

DUCKWORTHS
ARBORICULTURE LTD.

ARBORICULTURAL REPORT

TREE CONDITION SURVEY

ALEXANDRA COURT AND THE COURTYARD
DENMARK STREET
WOKINGHAM
BERKSHIRE

DECEMBER 2022

Ref: SCD 05966/ 2022

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2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Instruction

This Arboricultural Report has been commissioned by Natasha Woodrow of Grass and Grounds Ltd.

I have been asked to inspect the following trees growing at Alexandra Court and The Courtyard, Denmark Street, Wokingham, Berkshire.

Tree works have been prioritised according to the hazards identified and taking into account the presence of high-risk areas.

The report is to specify any necessary remedial tree works to address identified hazards from the trees whilst acknowledging and respecting their significance to amenity of the playing fields.

2.2 Inspection information

The trees were inspected on Thursday 9th December 2022 by Sarah Duckworth, Arboricultural Consultant.

The weather clear and bright. Visibility was good.

Trees were inspected from ground level only. Non-invasive inspection equipment (mallet and metal probe) were used to assess the structural integrity at the base and trunk of the trees where the visual inspection identified the need.

The trees are growing a 'high' occupancy area on land with unrestricted public access throughout the year and in all weathers.

2.3 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
- Consulting Arborist Society (CAS) Member and LANTRA endorsed 'Mortgage (Home Buyer) Tree Reports' Consultant.

2.4 Insurance

Sarah Duckworth t/a Duckworth's Arboriculture is insured with Hiscox Insurance

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

2.5 Statutory Tree Protection

TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

I have confirmed with the Wokingham Borough Council Mapping portal that at the time of this report, the trees are not subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

CONSERVATION AREAS

All areas surveyed are within the Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area. The Conservation Area designation affords a certain level of protection to the trees on site.

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 Borough Council 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.

FELLING LICENCES

Outside of domestic gardens, you must first apply to the Forestry Commission for a felling licence if you want to cut down trees containing more than five cubic metres of wood in any calendar quarter. However, there are exceptions to this rule. For example, you do not need a licence to felling trees in enclosed gardens or removing dead or dangerous trees.

2.6 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 and 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 and hedge cutting is highly likely to damage nests or cause them to be deserted.

2.7 Ivy

Ivy is an attractive habitat for insects and invertebrates and consequently bird and animal life can benefit as a result of an increase in available food source. Bats, which are rare and protected by law regularly roost amongst ivy, as well as inside small cavities in suitable trees. Ivy growth is not a threat to the health of otherwise healthy trees; however, it does obscure the base, trunk and forks of trees.

Defects present on trees can be hidden by ivy and dense vegetation. It was beyond the scope of this survey to clear ivy and vegetation from around all trees and the client is advised that where present, climbing plants and dense vegetation may obscure trunk defects.

I have specified for the removal of ivy from the base of individual trees if the visual appearance of the tree (its structural form or canopy vitality) meant a more detailed inspection of the lower trunks and forks is prudent.

When severing established ivy it is important to use sharp hand tools only. Ivy stems should be cut at ground level and 1.5m, taking care not to damage the tree bark. Cut stems should then be removed to height of 1.5m. The ivy growth above 1.5m can be left in the canopy (unless it obscures another necessary point of inspection) from where it will die back and eventually fall from the tree.

2.8 Management of Ash Dieback

Ash trees are susceptible to Ash Dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) a new disease which is spreading through the country. Many parts of the UK are now affected by Ash dieback to various degrees and the future of the species is uncertain.

Experience in continental Europe, which is now being seen replicated in the UK, indicates that Ash dieback can kill young and coppiced ash trees quite quickly. However, older trees can resist it for some time until prolonged exposure, or another pest or pathogen, such as Armillaria (honey fungus), attacking them in their weakened state eventually causes them to succumb. There is no known cure.

