

Arboricultural Assessment of 65 Hocombe road, Chandlers Ford, SO53 5QA

Carried out by Matthew Rowden on behalf of
Romsey Tree Surgeons, Agent.

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3. Instruction

This report is to survey 2 trees on the site for the potential to cause damage and/or harm for insurance and liability. I refer to the current guidance set out within NTSG Common sense risk management of trees 2011 to enable the homeowner to have discharged their duty of care.

The risks that I have assessed are: Likelihood of damage to property (indirect or contact), tree failure through structures, and personal harm or injury. I have been instructed by Ross Woodley from Romsey Tree Surgeons Ltd.

4. Limitations

This survey is valid for 5 years (adhering to the guidance set out in NTSG 2011). I must be kept in direct supervision of the site at all times in regards to all arboricultural matters in order for the findings in this report to remain valid.

The site was inspected using the VTA method as outlined in Mattheck and Breloer 1994. No detailed decay detection has been carried out.

No soil analysis has been carried out: assumptions have been made based on data from the BGS, and the species that grow in that area.

5. Site details

The site is a 0.2Ha residential property to the South of Hocombe road in Chandlers Ford.

The BGS lists the soil conditions as “Whitecliff Sand Member - Sand and gravel. Sedimentary bed-rock formed between 66 and 23.03 million years ago during the Palaeogene period”.

6. Legal restrictions

The trees are covered by a blanket TPO, ref 58H and 248E.

7. Proposals

This report aims to establish whether the trees require work within the next 5 years, 1 year, critically (as soon as reasonably practicable), or no work whatsoever. It aims to discharge the duty of care that the landowner has to ensure that their trees are as safe as reasonably practicable, and to instil a cyclic formal re-inspection schedule every 3-5 years in line with NTSG common sense risk management of trees 2011. Based on the target area of the site, the records of this report must be kept with the residents, and the next date for a formal inspection is January 2030 if the trees are retained.

Informal observations may be taken annually by visiting arboriculturists.

8. Drawings and documents

The client has not provided drawings and documents for the purposes of this assessment. I have obtained one from the Ordnance survey and have annotated the trees on the map.

Appendix 1: Schedule

Appendix 2: Tree location plan

9. Summary

The two trees on the site are of poor physiological and structural condition, and unworthy of retention. T1 poses a significant safety risk to the occupiers.

10. Findings (please see appendix 1 for specific details)

Buttresses, roots and lower stem:

- i. Both trees 1 and 2 exhibit significant bark wounding around the lower stem.
- ii. Tree 2's wound is consistent with a whole stem failure historically, with tearing extending from a height of 2m to ground level.

Main stem and branch structure:

- ii. Tree 1 exhibits poorly formed branch structure to a height of 12m, above which the canopy is completely dead, with a large dead top overhanging the garden.
- iii. Tree 2 exhibits black writing bodies on the exposed sap wood of the branch tear around 1m W aspect, consistent with either *Kretzschmaria deusta* or *Hypoxylon multifforme*.

Overall canopy

- iv. T1's canopy is in a severe state of decline, with a dead top extending 7m from any live growth, posing a significant hazard to the occupiers.
- v. The canopy of tree 2 is reasonable in density, but heavily suppressed by the surrounding trees.

11. Analysis

- i. *Kretzschmaria deusta* is a highly aggressive pathogen that will preferentially degrade cellulose, but will also degrade lignin, actively feeding off a tree's barrier zones. It is highly opportunistic and often makes ingress through bark wounds on the stem (such as both trees demonstrate).
- ii. This pathogen often kills trees very quickly, and would be a reasonable explanation for the rapid dieback on tree 1.
- iii. That said, no fruiting bodies were visible on T1, and charcoal fungus is often mistaken for *Hypoxylon multifforme*. This pathogen is often considered saprotrophic, but in a Missouri Botanical Gardens study (09/2024) it was found to be highly contributory to acute oak decline, and often found on chestnut.
- iv. The guidance within that study found: "There is no effective control for the disease. If over 15% of the crown is infected, cut the tree to ground level and burn it, or have a hauler remove it from the site. Since the fungus can remain active in dead wood, do not chip the wood and use it for mulch. Also, any wood burned as fuel should be used quickly."
- v. With the above in mind, whether the trees are affected by *Hypoxylon sp.* or *Kretzschmaria deusta*, their retention is unwise: at best they are unlikely to have a useful remaining contribution for more than 10 years; at worst, they are harbouring pathogens that are highly opportunistic and may spread through the rest of the tree group.

