



DUCKWORTHS
ARBORICULTURE LTD.

ARBORICULTURAL REPORT

TREE CONDITION SURVEY

8 SOUTH DRIVE
WOKINGHAM
BERKSHIRE
RG40 2DH

CLIENT: EMILY PLEWS

AUGUST 2025
Ref: 06810 / 2025

REPORT BY: SARAH DUCKWORTH

DipArb(RFS), TechCert(ArborA), M. Arbor.A, BA (Hons)
LANTRA Professional Tree Inspector

E: sarahcduckworth@hotmail.com
M: 07810 440546



Prepared by: Sarah Duckworth
Position: Arboricultural Consultant
Qualifications: DipArb(RFS),TechCert(ArborA),M. Arbor.A, BA (Hons),
LANTRA Professional Tree Inspector

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INSTRUCTION

This Arboricultural Report has been commissioned by Emily Plews, owner / occupier of 8 South Drive, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2DH.

I have been asked to undertake a visual inspection and provide a report on the condition of a Holm Oak growing within the front garden of 8 South Drive and a Horse Chestnut growing within the rear garden of the neighbouring property 7 South Drive.

This report is to specify any necessary remedial tree works to address identified hazards from the trees whilst acknowledging and respecting their significance to amenity and ecology of the local area.

1.2 INSPECTION INFORMATION

The trees were inspected on Thursday 24th July 2025.

On the day of the survey, the weather was dry and overcast. Visibility was satisfactory.

For the purposes of this survey all dimensions of the trees and their associated parts are measured using a laser measure or clinometer where possible. Where access is restricted, measurements have been visually estimated unless otherwise stated.

1.3 QUALIFICATIONS

Surveyor: Sarah Duckworth

- Royal Forestry Society's Professional Diploma
- Arboricultural Association's Technicians Certificate (with Distinction)
- LANTRA qualified Professional Tree Inspector
- Arboricultural Association Professional Member

1.4 INSURANCE

For your peace of mind, Duckworths Arboriculture Limited is insured with Hiscox Insurance:

- Public Liability £10,000,000
- Professional Indemnity £2,000,000

2. STATUTORY TREE PROTECTION

2.1 TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

I have confirmed on the Wokingham Borough Council website that at the time of this report, T1 (Holm Oak) is protected by a Tree Preservation Order (ref TPO-1195-2007).

No works should be undertaken to protected trees without the prior written consent of the Local Planning Authority – exemptions apply.