Current management guidelines from Forest Research (Great Britain's principal organisation for forestry and tree related research) confirmed that a landowner is not legally required to take any particular action if you own infected ash trees, unless your country forestry or plant health authority serves you with a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN) requiring action. This is unlikely.

With the exceptions of felling for public safety or timber production, Forest Research recommend a general presumption against felling living ash trees, whether infected or not. This is because there is good evidence that a small proportion will be able to tolerate an Ash Dieback infection. There is also the possibility that a proportion of ash trees can become diseased, but then recover to good health. These trees, would be valuable for research.

Public safety is the priority, and tree owners are advised to keep an eye on the condition of their Ash trees. Trees should be pruned or removed if they or their branches threaten to cause injury or damage. In particular, monitor for basal lesions (lesions, or cankers, forming near the bottom of the trunk), which can weaken the trunk and make the tree more prone to falling.

2.9 Tree Work Good Practice:

All tree works specified should be undertaken in accordance with BS:3998 2010 'Tree Work Recommendations'.

In order to limit the harm to trees caused by the pruning operations, pruning work on live trees 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.

You are advised to use a properly qualified and experienced company who will be employed 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.

2.10 Scope

The trees were inspected on 3rd November 2022 by Sarah Duckworth, LANTRA Qualified Professional Tree Inspector. On the day of the survey the weather was dry and sunny. Visibility was satisfactory.

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.

Private properties were not accessed or included in the survey. Fences where present on site have been taken as the presumed site boundary. 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.

2.11 Caveats

The trees have been looked at in detail using the Visual Tree Assessment¹ the basis of which is the identification of symptoms produced by a tree in reaction to a defect, or area of mechanical stress. VTA is a non-invasive method of examining the health and structural condition of an individual trees. No invasive / destructive tests have been undertaken. I have not taken any soil or root samples for analysis.

Non-invasive inspection equipment (mallet and metal probe) were used to make an assessment of the structural integrity at the base and trunk of the trees where the visual inspection identified the need.

This report is a baseline survey and reflects the condition of the trees on the day of the survey. Due to the high level of occupancy of the site in all weathers and the significant number of mature trees, regular inspections are recommended within 24 months or as recommended in the most recent survey. Between survey dates, trees will continue to be viewed and informally monitored by grounds maintenance teams. In the event of any changes or decline in condition of the trees, or presence of new fungal growths etc., the advice of a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant should be sought.

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) 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 trees and surrounding ground conditions at the time of my visit. If the condition of the trees 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.

