



Tree Condition Assessment



Oak

1 Marsh Gardens, Hedge End

Subject: **Oak**

Location: **1 Marsh Gardens, Hedge End, Hampshire, SO30 2XN**

Client: **Christine Stanton**

Survey Date: **27th May 2026**

Surveyor: **Kevin Cloud**

Report reference number: **TCA-KC/1MARSH/001**

Report date: **June 2026**



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1. Instructions

- 1.1 Technical Arboriculture Limited was instructed by Christine Stanton, 1 Marsh Gardens, Hedge End, Hampshire, SO30 2XN to undertake a ground based tree condition assessment of a single mature Oak within land at 1 Marsh Gardens, Hedge End, Hampshire, SO30 2XN.

2. Purpose of report

- 2.1 The purpose of a tree condition assessment is to determine whether a tree poses an unreasonable risk to people or property. Trees are not usually hazardous simply because of their size but failure may occur as a result of recognisable hazardous features. This report provides opinion on the condition of the tree and makes recommendations aimed at ensuring risk of failure is as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP¹) with a timescale for action and review.

3. Tree survey method

- 3.1 The industry standard tree inspection procedure is known as Visual Tree Assessment (VTA)² and involves examining a tree from ground level to detect possible weaknesses. The principles of VTA are discussed in *Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management* and have been incorporated into *Hazards from Trees - A General Guide*³. The National Tree Safety Group has issued guidance on tree management and inspections in *Common sense risk management of trees*⁴. These texts have guided the procedure adopted.
- 3.2 The tree was assessed from ground level using binoculars where required. If appropriate, a nylon sounding mallet and a metal probe were used to assess the possible presence of internal decay. Where photographs would improve the client's understanding of a particular tree defect, these are included.

4. Limitations

- 4.1 This assessment concerns arboricultural aspects only. No inspection has been made of the soil structure. No digging or other detailed investigation was carried out. Identification of fungi is made on a visual basis only. No account has been taken of the effects of the tree or its removal directly or indirectly on any building(s) or structure(s) relating to the possibility of subsidence or heave.
- 4.2 A tree is a dynamic self-optimising organism that grows in reaction and stimulus to its immediate surroundings and influence of wider environmental conditions. Consequently, tree health and condition will inevitably change

¹ Further details under Risk Assessment section below.

² 1994 Mattheck and Breloer (DETR), TSO

³ <https://cdn.forestresearch.gov.uk/2000/01/fcpg13.pdf>

⁴ <https://cdn.forestresearch.gov.uk/2011/12/fcms024.pdf>

over time therefore any comments made in this report can only be considered valid for three years unless otherwise stated under the report "review period".

- 4.3 This report does not take into account any effects of extreme climate and weather incidences, vandalism, changes in the natural and/or built environment around the tree after the date of this report, nor any damage whether physical, chemical or otherwise

