

Visual Tree Assessment - VTA (Tree Survey)

Huffwood Trading Estate,
Partridge Green,
Horsham,
RH13 8AU

For:
Pepita Investments Ltd,
Unit 5 Harwood Business Centre,
Littlehampton,
BN17 7AU

Client: Pepita Investments Ltd,
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Littlehampton,
BN17 7AU

Survey / Tree Location: Huffwood Trading Estate,
Partridge Green,
Horsham,
RH13 8AU

Survey Reference: 16032026

Survey Inspection date: 16th March 2026

Survey Inspector: Alfred Harmsworth *PTI, QTRA*

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INTRODUCTION

1 Instruction

- 1.1 This advice has been prepared by Golden Crown on behalf of; Pepita Investments Ltd
- 1.2 I have been instructed to carry continue the cyclical Arboricultural Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) at: Huffwood Trading Estate, on the current condition of all amenity trees situated within the subject estate site boundaries.
- 1.3 Further instruction and purpose are to address 'Duty of Care' requirements, under the 'Occupiers Liability Act 1957'.
- 1.4 Priority is to inform the client on the best course of action to minimise risk of harm and to assist with the instruction of recommended remedial works, and to generally consider the preservation of trees in the interest amenity.

2 Qualifications & Experience

- 2.1 The author Alfred Harmsworth holds a Lantra PTI, QTRA, combined with practical tree climbing & pruning qualifications dating back some 10+ years.
- 2.2 Alfred has conducted tree inspections for various clients, including local planning authorities, large housing associations, schools, major institutions, small businesses, and private landowners. He excels in helping clients develop and implement robust tree management strategies.

3 Scope of the report & objectives

- 3.1 To take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of people and property within the tree/s target areas (falling distance), whereby complying with the owners 'Duty of Care' requirements for responsible Landowners under the statutory Occupiers Liability Act 1957.
- 3.2 To maintain, and where possible, enhance the treescape of: Huffwood Trading Estate, in accordance with good arboriculture practice, to the benefit of all stakeholders and the wider environment.

4 Site Visit

- 4.1 The Survey was carried out on 16th March 2026. The weather conditions were clear cold and cloudy at the time of inspection.

5 Methodology

- 5.1 All tree inspections are undertaken using the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) methodology. **References;** (Mattheck & Breloer; *The body language of trees – DETR Research for amenity trees No.4.*) In addition, the principles forwarded by David Lonsdale (*Principles of tree hazard assessment and management – research for amenity trees No. 7.*) (Diagnosis of ill health in trees research for amenity trees No.2.) By R.G Strouts & T.G Winter. British Standards Institution (2010) BS 3998: *Tree works – recommendations*. Schwarze, F.W.M.R, Engels, J., and Mattheck, C. 2000. *Fungal strategies of wood decay in trees*. Springer, Berlin. The 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*. Forestry Commission, Edinburgh.
- 5.2 The VTA method takes into consideration (but is not limited to) the presence of wood decay fungi, tree biomechanics, loading, wind exposure, management history and current understanding of the species, together with its response to structural impairment. From this information, an assessment is made on the likelihood of part/s most likely to fail and reasonable recommendations are made, on the mitigation of actual and foreseeable risk.
- 5.3 The VTA method seeks a systematic and defensible approach to identifying a foreseeable risk of failure, so that (where a significant defect exists) an informed decision can be made within an appropriate time frame. In this regard, factors such as target occupancy and financial resources for continuation of amenity are considered pragmatically. Tree heights are estimates only. All inspections are carried out at ground level with the aid of binoculars, a 'Thor' acoustic hammer', metal probe, 30m measuring tape, a rounded down diameter tape (DBH tape), compass and digital camera. The data collected of trees subject in this survey, are recorded on the corresponding Tree Location/s Plan and Tree Survey Schedule - *Please see Appendix A, B & C.*

