

Tree Condition Report

Location of property surveyed:

Rear of St. Mary's Centre,
York Street,
Clitheroe,
BB7 2DG

Arboricultural report for:

St. Mary's Church

Date of site survey:

08/12/2017

Date of report:

11/12/2017

Job Ref: 1089

Gary Marsden
FDSc Arb, M.Arbor.A.

Tel: 077 61 66 73 84

www.gmtreeconsultants.co.uk
gary@gmtreeconsultants.co.uk



The content and format of this report are for the exclusive use of the client. It may not be sold, lent, hired out or divulged to any third party not directly involved in this subject matter without our written consent.

I hope that this report provides all the necessary information, but should any further advice be needed please do not hesitate to contact me.

Any enquiries regarding this report should be addressed to:

GM Tree Consultants
16, Fairfield Drive,
Lower Darwen,
Darwen,
Lancashire,
England,
BB3 0RJ.

Tel: 077 61 66 73 84

Email: gary@gmtreeconsultants.co.uk

Web: www.gmtreeconsultants.co.uk

Gary Marsden FDS Arb M.Arbor.A
Professional Member - Arboricultural Association (AA)
Professional Member - Consulting Arborist Society (CAS)



Registered User



Tree Preservation Order
consultingarboristsociety.com



City & Guilds
NPTC
Qualified



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
Introduction	6
1. Qualifications and experience	6
2. Instruction.....	6
3. Documents and information provided	6
4. Scope of this report.....	6
5. Mapping.....	6
6. Technical references	6
Limitations	7
7. Survey	7
8. Time limit.....	7
9. Tree health.....	7
10. Justification of works	7
11. Buildings.....	8
Site visit and observations	8
12. Site visit.....	8
13. Brief site description	8
14. Identification and location of the trees	8
15. Systematic method of assessment.....	8
Condition assessment	9
16. Tree assessment.....	9
17. Comments on the retaining wall.....	11
18. Photos	12
Recommendations	13
19. Present requirements:	13
Other Considerations	13
20. Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and Conservation Area (CA).....	13
21. Local authority details	14
22. Correspondence with local arboricultural / planning officer	14
23. Tree works	14
24. Implementation of works.....	14
25. Local Arboricultural Contractors	15
26. Safety	15
27. Statutory wildlife obligations	15

28. Future considerations 15

APPENDIX 'A' **16**

 Brief details of qualifications and experience of Gary Marsden 16

APPENDIX 'B' **17**

 • Site Location aerial photo taken from Google Maps showing tree location 17

Back cover **18**

Executive Summary

- The tree as a standalone individual asset is in good condition and does not require any remedial works other than the removal of the ivy.
- The Ash trees stem is located 60cm from the retaining wall. There are cracks visible in the masonry and pointing and there is a high probability that the trees root system has displaced the wall and caused it to crack due to incremental growth. Future growth of the tree will in my opinion continue to displace the wall, it is beyond my area of expertise to say how long this will take.
- The structural engineer has stated that "it is difficult to predict when collapse of the wall will occur, but it may be sudden and without warning."
- As the retaining wall requires remedial works to make it safe both now and in the future as a long-term management solution I recommend that the tree is removed to mitigate any risk of the tree causing more damage to the retaining wall and therefore reducing any foreseeable risk to the public from a collapse of the wall and potential failure of the tree into this high occupancy area of the town. It is recommended that this work is undertaken within 6 months of the writing of this report.

Gary Marsden FDS Arb, M.Arbor.A

Introduction

1. Qualifications and experience

I have based this report on my site observations and any provided information and I have come to conclusions in the light of my experience. I have experience and qualifications in arboriculture, and include a summary in Appendix 'A'.

2. Instruction

I am instructed by St. Mary's Church (referred to as the 'client' from here on) to inspect the significant tree located in the rear grounds at Rear of St. Mary's Centre, York Street, Clitheroe, BB7 2DG and to provide a report to fulfil the following criteria:

- A schedule of the relevant tree to include basic data, tree location and a condition assessment.
- A tree risk assessment based on current targets, defects and likelihood of failure.
- A schedule of any subsequent work that may be required.
- Assessment of any impact on the retaining wall.