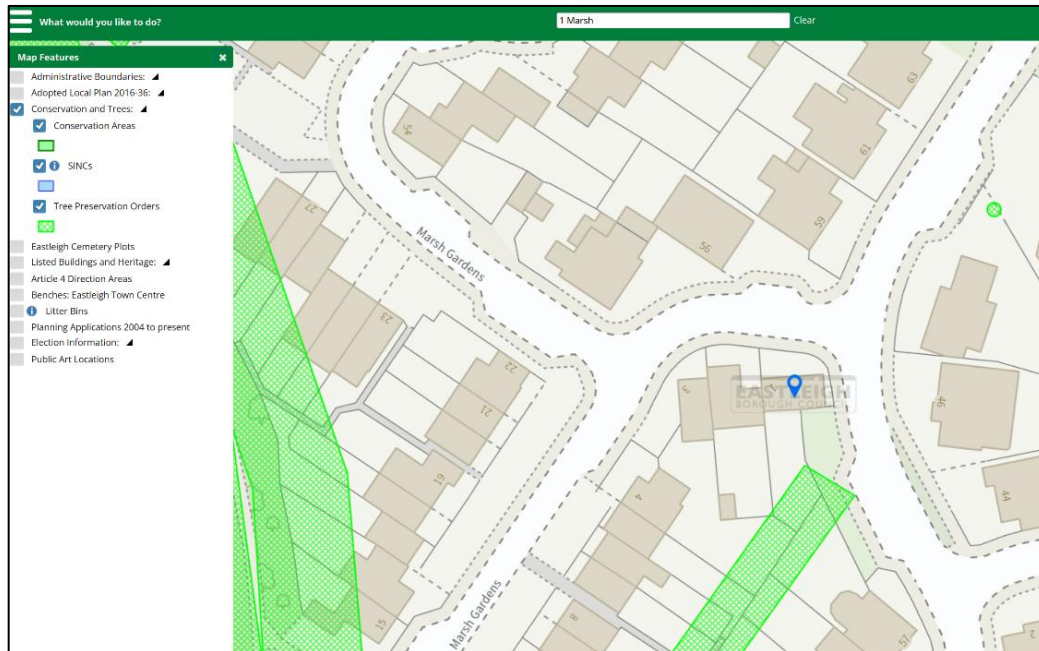
5. Legal constraints

- 5.1 The *Town & Country Planning Act (Tree Preservation)(England) Regulations 2012* and the *Town & Country Planning Act 1990* (as amended) provides legislative protection for trees within England.
- 5.2 A Tree Preservation Order prohibits the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage and wilful destruction of trees without the Local Planning Authority's consent. A formal application must be made before undertaking non-exempt works to protected trees. Before carrying out exempt works, such as the removal of dead trees or the removal of dead branches, the Local Planning Authority must still be given 5 days written notice for trees subject to a TPO. For trees that present an urgent and serious safety risk, you must give the LPA written notice as soon as practicable after the work becomes necessary. Trees growing in Conservation Areas are afforded a similar level of protection.
- 5.3 As of the date of this report, I have checked with the local planning authority for the presence of Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas that may be relevant and confirm that, at the time of writing, the tree identified in this report is subject of a Tree Preservation Order (see figure one below). The client should therefore only commence arboricultural work recommended by this report following the issue of formal consent from the local planning authority – notwithstanding certain statutory exemptions.
- 5.4 In the UK, a felling licence is required under the *Forestry Act (1967)*, for any tree removals, although some exemptions do apply such as trees standing or growing in an orchard, garden, churchyard or public open space⁵.
- 5.5 A tree may contain wildlife such as bats and nesting birds which are protected by law (*Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*). These place a duty upon landowners to ensure that best practice is followed, or an appropriate license issued, prior to any work commencing which may affect bats, reptiles or dormice. These could impose constraints on the use and timing of access to the site in

⁵ See [Tree felling Getting permission - updated 2023](#)

addition to any of the tree matters considered in this report. These issues are not the subject of this report.

Figure 1. Tree Preservation Order detail from local planning authority website.



6. Survey results

- 6.1 The tree was assessed on 27th May 2026 using the VTA method.
- 6.2 The tree stands in an area bordered by the client's dwelling to the north; pedestrian footway and road of Stanier Way to the east; 3rd party gardens and dwellings to the south and to the west. The land is generally level. The tree is exposed to prevailing winds with other neighbourhood trees providing some companion shelter. The predominant use of the land is private domestic garden.

Figure 2. Google Earth aerial image of site with Oak circled.



- 6.3 Detailed information on the tree is provided at appendix one with basic data shown in figure three below. Measurements are in millimetres and metres as indicated and taken using a laser. Stem diameter was recorded at 1.5m above ground level of the tree.

Figure 3. Basic tree data.

Tree No	Height (m)	Stem Diameter (mm)	Crown Spread (m)	Crown density (%)	Physiological condition	Structural Condition
T001	22	980	13N 12E 12S 12W	51-75	Fair	Fair

- 6.4 Overall the tree appears to be in reasonable health. However the tree has suffered from a recent, unexpected limb shedding without reasonable cause (i.e.. not occurring during extreme weather, no obvious decay, etc). I have been provided initial images by the client which I include as photographs one and two at figure four below. I also include photographs taken during my survey of the remnant branch to indicate size of part.
- 6.5 In addition to the above, the tree has a significant lateral wound and area of exposed heartwood on the S side of the stem (photograph six below). At the time of the survey the tree crown showed obvious gaps and areas of decline.
- 6.6 The tree dominates the garden space and overhangs 3rd party gardens by some extent also.

