# **Simon Pryce Arboriculture**

# Report

Client: Kernahans Property Consultants

Site: Belsize Court, Wedderburn Road, London, NW3

Subject: Tree survey and recommendations for necessary or appropriate

work

Inspection date: 15 March 2023

Report date: 2 May 2023

Reference: 23/010

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#### I Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on the instructions of Kernahans Property Consultants the managers of Belsize Court.
- 1.2 This report updates my previous reports prepared since 1999, the most recent full survey being in September 2021, reference 21/068. At various times some trees in the grounds have also been the subject of individual reports, generally in connection with subsidence or safety issues.
- 1.3 This report is based on a site visit and resurvey of the entire site on 15 March 2023. All the trees were inspected visually from ground level and the large London plane, tree 44, was climbed.
- 1.4 A schedule of comments and recommendations for individual trees is appended, with a site plan showing their locations. In order to avoid confusion the same numbering system has been used in all the reports on this site. Where trees have been felled and replaced, or new ones have established nearby, the new trees are given the original numbers. In order to keep the sequence trees not covered in earlier surveys are given the number of the nearest original tree followed by a letter, e.g. 23a.
- 1.5 Some third party trees in the street or adjacent sites were originally recorded during the initial subsidence investigations and have been covered in surveys since then to keep a record of their growth and management.

#### 2 Background Previous damage

- 2.1 The initial report in 1999 covered subsidence in Block B and the rear boundary wall behind the eastern end of Block E. As a result of that some work was done notably the reduction of some plane trees growing in the street and the removal of vegetation growing near the boundary wall. Since then there have been no reports of any damage and Camden Council have been recutting the plane trees in the street regularly.
- 2.2 In 2007 damage occurred in the southern end of Block C and the investigation showed that it was being caused by tree 33, a horse chestnut (report ref 07/264). Camden Council made a TPO to prevent it being felled, so the end of the block was underpinned and has been stable since then. Tree 33 has been crown reduced periodically since then in order to contain its growth.

#### Other work

2.3 Since the first reports various trees have been removed or had work done and new trees have been planted to replace felled ones are generally establishing and growing well. Most recently the large plane tree near Block D, no.44 in the survey, shed a branch which was found to have decay in the base that had spread from a trunk wound.

### 3 General comments

3.1 The grounds are managed actively, so most of the existing trees are in good condition and not in need of any major work. Self-seeded trees appear regularly, mainly ash and sycamore. If these are in suitable locations for long term retention they can be kept and left to grow, otherwise it is best to remove them while they are still small enough for that to be easy.

- 3.2 The London planes in Lyndhurst Gardens that were previously implicated in subsidence in Block B have been reduced and are trimmed regularly with the others in the street in line with the Subsidence Risk Limitation Strategy adopted by Camden and other London councils. These had been reduced shortly before this survey.
- 3.3 Trees 16 and 17, two sycamores in the rear garden of 22 Lyndhurst Gardens, were reduced some time ago and had been growing on vigorously since then, but are now looking less healthy, so are less likely to cause problems. They do not need urgent attention but could be reduced if the need arose. Since the previous survey trees 19 and 20, have also been removed.
- 3.4 The large horse chestnut near Block C, tree 33, has been reduced following subsidence in the building and is recut regularly, which will also lessen any risk to the nearby school buildings. Tree 37, a birch leaning on the school buildings was removed and now 37a, a self-seeded ash is also a potential threat to the buildings and should be removed.
- 3.5 Tree 44, the large London plane near Block D was climbed again and is described in more detail in a separate report. It has been resisting the decay well and there were no signs of Massaria, which can cause branch shedding. However the lowest main branch over the road has a decay cavity in the top and is carrying most of its weight at the end, so it would be advisable to shorten the branch, reshape the crown and check for Massaria while it is being climbed.

#### Restrictions

- 3.6 All five blocks are in the Fitzjohns Netherhall Conservation Area, so Camden Council must be given six weeks notice of any proposed felling or pruning of trees over 75mm diameter at 1.5m. They can allow that by confirming that they do not object or by letting the six weeks lapse without making a TPO to prevent the work. In that event, or if trees are already protected, it would be necessary to make an application for consent; if that is refused there is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate.
- 3.7 Exemptions include removing dead trees or dead wood from live trees and any work necessary to address an imminent risk of harm.
- 3.8 Shrubs, climbing plants and trees under 75mm trunk diameter are beyond the scope of this legislation.

#### Tree work

- 3.9 Any tree work should be carried out in accordance with BS3998: 2010, Recommendations for Treework. by an arboricultural contractor with appropriate third party and public liability insurance.
- 3.10 Where trees or other woody plants are removed it is good practice to remove the stumps and main roots in order to prevent colonisation by honey fungus, which can spread into other plants, either killing them or decaying the structural roots while they are still alive, leading to them uprooting. That also makes them less likely to send up sucker shoots, which can be a problem in some species, particularly cherries.
- 3.11 All bats and many birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994 and other legislation.