3. Documents and information provided

My client provided me with copies of the following documents or information:

- Their email of instruction outlining the situation.
- Their email commissioning this report and agreeing to the T&C and cost.
- Structural engineers report – ref: SP/AR/JN4139/Struc/Lt17087

4. Scope of this report

This report is only concerned with the prominent tree within the site. It takes no account of any trees outside this remit. It includes a preliminary assessment based on the site visit and any documents provided, listed in section 3 and 4 above.

The survey is based upon information that was available at the time of the inspection. Further inspections are necessary over time to give a fuller picture of the health of trees.

5. Mapping

I have not been provided with a topographical survey of the site. A digital ordnance survey map has been purchased and I have plotted the trees by the combined / individual use of land features, manual measurements, laser measurements and GPS. It is estimated that the accuracy is within 1-2m.

Site plans showing all of the tree locations and any relevant details can be found in Appendix 'D'.

6. Technical references

This arboricultural report is based on the following primary technical references:

- British Standards Institution (2010) BS 3998 Recommendations for tree work

- Lonsdale, D. 1999. *Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management*. The Stationary Office, London.
- Lonsdale, D. 2000. *Hazards from trees. A general guide*. Forestry Commission, Edinburgh.
- Matheny, N. P. and Clark, J.R. *A photographic guide to the evaluation of hazard trees in urban areas. 2nd Edition*. International Society of Arboriculture.
- Mattheck, C, and Breloer, H. *The body language of trees – A handbook for failure analysis*. The Stationary Office, London.
- Schwarze, F.W.M.R., Engels, J. and Mattheck, C. *Fungal strategies of wood decay in trees*. Springer, Berlin.
- Strouts, R.G. and Winter, T.G. 1994. *Diagnosis of ill-health in trees*. The Stationary Office, London.
- The National Tree Safety Group. 2011. *Common sense risk management of trees. Guidance on trees and public safety on the UK for owners, managers and advisers*. Forestry Commission, Edinburgh.

Limitations

7. Survey

The inspection was carried out from ground level only and relates only to arboricultural aspects. All visual observations and recommendations, relate, to the condition of the trees on the day of the survey. The trees have been assessed with the aid of a Nylon mallet for the purpose of detecting changes in resonance which may indicate that further investigation is required. Where appropriate the use of advanced decay detection methods are used, primarily a digital resistograph. Any unusual weather conditions, changes in soil, soil levels and changes to surroundings may result in a dramatic change in the trees health.

8. Time limit

Due to the changing nature of trees and other site circumstances, this report and any recommendations made are limited to a 24-month period. Any alteration to the site and any development proposals could change the current circumstances and may invalidate this report and any recommendations made.

9. Tree health

Trees are dynamic structures that can never be guaranteed 100% safe: even in good condition they can suffer damage under average conditions. Regular inspections can help to identify potential problems before they become acute.

10. Justification of works

Where management action / tree surgery are recommended, this is based on maximizing the tree's safe useful life expectancy (SULE), given its current situation or the safety of persons and surrounding targets. A lack of recommended work does not imply that a tree is safe and likewise it should not be implied that a tree would be made safe following the completion of any recommended work.

11. Buildings

This report does not consider the structural condition of existing buildings, nor the impact of existing trees on their foundations. If there are concerns over such matters the advice of a structural engineer should be sought.

Site visit and observations

12. Site visit

I carried out an unaccompanied site survey on 8th December 2017. All my observations were from ground level without detailed investigations and I measured all dimensions unless otherwise indicated. I did have access to tree outside the client's boundaries and consent was given to inspect and take measurements as needed or the trees were on public open space. The weather at the time of inspection was clear, still and dry, with good visibility. I have taken various photographs of the site for reference and are kept on file, photos are added into the report only if they are needed to highlight a specific issue.

13. Brief site description

York Street is located in Clitheroe. The site is on the northern side of the road and surrounded by residential and commercial developments. The location of the tree consists of stone retaining wall that is holding back the area of soil volume that the tree has grown in. Utility services were observed on site, these are phone wires running within the trees canopy area. No visual inspections of any services were made below ground level. The surrounding topography is relatively flat and the site is not particularly exposed. There is no known history on this site either personal nor from a third party.