Figure 4. Photographs of noteworthy aspects of the tree.

Photograph one (below) - client photo of failed limb



Photograph two (above) - client photo of failure point on tree



Photograph three (below) - photo of failure point at time of survey.



Photograph four (above) - remnant end of failed limb

Photograph five (below) - remnant end with tape to indicate size.



Photograph six (above) - showing cavity and exposed heartwood.

Photograph seven (below) showing tree crown.



7. Opinion

- 7.1 Whilst the tree appears to be in reasonable health, the unexpected loss of a sizeable limb, failing onto high value targets⁶ (client and 3rd party gardens) cannot be ignored.
- 7.2 At the time of my survey I could not find anything that would have contributed significantly to the failure of the limb so it is possible that it is "*summer branch drop*". This is often described as the shedding of large branches in summer, often in calm conditions with branches growing close to the horizontal with high end loading being relatively susceptible. The cause or causes of summer branch drop are poorly understood, and it is completely unpredictable.
- 7.3 I am also drawn to the general condition of the crown as an indicator of the general situation with the tree.
- 7.4 Given the above I recommend tree works below.

8. Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The Tolerability of Risk Framework (ToR) is an internationally recognised approach to making risk management decisions. 'Tolerability' does not mean 'acceptability'. It refers to a willingness to live with a risk so as to secure certain benefits and in the confidence that it is being properly controlled. ToR identifies Broadly Acceptable and Unacceptable levels of risk. Between these two levels of risk is a region where the risk is Tolerable if it is 'As Low As Reasonably Practicable' (ALARP).
- 8.2 The Health and safety Executive (HSE) states that at the core of ALARP "*is the concept of "reasonably practicable"; this involves weighing a risk against the trouble, time and money needed to control it*".
- 8.3 Public safety is not the only concern when deciding how to manage trees. Other broader concerns, such as ecological, landscape and aesthetic values, should also be taken into account⁷.
- 8.4 The level of risk in respect of the Oak is considered to be **UNACCEPTABLE** at the present time as there is a residual risk of failure of limbs.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 I have assessed the condition of a Oak on my client's land and, having regard to the health, vitality and condition of the tree, its location and the species, I

⁶ An element of tree risk: targets being the subject of injury or damage within range of a hazard.

⁷ NTSG Common Sense Risk Management of Trees, 2011, page 27

consider the tree presents a **UNACCEPTABLE** (not ALARP) level of risk in respect of branch failure.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 I recommend the height and spread of the tree be reduced as a means to reduce sail area. All deadwood should be removed at the same time to allow future surveys to monitor crown health.
- 10.2 I recommend that future surveys are carried out to monitor the response to pruning and to determine feasibility and extent of possible future reductions to further limit the size of the tree, often called retrenchment pruning⁸. It would be prudent to resurvey the tree in two years.

11. Bibliography

- 11.1 This arboricultural report is based on the following primary technical references:
 - British Standards Institute, 2010. *BS3998:2010 Tree work – Recommendations*. British Standards Institute, London.
 - Lonsdale, D. 1999. *Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management*. The Stationery Office, London.
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 - Matheny, N. P. and Clark, J.R. *A photographic guide to the evaluation of hazard trees in urban areas*. 2nd Edition. International Society of Arboriculture.
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 - Schwarze, F.W.M.R., Engels, J. and Mattheck, C. *Fungal strategies of wood decay in trees*. Springer, Berlin.
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 - Watson, G. and Green, T. 2011. *Fungi on trees. An arborist's field guide*. The Arboricultural Association, Cheltenham.
 - Wilson. P. 2013. *A-Z of tree terms. A companion to British arboriculture*. Ethelberga House, Kent.

⁸ Crown reduction in late-mature and senescent trees to anticipate or keep pace with decline in the crown.

Appendix One - Tree Survey Schedule

Tree Number (No) Tag No

Each tree has been allocated a unique number. Where specifically instructed small metal tags have been applied to each tree surveyed.

Common Name

The common name of tree species.

Height (Hgt)

Stated in metres above ground level at point of stem contacting ground.

Diameter

Stem diameter (in millimetres) measured at approximately 1.5 metres above ground level.

