



Arbor-Eco Consultancy

VISUAL TREE ASSESSMENT REPORT (VTA)

At:

**STRAWBERRY HILL,
BURSLEDON,
HAMPSHIRE**

For:

MR G MORGAN-HARRIS

This report was compiled by
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This report is the responsibility of Arbor-Eco Consultancy
It should be noted that whilst every effort is made to meet the client's brief,
no site investigation can ensure complete assessment
or prediction of the natural environment.

Report Number: MB240212

February 2024

Executive Summary

The Monterey Pine tree (*Pinus radiata*) situated to the rear aspect of the property is infected with Dyer's Polypore (*Phaeolus schweinitzii*) within structural roots and the eastern base of the stem.

This tree should be felled due to the significance of the fungal infection and position in the landscape.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Brief

Arbor-Eco Consultancy were commissioned by Mr George Morgan-Harris to undertake a ground level Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) and assess the health and safety condition of an individual Monterey Pine tree (*Pinus radiata*) growing on land, at Strawberry Hill, Bursledon within the administrative boundary of Eastleigh Borough Council.

The purpose of the report was primarily to determine the condition and health and safety of the tree at this site to further inform management recommendations.

The indicative location of the tree surveyed can be identified utilising the enclosed map (courtesy of Ordnance Survey), Drawing Number MB240212-01 in Section 8.

1.2 Site Description

The Monterey Pine tree is located within the rear aspect of the property and directly adjacent to the rear aspect of a property called Brook House, accessed off Bridge Road, minor road. The site is accessed from Long Lane, minor road, which is situated towards the eastern fringes of the village of Bursledon.

The site is dominated by a residential building, hard surfacing, swimming pool and amenity grassland. The Monterey Pine tree is located adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the property. The tree is a prominent landscape feature that overhangs a further property.

The northern boundary of the site tapers to a point and abuts a further residential property called Pine Glen and Bowden House accessed off Long Lane, minor road. The southern boundary is delineated by a further two properties called Willowbank and Woodell House, access off Long Lane, minor road. The eastern boundary meets with properties Pine Glen and Brook House, both accessed off Bridge Road, minor road. The western boundary is demarcated by a public footpath, also accessed off Long Lane, minor road.

The survey area is centred at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SU 4873 1008. The topography of the site is such that the ground slopes from west to east and north to south.

2. ARBORICULTURAL SURVEY

2.1 Methodology

A tree survey conducted by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant will ensure that there will be an accountable process, available for scrutiny that would satisfy the courts that reasonable and practicable measures have been taken to reduce the risk of injury to person or property.

To determine the status of the tree, a full ground level visual tree assessment survey has been undertaken, assessing the species and status of the tree as directed by the client. This survey has been carried out in accordance with the guidance from the National Tree Safety Group – Common Sense Risk Management of Trees (2011).

The tree was visually assessed and a schedule prepared listing tree number, species, stem diameter at 1.5 m above ground level, tree height, crown spread (within a range), and age class. Any specific observations or recommendations with regard to management were also noted. All these observations and measurements are summarised in Table 4.1. The tree was given a unique number and cross-referenced within the report.

The emphasis of the report is predominantly that of tree management and preliminary recommendations for tree works as a result of a health and safety inspection. It identifies naturally occurring defects within the tree due to inhibited growth or naturally related vectors that have caused what would otherwise be a tree of good form and vitality as guided by current best practice.

The inspection was carried out with use of binoculars where necessary. No climbing inspection was conducted. No analysis of soil samples was undertaken and the condition of trees' root system was only investigated by way of a surface visual inspection, light excavation around the buttress and assessment of the trees' overall vitality. Acoustic resonance impact testing utilising a Thor 710 nylon hammer was used, in conjunction with a metal probe, to determine the presence, depth and extent of decay found at the surface of the bark.

2.2 Weather Conditions

The survey was completed on the 28th February 2024 by Marco Bartolini, Arboricultural Consultant. The weather conditions at the time of the survey are shown in Table 2.1.

Conditions	Result
Temperature (C)	9
Cloud Cover (%)	100
Precipitation (%)	48
Wind Speed (Beaufort)	F3

Table 2.1: Weather Conditions at Time of Survey

2.3 Data Collection

The tree was inspected from ground level and no other equipment has been used to determine the health and safety of the tree other than knowledge, experience and training. Measurements are recorded in accordance with National Housing Federation DBH Banding.