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

¹ Mattheck and Breloer 1994

3 TREE SURVEY DATA

Ref:	Species	Location	Measurements	Survey Notes	Condition	Inspect Period	Recommendations
T001	False Acacia (Robinia pseudoacacia)	Within central courtyard. Pedestrian access in all weathers.	Height (m): 13 Crown Radius (m): 7.6 DBH (cm): 35 Stems: 4 Life Stage: Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	Tree growing in low level raised brick landscape bed. Roots cracking wall and lifting paving slabs. Restricted roots visible circling edge of retaining wall. Four stems from ground level. Areas of included bark to 2m above ground level. Base and trunks partially obscured by dense ivy growth. Where accessible bark intact. No fungal fruiting bodies evident or audible decay. Entwined trunks improve support and connection between stems. Canopy has been previously reduced with 1-3m growth on old cuts. Declining secondary branch stub on east side of canopy with bark wounds and low vitality. Bud distribution in remaining canopy dense and even, indicating reasonable physiological health. Less than 0.3m clearance between branch tips and neighbouring building. Deadwood in central canopy.	Fair	2 Years	- Sever ivy using sharp hand tools. - Crown lift north to east quadrant of canopy removing small branches back to source to a height of 5-6m to create reasonable clearance to office building - Remove deadwood and declining secondary branch stub on east side of canopy. Timescale: 09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)
T002	Cockspur Thorn (Crataegus crus-galli)	Within raised brick bed adjacent to pedestrian walkway. Pedestrian access in all weathers.	Height (m): 5 Crown Radius (m): 3.6 DBH (cm): 30 Life Stage: Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	Well-formed small but mature ornamental tree. Light ivy growth around lower trunk. Base clear, bark intact. No fungal fruiting bodies evident or audible decay. Single stem to 2m. Broad pendulous canopy. Bud distribution dense and even. 0.5m clearance to building. Upper canopy previously reduced with 1m growth on previous reduction points.	Good	3 Years	Cut back southeast side of canopy to create 1m clearance to building, grading cuts into the surrounding canopy to create a natural looking canopy shape. Timescale: 09-Dec-2024 (2 Years)
T003	Ash (Fraxinus oxycarpa)	Raised brick bed and pedestrian precinct. Pedestrian access in all weathers.	Height (m): 12 Crown Radius (m): 5 DBH (cm): 24 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	Young tree in brick raised planter. Base partially obscured by viburnum shrubs. Retaining wall of brick planter cracked and displaced. Where accessible base clear, bark intact. Single stem to 2m. Broad canopy formed of several long, extended branches. No dominant leader. One side branch has shed a long secondary branch around 4.5m long & 50mm diameter - now resting on ground. Bud distribution dense and even. No obvious symptoms of Ash Dieback (as viewed out of leaf). No major deadwood. Bird nest in canopy. 0.5m clearance of branch tips to neighbouring building.	Fair	1 Year	- Remove low branch with wound where branch failed back to trunk. - Obtain structural advice on the management of the brick planter – roots appear to be the most obvious cause of brick damage. Works may be required to fell and replace Ash trees to allow necessary repairs to take place. Timescale: 09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)

