

ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT - NORFOLK HOUSE NURSERY

Location:	Norfolk House Nursery, 9 Caerau Crescent, Newport NP20 4HG		
Client:	Norfolk House Nursery	Reference:	S251113.2
Author:	John Mitchener	Report Date:	21 February 2025
Surveyor:	John Mitchener	Survey Date:	13 January 2025

TERMS OF REFERENCE

TR33 Environments were instructed by Norfolk House Nursery to undertake an arboricultural assessment of a single lime tree at 9 Caerau Crescent, Newport NP20 4HG (hereafter referred to as 'the Site').

The scope of the arboricultural assessment includes a ground-based visual inspection of the lime tree. The purpose of the visual inspection, supported by the use of hand tools such as a probe and sounding hammer where appropriate, is to identify the presence of obvious tree defects which present a serious and present risk to persons or property. If identified, then appropriate recommendations for defect remediation are provided.

The requirement to assess trees for the presence of obvious defects arises from a duty of care imposed by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. This Act requires that employers, and persons in control of premises, do all that is reasonable and practicable to ensure that people are not exposed to risks to their health and safety. This assessment assists in the discharge of that duty of care as far as it constitutes a visual inspection of all trees by a competent person, the purpose of which is to identify, and advise on the remediation of, obvious tree defects.

In addition to the above, and where appropriate, general advice relating to the management of the assessed trees is also provided. This advice, which is unrelated to the presence of obvious tree defects, provides tree management recommendations based upon the principles of good arboricultural practice. It is based upon the surveyor's observations at the time of the visit, is advisory only and is delivered without knowledge of any wider site management aims or objectives.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

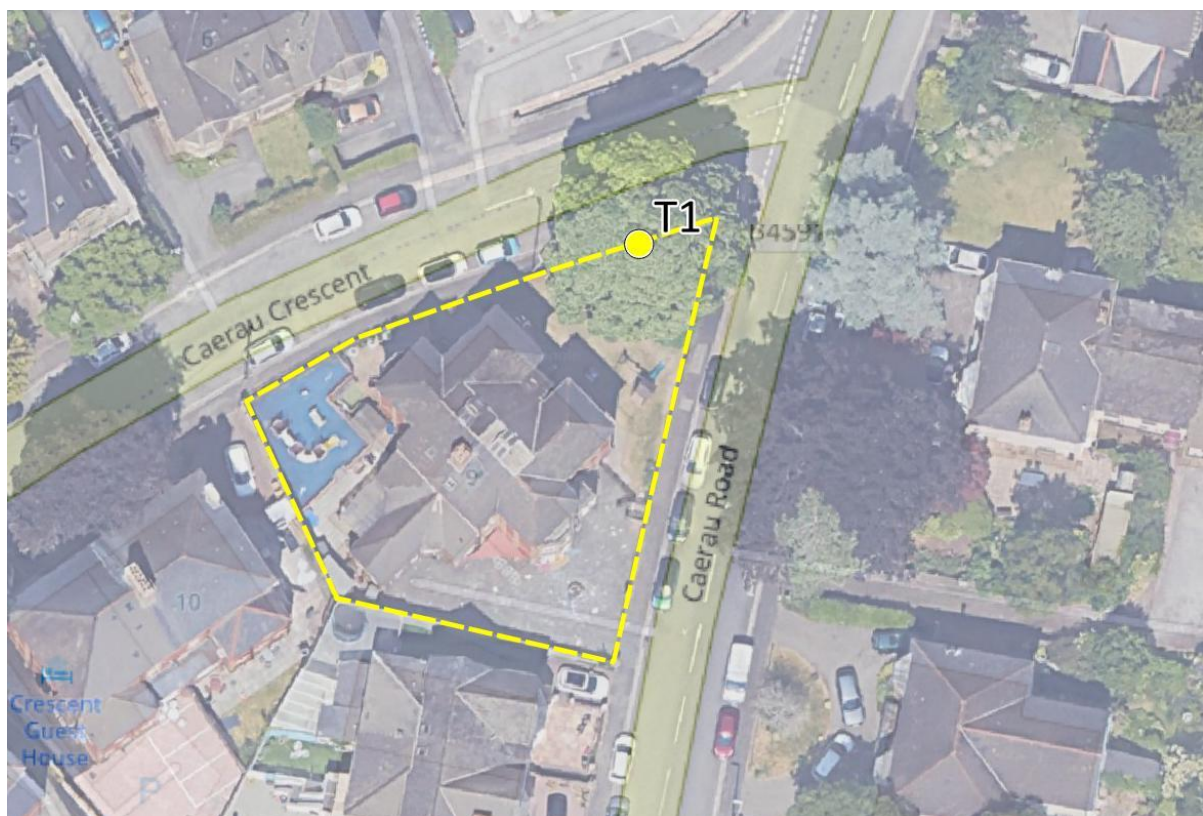
Tree T1 is a mature specimen with an estimated height in excess of 20m, a stem diameter in excess of 1000mm and a crown radius of between 6m and 9m. The location of tree T1 is shown in **Figure 1: Tree Location**.

