

Tree report P 080.003

22 April 2025

**Strowdes Estate
Culham Lane boundary trees**

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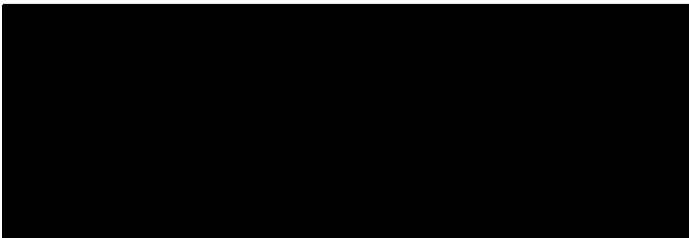


for and on behalf of
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Table of contents

1	Report limitations	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Terms of reference	1
4	The tree survey	2
5	Proposed works	3
6	Summary	3
	Appendix A – tree survey extent based on aerial photograph	4
	Appendix B - tree survey plan	5
	Appendix C – photos	6



Jonathan Hazell
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1 Report limitations

- 1 I have prepared this report as an experienced arboriculturist, and the report relates to the conditions that were found at the time of the assessment and represents a considered analysis of my observations following an external assessment of the trees from ground level only. Therefore, my conclusions, and any recommendations flowing from those conclusions, may be subject to review upon the receipt of new information.
- 2 My report is not, nor should be taken to be, a thorough assessment of the health and condition of all the trees on or adjacent to the site.
- 3 During the assessment limited dimensional data was recorded, and notes of any significant observations were made, and photographs were taken of the all the trees of interest. Gross defects and symptoms of interest were noted and prioritised recommendations for management intervention were made.
- 4 Because trees are dynamic and self-optimising living structures that respond and adapt to external stimuli, such as the availability of daylight, water and nutrients, the prevailing wind, the presence of pollutants or toxins, and to extreme weather events such as storms, this report can only remain valid for two years from the date of issue.
- 5 A local storm event, such as force 7 or above on the Beaufort Scale, within two years from the date of issue of this report would render this assessment invalid and the tree survey should be repeated to assess whether the trees' condition had altered and whether any remedial work may be necessary.

2 Introduction

- 6 The client for this report was Beau Bespoke, 2 Mill Street, Mayfair, London, W1S 2AT.
- 7 The agreed brief was to carry out a walk-over assessment of the trees on the Culham Lane boundary of the Strowdes Estate, known to be a Wokingham Borough Council asset although the direct management of the land is not verified, and because the trees are included in a Tree Preservation Order, prepare a report to accompany an application to undertake tree management works.
- 8 **Tree report P 080.003** was dated **22 April 2025**.
- 9 The appendices to this report are:
 - **Appendix A**, tree survey extent based on aerial photograph,
 - **Appendix B**, tree survey plan, and
 - **Appendix C**, site photos.

3 Terms of reference

- 10 The terms of reference were to address the concerns raised by Beau Bespoke on behalf of their client on 17 March 2025:

As discussed, we are very concerned about the safety of members of the public on foot, travelling in motor vehicles and our clients boundary fencing arising from the poor condition of a number of trees located on Local Authority property along Culham Lane. In recent months large limbs have detached from some of these trees, fallen onto the public footpath and resulted in damage to our client's boundary fencing (please see attached photo of the most recent occurrence).





- 11 The property boundary was defined by the metal estate railing fence, the land between the highway kerb and the fence was the responsibility of WBC.
- 12 Beau Bespoke have been happy to tidy the fallen material on behalf of their client, and would also be willing to expedite the delivery of the works proposed here by instructing their own resources to undertake the works, should they be approved.
- 13 A walk-over assessment, as defined in the second edition of “Common sense risk management of trees” published by the National Tree Safety Group <https://ntsgroup.org.uk/> was considered to be adequate for the purpose:

