

ARBORICULTURAL ASSESSMENT OF 63-65 HIGH STREET, MARKET LAVINGTON, SN10 4ES

Carried out by Matthew Rowden for Deborah and Mark
Doust (applicants and homeowners).

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ROWDEN
TREESCAPES

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3. INSTRUCTION

This report is to survey one tree on the site for the potential to cause damage and/or harm for insurance and liability. I refer to the current guidance set out within NTSG Common sense risk management of trees 2011 to enable the duty holder to have discharged their duty of care.

The risks that I have assessed are: Likelihood of damage to property (indirect or contact), tree failure through structures, and personal harm or injury. I have been instructed by Deborah and Mark Doust in the wake of a withdrawn section 211 notice where it was advised that in light of insufficient evidence, the LPA might consider a tree protection order for the tree.

4. LIMITATIONS

This survey is valid for 3 - 5 years (adhering to the guidance set out in NTSG 2011). I must be kept in direct supervision of the site at all times in regards to all arboricultural matters in order for the findings in this report to remain valid.

The site was inspected using the VTA method as outlined in Mattheck and Breloer 1994. No detailed decay detection has been carried out.

No soil analysis has been carried out: assumptions have been made based on data from the BGS, and the species that grow in that area.

5. SITE DETAILS

The site is a 0.5 hectare area, with a structure that was built in the 1830s - 1890s, predating any NHBC guidelines relevant to trees in proximity to structures.

The soil conditions are listed by the BGS as: "Shaftesbury Sandstone Member-Sandstone. These sedimentary rocks are shallow-marine in origin. They are detrital, ranging from coarse- to fine-grained (locally with some carbonate content) forming interbedded sequences."

6. LEGAL RESTRICTIONS

The tree falls within the curtilage of the conservation area for Littleton Panell. When a section 211 notice was previously filed to fell the tree, objections were raised by the parish council, and there were murmurings that in the absence of sufficient evidence, the LPA might make a TPO for the tree. The notice was subsequently withdrawn prior to my appointment.

7. PROPOSALS

This report aims to provide sufficient evidence to justify the felling of the tree which shall hereby be known as Tree 1, a western red cedar located to the front of the property. It is important to note that due to the constraints of a conservation area, the applicant is **not** obligated to provide justification for the tree to be felled, but to provide notice of intent to do so. With this in mind, this report's brief is simply to highlight that the tree is entirely undeserving of a tree preservation order being made for it.

8. DRAWINGS AND DOCUMENTS

The client has not provided any ancillary drawings or documents. I have obtained a plan from the ordnance survey that shows the tree location, plotted in a 1:200 scale at A3.

9. SUMMARY

Tree 1 exhibits significant structural defects in the form of included unions in the lower branch structure and main stem that make its retention as a protected tree unjustifiable. It is neither high amenity nor highly visible, has very little cultural or rarity value, nor does it have a specific landscape or character value for that particular conservation area. Combined with the obvious structural defects, these factors render the tree undeserving of a TPO, and the applicants hereby serve a section 211 notice of intent to fell the tree.

10. FINDINGS (PLEASE SEE APPENDIX 1 FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS)

Root plate and buttresses

1. The tree has caused moderate damage to the driveway, with an upward elevation of 100mm and cracking falling into BRE category 2.
2. It is likely that this damage will worsen over time: tree roots like to push between layers of soil and hard surfacing strata due to the warmer temperatures and condensation layers that go with it.
3. The secondary growth of the lateral roots of this tree, combined with the notorious shallow rooting characteristics of western red cedar, suggest that this will be an ongoing issue.

Main stem

4. Ivy obscures view of the buttresses in some areas, although the secondary growth around the buttresses is well formed and there are no defects at ground level.
5. Moving up the stem, the first issues are an included union that runs from 2-5m between the two co-dominant stems, followed by further included unions at 6m where the stems then branch out into 5 co-dominant stems.
6. Based on research by Kane et al. 2008 and Smiley et al. 2003, these unions have been shown to be up to 60% weaker than a properly formed union. The top of the unions do not form a layer of axillary wood that interlocks the xylem function, and wind shear failure is common with whole stems. The underside of the union also produces inadequate secondary growth, often due to things such as a natural brace or close grown woodland trees.
7. Further research has been carried out by D. Slater, but his studies have been primarily confined to hazel forks. Based on the pull testing by Kane and Smiley, the likelihood of one of the two stems failing at a height of 3-5m is elevated due to the presence of this defect.