6 Limitations of use

- 6.1 The content and format of the report are for the exclusive use of Golden Crown, the author Alfred Harmsworth and the intended recipient; Pepita. It may not be, sold lent hired out or divulged to any third party, nor directly involved in this subject matter without the written permission of Golden Crown
- 6.2 No sophisticated decay detection equipment was used. No excavation to reveal root condition was undertaken. No soil or tree tissue samples were undertaken. As a result, only defects visible from the inspection methods will be recorded. Where an internal or more detailed inspection is necessary, then such recommendations will be made.
- 6.3 The Author does not hold formal qualifications in either legal or structural engineering matters. Whilst it is normal to make comment on such matters from an arboriculture perspective, ***the appropriate professional advice should be sought, to clarify or confirm and comment in respect of legal or structural engineering issues.***
- 6.4 Trees are living organisms and any assessment of the biological and mechanical condition is only correct on the date of assessment. Every effort is made to give the maximum longevity to our recommendations. However, a tree with internal faults will often display associated external evidence, these would be noted in a visual tree inspection or apparent on the day of inspection. However, such signs are not apparent at all times of the year, for example, pests, disease & fungal pathogens/fruitlet bodies, leaf sizes and condition. The following findings and recommendations have been drawn from the evidence present on the day of inspection. The report is valid for 12 months notwithstanding change of site conditions, extreme weather events or other overriding environmental changes.

7 Duty of care

- 7.1 The person/s responsible for a tree has a duty to take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions that can be reasonably foreseen, and likely to cause harm. The law requires those responsible, to take reasonable care to identify possible causes of foreseeable danger and take appropriate steps to remove them, as far as reasonably possible.
- 7.2 Occupiers Liability Act 1957 - This Act deals with the relationship between an occupier of a property and a visitor to that property. It imposes the duty on the occupier to take such care as is reasonable to ensure that the visitor will be reasonably safe.
- 7.3 This duty includes reducing as far as is reasonably possible, the risk to visitors or even passers by being harmed by trees.

8 Planning Constraints

- 8.1 Having undertaken search, I can confirm that Huffwood Trading Estate is subject to Tree Preservation. Screen shot of the TPO plan, taken from the council interactive map is shown below.



9 Observations & Recommendations

9.1 Informative and future considerations:

In assessing the site, I will consider both the overall condition and the specific situation of the trees.

I noted works for trees in a poor condition, major deadwood in high risk areas and low hanging branches effecting vehicles.

These are H&S concerns and the main issues I was looking for when surveying the site.

T1 has extensive *Inonotus dryadeus* fungus around the entire stem, significantly weakening it. Given its location near seating and buildings, removal is recommended.

T2 shows basal cavity and previous reduction, along with one *Inonotus dryadeus* fungus. Removal is not considered necessary at this stage, but it should be reduced back to previous points to lower wind load and improve safety.

T5 and T6 both have notable deadwood and are located near seating areas and access points. Deadwood over 50mm should be removed.

T9 is the largest tree within the group and is the subject of neighbour complaints. However, size alone does not indicate risk, and there are no clear arboricultural reasons to carry out reduction works at this time. Although the tree is in contact with the fence, this appears to be historic and not a current concern. The only recommended action is to sever the ivy to allow better inspection and ongoing monitoring of the base.

T10 is covered in ivy, which should be severed to allow for proper inspection of the trees.

T11 is in poor condition, with significant dieback, deadwood, bark wounds, and a lean towards the building. Recommended works include removal of deadwood, reduction of overhanging limbs by approximately two metres, and ongoing monitoring of its condition.