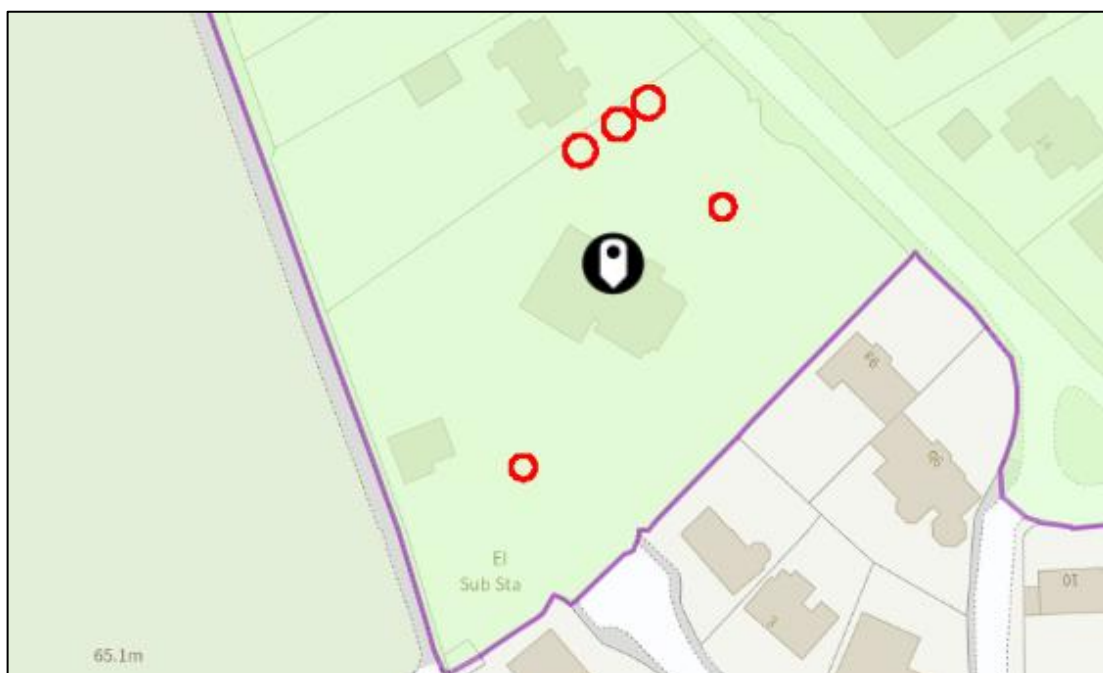


Figure 1 – Wokingham Borough Council TPO Map

2.2 CONSERVATION AREAS

8 South Drive is within the Murdoch Road Conservation Area.

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 all trees in a Conservation Area with a trunk diameter of 75mm or more (measured at 1.5m above natural ground level) are protected (subject to some exemptions). It is an offence to prune, fell or otherwise damage a tree without first giving notice to the Council.

You are required to give the Borough Council six – weeks' notice of works to trees within a Conservation Area (a Section 211 Notification). The Local Authority cannot refuse the works, but it will use the six-week notification to consider whether the work is sufficiently harmful to amenity that it is expedient to serve a tree preservation order on the tree(s) in order to prevent or modify the works.

3. GENERAL GUIDANCE

3.1 TREE WORK GOOD PRACTICE

Where possible, recommended tree works should be undertaken in accordance with BS:3998 2010 'Tree Work Recommendations'.

To limit the harm to deciduous trees, pruning work on live trees (aside from trees to be felled) should be undertaken in the summer months (July and August) avoiding periods of drought. No tree pruning work is advisable during the period immediately before or after leaf break (February to June) when the trees' energy reserves are most depleted.

Chippings arising from the work should not be piled around the bases of trees on or off the site. Wood, brash and any other arisings from the tree work should not be burnt on site.

When undertaking tree work, you are advised to use a properly qualified and experienced company who carry Public and Products Liability Insurance with a minimum of £2,000,000 cover and the relevant Employers Liability Insurance. A List of approved contractors is available from the Arboricultural Association – www.trees.org.uk.

3.2 PROTECTED SPECIES

In accordance with the Wildlife and Countryside Act - 1981, Conservation - Natural Habitats-Regulations 1994 and Countryside Rights of Way Act - 2000, you must consider the timing and type of tree work operations including hedge pruning to avoid causing disturbance to any nesting or breeding birds or bat roosts that may be present within trees and hedgerows.

It is an offence (subject to exceptions) to intentionally kill, injure, or take, possess, or trade in any wild animal listed, and prohibits interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places.

Non-urgent major tree work involving tree removal or reduction and hedge cutting operations should not be undertaken during the bird nesting or breeding season, which is considered to be from 1 March to 31 July. However, depending on seasonal temperatures, some birds continue breeding into August and September.

All wild birds, their young, their eggs and active nests are protected under law. It is an offence to damage a nest intentionally while it is in use or being built. Tree work where birds are nesting is highly likely to damage nests or cause them to be deserted.

3.3 FUNGAL DECAY

Trees can be colonised by a number of decay-causing fungal pathogens which usually degrade wood around the roots or base of the tree. As many decay fungi fruit only annually, their presence may not always be apparent in a seasonal tree survey.

Tree owners are therefore advised to monitor the ground where trees may be rooting. Any unusual fungal growths around any tree should be photographed and forwarded to a professional arborist for identification. The fungal fruiting body should be left in situ to mature (for identification purposes).