2.3.1 The tree stem circumference was measured at 1.5m above ground level and given the following range of diameter;

<150	less than 150mm
150-300	between these two measurements
300-450	between these two measurements
450-600	between these two measurements
600-1000	between these two measurements
1000+	greater than 1000mm

2.3.2 Crown spread was measured across the complete face of the crown and given incremental figures.

2.3.3 Works required to be carried out are weighted in monthly timescales.

2.3.4 Trees are 'aged' through periods of their anticipated life subject to location, soil structure and other external influences compared to that of an open grown tree in ideal conditions for that species;

Y: Young = tree within first third of average life expectancy

EM: Early Mature = tree within second third of average life expectancy

M: Mature = tree within final third of average life expectancy

OM: Over mature = tree beyond average life expectancy

V: Veteran status (in decline and a historically or culturally valuable tree)

D: Dead

2.4 Risk Zones

The Location of a tree should be categorised as High (Red), Medium (Orange), Low (Green) and be dependent on the accessibility to the general public and on-site frequency of use. If client has not provided risk zones maps specific to each site, then categorisation is based solely on the Arboriculturist/Surveyor's discretion from observations gained during the site visit only. Guidelines for this subject come from Common Sense Risk Management Of Trees - National Tree Safety Group (NTSG). Due consideration will be given to the principles set out below:

- Public impact - Numbers of public using site
- Site usage - Location of roads, footpaths, buildings
- Business Risk - Risk of damage to property

Risk Zone/Hazard Class	Work Priority	Time Limits (as detailed on survey schedule)	Details
HIGH Adjacent property including gardens, parks or schools, public roads and footpaths, car parks. Buildings, infrastructure or plant. Any internal access roads or footpaths leading to buildings or infrastructure used on a regular basis	High	Immediate/Urgent Within 1- 3 months Within 3-6 months	Covers trees likely to cause an immediate nuisance, imminent failure, hanging deadwood or major deadwood in a place of high frequency use or a public space. Additionally, infrastructure, public property or a public health is a consideration. Weighted in timescales appropriate for the risk and target.
MEDIUM Open Areas such as tree groups or grassland with limited usage	Medium	Within 6 months Within 12-18 months	Covers trees within target distance of High-Risk Zone likely to cause an inconvenience such as pruning to clear buildings or phone lines. Covers trees within target distance of Medium Risk Zone likely to cause injury or damage.
LOW Woodlands or areas where there is no access and would not require any work	Low	Within 2-7 Years	Covers trees within target distance of High or Med Risk Zones with regard to tree works that are necessary to be programmed to promote the future health and well-being of tree stock, such as re-reductions whereby higher categories aren't necessary.

Table 2.2: Risk Zone Table

Due to the location of the trees to a residential property, the following has been considered;

- Adjacent to public property; **HIGH-RISK** zone.

3. STATUTORY LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

3.1 Protected Trees

Examination of Eastleigh Borough Council (2024) interactive mapping system (<https://emaps.eastleigh.gov.uk/webmaps/>), accessed on 28th February 2024, indicated that at the time of the survey the Monterey Pine tree is the subject of EBC Tree Preservation Order 102-E.

The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012, Part 4 – Applications for Consent under Tree Preservation Orders states that an application for consent to the cutting down, topping, lopping or uprooting of any tree in respect of which an order is for the time being in force shall be made in writing to the authority on a form published by the Secretary of State for the purpose of proceedings under these Regulations.

Until such time as the application has been granted no works must be undertaken on the trees identified as being subject to TPOs that contravene the order. Works include pruning, topping, lopping, uprooting or wilfully damaging these trees. Any proposed pruning works will need to be fully specified and agreed within any planning application. If works are not included within the planning application, a separate TPO application will be required to be submitted to the Local Authority for permission to undertake any works (approximately an 8-week process).

Apart from [limited exceptions](#), permission must be sought from the local planning authority by submitting a standard application form. The form is available from the Local Authority [Planning Portal](#). It is important that the information on the form makes clear what the proposed work is and provides adequate information to support the case.

