Sylva Consultancy

expert arboricultural advice

ARBORICULTURAL REPORT

Bird Place
Henley Bridge
Henley on Thames
Oxfordshire
RG9 2LN

September 2025

Ref: 22193

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This report is for the sole use of the above-named client and refers to only those trees identified within; use by any other person(s) in attempting to apply its contents for any other purpose renders the report invalid for that purpose.

1. INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 Instructions have been received to undertake a health and safety inspection on a row of mature Hornbeams (T32, T34 – T39) on land at Bird Place, Henley on Thames (Site Location Plan Appendix 1). This report comments on the health & safety of the trees and makes recommendations, where appropriate regarding future management requirements.

2. REPORT LIMITATIONS

2.1. The trees have been inspected using the Visual Tree Assessment Method (VTA) from ground level only. This is a basic data collection exercise and a record of the tree's condition at the time of surveying. No soil excavations or root samplings have been taken for the purpose of this report, and no documentation has been provided concerning the history of site changes, its hydrology or soil structure, past tree and land management, associated buildings or service installations.

2.2 Non-invasive inspection equipment (sounding hammer and/or metal probe) were used to assess the structural integrity where the visual inspection identified this requirement.

2.3 Trees are living organisms whose health and condition can change rapidly. The health, condition and safety of trees should be checked on a regular basis, preferably at least once a year by a person competent in Arboriculture. In addition, it is recommended that trees are assessed at different times of the year as different symptoms can manifest themselves during the different seasons.

2.4 The conclusions and recommendations in this report are valid for 1 year from the date of this report unless otherwise specified. This period of validity may be reduced in the case of any change in conditions to or in close proximity to the tree(s). There are no guarantees of absolute safety in the event of unusual or extreme weather.

3. TREE PROTECTION

3.1 A desktop study of information posted on the Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) interactive mapping system (https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/how-apply-permission/listed-buildings-heritage-and-conservation-areas) was carried out on the 24th September 2025.

3.2 The trees subject of this report are located within Remenham Henley Bridge Conservation Area. Trees in a Conservation Area that are not protected by a TPO are protected by the provisions in section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Anyone who ***cuts down, uproots, tops, lops, wilfully destroys or wilfully damages a tree*** in a Conservation Area (if that tree is not already protected by a Tree Preservation Order), or causes or permits such work, without giving a section 211 notice (or otherwise contravenes section 211 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is guilty of an offence, unless an exception applies.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Instructions were received to inspect seven hornbeam trees that are growing at Bird Place, Henley on Thames.

4.1.2 The trees were inspected on the 10th September 2025. The weather was dry, and visibility was good.

4.1.3 This report advises on tree works regarding both Health & Safety and Duty of Care obligations and makes recommendations, where appropriate regarding future management requirements.

4.1.4 Trees identified within the survey area were assessed visually from ground level by a person qualified and experienced in arboriculture. This report considers amongst other things, the trees structural condition and where significant defects are visually identified, remedial works have been recommended within the tree survey data at Appendix 2, with a tree works schedule, including timescales at Appendix 4.

4.1.5 To ensure that Duty of Care requirements are met it is strongly recommended to carry out the work at Appendix 4 within the timescales that have been allocated.

4.2 Report Findings

4.2.1 An initial site visit was carried out during July 2025. Since this visit tree T39 has failed. Observations made at the time of the September 2025 visit concluded that this tree failed due to the presence of Honey fungus (*Armillaria mellea*).

4.2.2 The failure of T39 has exposed the rooting area on the southern side of the adjacent tree, T38. Observations note the presence of black rhizomorphs which are associated with Honey Fungus. The canopy was inspected from ground level with the canopy noted as sparse and chlorotic. Due to the evidence that honey fungus is present and the compromised rooting area due to T39's failure it is recommended to remove this tree.

4.2.3 The decay fungus Giant Polypore (*Meripilus giganteus*) has been observed at the base on the western side of tree T37. Given the known decay strategy of significant degradation of the rooting areas of trees it is recommended to remove this tree.

4.2.4 Tree T35, has significant stem decay from ground level to branch break. A Ganoderma bracket has also been observed on the underside of one of the main scaffold branches on the eastern side of this tree. Due to the presence of the decayed stem, it is recommended to remove this tree.