12. Conclusion:

The two trees within this garden are not good specimens, and they are not particularly visible to anyone from anywhere other than the garden of 65 Hocombe road and the adjacent properties. With that in mind, the felling of these trees is no great loss, and the retention of the remaining trees within the TPO woodland group may be safeguarded by the felling of these two trees. Replacement trees must be resistant to both of the suggested pathogens in this report.

13. Recommendations

1. T1 & T2 - Fell
2. Replace with 2x 8-10 standard bare root *Persica parrotia*, and 2x 8-10 standard *Carpinus betulus*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Rowden', is written over a solid orange horizontal line.

Matthew Rowden ABC ProfDipArb L6, BTEC NatDipArb L3

14. References

- a. BS3998:2010
- b. Structural Features Related to Tree Crotch Strength by Robert W. Farrell
- c. Tree Pulling Tests of Large Shade Trees in the Genus Acer, Brian Kane and Peggi Clouston
- d. Modern Arboriculture, Alex Shigo
- e. The body language of trees, Dr Claus Mattheck
- f. NTSG Common sense risk management of trees 2011.
- g. <https://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/gardens-gardening/your-garden/help-for-the-home-gardener/advice-tips-resources/insects-pests-and-problems/diseases/cankers/hypoxylon-dieback-of-oaks>

Appendix 1 - Tree survey schedule

Appendix 2: Tree location plan

Tree no. on plan	Species	Ht (M)	Crown spread (M) N E S W	Stem dia. @1.5m (mm)	Life stage	Estimated remaining contribution in years	General observations Physiological condition- P Structural condition - S	Preliminary management recommendations	Likelihood of causing damage/harm
1	<i>Castanea sativa</i>	19	9 5 2 6	620	V	<10	P- Poor S- Poor Significant bark wound SW aspect 200mm x 500mm at ground level, and one at W aspect of 600 x 100mm. The top of the tree is in severe retrenchment, and entirely dead from a height of 12m up.	Fell	High
2	<i>Quercus robur</i>	19	1 4 7 2	480	OM	<10	P- Poor S- Poor Significant bark wound SW aspect 2000mm x 500mm at ground level, consistent with a whole stem loss. On this exposed sap wood are black fruiting bodies consistent with either <i>Kretzschmaria deusta</i> or <i>Hypoxylon multifforme</i> . Heavily suppressed tree with poor form.	Fell	High

Survey schedule key

- Tree ID: Refers to numbers as shown in the tree location plan.
- Species: scientific name
- Height (measured in meters)
- Crown spread (measured in meters at the points of North, South, East and West). Where “#” is used as a suffix, the measurements are approximate.
- Stem diameter measured at 1.5m height in mm.
- Life stage: Young (Y) (small trees at a very early stage of their growth), young mature (YM)(larger trees at an early life stage with the potential to still grow considerably larger), Mature (MA)(trees which have reached their maximum size and are self sustaining at the point), Over mature (OM)(trees that are beginning to decline and starting to die back from the tips), Veteran (V)(trees that are rapidly in decline and steadily losing canopy spread), Dead (D)
- Estimated remaining contribution in years: Until such a time as any residual amenity is lost.
- General observations - a visual assessment of the physiological and structural condition of the tree, classed as :Poor, fair, good, dead, decline. Physiologically refers to the vitality and vigour of the tree; Structural refers to the presence of physical defects within the tree's structural makeup. For example, a multi stemmed tree from a lapsed pollard with multiple defects in those unions, but with good vitality and good leaf cover would be classed as physiologically good, but structurally poor.

- Preliminary management recommendations - recommendations to maintain the tree as part of the proposals, or assessing whether its retention is viable, whether it be the suggestion of aerial inspections, remedial pruning, or detailed decay inspections.
- Likelihood of causing damage/ harm: None, low, moderate, high and critical. These mean that respectively, the recommendations are to be actioned with no time scale and within 5 years (green canopy spread), 1 year (blue canopy spread), 6 months (red canopy spread). Trees to be felled with have the canopy spread denoted in a dashed line.