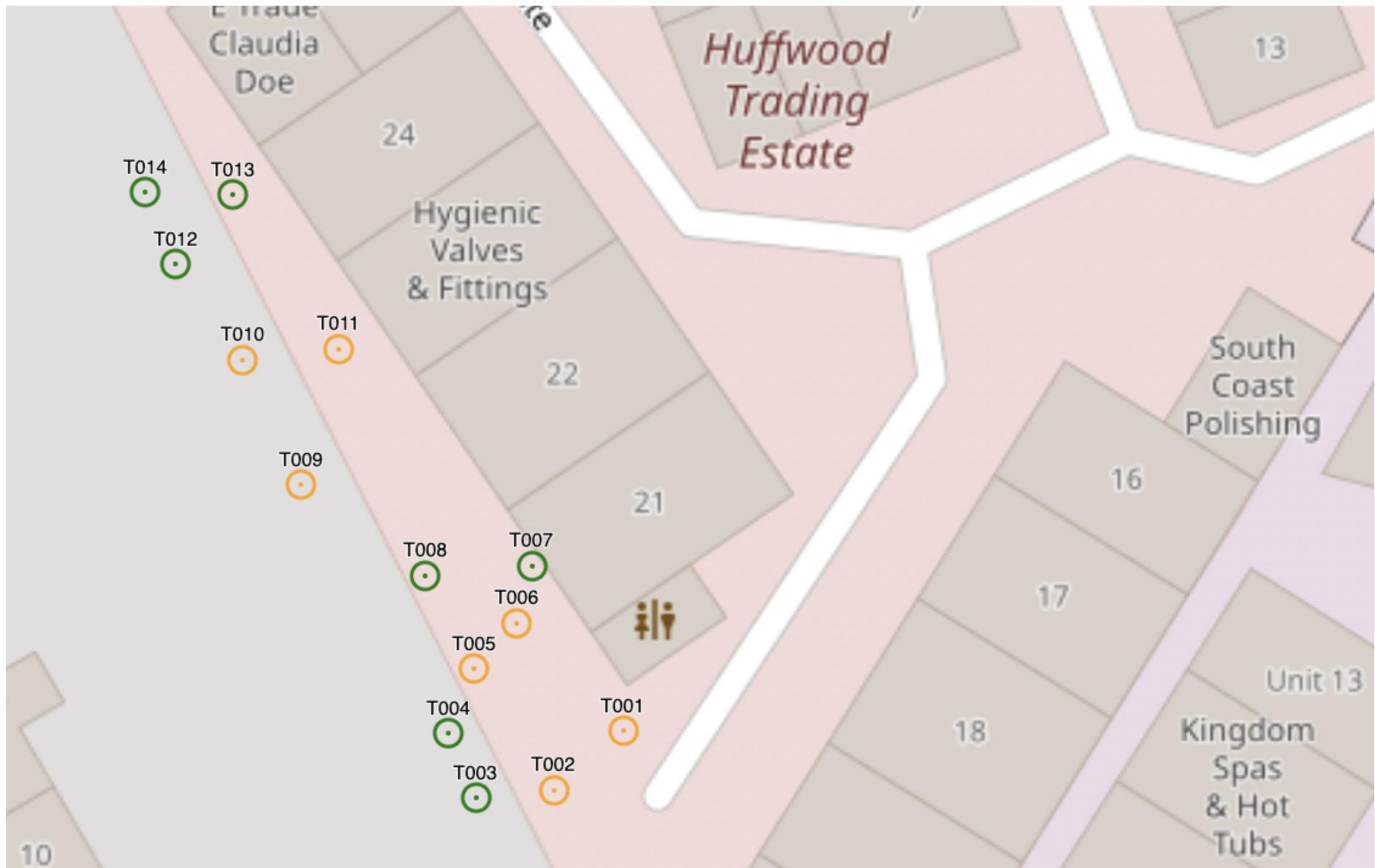
All other trees were assessed and do not currently require works for health and safety reasons. Any concerns regarding overhang from neighbouring properties would be a third-party matter and not the responsibility of the tree owner unless related to safety.

I was also informed about branches falling from a large tree into the garden at 8 Meyers Wood. So I did look at this, though I couldn't find any evidence there was anything wrong with the tree to suggest any works.

9.2 All observations, data and measurements taken on the date of the survey have been recorded within the Tree Survey Schedule and the position of trees shown within the Tree Locations Plan. *Please see Appendix A, B & C*

9.3	Tree works recommendations are also prescribed within the Tree survey schedule, including the maximum period from the survey date, to when re-inspection should be undertaken. <i>Please see Appendix A, B & C.</i>
9.4	Any tree works undertaken should be carried out as soon as prescribed within the Tree Survey Schedule. Any tree work undertaken should be in accordance with 'British Standard 3998 Tree Work – Recommendations'.

This concludes my findings, advice and recommendations.
Alfred Harmsworth



Overlay tree position is correct however map display shows boundary line further in.

APPENDIX B - Tree Survey Key

Height & Trunk diameter (DBH)

- Estimated total height in meters from ground level. DBH (Diameter at Breast Height). Stem diameter measured at a height of 1.5 metres (UK) or the nearest measurable point.

Age class.