Canopy vitality and spread

8. The canopy exhibits vitality that could at best be described as “fair”.
9. It is not particularly dense, and there is some necrosis of the needles in the upper canopy.
10. The front of the structure is listed within the Local Plan, and is subject to significant shading constraints from the tree, due to its location to the north east aspect of T1.

TPO justification

11. The above findings highlight the clearly visible defects of the tree, which are enough to demonstrate a foreseeability of failure in the future. To serve a TPO on a tree that has a glaringly obvious physical defect, fails to keep the risks posed by the tree to a level that is as low as reasonably practicable. That said, there are also other significant reasons why a TPO is unjustifiable.
12. Amenity value: the tree is not particularly visible from the road, and the site is heavily wooded. When I visited the site, with the trees to the west aspect in leaf, the only aspect that the tree was realistically visible from was 200m to the south aspect along the road. Combined with this, the tree is not a particularly good specimen, non native, and not planted as any part of the landscape plan of the original Victorian build.
13. Based on an amenity valuation, using the Helliwell mechanism (see ref: F below), the value of the tree comes out at $8 \times 2 \times 1 \times 1 \times 1 \times 0.5$. It scores “poor” on the form due to the structural defects highlighted within paragraph 10. When multiplied by the figure for 2026 (£53.99), the overall value of the tree works out at £431.92.
14. Cultural and rarity value: Western red cedar is non-native, and usually planted as a forestry tree for timber production or as hedging; **not** as a high value amenity tree. It is not rare to the area, nor to the country.
15. Landscape or character value for the area: As mentioned above, the tree is not particularly visible to the general public, the area is already quite densely wooded, and in no way does this tree perform any useful landscape function, such as a vista up the high street. I also struggle to see how a tree that wasn't introduced to the UK until the 1850s can have a specific character value for what is an ancient Saxon settlement.

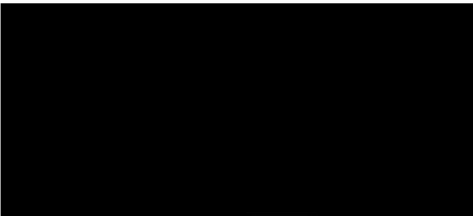
11.CONCLUSION:

From the initial instruction, the basis of this report has never had to fully justify the felling of tree 1, but more specifically, why tree 1 does not deserve a TPO, and to clarify that actually the objections of the parish council were unjustified. The tree exhibits structural defects that make failure foreseeable, is already causing contact damage and excessive shading constraints to the property, and is far from the best specimen. When assessed against the criteria for making a TPO, it holds an overall monetary amenity value of £431.92: a paltry sum at best; when assessed against landscape, cultural, historic, character and rarity values, it also comes up short. Due to its non-native status, it even has limited ecological value.

The report does not need to explore pruning as an option, as it is outside the remit of any LPA to insist that a tree owner prunes their trees to then get them to a standard where they might then deserve a TPO, so with the above in mind, the applicants move to submit a new section 211 notice of intent to fell tree 1. I've advised that the tree should be replaced, as it is a shame to lose a mature tree without a better specimen for the next generation, and would suggest a copper beech tree. They will perform well on the soil condition, preferring neutral, well drained sandy or calcareous soil, and are high value, high amenity, large sized trees at maturity.

12.RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Tree 1: Fell
2. Replace with 1x 12-14 standard *Fagus sylvatica atropurpurea*.