4.2.5 Trees T32, T34, T36 & T36a are growing within proximity to the trees that are proposed to be removed. With the exception of T36a the trees are similar in age and size and consequently have established as a linear group feature. There are concerns that the removal of trees T35, T37 & T38 will expose the remainder of the group to prevailing winds and differing wind turbulences. It is judged that this sudden exposure will increase the likelihood of further tree failure. Therefore, it is proposed to remove these trees as part of the long-term tree management strategy of the site. The removal of the group will open up opportunities for new and sustainable tree planting to occur.

4.2.6 Tree T33 is a self-seeded etiolated sycamore. As part of the above work, it is proposed to include this tree for removal due to its position within the group.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is proposed to remove Hornbeam trees T32, T34, T35, T36, T36a, T37 & T38. Tree T33, sycamore will also be removed.

5.2 Unless an exception applies a notification to undertake works to protected trees must be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council prior to any pruning work being carried out.

5.3 All pruning works should be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998: 2010 'Recommendations for Tree Works' and in compliance with good practice as promoted by the Arboricultural and Forestry Advisory Group.

6. PROTECTED SPECIES

6.1 The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000, provides statutory protection to birds, bats and other species that inhabit trees. The timing and type of tree work, including hedge pruning must be considered before undertaking any works highlighted within this report.

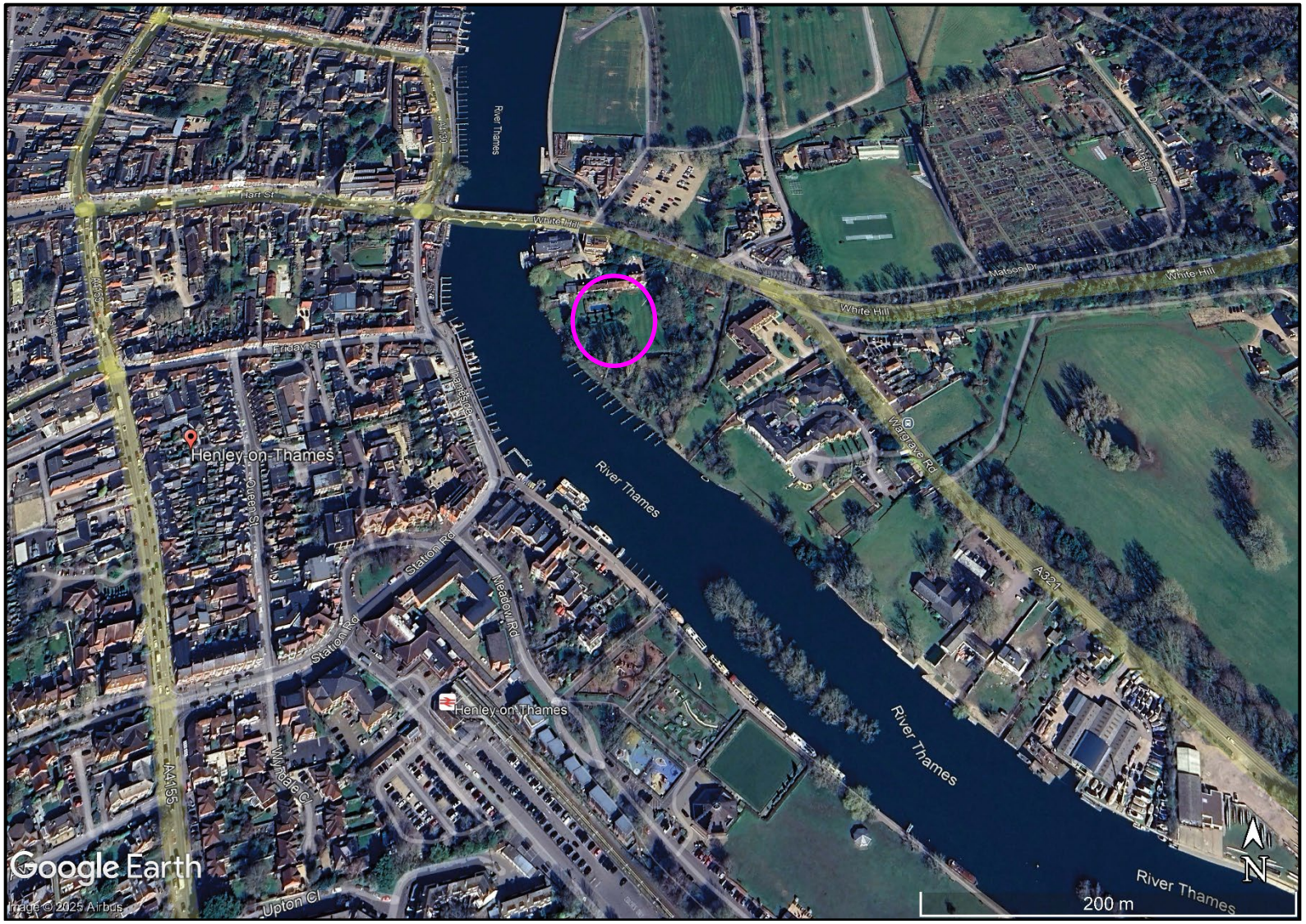
6.2 It is an offence to 'intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat' or to 'damage, destroy or block access to the resting place of any bat' (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2001 as amended). Where works are being carried out and bats are found to be present, or if the tree is a known roost, the Statutory Nature Conservancy Organisation (Natural England 0845 600 3078) must be advised. A license is required to handle or to undertake works which will affect bats.