Further examination of Eastleigh Borough Council (2024) interactive mapping system (<https://emaps.eastleigh.gov.uk/webmaps/>), accessed on 28th February 2024, indicated that at the time of the survey the Monterey Pine tree is not situated within a Conservation Area.

3.2 Legislation

The tree health and safety audit has been carried out with consideration to the following guidelines and current legislation;

- *Occupiers' Liability Act 1957 & 1984*
- *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the associated ACoP (guidance is contained in HSG 65 Successful health and safety management and INDG 163 Five steps to risk assessment)*
- *HSE's "Reducing Risks Protecting People" 2001*
- *National Tree Safety Group - Common sense risk management of trees 2011*
- *The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) (decision –making framework, known as the Tolerability of Risk (ToR) framework)*
- *Section 41(1) of the Highways act 1980, a duty "to maintain the highways"*
- *Section 154 (2) of the Highways Act 1980*
- *National Planning Policy Framework, Trees and Forestry Commission, Crown or local authority land, churchyards, aerodromes and scheduled monuments, Government Planning Practice Guidance.*

3.3 Protected Species

Bats: A bat survey must be performed on the relevant roost potential prior to demolition. If bats are found to be present, a Natural England licence will be required prior to demolition. Bats and the places they use for shelter or protection (i.e. roosts) receive European protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended. They receive further legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981, as amended. This protection means that bats, and the places they use for

shelter or protection, are capable of being a material consideration in the planning process. As bats re-use the same roosts (breeding site or resting place) after periods of vacancy, legal opinion is that roosts are protected whether or not bats are present. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on public bodies to have regard for the conservation of biodiversity and maintains lists of species and habitats which are of principal importance for the purposes of conserving biodiversity in England and Wales. A number of bat species are listed on Section 41 (England) and Section 42 (Wales) of the NERC Act 2006.

Nesting Birds: The removal of relevant features must be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (this generally extends between March and August but is weather dependent). If this is not possible the area concerned should be checked immediately prior to removal by a suitably qualified ecologist. Nesting and nest building birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act WCA 1981 (as amended). Some species (listed in Schedule 1 of the WCA) are protected by special penalties.

3.4 Common Law

Where trees overhanging the property and in particular trees growing within third party land. It is the affected persons responsibility to manage the overhanging vegetation unless a safety issue arises.

The following relates to common laws regarding trees only;

Under common law, a person may cut back any branch (or root) from a neighbour's tree that overhangs or encroaches onto their property. In cutting back any overhanging branches (or encroaching roots) the following must be observed:

- The person must not trespass onto the land on which the trees are growing.
- Branches or roots must not be cut back beyond the boundary in anticipation of them overhanging.
- Any branches, fruit or roots that are removed must be carefully returned to the tree owner unless they agree otherwise.
- All work must be carried out carefully. For example, avoid damaging property or carrying out work that would leave the tree unsafe or dangerous to avoid any complaint from the tree owner.
- The person must not alter the height of trees or hedges on neighbouring land. While not required under common law, it would be courteous to notify the tree owner of your intentions to help allay any misunderstanding.
- Common law rights are intended to allow the person to carry out the minimum amount of work.
- If extensive works are carried out and in so doing make the tree unsafe, the tree owner may have a case for criminal damage. The person should be especially careful if pruning roots. Obtain qualified arboricultural advice before carrying out any such work. If the tree owner agrees to works that are in addition to your common law rights, or if they give permission to enter their land to undertake the work, it would be prudent to obtain their written consent. If the trees in question are subject to a tree preservation order or are growing in a conservation area then an application (in the case of tree preservation orders) or 'Notice of Intent' (in the case of trees growing in a conservation area) may be required and the following points will apply.
 - o The person intending to submit an application or notice must inform the owner of the land on which the trees are growing that an application or notice is to be made.
 - o The granting of consent in the case of a tree preservation order or the raising of no objection in the case of trees in a conservation area means that the tree work applied for is acceptable in arboricultural and planning terms only. It does not give the person submitting the application or notice an automatic legal right to carry out the work. The question of ownership is a civil rather than a planning issue and the landowner's permission must be obtained in addition to any planning approval.