Branch spread

Overall spread of crown expressed in metres at the four cardinal points (NESW)

Crown density

An assessment of the density of live crown as a useful indicator of crown health. Stated as a bracket percentage of remaining live crown as follows:

76-100%
51-75%
26-50%
0-25%

Unless otherwise stated:

All measurements are in metres (m) or millimetres (mm).
All heights are stated above ground level (AGL) of tree stem.
All distances are from base of tree.
Cardinal points are abbreviated e.g. SW = South West

Age

An assessment of age expressed as fifths of maximum age. Thus broadly;

1/5 = Young,
2/5 = Early mature
3/5 = Mature
4/5 = Over mature
5/5 = Veteran.

Physiological Condition

An assessment of a tree's overall physiological condition is recorded as:

Good
Fair
Poor
Dead

Structural Condition

An assessment of a tree's overall structural condition is recorded as:

Good
Fair
Poor

Rem Con

Estimated remaining contribution in years.

Target

Appraisal of the key features within falling distance of the tree or parts of it.

Is Risk ALARP? Yes or No

Is the risk **As Low As Reasonably Practicable**? If the answer to this is NO then remedial work should be carried out to reduce the risk to the lowest practicable level.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) states that at the core of ALARP "is the concept of "reasonably practicable"; this involves weighing a risk against the trouble, time and money needed to control it".

Timescale for action

Suggested timescale for carrying out remedial action.

Review Period

Suggested timescale for carrying out repeat survey or review of tree(s).

Condition comments

Where possible the whole of the tree has been surveyed and inspected as per the client's brief. If any sections have been omitted for any reason this will be stated.

Unless otherwise stated all measurements in this section will be approximate. Unless stated otherwise, heights provided in relation to any noted aspects will be above ground level (AGL) at base of tree. Cardinal points are abbreviated to N, S E and W.

Recommendations

Suggested remedial action

Tree Survey Schedule

Tree No	Condition Comments
	<u>Rootzone</u>
Tag No	To the N: bare ground to base, lawn 1.6m to patio 12m and dwelling 15.5m. To the E: bare ground to boundary fence 0.5m, 3rd party garden beyond to pedestrian footway and road beyond. To the S: bare ground to boundary fence 0.5m, 3rd party gardens beyond. To the W: bare ground to garden storage then boundary fence 3.5m, 3rd party gardens beyond. No signs of fungal fruiting bodies associated with the species.
T001	
Common name	<u>Buttress/lower stem</u> Lateral wound on S side from 200mm to 1100mm by 150mm at widest. Exposed heartwood with limited internal degradation. Good wound wood ⁹ response in both sides. No other reason to probe ¹⁰ . Sounding with a mallet ¹¹ indicates no decay or degradation.
Oak	<u>Stem</u> Historic prune wounds to 300mm diameter with good wound wood occlusion to full extent of stem. <u>Crown and Branches</u> Significant branch over-extension to client and 3rd Party gardens. Crown dieback on branch ends with minor (<25mm dia.), moderate (25-100mm dia.) and major (>100mm dia.) deadwood throughout crown. Recent failure of 200mm dia. living branch from attachment at 5m on S side. Some minor degradation visible on top of remnant branch closest to attachment point otherwise no obvious reason for failure. Notable degradation on tops of lower limbs. <u>Foliage</u> Density: abnormal. Colour: Normal.

Hgt	Dia	Branch spread	Crown density
m	mm	m	
22	980	N:13 E:12 S:12 W:12	51% - 75%.
Age	Phys Cond	Struct Cond	Rem Con
3/5	Fair	Fair	20+

Target	Is Risk ALARP?	Time Scale	Review period
Dwelling. Garden. Outbuilding Road. Pedestrian footway. Parking.	No	3 Mths	2 Years

Management Recommendations

Crown reduce by 3-4m in all directions.
Reduce height by 4m.
No greater than 75mm prune wound diameter.
Remove deadwood.
Monitor recovery of crown.

⁹ In woody stems, the new wood developing in response to a wound, often resulting in a swelling (as round a pruning wound) which gradually occludes the wound.

¹⁰ To establish dimensions of any relevant cavaity.

¹¹ Plastic mallet used to give an acoustic return.



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