6.3 It is advised that non-urgent work, including work to hedges are not undertaken during the bird nesting season or breeding season ((1st March – 31st August).

APPENDIX 1

SITE LOCATION PLAN

SITE LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX 2

TREE SURVEY DATA

KEY TO TREE SCHEDULE

Tree No:	Relates to individual trees, groups, hedges and woodlands as identified within the Tree Survey Schedule and Tree Constraints Plan
Species	Common name
Height:	Estimated height expressed in meters
Abbreviations:	
E	Estimated
Ave	Average
agl	Above ground level
SULE	Safe Useful Life Expectancy
Age Class:	
Y	Young
MM	Semi mature
M	Mature
OM	Over Mature
NP	Newly Planted
Physiological Condition:	
G	Good
F	Fair
P	Poor
D	Dead
Priority Codes:	
1 Month	Works required to be carried out within the next 1 month from the date of the report, unless otherwise stated.
3 Months	Remedial pruning works to be carried out within 3 months from date of this report.
6 Months	Remedial pruning works to be carried out within 6 months from date of this report.
Ds	Highly desirable works. Should be carried out as part of regular maintenance of trees.
1 Year	Works to be carried out in 1 year
Monitor	Monitor tree as per recommendations in report.
NW	No works currently recommended

TREE SURVEY DATA

Tree No.	Species	HT (M)	Age Class	Phys. Cond.	Branches	Leaf/ Buds	Stem	Roots	Comment	Proposed Work	Priority	Next Survey (month
T32	Hornbeam	23	M	F	Topped;Stubs; Old pruning wounds; Fractures	Normal	Old pruning wounds;	No visual defects	Historically reduced at 14m agl. Etiolated in form when compared to adjacent trees. High canopy - biased canopy due to proximity of adjacent trees. Concerns regarding the long term retention of this tree due to the removal of T35, T37 & T38. Will be left exposed. Recommend to fell to open up the ability to replant the area.	Fell	2 Months	N/A
T34	Hornbeam	26	M	F	Topped;Stubs; Old pruning wounds; Fractures	Normal	Dead Ivy stems	No visual defects	Historically reduced at 14m agl. Branch failure in upper canopy, decay pocket observed from GL. Historical large limb removed on western side of the tree - area not inspected. Concerns regarding the long term retention of this tree due to the removal of T35, T37 & T38. Will be left exposed. Recommend to fell to open up the ability to replant the area.	Fell	2 Months	N/A
T35	Hornbeam	25	M	P	Decay;Old pruning wounds; Fungus	Normal	Decay;Fungus; Dead Ivy stems	See comment	Significant hollowing/decay in the main stem of the tree from 0.5m to 1.75m - to branch break. Structural integrity has been compromised. Ganoderma present on primary low limb on eastern side of the tree. Fell	Fell	2 Months	N/A
T36	Hornbeam	24	M	F	Old pruning wounds; Topped	Normal	Decayed sucker	No visual defects	Historically reduced at 14m agl. Concerns regarding the long term retention of this tree due to the removal of T35, T37 & T38. Will be left exposed. Recommend to fell to open up the ability to replant the area.	Fell	2 Months	N/A
T36a	Hornbeam	16	MM	F	Suppressed	Normal	Bifurcated	No visual defects	Biased canopy - eastwards. Smaller specimen and suppressed by adjacent trees. X2 stems at. Need to be managed as part of the group. Recommend to fell to open up the ability to replant the area.	Fell	2 Months	N/A
T37	Hornbeam	25	M	P	See Comment	Sparse	See Comment	Fungus	Single stem tree. Giant polypore (Meripilus present) present at base on western side of the tree. Root decayer. Canopy sparse which is an indication rooting area is compromised. Fell	Fell	2 Months	N/A
T38	Hornbeam	25	M	P	Old pruning wounds; Major deadwood; Fractures	Sparse	Old pruning wounds; Bifrucated;Fungus	Exposed;Fungus	Tree adjacent to T39. Rooting area exposed on southern side of the tree. Evidence of honey fungus around the basal area. Canopy sparse which is an indication HF is present. Canopy is suppressed by tree T37. x2 stems. Recommend to fell	Fell	2 Months	N/A
T39	Hornbeam	10	M	-	Tree has failed	N/A	Tree has failed	Tree has failed	Tree has failed. Evidence of honey fungus present around the rooting area.	N/A	N/A	N/A