4. LIMITATIONS

4.1 SCOPE

T1 (Holm Oak) and T2 (Horse Chestnut) have been looked at in detail using the 'Diagnosis of Ill Health in trees' and Inspecting Trees for Signs of Decay' methodologies described by R.G. Strouts and T.G. Winter¹.

My visual assessment is a non-invasive method of examining the health and structural condition of a tree. Non-invasive inspection equipment (plastic-headed mallet and metal probe) were used to make an assessment of the structural integrity at the base and trunk of the tree where the visual inspection identified the need. The lower trunks of each tree was tapped with a plastic-headed mallet to check for acoustic indication of internal decay. The differing sound intonation can often reveal some types of decay or hollow trunks.

The survey is to identify visible defects on the trees and to specify any necessary remedial tree works which may be required to address identified hazards from the trees whilst acknowledging and respecting their significance to the local area.

The report refers to the condition of tree(s) and an assessment of the site on the days the evaluation was undertaken. The trees were assessed from ground level only and were not climbed.

4.2 CAVEATS

The extent of the survey was limited to a visual inspection of 1x Holm Oak and 1x Horse Chestnut tree as viewed from ground level only.

The survey looks for defects which may make the failure of all or part of the tree foreseeable. The report then makes recommendations for remedial works which would reduce the probability of failure where the hazard presented poses an unacceptable risk to persons or property. The report is valid for normal weather conditions only. Healthy trees or parts of healthy trees may fail in normal weather situations, although the risk increases with storm conditions and, as the consequences of such weather events are unforeseeable, Sarah Duckworth (trading as Duckworth's Arboriculture Limited) cannot be held liable for any such failures.

Trees are dynamic living organisms subject to change, whose health and condition can be subject to significant change influenced by internal and external factors. The assessment, conclusions and recommendations from the report are based on the condition of the tree and surrounding ground conditions at the time of my visit. If the condition of the tree evidently changes or where tree(s) are subject to development or ground works within their rooting areas or extreme weather conditions, further inspection may be required.

¹ R.G Strouts & T.G. Winter, 'Diagnosis of Ill Health in Trees' Published for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, under license from the Controller of her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright 1994.

This report is not a structural report, and it does not consider the structural integrity of the property and its use as such is invalid.

It is the client's responsibility to ensure that this report covers all areas under the brief of the tree inspection and refer any concerns regarding this matter back to the Arboricultural Consultant.

The report is for the sole use of the client – Emily Plews and may be forwarded to the owner of T2 [REDACTED] The report can be submitted to the Local Authority in support of a tree works application. Its reproduction or use by anyone else is forbidden unless written consent is given by the author.

This report is valid for two years from the survey date. Further inspection is recommended prior to 24th July 2027.

Trees can never be guaranteed 100% safe. Regular inspections by competent and / or suitably qualified arboriculturists will help identify potential problems before they become acute.



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5. ARBORICULTURAL INSPECTION DATA

Tree Ownership			Site Address					
Emily Plews			8 South Drive, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2DH					
Tree Number		T1		Tree Species			Age	Mature
Diameter:		630mm, 720mm @1.5m	Height:	17m	Canopy spread	N: 7m	E: 7.5m	S: 10m W: 6.5m

SITUATION:

Mature Oak in circular soft landscaped bed in centre of driveway. Spotlights in ground around base.

Raised bed has an approximate radius of 2.5m edged with sleepers & brick pavers. Driveway beyond raised bed is surfaced with gravel.

T1 (Holm Oak) is currently fenced off due to ongoing garage construction works. Fence panels were released temporarily for this tree survey.

BASE:

Historic damage to buttress root on north and south side of trunk. Good wound wood formation. Elsewhere - base clear, bark intact.

No fungal fruiting bodies evident. Hammer test / sound intonation even and satisfactory. No audible decay. Deeply fluted trunk with bark lined ingresses on all sides.

STEM & UNIONS:

Twin stem from 1m. Branch fork is a well-formed 'cup' style union which is supported by raised ridge on north side of fork. Organic matter built up in fork which cannot be probed deeper than 100mm.

