

BS5837:2012 Table 1 – Cascade Chart for Tree Quality Assessment

Category and definition	Criteria (including subcategories where appropriate)	Identification on plan
Trees unsuitable for retention (see Note)		
Category U	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Trees that have a serious, Irremediable, structural defect, such that their early loss is expected due to collapse, including those that will become unviable after removal of other category U trees (e.g. where, for whatever reason, the loss of companion shelter cannot be mitigated by pruning) ▪ Trees that are dead or are showing signs of significant, immediate, and irreversible overall decline ▪ Trees infested with pathogens of significance to the health and/or safety of other trees nearby, or very low quality trees suppressing adjacent trees of better quality <p><i>Note: Category U trees can have existing or potential conservation value which it might be desirable to preserve: see BS5837:2012 paragraph 4.5.7.</i></p>	Red
Trees to be considered for retention	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mainly arboricultural qualities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mainly landscape qualities</p>
Category A	<p>Trees that are particularly good examples of their species, especially if rare or unusual; or those that are essential components of groups or formal or semi-formal arboricultural features (e.g. the dominant and/or principal trees within an avenue)</p>	<p>Trees, groups or woodlands of particular visual importance as arboricultural and/or landscape features</p>
Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years		Green
Category B	<p>Trees that might be included in category A, but are downgraded because of impaired condition (e.g. presence of significant though remediable defects, including unsympathetic past management and storm damage), such that they are unlikely to be suitable for retention for beyond 40 years; or trees lacking the special quality necessary to merit the category A designation</p>	<p>Trees present in numbers, usually growing as groups or woodlands, such that they attract a higher collective rating than they might as individuals; or trees occurring as collectives but situated so as to make little visual contribution to the wider locality</p>
Trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years		Blue
Category C	<p>Unremarkable trees of very limited merit or such impaired condition that they do not qualify in higher categories</p>	<p>Trees with material conservation or other cultural value</p>
Trees of low quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 10 years, or young trees with a stem diameter below 150 mm		Grey
	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mainly cultural values, including conservation</p>	<p>Trees, groups or woodlands of significant conservation, historical, commemorative or other value (e.g. veteran trees or wood-pasture)</p>
	<p>Trees present in groups or woodlands, but without this conferring on them significantly greater collective landscape value; and/or trees offering low or only temporary/transient landscape benefits</p>	<p>Trees with no material conservation or other cultural value</p>

DISCLAIMER

Survey Limitations: Unless otherwise stated all trees are surveyed from ground level using non-invasive techniques. The disclosure of hidden crown and stem defects, in particular where they may be above a reachable height or where trees are ivy clad or in areas of ground vegetation, cannot therefore be expected. All obvious defects, however, are reported. Detailed tree safety appraisals are only carried out under specific written instructions. Comments upon evident tree safety relate to the condition of said tree at the time of the survey only.

Unless otherwise stated all trees should be re-inspected annually in order to appraise their on-going mechanical integrity and physiological condition. It should, however, be recognised that tree condition is subject to change, for example due to the effects of disease, decay, high winds, development works, etc. Changes in land use or site conditions (e.g. development that increases access frequency) and the occurrence of severe weather incidents are also significant considerations with regards tree structural integrity and trees should therefore be re-assessed in the context of such changes and/or incidents and inspected at intervals relative to identified and varying site conditions and associated risks.

Where trees are located wholly or partially on neighbouring private third-party land then said land is not accessed and our inspection is therefore restricted to what can reasonably be seen from within the site. Stem diameters of trees located on such land are estimated. Any subsequent comments and judgments made in respect of such trees are based on these restrictions and are our preliminary opinion only. Recommendations for works to neighbouring third-party trees are only made where a potentially unacceptable risk to persons and/or property has been identified during our survey. Where significant structural defects of third-party trees are identified and associated management works are considered essential to negate any risk of harm and/or damage then we will first attempt to inform the site occupier of the issues and, if not possible, then inform the relevant Council. Where a more detailed assessment is considered necessary then appropriate recommendations are set out in the Tree Survey Schedule.

Where tree stem locations are not included on the plan(s) provided then they are plotted at the time of the survey using, where appropriate and/or practicable, a combination of measurement triangulation and GPS co-ordination. Where this is not possible then locations are estimated. Restrictions in these respects are detailed in the report.

The tree survey and any report information provided is intended as a guide to identify key tree related constraints to site development only. As such, the potential influence of trees upon existing or proposed buildings or other structures resulting from the effects of their roots abstracting water from shrinkable load-bearing soils is not considered herein. The tree survey information in its current form should not therefore be considered sufficient to determine appropriate foundation depths for new buildings. Accordingly, an updated survey, with reference to the current NHBC Standards Chapter 4.2 - Building Near Trees, must therefore be prepared for the specific purpose of informing suitable foundation depths subsequent to planning approval being granted. The advice of a structural engineer must also be sought with regard to appropriate foundation depths for new buildings.

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