTH & SAFETY KEY	Explanation
T, G, H or S	Tree or Group numbers on enclosed list – (T = tree; G = group; H = hedge; S = shrub). Tree location within plot - hash tag (#) signifies tree outside boundary or in alternative ownership.
Species	Defined in Common & or Scientific names.
Height	Measured in metres above ground level. – Small (S) = 4 – 6. Medium (M) = 7 – 14. Large (L) = 15 – 23. Very large 23 +
Spread	Canopy measured in metres from main stem in cardinal directions: North, South, East and West.
Age & Life Stage Status	Y: Young tree, recently planted, which could be relocated, if required, measuring less than 150mm in diameter at 1.5m. SM: Semi mature tree, establishing well, and within the first ⅓ of its lifespan. More growth required before reaching maximum potential. EM: Early mature tree at almost full height and within ⅔ of its lifespan. If healthy, crown and stem increment will continue. M: Mature fully-grown tree, unlikely for tree height, crown width or stem diameter to increase. LM: Late-mature tree declining in vigor and size, and possibly entering senescence, with potential defects and duty of care implications. Vet: Veteran aged senescent tree with possible habitat/ecological value, or of significant historic/cultural worth. Dead: Dead tree not classified as Veteran status yet still retainable for possible ecological/habitat benefit.
Physiological Condition Status	GOOD: General satisfactory conditions of health observed for species overall, due to good vitality and leaf cover/size with possible minor deadwood present. A maintenance prescription may be recommended for continued safe useful life expectancy. FAIR: Tree displays some deterioration issues, or stress factors, i.e. minor die-back with moderate deadwood, discolored leaves, crown thinning, damage or disease. Remedial action likely to be recommended to assist the safe retention and recovery of tree, to reduce the risk of failure. POOR: Tree displays major deterioration or stress issues, i.e. sparse foliage, pest infestation, extensive crown die-back and major deadwood rendering its retention a risk. Recommended remedial works, or full removal, likely to resolve problems and reduce risk of failure. DEAD: Deceased or dying tree that has, or will become, a risk factor to retain.
Structural Condition Status	GOOD: Few significant structural defects noted for species. Possible maintenance prescription recommended for safe useful life expectation. FAIR: Tree may exhibit possible issues i.e. storm damage, decay, cavities. Maintenance prescription likely to reduce risk of failure. POOR: Tree displays major structural defects, i.e. significant root damage, cracked limbs, major deadwood rendering its retention a risk. Recommended remedial works, or full removal, likely to resolve problems and reduce risk of failure. DEAD: Deceased or dying tree that has, or will become, a risk factor to retain.

Observations	Deadwood defined as: TWIGS: Twigs up to 10mm diameter MINOR DEADWOOD: Minor deadwood between 10mm to 40mm in diameter MODERATE DEADWOOD: Moderate deadwood within 40mm – 70mm in diameter MAJOR DEADWOOD: Major deadwood over 70mm in diameter Root Condition: The visual assessment of the rooting area, taking into consideration any evidence of physical damage, soil compaction or heave, excavation work and/or drainage problems. Stem Condition: The visual assessment of the stem and main scaffold branches observing any visible faults and wounds, and other exterior signs which may suggest possibility of internal faults. If decay is suspected, a sounding hammer may be used. Leaf & Bud: The visual assessment of the amount and condition of foliage cover, and/or bud development, when compared against the foliage of the surrounding trees of the same species.
Recommended Works	The arboriculturalist's recommendations for prescriptive works and requirements for re-inspection or testing.
Hazard Rating System:	Hazard Rating: calculated by assessing three criteria on a scale of 0-3, i.e. (i) Size of part likely to fail None = 0 minor = 1 significant = 2 major = 3 (ii) Likelihood of failure Exceptionally low = 0 unlikely = 1 quite likely = 2 very likely = 3

	(iii) Target area occupation Exceptionally low = 0 Infrequent use = 1 Frequent use = 2 Structure beneath or continual use = 3 Where size of part and likelihood of failure are high but target occupation is exceptionally low a non intervention course of management may be advised bringing an exception to the formula rule.	
Action relative to score =	No maintenance required = 0-3 = (very low) Maintenance advisable = 3-5 = P3 (low) Maintenance essential = 6-7 = P2 (medium) Implement specified works urgently = 8-9 = P1 (high) Text colour of recommended works relative to operations = Monitoring/further investigation. Remedial/maintenance actions (some of which may be recommended to reduce likelihood of future damage to property). Preventative/duty of care works. Removal works. MONITOR - possible future issues to reinspect within timeframe given – see guidelines **	Guidelines: ** Reinspection will be recommended within a given timeframe, using the following guidelines, usually within 24 months: • With / without leaf • When fungal fruit bodies in evidence • When Ivy severed • With climbing inspection

Legalities:

- Duty of Care – in England and Wales under the common law of duty of care, the person or organisation responsible for trees must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions, that could reasonably be foreseen, which would be likely to cause harm to persons or property.
- Occupiers Liability Act 1957 and 1984 – these Acts place a duty upon the occupier to take such care as is reasonable to ensure that visitors to their land shall be safe from harm.
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 – this Act places a duty on every employer to conduct his undertaking in such a way to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in his employment who may be affected by the day-to-day activities of the business are not exposed to risks to their health and safety.
- Implications of the Legal Framework – the person or organization responsible for these trees thus has a legal obligation to take reasonable measures to review the condition and any risks posed by the trees in their care, and if expert advice is sought in this regard to follow these recommendations. Failure to do this may lead to a claim of negligence under common law or prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

References:

- British Standard 3998 (2010) Tree Work
- Mattheck and Breloer (1994) The Body Language of Trees
- Lonsdale (1999) Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management

Full Legal Disclaimer

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Specific - Trees

All tree inspections, unless specified, have been undertaken from ground level and using non-invasive techniques. Comments contained within the report on the condition and risk associated with any tree relate to the condition of the tree at the date and time of survey. Please note that the condition of trees is subject to change. This change may occur, but is not limited to biological and non-biological factors as well as mechanical/physical changes to conditions in the proximity of the tree. Trees should be inspected at intervals relative to identified site risks and in accordance with relevant HSE and Central Government guidance. Heritage Tree Services Ltd can provide further information on this matter if required.

Please note: no statutory control checks have been undertaken (unless specified). Where tree surgery works have been identified these works are based on the assumption that planning is approved. No tree works should be undertaken prior to determination of this application without up-to-date confirmation of the Tree Preservation Order / Conservation Area Status of the vegetation. All works should be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate Duty of Care. This should include, for example, site specific risk assessments and due diligence inspections for the presence of protected species.

Any comment relating to 3rd party trees has been made without full access to the tree(s). Should these trees have any impact on the proposed development we would advise you to instruct us to contact the 3rd party and undertake further inspection work.

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