APPENDIX 3

TREE LOCATION PLAN

KEEP CLEAR

HENLEY ROYAL REGATTA

BIRD PLACE

ROSE COTTAGE

TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY

T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6 T7 T8 T9 T10 T11 T12 T13 T14 T15 T16 T17 T18 T19 T20 T21 T22 T23 T24 T25 T26 T27 T28 T29 T30 T31 T32* T33* T34 T35* T36 T36a* T37 T38* T39 T40 T41 T42 T43* T44 T45 T46 T47 T48 T49 T50 T51 T52 T53 T54

G1 G2 G3 G4 G5 G6 G7 G8 G9 G10 G11 G12 G13

Laurel
Elder
Elder
Laurel
Laurel
Laurel
Understorey of mixed shrubs
Laurel
Goat Willow
Goat Willow
Sycamore
Yew
Sycamore
T25
Alder
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Sycamore
Laurel
Robina
Birch
Birch
Vine
Sycamore
Smoke bush
Bamboo
Windmill palm group
Lonicera nitida hedge
Regenerating Poplar stumps
Alder
Alder
Alder
Alder
Sycamore
Alder
Alder
Sycamore
Sycamore

T39 has failed since July 25 survey

Extent of Survey Area

Extent of Survey Area

5m 10m

N W E S

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Site: Bird Place, Henley Bridge, Henley-On-Thames, RG9 2LN	1:250 at A1
Drawing Title: Tree Constraints Plan	September 2025 Rev A

Key:

- Category A
- Category B
- Category C
- Category U

Category
13
Crown Spread
Tree Number
Root Protection Area

NOTE: Tree/group numbers marked with an * have approximate locations.

NOTE: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

APPENDIX 4

TREE WORKS SCHEDULE

TREE WORK SCHEDULE

Tree No.	Species	Work Category 1	Work Item 1	Priority 1	Work Category 2	Work Item 2	Priority 2	Work Category 3	Work Item 3	Priority 3	Comment	Date of Works
T32	Hornbeam	Fell	To Ground Level	2 Months								
T34	Hornbeam	Fell	To Ground Level	2 Months								
T35	Hornbeam	Fell	To Ground Level	2 Months								
T36	Hornbeam	Fell	To Ground Level	2 Months								
T36a	Hornbeam	Fell	To Ground Level	2 Months								
T37	Hornbeam	Fell	To Ground Level	2 Months								
T38	Hornbeam	Fell	To Ground Level	2 Months								

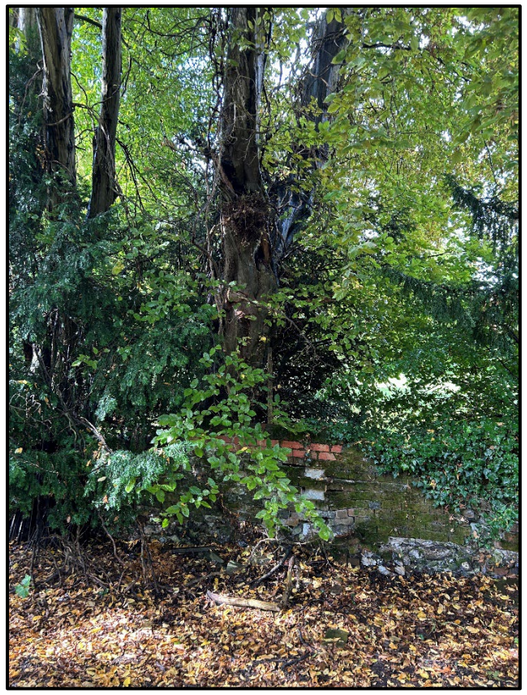
APPENDIX 5

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph 1

Decay column which is present on tree T35.