The assessment of tree T1 was conducted from an accessible location and from a position of safety. The assessment involved a visual inspection looking for mechanical and other external signs of structural weakness, disease or poor physiological health. This methodology was applied to all aspects of the tree including its shape, crown, stem, roots and the surrounding environment.

In any instance where a risk related feature was identified then the level of risk was calculated using the VALID Tree Risk App¹. VALID is a tree risk assessment process which applies the internationally recognised Tolerability of Risk Framework (ToR) to identify whether the level of risk is either acceptable or unacceptable.

Access to tree T1 was adequate and there were no restrictions on the completion of the assessment.

Figure 1: Tree Location



¹ [Tree Risk-Benefit Management & Assessment | VALID \(validtreerisk.com\)](https://validtreerisk.com)

Photographs which support the assessment are included in **Annex A: Photographs**. Limitations which may apply to the assessment are detailed in **Appendix B: Limitations**. A list of technical terms which may be used in this report, together with accompanying definitions, can be found in **Annex C: Glossary of Terms**.

FINDINGS

The Site

The Site comprises a roughly triangular shaped plot which is substantially occupied by an attractive building which was most likely constructed during the Victorian era. To the fore of the building is an area of maintained grass whilst land to the sides and rear primarily consists of hard surfacing. The Site is bordered to the east by Caerau Road and to the north by Caerau Crescent. The Site is separated from the public highway by a short, ornate brick-built retaining wall topped with metal railings.

The Site is positioned within the Stow Park Conservation Area. Reference to the Stow Park Conservation Area – Conservation Area Appraisal (dated February 2020) attributes the value of the area as being *“drawn from its historical links with Newport’s 19th-century commercial prosperity and the architectural richness this afforded in the growing suburbs”*. It also notes *“the ratio of greenery to buildings is also a highly significant characteristic of the Conservation Area and sets it apart from other suburbs.”*

Sub-section 4.3 of the Stow Park Conservation Area – Conservation Area Appraisal identifies damage to boundary walls as a matter of concern. It specifically highlights vegetation induced damage to boundary walls as an issue which requires redress.

The Tree

Tree T1 is positioned at the frontage of the Site and close to the junction between Caerau Crescent and Caerau Road. The tree was likely planted at around the same time as the adjacent building was constructed and is therefore of Victorian origin. It has a form which indicates that it was historically managed in a pollarded form but in more recent years has been allowed to grow and now supports a crown of substantial height and width.

Tree T1 does not exhibit any obvious defects which would raise concerns over tree safety. It does however have some branches which are below the recommended height over the highway and the crown contains several pieces of deadwood which could break and fall into either Caerau Crescent or Caerau Road. Also, some of the smaller stems positioned within the interior of the crown have become suppressed due to shading and now exhibit only limited leaf growth, poor physiological function and a sub-optimal height to diameter ratio. The long-term future of these suppressed stems is therefore questionable, and they are likely to either die or break if not removed via pruning.

During the course of the assessment, it was noted that the brick-built retaining wall adjacent to tree T1 is damaged with an approximately six-metre-long section of wall either leaning outwards into the highway and/or showing laterally displaced bricks and cracked or missing pointing. In places brickwork is sufficiently loose that it can be removed from the wall by hand and there is an obvious risk that parts of the wall will fall onto the adjacent public footway.

Damage to the brick retaining wall has been caused by the growth of roots from tree T1. Damage has resulted from tree roots pushing against the wall thereby forcing it outwards. This damage will

continue to get worse as the tree ages and grows.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Notwithstanding the potential requirement to remove deadwood and low branches from the crown of tree T1, the primary concern with the tree is mitigating the damage that it has caused to the brick retaining wall which separates the Site from Caerau Crescent. Mitigation is required to ensure that the boundary wall does not pose a risk to users of the highway and to ensure compliance with the Highways Act 1980.

Based upon our experience of such matters, it is likely that the damaged section of boundary will need to be dismantled and re-built. This will require the cutting back or removal of all tree roots which are otherwise pressing against the wall and causing damage. Other roots, which may foreseeably cause further damage in the future may also need to be removed.

The cutting or removal of any substantial tree root can have profound consequences for tree stability which, in an urban environment, can present an obvious risk to public safety. Tree stability can be compromised where structurally important roots are cut, or where pruning wounds permit the entry of wood decaying fungi.

In light of the above, it is recommended that the tree be pruned in order to reduce its height and spread before any repairs to the wall are undertaken, including the cutting or removal of tree roots. In order to guarantee the ongoing stability of the tree, and as a means of counteracting any decay which may arise following the cutting or removal of roots, it is advised that tree pruning extends to include the pollarding of the tree in its original form. The location of the proposed pollard points is illustrated in **Photograph 4**.

Benefits associated with the proposed pollarding of tree T1 include the ability to repair the damaged brick boundary wall. This will not only alleviate an obvious risk to users of the highway but will also permit the retention of the boundary wall in accordance with the Stow Park Conservation Area – Conservation Area Appraisal.