14. Identification and location of the trees

I have illustrated the locations of the significant trees on the map included in Appendix 'B'. This plan is for illustrative purposes only and it should not be used for directly scaling measurements. All the relevant information on it is contained within this report and the provided documents.

15. Systematic method of assessment

I visually inspected the significant trees and recorded the information in the table in section 16.

I stress that my inspection was of a preliminary visual tree assessment (VTA) nature and did not involve any climbing or detailed investigation beyond what was visible from accessible points at ground level.

The methodology employed in the assessment of trees undertaken by GM Tree Consultants takes into consideration the following points (but not in any particular order of importance) by firstly carrying out a Visual Tree Assessment (VTA), this includes:

- A distance visual assessment of the tree taking into account the overall shape, form, foliage colour appropriate for the time of year and any other elements that do not appear normal for that particular species.
- The exposure to the weather. This can be due to it being a solitary tree or that surrounding tree cover could have been removed exposing it to 'new wind forces' acting on the canopy.

- The prevailing ground conditions. For example: soil erosion, ponding, soil characteristics and the impact on the tree, presence / lack of vegetation.
- Any information as to the trees history or history of the surrounding trees / landscape. For example: previously failed limbs, surrounding tree removal / failure, excavations, fruiting bodies seen.
- Knowledge of previous documented information of issues with a particular species. For example: tight union failure on Beech, poor compartmentalisation of Willow.
- The health and visual defects of the tree. For example: cavities, the trees 'body language', dieback, foliage irregularities, fungal brackets and deadwood.

From this information an assessment is made of the likelihood of the part/s most likely to fail in relation to the target / occupancy value within the trees failure area and recommendations are then made, these can include the following but is not exhaustive:

- Recommendations for further visual monitoring.
- Investigation with more advanced decay detection equipment such as: Resistograph, Picus, Thermal imaging.
- Remedial pruning / limb removal.
- Whole tree removal.
- Pruning for aesthetical reasons.
- Removal of significant deadwood.
- Or, no work may be needed.

The primary reasoning behind this method of assessment is to identify a foreseeable failure, make an informed decision and act on it within a specified time and know that the response is reasonable in relation to the target area and the financial resources available.

Condition assessment

16. Tree assessment

The assessment is broken down into the primary elements of the tree where they are assessed individually with findings assessed as to the implication for the tree as a whole:

Owner (if known)	St Mary's Centre
Tree no (if applicable)	T1
Species	Ash
Size category	Large
Age class	Mature
Height	16 meters

Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)	92 cm (1.5m above ground level)							
Crown Spread	North	8 m	South	8 m	East	6 m	West	7 m
Canopy clearance above ground level	+4 meters above public footpath and road							
Root system assessment	<p>There are no visible aspects of the trees rooting system from a ground level assessment, there is no reason to indicate that the tree has any dysfunctional association from root issues.</p> <p>To the south of the tree there is a stone retaining wall that has physically prevented root development past the wall. The tree has grown within these conditions for all its life and has adapted accordingly, there is no reason to indicate that the tree is in risk of becoming unstable at ground level, with the condition that the retaining wall continues to provide adequate support for the rooting volume of soil.</p>							
Buttress assessment	There are no visual defects or issues with the trees buttress area.							
Stem assessment	There are no visual defects or issues with the trees stem. It should be noted that the stem is covered in ivy and thus prevents a full visual assessment. It is recommended that the ivy is removed so if there are any hidden defects they can be assessed.							
Scaffold and secondary branches assessment	The tree appears to have been pruned recently (within 5 years) from what looks like to be for low canopy branches and possibly encroaching onto the phone wires. This work has been undertaken in a sympathetic and appropriate way and the tree appears to be coping with work.							
Twigs, buds and leaves assessment	At the time of inspection, the tree was not in leaf, this is normal for the species at this time of year.							
Advanced decay detection (if applicable)	There is no indication of dysfunction within the trees stem to justify advanced decay detection							
Overall Physiological condition	Good							
Overall Structural condition	Good							