Matthew Rowden *ABC ProfDip.Arb L6, BTEC NatDip.Arb L3*

13. REFERENCES

- a. BS3998:2010
- b. Modern Arboriculture, Alex Shigo
- c. The body language of trees, Dr Claus Mattheck
- d. Plant Biomechanics, Karl Niklas
- e. NTSG Common sense risk management of trees 2011
- f. Understanding Helliwell 2021 HelliBiz.

Factor	Points Available									
	0	0.5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
i) Size (m2)	<2	2 – 5	5 -10	10 – 20	20 – 30	30 – 50	50 – 100	100 – 150	150 – 200	over 200
ii) Duration (years)	<2	–	2-5	4-40	40-100	100+				
iii) Importance	None	Very little	Little	Some	Considerable	Great				
iv) Tree Cover		Woodland	Many	Some	Few	None				
v) Suitability	Not	Poor	Just	Fairly	Very	Particularly				
vi) Form	–	Poor	Average	Good	–	–				

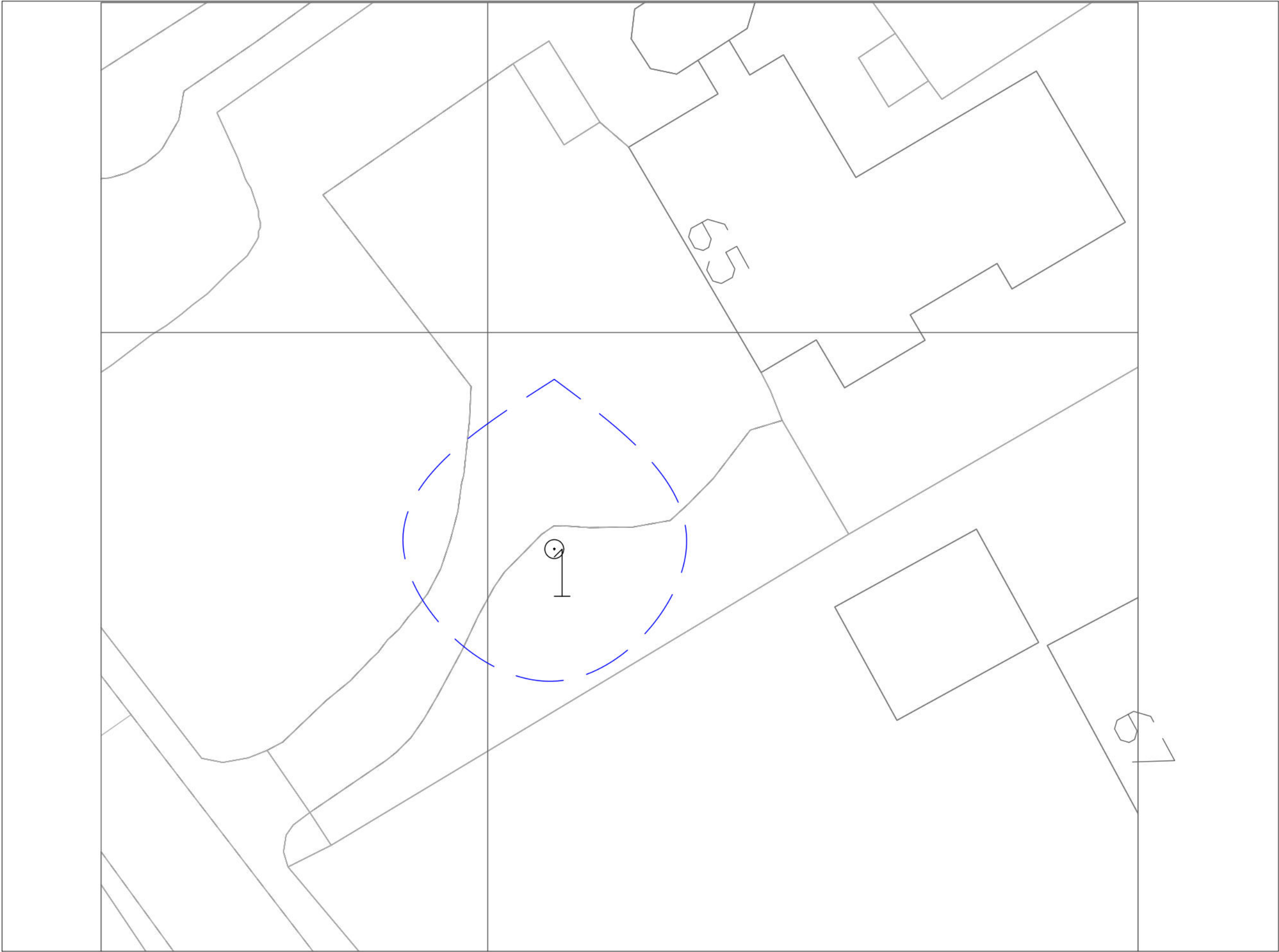
Visual amenity valuation table showing factors and scores available for individual trees