Cavity on east side 1.2-1.8m 400mm diameter associated with previous branch removal, Active decay present. Limited wound wood formation. Wound cannot be probed for beyond cavity (500mm deep).

CANOPY:

Canopy formed of 5 main stems. High broad, asymmetrical crown. No sign of separation or gaps in the crown which could indicate separation of stems / trunks. Multiple cavities on branches and stems throughout the crown associated with previous pruning cuts

Canopy previously reduced with mature growth on previous reduction points. Foliage density normal - slightly denser on south side towards dwelling.

DISCUSSION:

T1 is a healthy mature Oak growing in a prominent location at the front of 8 South Drive. There are no visible defects or decay evident around the tree's base. The tree is slightly undermined by the weaker, multi-stem form; however, the forks are currently in a reasonable condition and are showing no sign of separation.

The physiological health of the tree varies across the crown. Branches on the southern side of the crown are elongated and are more heavily weighted than in other areas. Minor works are therefore recommended to selectively reduce the lateral spread on the south side of the tree only in order to reduce the weight of the branches and asymmetry of the tree's canopy.

Recommended Tree Works: - Crown lift 5m over private driveway of 8 South Drive - Selectively thin and reduce branch tips on the south side of crown by up to 2m to reduce on weight / exposure of dense branches on south side of crown.	Priority	Within 6 months
	Re-inspection due	24 Months
	Date	24 th July 2025

Tree Ownership				Site Address	7 South Drive, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 2DH				
Tree Number		T2		Tree Species	Horse Chestnut (<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>)			Age	Mature
Diameter:	1100mm @1.5m	Height:	20m	Canopy spread	N: 6.5m	E: 10m	S: 8m	W: 6.5m	

SITUATION: Tree growing in lawn area of the garden of 7 South Drive, adjacent to the boundary of 8 South Drive. Within the garden of 8 South Drive the rooting area of the tree has been covered with gravel which I am advised has been laid directly over a porous horticultural fleece.

BASE: Pronounced buttress roots on all sides. Deeply fluted trunk. Rapid-growth vertical bark expansion scars on several ridges.

Base clear, bark intact, hammer test even and satisfactory, no fungal fruiting bodies evident or audible decay.

STEM & UNIONS: Slight bulging at 2m with areas of bud proliferation and light epicormic shoots.

Bleeding canker at ground level and on rapid growth expansion scar west side of trunk to fork 5m above ground level. Twin stems from 5.5m.

Multiple vertical cracks and ribs of wound wood formation on trunk – this feature is not uncommon for species. However, there are two large and very significant wounds on bark either side of fork with large ribs of new wood (10-12cm diameter) – this feature could indicate decay or the possible early failure of the stem fork. Further investigation of these features is recommended. Two large stems above fork approximately 600mm diameter.

CANOPY: Broad crown. Foliage dense and even. *Cameraria ohridella* – Horse Chestnut Leaf Minor Moth on foliage throughout crown.

Rope tied around side branch on west side of crown likely to girdle branch as the branch grows wider and the rope restricts growth.

Broken branch on southeast side of crown approximately 8m above ground level over the garden of 8 South Drive. The broken branch was approximately 300mm diameter leaving broken stump 2m long.

Elongated branch on east side 6m above ground level with a raised ridge close to where it joins the trunk. This feature indicates a possible internal crack / sheer of internal wood fibres. This elongated limb is undulating in form (not straight). The branch extends beyond the surrounding crown and in this location is exposed to greater wind loading. The branch has a higher risk of failure.

Low pendulous crown to 2.5m above ground level formed of slender secondary/ tertiary branches under 50mm diameter.

DISCUSSION:

The Horse Chestnut has previously shed a branch over the garden of 8 South Drive and there are valid concerns that an adjacent branch elongated is similarly undermined by a split close to the branch collar. Works are recommended to reduce this limb to reduce the weight of the branch and risk of the fracture spreading or breaking completely.