3.12 Tree work should not be undertaken during the nesting season (broadly March to August) unless a survey for nesting birds confirms that none are present. Bats and their roosts are protected and it is an offence to disturb or harm a bat, or to damage places used by bats for shelter. Trees should be inspected before any works start, and if the presence of bats is suspected, works must be stopped and advice sought from a qualified bat specialist.

Simon Pryce, BSc, FArborA, RCArborA, CBiol, FICFor

Tree Species

2 2a Ash Holly

2b Holly

\*(c)

Sycamore

no.				dia.	age	
the fi	rst column deno ers of their pred	te those in o	other own	ership, with	[c] den	is surveys, starting near the southern end of Block A and going round clockwise. Asterisks in oting council owned trees. m/s = multiple stemmed. Replacement trees have inherited the survey have letters after the number of the nearest original tree in order to avoid altering the
Block	. A					
this v	vill be localised a	and shallow,	and there	are no repo	orts of a	rubs, such as fuchsias, with some roses. These will have some drying effect on the soil, but ny problems. Near the south end are various small to medium sized hollies, elders and other mores are becoming established.
- 1	Sycamore	-,	-	-	-	Removed.
la	Sycamore gp	-	-	-	-	Removed.
lb	Lawson cypress	6m	I2m	240mm	20+	Drawn up due to growing among the other trees, but sound, healthy and still improving since previous surveys. Ash sapling near tree 40b is growing into it,  • Remove ash sabling.
lc	Holly	5m	10m	190mm	40+	Also drawn up due to growing among other trees, foliage slightly sparse, but sound and healthy and has grown since 2021.  Nowork needed at present.
Ιd	Elder	-		Ē	-	Removed since previous survey.
le	Elder	-	-	-		Removed since previous survey.
lf	Laurel	4m	7m	220mm	40+	Trunk leans towards the building due to growing under a large ash removed in 2008. It has been reshaped pruned regularly to clear the building, but is growing back.  • No urgent work needed but will need trimming regularly to clear the building.
2	Ash		-	-	-	Removed in 2008.

Fork at the base is well formed, foliage slightly sparse, but healthy otherwise.

No work needed at present.
Healthy young specimen.
No work needed at present.
Pollarded at 6m when younger. Has a small wound at the base of the trunk. Slightly one sided due to growing near the ash, has had sparse foliage for some years and there is now some die back in the top.
No work needed at present.

Distance Height Trunk Est. Comments and recommendations

8m

15m

8m

I0m

I2m

160 + 220mm

I40mm

510mm

20+

20+

Tree no.	Species	Distance	Height	Trunk dia.	Est.	Comments and recommendations
4 *(c)	Sycamore	9m	15m	540mm	70+	Closer to the building than the previous tree, but also has sparse foliage and some dead wood. Not very vigorous.  • No work needed at present, would tolerate light crown thinning if the need arose.
5 *(c)	Ash	9m	6m	180mm	8+	Young tree, replacing a sycamore removed after 1999. Has some minor bark damage on the road side and twig growth denser than before and healthy looking.  No work needed at present.
6	Holly	8m	8m	260mm	70+	Has had sparse foliage for several years, but is still sound and healthy otherwise.  • No work needed at present.
7 *(c)	Ash	17m	I2m	650mm	70+	Pollarded at about 6m when younger, has a wound on the trunk, but no signs of major decay. Crown reduced and thinned in 1999, and has been reduced periodically since then. Reduced again recently, regrowth not particularly vigorous.  No work needed at present.
8	Various evergreens	8 - 15m	3 - 6m	m/s	70+	Dense group of laurel, bay and other shrubs, not a major threat to the building. Provides screening, although the residents are keen to make it more open. Some self-seeded saplings were removed, but there are others and a heavily decayed laburnum.  • Trim back laurel and other evergreens to clear the pavement and remove any further seedlings that appear. Maintain clearance from the young swamp cypress, tree 9.
9	Swamp cypress	7m	5m	100mm	5+	Young tree replacing the original mature one felled in about 2015. Well established and growing well.  No work needed beyond normal maintenance.
9a	Bay	10	П	3x 250- 330mm	80+	Large healthy specimen growing out from among the laurels.  No work needed.
Block	В					

removed.