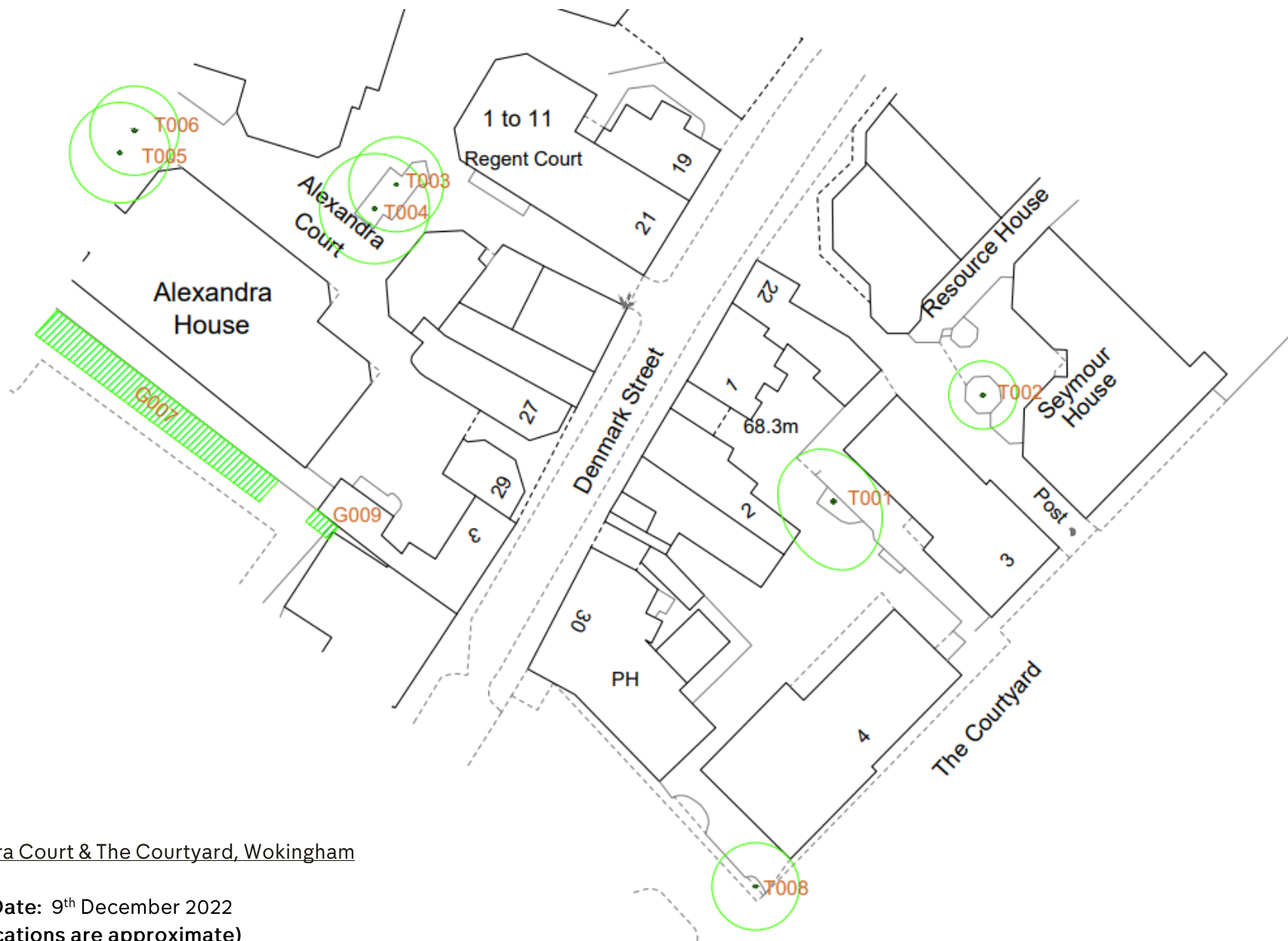
Ref:	Species	Location	Measurements	Survey Notes	Condition	Inspect Period	Recommendations
T004	Ash (Fraxinus oxycarpa)	Raised brick bed and pedestrian precinct. Pedestrian access in all weathers.	Height (m): 12 Crown Radius (m): 5.8 DBH (cm): 30 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	Young tree in brick raised planter. Base obscured by viburnum shrubs. Retaining wall of brick planter significantly cracked and displaced. Where accessible base clear, bark intact. Single stem to 1.8m. Broad, asymmetrical canopy formed of a number of long extended branches. No dominant leader. Large low limb on south side of canopy. Bud distribution dense and even. No obvious symptoms of Ash Dieback (as viewed out of leaf). Minor deadwood.	Fair	2 Years	- Remove deadwood. - Selectively thin and lift tips of large branch on south side to reduce weight of branch and rush if breakage. - Obtain structural advice on the management of the brick planter – roots appear to be the most obvious cause of brick damage. Works may be required to fell and replace Ash trees to allow necessary repairs to take place. Timescale: 09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)
T005	Ash (Fraxinus oxycarpa)	Raised brick bed and pedestrian precinct. Pedestrian access in all weathers.	Height (m): 12 Crown Radius (m): 5.3 DBH (cm): 27 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	Young tree in brick raised planter. Base clear, bark intact. Single stem to 1.8m. historic wound on main trunk fully occluded. Hammer first even, no evidence of decay. Poorly occluded wound and stub cut on trunk from previous branch removal. Suppressed, asymmetrical canopy formed of three long extended branches. No dominant leader. Bud distribution dense and even. No obvious symptoms of Ash Dieback (as viewed out of leaf). Some dead small branches over parking spaces.	Fair	2 Years	Remove deadwood. Timescale: 09-Dec-2023 (1 Year)
T006	Ash (Fraxinus oxycarpa)	Raised brick bed, parking area and pedestrian precinct. Pedestrian access in all weathers.	Height (m): 12 Crown Radius (m): 4.7 DBH (cm): 29 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	Young tree in brick raised planter. Base clear, bark intact. No fungal fruiting bodies evident. Fibre buckling around lower trunk. Small pruning cuts partially occluded on trunk from previous works to raise canopy. Vertical growth but no dominant leader. Bud distribution dense and even. No obvious symptoms of Ash Dieback (as viewed out of leaf). Minor deadwood mostly over raised bed.	Fair	2 Years	Remove deadwood. Timescale: 09-Dec-2023 (1 Year)
G007	Sycamore x5 (Acer pseudoplatanus)	Offsite linear group Pedestrian access in all weathers.	Height (m): 13 Crown Radius (m): 4 DBH (cm): 40 Trees: 5 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 40+ Years	Within neighbouring property. Ivy clad group. Outer branch tips close to property.	Fair	2 Years	Cut back to create 2m clearance to building. Timescale: 09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)