- Y (young) – newly planted or young sapling/tree usually under 15 yrs. old.
- EM/SM (early mature) – tree within first 1/3rd of normal life expectancy.
- SM (semi mature) – tree usually reaching full maturity.
- M (mature) – tree in final 2/3rd of normal life expectancy.
- OM (over mature) – tree reaching the end of or exceeding normal life expectancy.
- V (veteran) – tree reaching, or of veteran status.

Physiological condition - (referring to the tree/s biological functional system).

- Good – fully functioning biological system, showing average or above average vitality for a species of its type and age.
- Fair - fully functioning biological system showing below average vitality for the species of its type and age.
- Poor – a biological system of significantly reduced vitality for a species of its type and age.
- Dead – a dead tree.

Structural condition - (referring to the trees structural integrity).

- Good – tree free from significant visual defects.
- Fair – tree with significant visual defects, remedial by intervention.
- Poor – tree with significant defects requiring either substantial works or removal.
- Hazardous – Tree in need of immediate removal or attention, due to potential harm being caused and or safety concerns.

Observations & Recommendations (Works).

- Observations of all kinds related to the subject tree.
- Recommended tree work prescription to subject tree/s.

Work priority - The maximum period from the survey date, to when the work should be carried out.

- Urgent or Critical.
- Within 1, 3, 6 Months, or 1 & 2 years.
- By next inspection.
- N/A = Not applicable.
- NWR = No works required.

Re-inspection frequency.

- The maximum period from the survey date, to when the re-inspection should be undertaken. A date to when next inspection should be undertaken is shown.

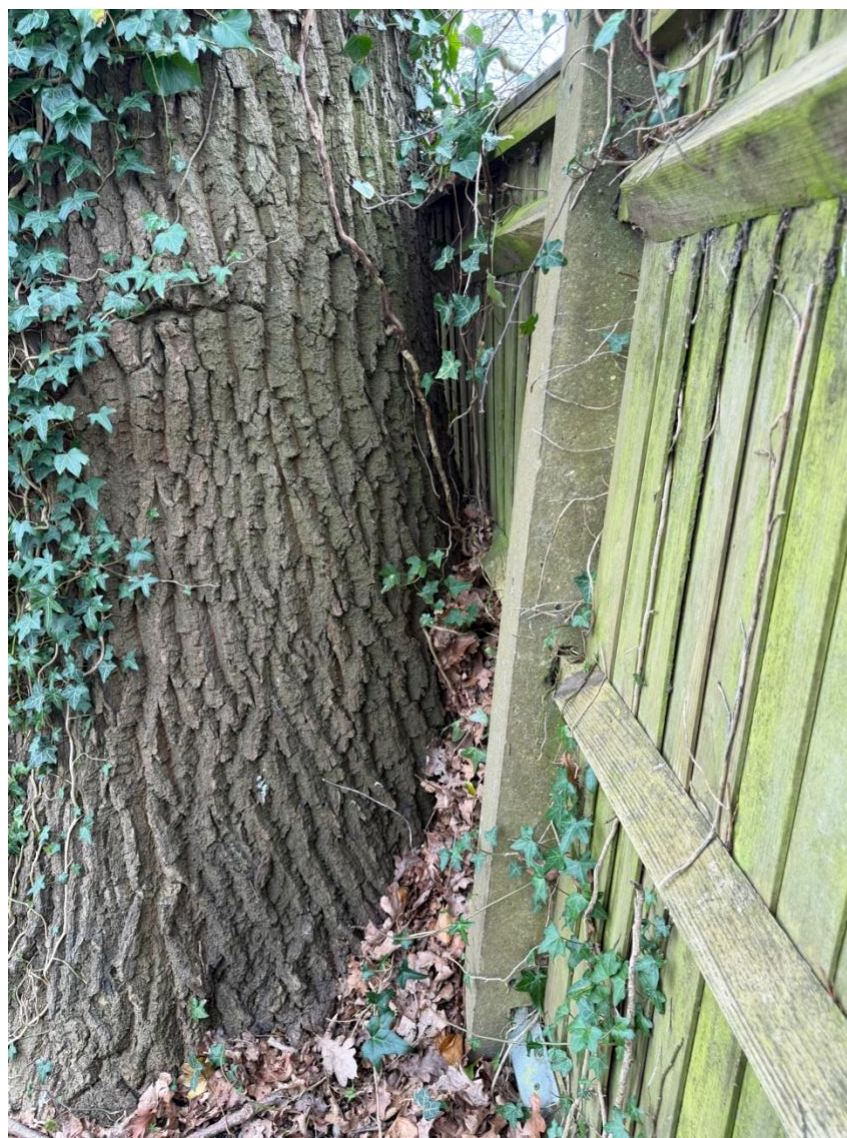
Ref.	Species	Targets	Measurements	Recommendation	Work Timescale	Budget £
T001	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park.	Height (m): 16 Crown Radius (m): 6 DBH (mm): 600 Life Stage: Mature	Fell in sections to ground level	16-Sep-2026 (Within 6 Months)	████
T002	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 18 Crown Radius (m): 8 DBH (mm): 1100 Life Stage: Mature	Reduce crown to previous reduction points and shape	16-Sep-2026 (Within 6 Months)	████
T005	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 14 Crown Radius (m): 4 DBH (mm): 375 Life Stage: Mature	Remove dead wood over 50mm in diameter	16-Sep-2026 (Within 6 Months)	████