Additionally, the pollarding of the tree will provide a significant safety margin which will permit tree retention even when roots are cut, or the base of the tree becomes partially decayed. This is important as, without pruning, tree stability could be easily compromised to the point where an appropriate degree of public safety cannot be achieved.

ANNEX A – PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1: Tree T1 viewed from Caerau Crescent and looking in an easterly direction



Photograph 2: Retaining wall adjacent to tree T1



Photograph 3: Assumed extend of damage to retaining wall (ringed in red)



Photograph 4: Tree T1, proposed point of pollarding indicated by red line



ANNEX B: LIMITATIONS

This report is subject to the following limitations.

VALIDITY PERIOD

Trees are biological entities which may be affected by a wide range of biotic and abiotic factors. Their structural and physiological condition can therefore change substantially over a limited period.

The recommendations made in this report do not take account of the effects of extremes of climate, vandalism, or accident, whether physical, chemical or fire. TR33 Environments cannot therefore accept any liability in connection with these factors, nor where prescribed work is not conducted in a correct and professional manner in accordance with current good practice. The authority of this report ceases after 12 months from the date of the survey or when any site conditions change, or pruning or other works unspecified in the report are conducted to, or affecting, trees within the Site, whichever is the sooner.

SITE OCCUPANCY

Unless otherwise stated, site occupancy is defined by the surveyor based upon observations made at the time of the survey. Therefore, it may not account for moveable or transitory targets the presence of which cannot be reasonably foreseen.

SEASONALITY

Whilst arboricultural surveys are not seasonally limited it is the case that certain pests and diseases may only be evident at specific times of the year.

Seasonally apparent pests and diseases include certain wood decaying fungi such as the Giant Polypore (*Meripilus giganteus*) where fruiting bodies are short-lived, and the initial stages of root decay may not result in other identifiable symptoms. They also include diseases such as ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) where, in the initial stages of infection, foliar symptoms can be the main method of identification, but which are absent during the winter months.

Survey data is therefore based upon observations made at the time of the site visit. The identification of seasonally apparent hazards must be addressed as part of a wider risk management strategy and are outside the scope of this assessment.

ACCESS

The survey has only been undertaken from land within the client's ownership, from public land or from areas where formal access has been arranged.

Whilst all reasonable efforts are made view trees from the required angles this may not always be possible where they are located on the Site boundary, where safe access cannot be assured or where dense vegetation obscures views.

WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION

Trees have the capacity to provide habitat for species such as bats, birds, and mammals some of which may be protected under UK or European Legislation. It is a statutory offence to injure, kill or disturb any protected species or to damage or destroy their breeding site or resting place. It is also

an offence to disturb any nesting bird.

Wildlife and conservation matters are beyond the scope of this report although incidental comments may be made where these are of direct relevant to the arboricultural survey or subsequent assessment. It is therefore advisable that specialist ecological advice is sought prior to any tree removal or maintenance activities. If applicable, then the recommendations contained within this report should be reviewed considering any ecological constraints which may be identified.

ANNEX C: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Table 1 includes a glossary of technical terms which may be used in this report.

Table 1: Glossary of technical terms

Term	Description
Arisings:	any parts of the tree (including stem, roots, branches, and leaves) derived from the tree during tree work operations.
Bracket:	the fruiting body of a wood decaying fungus.
Canker:	area of dead bark killed by a pathogen.
Cavity:	a hole in the woody part of a tree caused by decay or damage.
Co-dominant:	upward growing stem/branch with a similar height and disposition as another stem/branch. Where such stems/branches arise from the same point then their stability or the integrity of their attachment could be compromised.
Coppicing:	cutting trees close to ground level with the intention of encouraging regrowth in the form of multiple shoots.
Crotch:	forked region formed by the junction of a branch and the stem, or by two branches.
Crown:	main foliage-bearing part of the tree.
Crown lifting:	removal of lower branches to achieve a stated vertical clearance above ground level or another surface.
Crown reduction:	the shortening of twigs and branches to reduce the height and/or spread of the crown.
Crown thinning:	selective removal of live branches to reduce crown density.

Term	Description
Dieback:	condition in which the branches in the crown die from the tips towards the centre.
Epicormic growth:	shoots growing from a woody stem or branch.
Heartwood:	central wood within a stem.
Included bark:	bark lodged in the union between a branch and parent stem, in the crotch between two branches, or between the bases of co-dominant stems, indicating potential weak attachment.
Phototropic:	stem or branch whose growth is influenced by light; growing towards light.
Pollard:	a tree which has been cut so as to encourage the formation of numerous branches arising from the same height on the main stem and principal branches.
Stem:	principal above ground structural component of a tree that supports the branches.
Vitality:	overall measure of physiological and biomechanical processes, in which high vitality equates with near optimal function and low vitality equates with sub-optimal function.
Windthrow:	tree failure due to uprooting caused by wind.