TREE NO. ON PLAN	SPECIES	HT (M)	CROWN SPREAD (M) N E S W	STEM DIA. @1.25M (MM)	LIFE STAGE	ESTIMATED REMAINING CONTRIBUTION IN YEARS	GENERAL OBSERVATIONS PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITION- P STRUCTURAL CONDITION - S	PRELIMINARY MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	LIKELIHOOD OF CAUSING DAMAGE/HARM
1	<i>Thuja plicata</i>	19	9 7 7 8	945	M	<10	P- Fair S- Poor Root flare is causing moderate contact damage to NW aspect where it meets driveway, with an upward elevation of 100mm and cracking falling into BRE cat.2. Good buttress formation but ivy partially obscures viewing. Main stem exhibits included union from 2m S aspect extending to 5m, and from 3m N aspect extending to 5m of high significance into co-dominant stems extending to 6m. From this weak union, tree then splits into 5 dominant stems, all with included unions of moderate significance. Canopy vitality = fair. Relatively sparse canopy with some necrosis on the tips of low significance.	Fell	Moderate

SURVEY SCHEDULE KEY

1. Tree ID: Refers to numbers as shown in the tree location plan.
2. Species: scientific name
3. Height (measured in meters)
4. Crown spread (measured in meters at the points of North, South, East and West). Where “#” is used as a suffix, the measurements are approximate.
5. Stem diameter measured at 1.5m height in mm, Water demand classification as per NHBC guidelines 4.2, and subsequent zone of influence measured in metres.
6. Life stage: Young (Y) (small trees at a very early stage of their growth), young mature (YM)(larger trees at an early life stage with the potential to still grow considerably larger), Mature (MA)(trees which have reached their maximum size and are self sustaining at the point), Over mature (OM)(trees that are beginning to decline and starting to die back from the tips), Veteran (V)(trees that are rapidly in decline and steadily losing canopy spread), Dead (D)
7. Estimated remaining contribution in years: Until such a time as any residual amenity is lost.
8. General observations - a visual assessment of the physiological and structural condition of the tree, classed as :Poor, fair, good, dead, decline. Physiologically refers to the vitality and vigour of the tree; Structural refers to the presence of physical defects within the tree’s structural makeup. For example, a multi stemmed tree from a lapsed pollard with multiple defects in those unions, but with good vitality and good leaf cover would be classed as physiologically good, but structurally poor.
9. Preliminary management recommendations - recommendations to maintain the tree as part of the proposals, or assessing whether its retention is viable, whether it be the suggestion of aerial inspections, remedial pruning, or detailed decay inspections.
10. Likelihood of causing damage/ harm: None, low, moderate, high and critical. These mean that respectively, the recommendations are to be actioned with no time scale and within 5 years (green canopy spread), 1 year (blue canopy spread), 6 months (red canopy spread). Trees to be felled with have the canopy spread denoted in a red dotted line.



General Notes

Key

Low risk trees	
Moderate risk trees	
High risk trees	

No.	Revision/Issue	Date

Firm Name and Address

ROWDEN TREESCAPES

Project Name and Address

63-65 High street, Market Lavington, SN104ES

Project	Sheet
RTC/20/63-65HSL/VTA/V1	A3 Tree Location Plan
Date	
15/05/2006	
Scale	
1:500	