Photograph 2

Ganoderma bracket present on tree T35



Photograph 3

Giant Polypore present at the base of tree T36



Photograph 4

Evidence of honey fungus around the basal area of T38



Photograph 5

Sparse canopy of T38



Photograph 6

Tree T39 has recently failed.

Trees T35, T37 & T38 are proposed to be removed.



Photograph 7

End trees T32 & T34.

APPENDIX 6

BIBLIOGRAPHY/ GLOSSARY

TREE GLOSSARY

Adventitious:	Describing shoots, roots or other plant organs which develop other than in their normal position of origin (i.e. terminal/axillary buds).
Arboriculture	The cultivation of trees in order to produce individual specimens of the greatest ornament, for shelter, or any other primary purpose other than the production of timber.
Canopy	The uppermost layer of twigs or foliage in a woodland, tree or group of trees.
Chlorotic:	Chlorosis is an atypical colouring, usually yellowish, of foliage; often symptom of mineral nutrient imbalance or inadequate root function.
Crown	The spreading branches and the foliage of the tree supported by trunk(s).
Crown Cleaning:	The removal of dead, dying, crossing, diseased branches.
Crown Lifting:	The removal of lower limbs, generally back to the main stem or pruning lower secondary branches to give more clear space below the crown.
Crown Reduction:	The tree crown is reduced by shortening branches, usually carried out all round the crown or canopy to maintain a balanced shape. Partial reductions may be useful for preventing branches contacting buildings, roofs and guttering
Crown Thinning:	This reduces the density of the tree's crown without changing the shape and form of the tree. Thinning reduces the amount of foliage and allows more light through the canopy or crown. The amount is usually specified as a percentage (%) of the crown.
Dead wood	In some situations dead wood can pose a hazard as it can fall from the tree. However it also provides a range of habitats both when aerial and when on the ground.
Dieback	The death of a part of a tree, usually starting from the branch tips and progressing in stages.
Epicormics:	Pertaining to shoots or roots which are initiated on mature woody stems; shoots may form in this way from dormant buds or they may be adventitious.
Included Bark:	Bark of adjacent parts of the tree (usually in forks, acutely angled forks or basal flutes) which is a face-to-face contact, so that there is a weakness due to the lack of a woody union.
Occlusion:	The overgrowth of a wound with (callus) tissue which is produced subsequently.
Pollard	A tree cut once or repeatedly at a height above which grazing animals can reach the regenerating growth. Usually cut on a semi-regular basis with the whole or part of the crown removed.
Reaction Wood:	Usually laid down in wider annual increments than ordinary wood. Formed to help maintain the angle of a bent or leaning part of a tree by resisting the further bending downwards.

TREE GLOSSARY

Soil compaction	Soil compaction restricts the growth of trees, damages roots and reduce infiltration of water into the soil which over prolonged periods of time will be detrimental to tree health.
Stress	In plant physiology, a condition under which one or more physiological functions are not operating within their optimum range.
Vitality	In tree assessment, an overall appraisal of physiological and biochemical processes, in which high vitality equates with healthy function.
Wound wood:	Wood formed in the vicinity of a wound. Can also be used to describe the occluding tissues around a wound.

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QUALIFICATIONS

Fiona Bradshaw

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I have over 26 years' experience of arboriculture and I am the principal consultant at Sylva Consultancy. I hold the Royal Forestry Society's Professional Diploma in Arboriculture and the Arboricultural Associations Technicians Certificate. I am a Fellow member of the Arboricultural Association and a professional member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters, of which I am also a registered Consultant.

I have the benefit of both a local authority and private practice background and I am frequently instructed to provide advice and assistance relating to trees and the planning process. I am also experienced at compiling expert reports, providing evidence and also appearing as an expert witness at Public Inquiries.

I am committed to my continued professional development which is reflected in my regular attendance of seminars and workshops.

APPENDIX 7

QUALIFICATIONS