Ref:	Species	Location	Measurements	Survey Notes	Condition	Inspect Period	Recommendations
T008	Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)	Small landscape bed adjacent to car park and car path access.	Height (m): 10 Crown Radius (m): 4.6 DBH (cm): 28 Life Stage: Mature Life Exp.: 40+ Years	Single stem, base clear bark intact. Base displacing kerb. No fungal fruiting bodies evident. Single stem to 1.5m. stem fork well formed. No defects around lower trunk. Low branches over highway caused by regeneration of cut branch. Bird nest in this area. Woolly aphids on underside of low branches. Broad canopy obscuring light and close to building	Fair	2 Years	• Selectively reduce on building side and Street light area by up to 2m to clear structures. • Pollard low regeneration shoots over highway to create 5m canopy clearance over highway. • Remove deadwood. Timescale: 09-Dec-2023 (1 Year)
G009	Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)	Offsite	Height (m): 13 Crown Radius (m): 4 DBH (cm): 40 Trees: 5 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 40+ Years	Offsite. Growing directly adjacent to building. Tree unsustainable in the long-term in this location without risk of damage to building.	Fair	2 Years	Liaise with owner to agree removal of trees and treatment of stumps Timescale: 09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)

4 TREE WORKS IN ORDER OF PRIORITY

Ref:	Species	Recommendations	Work Timescale
T001	False Acacia (Robinia pseudoacacia)	• Sever ivy using sharp hand tools. • Crown lift north to east quadrant of canopy removing small branches back to source to a height of 5-6m to create reasonable clearance to office building • Remove deadwood and declining secondary branch stub on east side of canopy.	09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)
T003	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	• Remove low branch with wound where branch failed back to trunk. • Obtain structural advice on the management of the brick planter – roots appear to be the most obvious cause of brick damage. Works may be required to fell and replace Ash trees to allow necessary repairs to take place.	09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)
T004	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	• Remove deadwood. • Selectively thin and lift tips of large branch on south side to reduce weight of branch and risk of breakage. • Obtain structural advice on the management of the brick planter – roots appear to be the most obvious cause of brick damage. Works may be required to fell and replace Ash trees to allow necessary repairs to take place.	09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)
G007	Sycamore x5 (Acer pseudoplatanus)	Cut back to create 2m clearance to building.	09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)
G009	Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)	Liaise with owner to agree removal of trees and treatment of stumps	09-Jun-2023 (6 Months)
T005	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	Remove deadwood.	09-Dec-2023 (1 Year)
T006	Common Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	Remove deadwood.	09-Dec-2023 (1 Year)
T008	Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)	• Selectively reduce on building side and Street light area by up to 2m to clear structures. • Pollard low regeneration shoots over highway to create 5m canopy clearance over highway. • Remove deadwood.	09-Dec-2023 (1 Year)
T002	Cockspur Thorn (Crataegus crus-galli)	Cut back southeast side of canopy to create 1m clearance to building, grading cuts into the surrounding canopy to create a natural looking canopy shape.	09-Dec-2024 (2 Years)

5 TREE LOCATION PLAN



Alexandra Court & The Courtyard, Wokingham

Survey Date: 9th December 2022
(Tree locations are approximate)