

CONDITION ASSESSMENT OF THREE BEECH TREES AT WHALLEY TENNIS CLUB

Client: Mr H Farrar (acting for Whalley Tennis and Cricket Club)

Date of Tree Inspection: 6.3.19

Weather conditions: Clear and damp.

T28 by Road



T29 by changing rooms



T30



BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE.

1. The Trees in question are located within the tennis club curtilage and close to Station Rd and the access drive in to the club grounds. The trees are understood to be in the region of 120 years old and are covered by a Tree Preservation Order administered by Ribble Valley Borough Council. (7/19/3/113A Station Rd Whalley and by an individual TPO)
2. Any planned works will have to be discussed with the Local Authority and no works carried out without formal permission from the council. We will undertake this applications as part of our work.
3. The client has been concerned about the trees since a limb snap out from one of the trees a year ago. Limb or total failure would hazard the local commuter road, site roads and an adjacent office and carpark.
4. Our remit is to evaluate the condition of the trees, and determine what work could be carried out to enable The Tennis Club to fulfill their duty of care responsibilities to site users, road traffic and neighbours. The trees have been tag marked 28, 29 and 30 for identification purposes by the Council and contracting staff

The Tree Inspector

I am Ken Linford, a consulting arborist, trained in Pre-development Tree assessment, Quantified Tree Risk Assessment and Tree Defect identification. I have experience as a tree care contractor for more than 25 years and have been providing a consulting service for Local Councils, private persons and architects for 16 years. My CPD record is open to inspection if required. I am covered by PI insurance by AXA Insurance to £5m.

Beech 28

1. The tree is located 4m from Station Rd and in close proximity to a street lamp post (13) and a BT Pole. The tree lost a large limb from the lower canopy in the last year. The tree has an overall height of 23m and a Dbh of 1220mm. The canopy extends to the middle of the road (9m) and the Club grounds entrance.
2. The root zone of the tree is covered to a radius of 2m with brush prunings from adjacent landscape works to a depth of 400mm. While this debris keeps people away from the immediate under canopy area of the tree the brush cover rules out an inspection of the root zone surface and the presence of any root decay pathogens.
3. Ivy growth covers the main scaffold of the tree to a height of 10m and obliterates branch unions, adds wind drag to the tree in winter and makes inspection difficult.
4. The past snap out failure of a large limb is characterised by a typical timber fracture of wood where the cellulose element has been reduced. As shown in the attached photo the older Fruiting bodies of *Kretzschmaria deusta* are visible. The pathogen is present in the outer stem at 1.8m from ground level and in proximity to other unions of branches extending towards the road. Further branch failures can be expected.



5. At the roadside and close to the tree canopy Street light pole 13 is being obstructed by the tree. We would expect the highway Authority to require the branches to be cut back so that the pole is clear of moving branches and the light spread to the road is not obstructed.
6. The timber utility pole is also obstructed and branch removal/canopy lifting is a normal solution.
7. A digital micro probe test indicated that there was a small (150mm diameter) cavity in the tree and the root plate appeared sound. Total tree wind throw appears unlikely.

Target and risk assessment

The tree is within failure range of a busy road with a traffic flow at 30mph of 60-100 vehicles per hour during the day at a location where there are multiply junctions and visibility issues. We would regard the target value as high. The likelihood of further limb failure is medium and in its current state, branch failure over the road pavement and entrance track is likely.

CONCLUSIONS

The following work is recommended:

1. Sever the ivy at ground level and at 1.5m
2. Remove the pruning debris from around the tree without creating a ground scrape which will damage surface roots.
3. Canopy lift the tree by removing branches obstructing the Light pole and reducing the light beam spread and remove two lower limbs extending over the pavement and road adjacent to the recent snap out failure
4. The canopy lift over the road should enable road clearance of 5.5m
5. The progress of the *Kretzschmaria deusta* pathogen should be monitored again in November 2020 and any evidence of root decay fungi noted

Beech 29

The tree has a height of 22m and a Dbh of 1180 and a canopy spread ranging from 8 to 14m. Most noticeable is the effect of fire damage of 350mm x2m many years ago on the main stem. The tree has produced significant compensatory growth and the decayed core is a rigid rather than a soft rot.

In the distant past the tree may have suffered a slight root plate lift in high winds and while two roots are visibly dead there is evidence of a secondary rooting system able to sustain the canopy which appears free from dieback.

The canopy growth over the tennis courts presents maintenance issues, debris and slippery moss so a light canopy reduction prune to achieve an effective canopy radius reduction of 2m is recommended.

Beech 30

The tree is located on a raised bund behind the Changing rooms. The tree is 17m high with a canopy spread to the access track of 10m and Dbh of 760mm.

There is evidence that the tree may have been root oversoiled in the past and heavy ivy growth obstructs inspection.

The two dominant leaders have both died back and larger deadwood will soon be shed. These leaders are unlikely to recover although some removal of the deadwood might start the process of natural retrenchment and regrowth by the tree. Pruning back of the moribund leaders by 6m is recommended together with the severing of the ivy at ground level and 1.5m.

The progress of the canopy should be reviewed by inspection in November 2020

This report will be attached to an application for works to RVBC and we will advise the client when we have a response from the planning department. When permission has been granted the contractor you have chosen should be given access to this report to assist him in the planning of his work.

Ken Linfoord
CONSULTING ARBORIST

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