Other issues / comments	There is concern over the structural integrity of the retaining wall, this is outside my level of expertise and direction should be taken from the structural engineer's report on relevant courses of action.
Remaining Safe contribution (years)	20+ years (this is taken as the retaining wall is structural safe)
Retention quality (BS5837 rating)	B1
Targets within falling distance of tree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ Road _ Footpath – highway _ Building _ Parking / driveway _ Church
Overall risk imposed from tree in relation to identified defects	<p>Low - (this is taken as the retaining wall is structural safe)</p> <p>High – (if the retaining wall was to fail causing displacement of the trees rooting soil)</p>
Recommendations	Removal of all of the ivy from the tree to allow a full assessment of all structural unions.
Timescale for action	Within 6 months
Review period	Within 12 months

17. Comments on the retaining wall

The Ash trees stem is located 60cm from the retaining wall. There are cracks visible in the masonry and pointing and there is a high probability that the trees root system has displaced the wall and caused it to crack due to incremental growth. Future growth of the tree will in my opinion continue to displace the wall, it is beyond my area of expertise to say how long this will take.

If the wall had to be rebuilt in my opinion this would cause concern over destabilisation of the soil and rooting area around the tree and if this was the case I would recommend the tree was removed to allow the wall to be rebuilt safely.

The structural engineer has stated that "it is difficult to predict when collapse of the wall will occur, but it may be sudden and without warning" – with this, in my opinion removal of the tree will minimise the risk of such a collapse both now and in the future and mitigate any foreseeable risk to the public and local properties.

I was asked by the client to comment on flood / freeze effects on the wall / tree. If the soil behind the retaining wall was to flood and freeze, as water expands when frozen it is possible that this could contribute to the cracking of the wall, although this is only my opinion and the question could be more accurately answered by the structural engineer.

18. Photos



Recommendations

19. Present requirements:

As the retaining wall requires remedial works to make it safe both now and in the future as a long-term management solution I recommend that the tree is removed to mitigate any risk of the tree causing more damage to the retaining wall and therefore reducing any foreseeable risk to the public from a collapse of the wall and potential failure of the tree into this high occupancy area of the town. It is recommended that this work is undertaken within 6 months of the writing of this report.

Any works required to establish acceptable levels of risk for the site and to maintain the tree in line with good arboricultural management are listed in a priority scale and should be carried out within the time scale indicated.

These lists of works are designed to highlight dangerous situations and are necessary for safety reasons or to establish high levels of arboricultural management to the existing tree.

REASONING: Proactive intervention rather than reactive to failure

Other Considerations

20. Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and Conservation Area (CA)

A tree preservation order, referred to as a 'TPO', is an order made by a local planning authority ('LPA') in respect of trees or woodlands.

The principal effect of a TPO is to prohibit the: Cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage, or wilful destruction of trees without the LPAs consent. The cutting of roots is potentially damaging and so, in the Secretary of State's view, requires the LPAs consent.

Anyone who, in contravention of a TPO, wilfully damages a tree in a way that is likely to destroy it is guilty of an offence. Anyone found guilty of this offence is liable, if convicted in the Magistrates Court, to a fine of up to £20,000. In serious cases a person may be committed for trial in the Crown Court and, if convicted, is liable to an unlimited fine.

Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historical interest with a character or appearance that is desirable to preserve or enhance. Trees may often contribute to the special character of the area.

All trees in a Conservation Area are subject to controls which enable the LPA to protect the special character of the area created by the trees. If trees have a specific Tree Preservation Order (TPO) on them, then the normal Tree Preservation Order controls apply.

You must give the LPA 6 weeks' notice, in writing, of your intention to do any work to trees in a Conservation Area. You must not carry out any work during the six week period, which starts from the date of receipt of your notification by the council, unless you receive written permission to do so.

Work which is not exempt and is carried out without formal notification or within the six week period without the written consent of the council is illegal. The LPA may prosecute offenders and fines of up to £20,000 for each tree may be imposed by the Magistrates Court in the event of offenders being convicted of an offence. If proceedings are instituted in the Crown Court fines are unlimited. There is a duty to replace any tree removed without permission.