3.5 Occupiers' Liabilities Act 1957 and 1984

An occupier of premises owes the same duty, the "common duty of care", to all his visitors whether by invite or otherwise. The common duty of care is a duty to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that the 'visitor' will be reasonably safe in using the premises for the purposes for which he is invited or permitted by the occupier to be there or for purposes other than that which they have been invited (trespassers).

Should the landowner have any concerns about the trees overhanging their boundary then they would be best advised to write to the landowner and remind them of their responsibilities to ensure that public health and property are managed around trees.

It was noted that a Monterey Pine tree growing within the curtilage of Bowden House would benefit from tree management to remove the major deadwood and suspended deadwood within the canopy as it overhangs Strawberry Hill property.

4. TREE STOCK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Tree Condition

An individual Monterey Pine tree has been inspected in accordance with National Tree Safety Group Guidelines (2011).

4.1.1 The resurvey of this tree has been carried out as a result of a neighbouring concern.

4.1.2 The Monterey Pine tree was inspected at ground level where strong evidence of internal decay and root rot was evident. There were outwardly signs to suggest the tree was in stress or had a debilitating pathogen.



Plate 1- Monterey Pine tree surveyed.

4.1.3 The Monterey Pine tree was growing within a partially restricted rooting space. The combined hostile features of an amenity garden, change in levels and boundary features provide an unnatural environment. The compacted soils, void of nutrients, restricts water percolating to the roots. These man-made features are all located within the Root Protection Area (RPA) of the tree (as calculated within Section 4.6 and Annex C of BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations).

4.1.4 Large clusters of *Phaeolus schweinitzei* were found around the rootplate of the tree. Further to this one structural root was found to have been disconnected from the stem due to decay. A large hollow section of stem was also discovered to the south-east and it is deemed that this tree is now unstable due to the quantity of fungal fruiting bodies present.



Plate 2 –Clusters of fungi.

4.1.5 A section of the stem was sounded and resulted in a large portion of stem being hollow.



Plate 3: Area of hollow stem.

4.2 Tree Survey Results

The results of the tree survey inspection is detailed within Table 4.2.

Tree No	Species	Age Class	Height (m)	Stem Diameter (mm)	Crown Spread (m)	Structural Cond	Physio-logical Cond	Defects and other Relevant Comments	Recommended Works	Priority (months)	Recommended Re-Inspection Interval (Years)
1	Monterey Pine	M	20+	1000+	15-20	P	G	- Major deadwood in crown. - Hollow section of stem to south-east. - Dyer's polypore at base of stem and on roots system. - Compacted RPA. - Crown weighted to east – prevailing wind sculptured tree.	Fell to ground level and grind stump.	3	N/A
Key <u>Age Class</u> Y: Young = tree within first third of average life expectancy EM: Early Mature = tree within second third of average life expectancy M: Mature = tree within final third of average life expectancy OM: Over mature = tree beyond average life expectancy V: Veteran = Historical or culturally important tree (in decline) D: Dead <u>Physiological Condition</u> G: Good = no health problems F: Fair = symptoms of ill health that may be remedied P: Poor = poor health <u>Structural Condition</u> G: Good = no structural defects F: Fair = remedial structural defects P: Poor = significant structural defects Major deadwood: branches in excess of 50 mm diameter Minor deadwood: branches/twigs less than 50 mm diameter RPA: Root Protection Area (Calculated in accordance with BS5837:2012 Appendix D, Table D.1) This tree is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TVBC.499)											

Table 4.1: Tree Survey Schedule

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Tree is the subject of a Tree Preservation Order and the work to fell this tree must be preceded with the submission of an appropriate Planning Application to the Planning department.
- All tree works should be carried out in accordance with BS3998:2010 Tree works - Recommendations.
- This Arboricultural Survey is valid for a period of 12 months.

6. INSPECTION PERIOD

Should a monolith be retained, it is recommended that the Monterey Pine tree stump (over 4 m tall) is surveyed every 34-38 months due to the its' position in the landscape and to permit an inspection to occur across all seasons over time.

