

Tree Inspection and Description of Works

Site: 65 Hilmanton, Lower Earley, RG6 4HN

Tree Reference: T5 (Ash) - TPO 672/1994

Date: January 2026

Ref: ASHT5_2026

Report by: Dr Oluwaseun Ogunleye

Tree preservation order

I have confirmed on the Wokingham borough council online mapping portal that the Ash tree subject of this report is protected as T5 of the tree preservation order 672/ 1994. The property is not within a conservation area

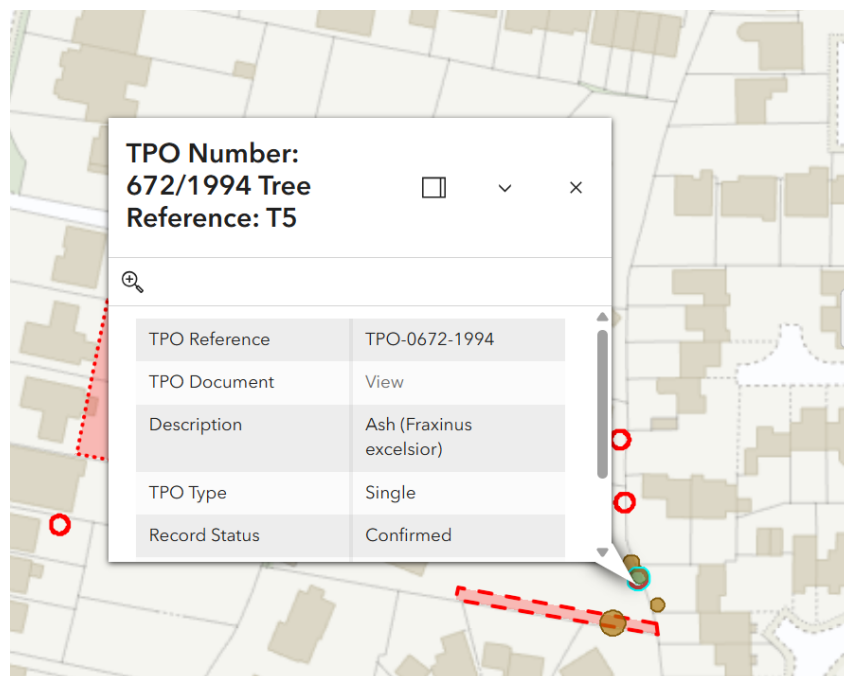


Figure 1: Extract from the Wokingham borough TPO Map

Proposal: Complete Removal of T5 Ash Monolith

History and Previous Management

This Ash tree (T5) was previously a co-dominant (twin-stemmed) specimen. Following the catastrophic failure of one of the main stems in 2016, the tree was assessed in June 2020 by Duckworth's Arboriculture.

At that time, the arborist identified significant defects (Figures 2 in the Appendix) and recommended the tree be removed, but the previous owner advised retaining the tree as a reduced "monolith" (approx. 6–8m height) to preserve habitat value. This advice was followed, and the tree has been managed as a standing habitat feature since then (Please see Historic Tree Works Applications: 202248 ref: 05386 / 2020).

Reason for Application: Progressive Structural Failure

The tree has been looked at in detail recently using the Visual Tree Assessment. While the reduction to a monolith initially mitigated the safety risk, the basal decay identified in the 2020 report has continued to spread (Figures 3 in the Appendix), as was predicted by the specialist. The structural integrity of the remaining stump is now severely compromised, and I believe complete removal is necessary to prevent an uncontrolled collapse.

My concerns are based on the baseline conditions recorded in the attached 2020 report, which have since worsened:

- **Extensive Basal Decay:** The report noted a "central column of decay" and a large wound at the base.
- **Deep Cavities:** At the time of the survey, a metal probe could be inserted over 500mm upwards into the cavity under the tree, and 400mm downwards into a wound on the south side.
- **Root Plate Instability:** The report confirmed the base was "undermined" by the previous failure and bark inclusion.

The specialist explicitly warned that "decay is expected to progress within the tree's base over time further weakening the tree. This progression has now reached a point where retaining the monolith is no longer safe.

Work required

Complete removal is necessary to prevent an uncontrolled collapse.

Replacement Proposal

To compensate for the loss of T5, I propose to formally retain the younger semi-mature Ash tree located in the southwest corner of the property as the replacement tree¹⁰.

- This tree was identified in the 2020 report as being approximately 40 years old and in good health.
- The specialist specifically recommended this tree be retained to "replace the tree under the TPO.

I believe this proposal balances the safety requirements of the property with the amenity value of the original TPO.