It has been confirmed that there is a Tree Preservation Order / Conservation Area in force on some or all of the trees in question. It is strongly advised that prior to undertaking any work on the tree/s written consent is granted from the local authority via an application or through the planning process.

21. Local authority details

For reference the contact details are listed below for the relevant councils planning department and / or the arboricultural (tree) officer.

Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices,
Church Walk,
Clitheroe,
Lancashire,
BB7 2RA
Tel: 01200 425111,
E-mail: webmaster@ribblevalley.gov.uk

22. Correspondence with local arboricultural / planning officer

The council tree officer has made comments on this issue and are documented in the refusal of the application to fell the tree.

23. Tree works

The management options noted in the survey data should be followed so to keep a maintained tree stock on and around this development site, particularly giving clearance from properties and over any adopted roads or footpaths.

24. Implementation of works

All tree works should be carried out to BS 3998 Recommendations for Tree Work as modified by more recent research. It is advisable to select a contractor from the local authority list and preferably one approved by the Arboricultural Association. Their Register of Contractors is available free from:

Arboricultural Association
The Malthouse,
Stroud Green,
Standish,
Stonehouse,
Gloucestershire
GL10 3DL, UK

Tel: +44 (0)1242 522152
Email: admin@trees.org.uk
Website: www.trees.org.uk/contractors.htm
Fax: +44 (0)1242 57766

25. Local Arboricultural Contractors

If requested I can provide a list of reputable arboricultural contractors that have carried out work on previous projects.

26. Safety

Tree works can be a hazardous profession, so it is important that all operatives have the necessary and relevant training, health and safety policy and valid forms of insurance.

27. Statutory wildlife obligations

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, provide statutory protection to birds, bats and other species that inhabit trees. All tree work operations are covered by these provisions and advice from an ecologist must be obtained before undertaking any works that might constitute an offence.

28. Future considerations

Any remaining trees should be inspected on a regular basis by a qualified arboricultural consultant and should not exceed a 5 year interval.

APPENDIX 'A'

Brief details of qualifications and experience of Gary Marsden

Qualifications:

- National Certificate in Arboriculture
- Foundation Degree In Science - Arboriculture
- BTEC Higher National Diploma in Arboriculture
- Certified Expert Witness by Cardiff Law School / Bond Solon
- LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection Award

Practical experience:

After qualifying at NC level in arboriculture I gained full time employment with Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council as an Arborist / Climber (September 1998) where I gained a wide range of practical Arboricultural experience ranging from pruning, dismantling and planting.

In January 2004 I was promoted to Team Leader Arborist where I developed my skills in Arboriculture, leadership, organisation and prioritising workloads.

In August 2005 I was promoted to 'Arboricultural Officer' this job involves:

Health and Safety of all Arboricultural aspects

Inspection and scheduling of tree complaints

Tree surveys and report writing

Staff management

In July 2008 I set up my own tree consultancy company – GM Tree Consultants – which I am constantly developing and evolving.

Continuing professional development:

As a conscious effort to stay in touch with the progression in modern techniques and practices in the arboricultural industry, I attend seminars, receive regular arboricultural literature and maintain membership of professional bodies, examples of which are listed below:

- Arboricultural Association Professional Member since November 2006
- Professional Member of the Consulting Arborist Society since May 2009
- Quantified Tree Risk Assessment licensed user since October 2008
- Attendance of Arboricultural Association annual conferences
- Attendance of specialist short courses in relation to specific fields in arboriculture including: Tree Preservation Orders, Subsidence and mortgage reports, Planning legislation and Tree inspection methods and skills.
- Accredited as an Expert Witness by Cardiff University Law School / Bond Solon since December 2011

A detailed breakdown of qualifications and continued professional development training is available; please contact me directly for this information if requested.

APPENDIX 'B'

- Site Location aerial photo taken from Google Maps showing tree location 



BS 5837 Planning Surveys

**Arboricultural Impact
Assessments**

**Arboricultural Method
Statements**

Site Supervision

Tree Condition Reports

Visual Tree Assessments

QTRA Assessments

Expert Witness Reports

**L.O.L.E.R Thorough
Equipment Inspections**

Mortgage Reports

TPO applications and advice