T006	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 14 Crown Radius (m): 5 DBH (mm): 475 Life Stage: Mature	Remove dead wood over 50mm in diameter	16-Sep-2026 (Within 6 Months)	
T009	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 23 Crown Radius (m): 9 DBH (mm): 1250 Life Stage: Mature	Sever Ivy by up to 1.5m from ground level	16-Sep-2026 (Within 6 Months)	
T010	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 19 Crown Radius (m): 8 DBH (mm): 675 Life Stage: Mature	Sever Ivy by up to 1.5m from ground level	16-Sep-2026 (Within 6 Months)	
T011	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 15 Crown Radius (m): 8 DBH (mm): 550 Life Stage: Mature	Remove dead wood over 50mm in diameter Reduce overhang towards the building by 2m due to main limbs having dead sections. Sever Ivy by up to 1.5m from ground level Monitor going forward	16-Sep-2026 (Within 6 Months)	
T003	Lime (<i>Tilia sp.</i>)	Target # - garden. Target # - fence.	Height (m): 6 Crown Radius (m): 3 DBH (mm): 275 Life Stage: Mature	No action required.	No Action	
T004	Maple (<i>Acer sp.</i>)	Target # - garden. Target # - fence.	Height (m): 13 Crown Radius (m): 7 DBH (mm): 450 Life Stage: Mature	No action required.	No Action	

T007	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 16 Crown Radius (m): 8 DBH (mm): 550 Life Stage: Mature	No action required.	No Action	
T008	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 16 Crown Radius (m): 6 DBH (mm): 450 Life Stage: Mature	No action required.	No Action	
T012	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 16 Crown Radius (m): 7 DBH (mm): 575 Life Stage: Mature	No action required.	No Action	
T013	Oak (<i>Quercus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 15 Crown Radius (m): 9 DBH (mm): 800 Life Stage: Mature	No action required.	No Action	
T014	Ash (<i>Fraxinus sp.</i>)	Target # - building Target # - car park. Target # - garden.	Height (m): 6 Crown Radius (m): 5 DBH (mm): 250 Life Stage: Early Mature	No action required.	No Action	







All information supplied to Alfred Harmsworth – Golden Crown, the Client or on behalf of the Client is assumed accurate, unless otherwise informed. This advice is limited to the observations made on the date of the inspection as detailed herein and any deletion, editing or alteration will result in the advice being null & void, in its entirety. This advice in its entirety may be deemed null and void if any remedial works are undertaken on any area of the site, on or after the date of this survey.

The author Alfred Harmsworth for any misuse, misinterpretation or misinterpretations of this advice assumes no liability. This advice is not valid in adverse or unpredictable weather conditions or for any failure due to 'force majeure' or unpredictable events. No responsibility is assumed either by the author of this advice for any legal matters that may arise as a consequence. The Author nor Treescapes will be required to attend Court or give Testimony as part of this agreement, unless otherwise agreed in writing. The responsibility for any works undertaken on the basis of recommendations of this advice does not form part of this agreement.

It would be prudent to note, and I would strongly advise, that only a qualified Structural Engineer can advise appropriately with matters such as Subsidence or Heave, where trees are implicated. The report does not take into account the effect that removal or pruning of any tree may have on the surrounding built structures or land formation.