10	London plane	7m	21m	1.16m	90+	Three nearly identical street trees, all pollarded at about 5m when younger, then allowed
*(c)	(5)					to grow on. Tree 10 was implicated in subsidence in Block B in 1999. They have all been
H	London plane	Hm	21m	750mm	90+	crown reduced and are now recut about every 2 years to contain their growth. The last
*(c)						time was about one year ago and growth since then is healthy and vigorous.

that has not been seen for several years.  The original trees 13 - 15 were young ash and elms removed after the 1999 survey. 13 - 15a below have are in about the same places. Distances are from the back of the small garage block next to block B.  I3 Elder Removed after previous survey  14 Palm 2m 8m 220mm 10+ Still has ivy growing into the crown, but  Cut ivy.  I5 Cordyline 1.5m 9m 200mm 10+ Had some ivy on the trunk, which has be No work needed at present.	to about their current sizes or smaller. e established or become significant since then and
*(c) that has not been seen for several years.  • Continue pruning regime to keep them The original trees 13 - 15 were young ash and elms removed after the 1999 survey. 13 - 15a below have are in about the same places. Distances are from the back of the small garage block next to block B.  13 Elder Removed after previous survey  14 Palm 2m 8m 220mm 10+ Still has ivy growing into the crown, but  • Cut ivy.  15 Cordyline 1.5m 9m 200mm 10+ Had some ivy on the trunk, which has be No work needed at present.	to about their current sizes or smaller. established or become significant since then and
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The original trees 13 - 15 were young ash and elms removed after the 1999 survey. 13 - 15a below have are in about the same places. Distances are from the back of the small garage block next to block B.  13 Elder Removed after previous survey.  14 Palm 2m 8m 220mm 10+ Still has ivy growing into the crown, but  • Cut ivy.  15 Cordyline 1.5m 9m 200mm 10+ Had some ivy on the trunk, which has be Nowork needed at present.	established or become significant since then and
are in about the same places. Distances are from the back of the small garage block next to block B.    13   Elder	Ç
13   Elder   -   -   -   -   Removed after previous survey     14   Palm   2m   8m   220mm   10+   Still has ivy growing into the crown, but     15   Cordyline   1.5m   9m   200mm   10+   Had some ivy on the trunk, which has be   No work needed at present.	is healthy, not a high risk species.
14 Palm   2m   8m   220mm   10+   Still has ivy growing into the crown, but    Cordyline   1.5m   9m   200mm   10+   Had some ivy on the trunk, which has be    No work needed at present.	is healthy, not a high risk species.
Cordyline I.5m 9m 200mm 10+ Had some ivy on the trunk, which has be     No work needed at present.	is healthy, not a high risk species.
15 Cordyline 1.5m 9m 200mm 10+ Had some ivy on the trunk, which has be No work needed at present.	
No work needed at present.	
	een removed. Not a major threat.
15a Holly 5m 7m 150mm 20+ Varianted tree healthy and will grow or	
13a 11ony 3m 7m 13onm 201 Variegated tree, healthy and will grow of	n but is a low risk species, well away from the
buildings. Ash nearby has been removed	d.
No work needed at present.	
15b Holly 6m 5m 3x 130 - 30+ On the boundary with Lyndhurst Garden	ns, healthy but top growth is sparse.
220 • No work needed.	
Garage block	
The rear wall of the block forms the site boundary and runs into the boundary wall behind Block E, which are all in the rear garden of 22 Lyndhurst Gardens. Dimensions of some of these are estimated.	h has been repaired since 1999. The trees near it
16 * Sycamore 5m 16m 350mm 50+ Thinned before the 1999 inspection and	was crown reduced after that. Regrowth was
healthy, but the twig growth is sparse an	nd there is some dead wood.
No work needed at present, could be re-	
	merge and it has been managed in the same way but
350mm is not quite as sparse.	,
No work needed at present, could be re	educed and managed if the need arose
	ut there are no signs or reports of damage near it.
	cies, but is mature and the foliage has been getting
sparser for several years, indicating that	
No work needed at present, if found to	it is starting to decline.