Walk-over assessments primarily involve checking trees and are undertaken on foot. They are an effective method for checking trees over a wide area (or along a considerable length of road) from accessible viewpoints to identify if there is a need for further investigation or safety management. The time devoted to each tree, when undertaking checks, is brief, taking minutes (or even seconds) rather than hours. The procedure, based on visual tree assessment, involves viewing a tree in the context of its overall condition and its setting. The initial check may identify issues calling for a closer assessment of the base, trunk and crown. This may involve tapping and probing tree features that can be reached from ground level. It may not be possible to observe each tree from every aspect (due to undergrowth, ivy, hedges, walls or property boundaries). Before progressing to a higher level of inspection, a judgement is needed as to the likely importance of additional information that might be gained. Walk-over assessments make a significant nationwide contribution to reasonable, cost-effective tree risk management where large numbers of trees are involved (including roadside populations where risk is potentially highest).

4 The tree survey

- 14 The walk-over assessment was limited to those trees along Culham Lane, and noted a number of trees of concern, for example:



- 22 ash trees were assessed, and they were seen to be in varying states of health: using the Tree Council's classification¹ they ranged from **Class 2** (75% - 51% of the crown remaining), see photo 1, to **Class 4** (25% - 0% of the crown remaining), see photo 2,
- of the several holm oak trees that were seen, one at least had extensive decay, see photos 3 to 6,
- the oak tree that had recently shed a limb had a collapsing and imbalanced crown with the bias of the weight now over the highway, see photo 7,
- a second oak had a split beam, and fallen limbs, see photos 8 and 9,
- there was an oak tree that had lost its leader with a potential column of decay suggesting that the limb attachments may be compromised, see photo 10,
- a dead sycamore, possibly as a result of sooty bark disease, see photo 11,
- one roadside whitebeam missing a considerable amount of bark, see photo 12, and
- one of the roadside yew trees had significant dieback, see photo 13.

- 15 I understand that Mike Pearce, Team Leader Operational Tree Management for WBC, is aware of the suggestion that Beau Bespoke submit this application and undertake the approved works at their cost and arrangement.

5 Proposed works

- 16 For the purpose of this application the works proposed are
- 1 22 Ash to remove and stump grind (some are multi-stemmed)
 - 2 1 Sycamore to remove
 - 3 1 Sorbus Whitebeam to remove
 - 4 1 Oak to remove
 - 5 Deadwood and stub tidying on 1 Oak, 1 Sycamore,

- 17 The proposals are shown on the tree survey plan.

6 Summary

- 18 From the walk-over assessment that has been carried out, and the recent history of branch failure, It would appear that a programme of tree work is required to reduce the risk of branch or tree failure to as low as reasonably practicable so that all parties can be seen to be discharging their duty of care.
- 19 Some of the trees are within the Strowdes Estate, but the majority are on land under the responsibility of WBC, and all are included in Tree Preservation Order 0345 dating from 1987 as Area 1.
- 20 Despite the differences in ownership, Beau Bespoke would be content to instruct their own resources to undertake the approved works.

1 Ash dieback disease – A guide for tree owners, June 2020
treecouncil.org.uk/guidance-resources/ash-dieback-disease-a-guide-for-tree-owners/

