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T1 – Oak – Quercus robur

Location – Pulborough Recreation Ground

T1 is a mature and established Oak, the tree is situated on the northern edge of Pulborough recreation ground, south of Collingwood which is a drive directly off New Place Road.

T1 is one of the most mature trees within the recreational ground and frames the recreational field. It can be seen from surrounding properties of the recreational ground and it is an integral part of the landscape. Its size and wide spread crown shows a good example of an established parkland tree.

Pulborough recreation ground and neighbouring Pocket Park wood is bi-annually surveyed. Honey fungus has become a reoccurring issue with trees in and around the Recreation ground and Woodland with previous neighbouring trees being removed due to the disease.

T1 has previously been noted to have Honey fungus and has shown to be resisting the effects of the disease which commonly affects the root system. More mature trees tend to fair the best with the disease due to more established root systems and better reserve glucose stores to combat the effects. This year the crown started with a healthy and thick amount of leaf coverage apart from the southern aspect of the crown. One leader from the main crown break has considerably less leaf coverage. Averaging 50% less than the rest of the crown. This decline within the crown could suggest root decay from the Honey Fungus.

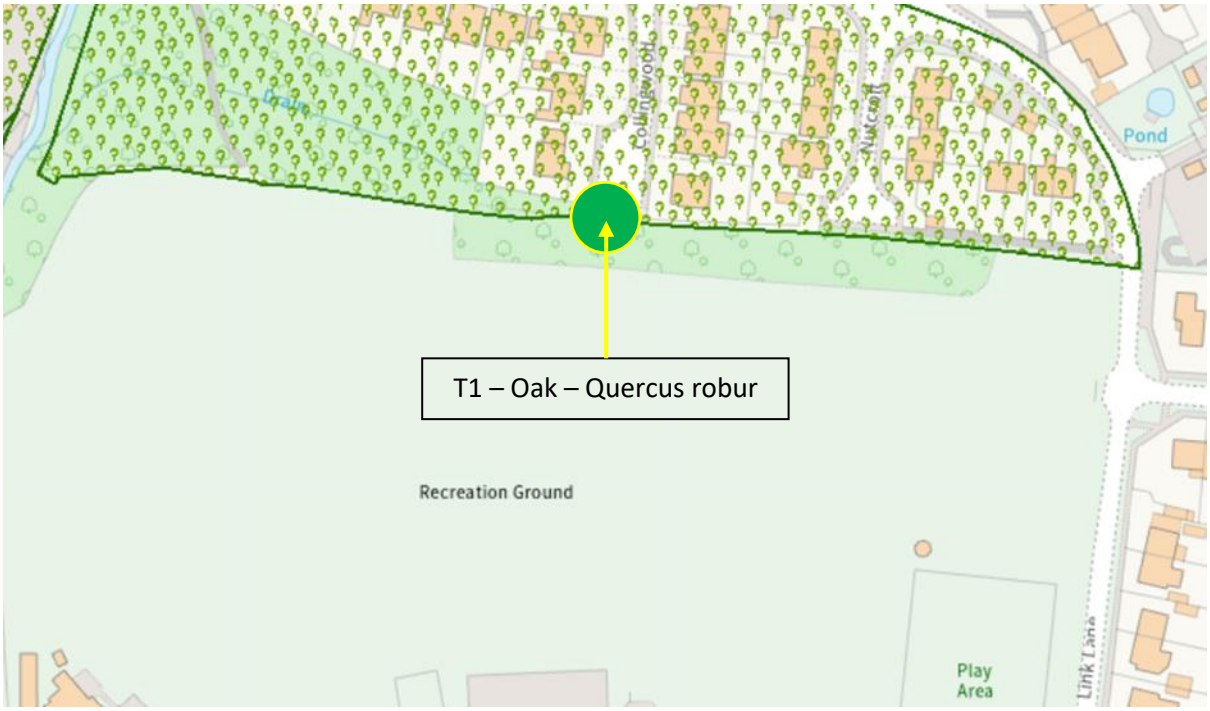
T1 being situated on the edge of the recreation field and the southern aspect of Collingwood has pedestrian traffic to the houses in Collingwood and public using the recreation field. Cars from Collingwood park underneath the crown and the crown spreads over into 10 Collingwood. If the tree were to completely fail, 10 Collingwood is within striking distance.

Due to T1's value on the landscape, the decision on what course of action to be taken has been ongoing for quite sometime. Retaining the tree have been paramount. Including reducing the crown to reduce sail effect were considered, aiming to retain the tree for as long as possible even if reducing the tree did decrease impact on the landscape. Ultimately, due to the trees condition and the presence of Honey Fungus it has been a growing concern to Pulborough Parish Council and residents of Collingwood on the structural integrity of the tree. Although reducing the crown will retain the tree for a longer period of time, it does not completely relieve the risk of the root degradation from the disease.

With T1 being in an area which holds a safety risk in the event of failure and the Parish being conscious of the Occupiers Liability Act 1957. The option of preventing risk and upholding safety to the public has been held in the upmost regard. Removing the tree would remove risk to public and properties.

Removing the tree would obviously be at the detriment to landscape. Therefore replanting with a mature standard tree(s) would be essential. Considered species for replanting are based on trees that are rarely affected and sometimes affected by Honey fungus. Species that would suit the parkland environment with large exposure to sun and wind whilst also dealing well with the sandy, well draining soil. It would also be recommended to look at non native trees for longevity in an increasingly warming climate with milder winter conditions.

Recommended options include – Ginko, Dutch Elm resistant Elm, Catalpa (Indian Bean Tree), Zelkova (Water Elm), Morus (Mulberry), Tilia (Lime), Pinus (Pine), Carpinus (Hornbeam)



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