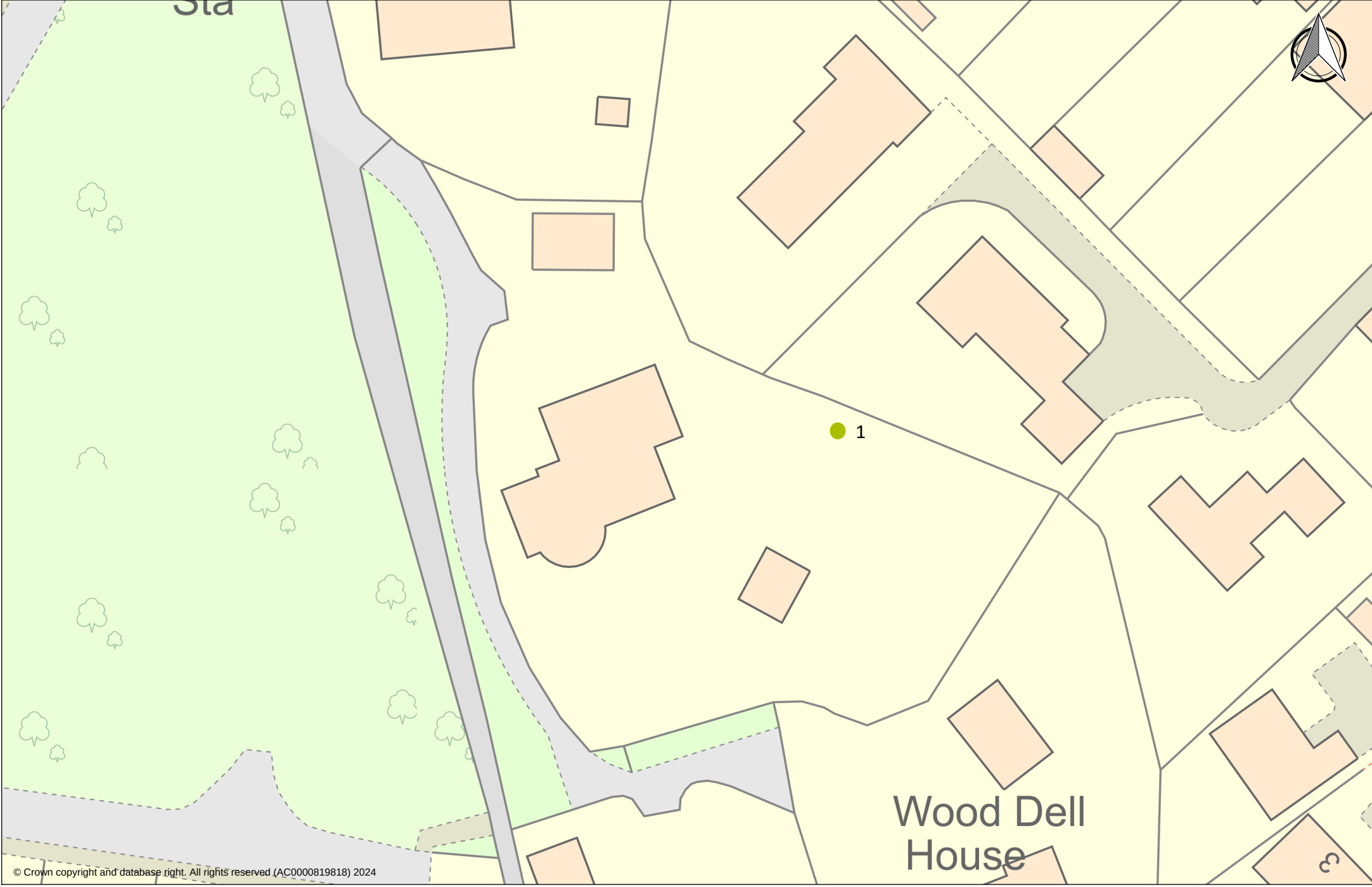
7. DISCLAIMER

Arbor-Eco Consultancy accepts no responsibility or liability for any use that is made of this document other than by the client for the purposes for which it was originally commissioned and prepared. This report has not been compiled as part of an insurance claim and should not be used in conjunction with any such activity.

It should be noted that trees are dynamic living organisms that are subject to natural changes as they age or are influenced by changes in their environment. As such following any significant meteorological event or changes in the growing environment of the trees they should be re-assessed by a suitably qualified and experienced arboriculturist.

8. DRAWINGS

MB240212-01 Indicative Tree Location Plan



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