A climbing inspection to assess the structure and condition of the main fork should also be undertaken prior to any remedial pruning works. If the climbing inspection identifies any weakness in the main fork greater works may need to be carried out (such as a reduction of the whole canopy).

Recommended Tree Works: - Remove rope around branch on west side of crown - Climbing inspection of fork@ 5.5m above ground level - Crown lift to create 5m canopy clearance over garden of 8 South drive - Reduce tips of extended branch on east side of crown back to form-from 10-6.5m radius	Priority	Within 6 months
	Re-inspection due	24 Months
	Date	24 th July 2025

6. GALLERY



Photo 1 – T1 (Holm Oak) Indicative line of proposed reduction of denser elongated branch tips on south side of canopy



Photo 2 – T1 (Holm Oak) historic pruning cuts and cavity on trunk



Photo 3 – T1 (Holm Oak) historic pruning cuts and cavities in crown



Photo 4 – T2 (Horse Chestnut) rapid growth bark cracks on trunk

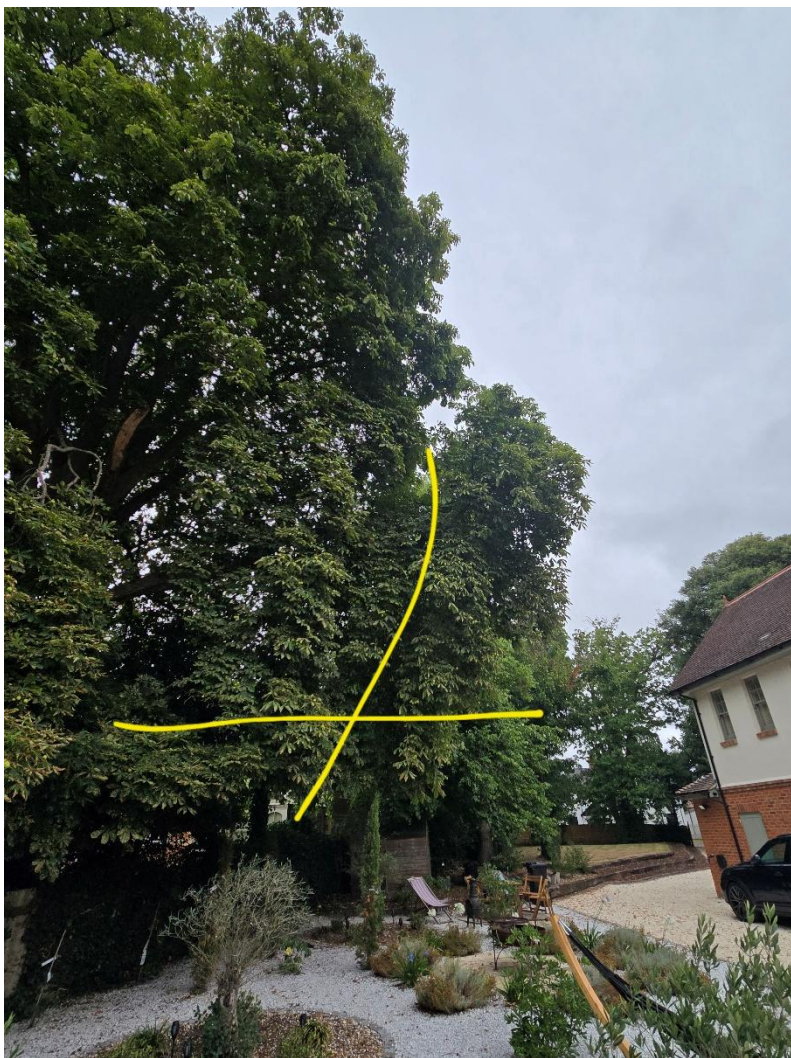


Photo 5 – T2 (Horse Chestnut) indicative line of proposed lateral reduction



Photo 6 – T2 (Horse Chestnut) broken branch, and raised ridge indicating internal split on lower branch

7. SITE PLAN