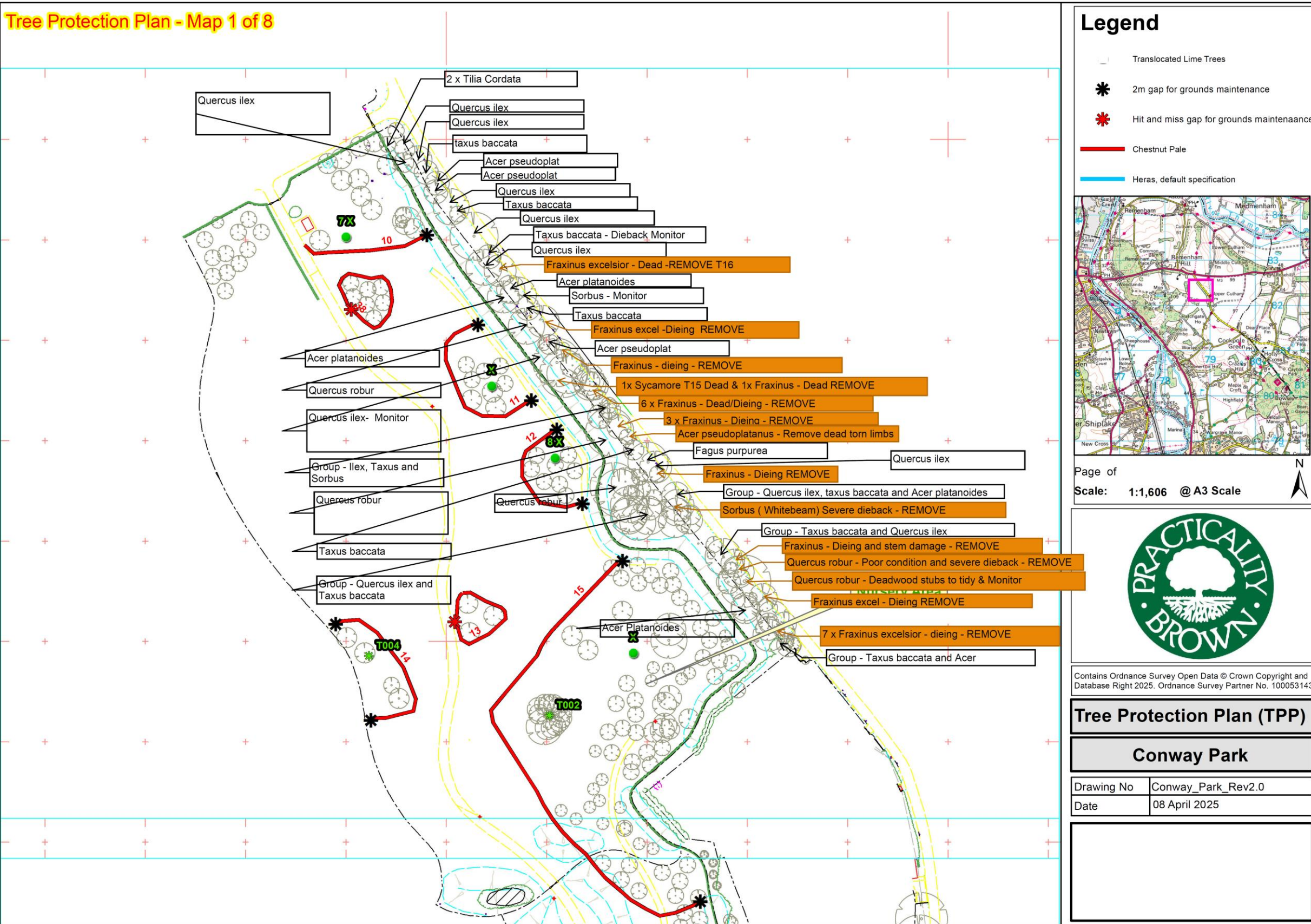


Appendix A – tree survey extent based on aerial photograph



Appendix B - tree survey plan

Tree Protection Plan - Map 1 of 8



Appendix C – photos



Photo 1
roadside ash tree group, ash dieback class 2 to class 4



Photo 2
roadside ash tree, ash dieback class 4





Photo 3
one of the several holm oak trees



Photo 4
tear-out wound in close-up





Photo 5
basal decay on the holm oak



Photo 6
basal decay on the holm oak





Photo 7
one of the roadside oaks, with a collapsing crown



Photo 8
oak tree with split beam





Photo 9
a second view of the split limb



Photo 10
oak with lost leader and column of decay





Photo 11
dead sycamore and leaning ash tree



Photo 12
roadside whitebeam with extensive dieback





Photo 13
roadside yew with extensive dieback