Appendix

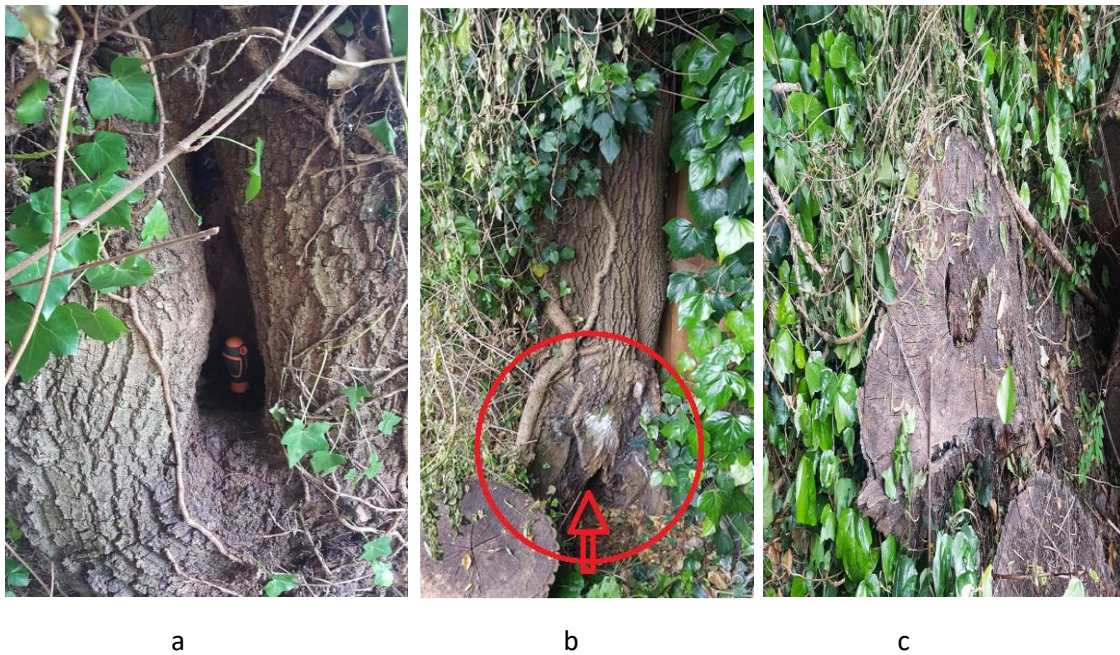


Figure 2:

- a) Cavity on the south side with metal probe (2020 Inspection)
- b) Basal wound and cavity (2020 Inspection)
- c) Cross-section of wood from fallen trunks (2020 Inspection)

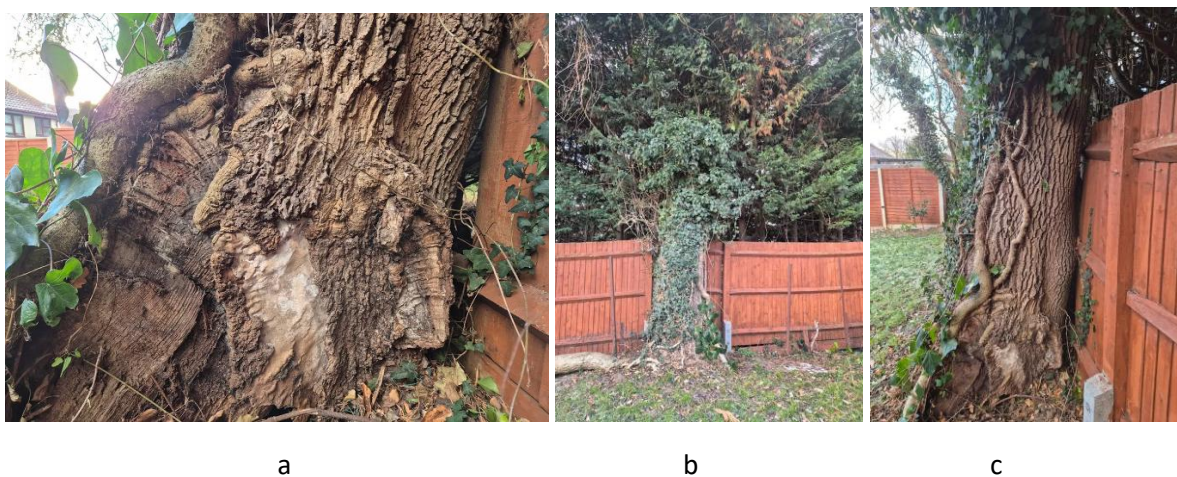


Figure 3:

- a) Current Basal wound and cavity (2026 Inspection)
- b) Current tree canopy and vine (2026 Inspection)
- c) Current lean of the tree (2026 Inspection)