Tree no.	Species	Distance	Height	Trunk dia.	Est.	Comments and recommendations
18a *	Wild cherry	lm	I0m	300mm	10+	Healthy, vigorous young specimen that does not appear to have caused problems to date, but is close to the garages and could grow much larger, particularly with the next tree removed.  • Remove, treat stump to prevent regrowth or sucker shoots.
19*	Sycamore		-			Had been declining steadily, removed since the last survey.
20 *	Sycamore	-	-	-	-	Had been damaged by a fire several years ago, also felled since the last survey.
20a *	lvy	0m	4m	m/s	20+	It is not clear exactly where this is rooted, but it is close to the back of the garage and had become large and dense enough to be a possible subsidence risk but has recently been cut back hard.
Roar	of block E					Trim regularly to contain further growth.
		1.	1.		1	
21	Bay	6m	6m	m/s	20+	Healthy young shrub that has been left to grow on for several years and is starting to spread across the driveway.
						(previous 21 was two pear trees just beyond the rear boundary)
						<ul> <li>Trim back to clear driveway and maintain it to about this overall size or smaller.</li> </ul>
21a	Flowering cherry	5m	6m	150mm	5+	Healthy young specimen, growing well.  No work needed at present.
22 *	Laurel, ceanothus	½m	½m	m/s	30+	Assorted shrubs and some small cherry plum trees, some removed and others cut back hard after the wall was rebuilt. Upper branches of the plums are spreading over the drive
	etc.	-	-	,	20.	Continue present trimming regime to keep them to about this size and clear of the drive.
23 *)	lvy	0m	3m	m/s	30+	Had been cut back from the wall and trimmed, but is growing back and becoming denser.  • Continue trimming to keep it in check
Block	. E					Continue trimming to keep it in check.
						of the main building, none likely to cause problems with normal pruning and maintenance. e roadside verge, possibly in other ownership and the others are on the grass verge in front
of the	block.					
24	Plum		2000		200	Removed since 2008

 24
 Plum
 Removed since 2008.

Report on trees at Belsize Court, Wedderburn Road, London, NW3

Tree no.	Species	Distance	Height	Trunk dia.	Est.	Comments and recommendations
25	Pear	6m	13m	270mm	70+	Near the boundary wall, which has a crack, but that is at a joint in the wall and does not appear to be due to the tree. The trunk has distorted slightly round the parapet, but that is not harming the tree significantly. Has been reduced in the past, and cut back on the far side more recently due to building work at no.26. Regrowth was slow, but is becoming more vigorous and is healthy looking.  No work needed at bresent.
26	Pear	5m	I2m	420mm	70+	Mature tree, reduced to about 6m when younger. It had been cut back to clear scaffolding when the house next door was built, but has recovered from any ill effects and is growing on vigorously.  • Trim regrowth every 3 - 5 years.
27 *?	Sycamore	I2m	I4m	900mm	90+	Old tree pollarded at about 3m when younger and grown on. Twig growth is still sparse but no major dead wood or signs of die back, nor any obvious signs of it being harmed by the building work at no.26. Not a significant threat to Block E.  No work needed.
28	Rowan	9m	6m	90mm	10+	Young tree replacing a purple cherry plum that was felled due to decay, slightly one sided but is established and growing well.  • Planting stake can be removed, otherwise no work needed.
29	Rowan	9m	9m	180mm	10+	Young, replaces a cherry removed between 1999 and 2008, healthy and well established.  Variety with orange berries.  No work needed at present.
30	Birch	-	-	-	-	Removed between 2008 and 2015.
31	Crab apple	9m	10m	410mm	60+	Healthy mature tree that was reduced lightly and had some lower branches removed.  New growth is healthy, including young shoots filling out the lower crown.  No work needed at present.
32	Flowering cherry [Kanzan]	9m	6m	430mm	60+	Leaning, but has been doing this since at least 1999 and appears stable. Was crown reduced several years ago and more recently has been thinned and had lower branches cut, There is decay in some of the larger cuts, but the tree appears reasonably sound otherwise and the regrowth is dense and healthy.  No work needed at present, could be improved by thinning out the denser regrowth lightly

Tree no.	Species	Distance	Height	Trunk dia.	Est.	Comments and recommendations
32a	Cherry	9m	2.5m	30mm	3+	Looks like a sucker shoot from the root system of tree 32, so will be a white flowered wild cherry. Leans slightly, but is healthy, growing well and could be an eventual successor for tree 32.  • Could improve with formative pruning.
Block	С					
This a	lso has assort	ed small shrub	s near the	walls, non	e of whi	ch are major threats although any tree seedlings that appear should be removed.
33	Horse chestnut	9m	17m	990mm	90+	Has three trunks from about 3m, but junctions appear sound. It was implicated in subsidence in the end of the block, which was underpinned and has been problem free. Well away from other blocks. Near one of the adjacent school buildings, but there are no signs or reports of any problems there. It was reduced following the subsidence claim and more recently side branches growing towards the block have been shortened. Regrowth is not particularly vigorous, but the tree is sound and healthy. It is infested by horse chestnut leaf miner moth during the summer, but that is not affecting it too badly and, like many other chestnuts, it appears to be developing some tolerance.  • No work needed at present. Recutting to the former points every 3 - 4 years will lessen any risk to the nearby buildings.
33a	Sycamore	-		-	-	Removed
34	Sycamore	10m	18m	680mm	90+	One sided due to growing near the predecessor of tree 35, a large ash. New growth since then is healthy and making the crown better balanced as it develops. Branch ends over the parking area have been shortened.  • No work needed at present.
35	Red oak	15m	5m	50mm	5+	Young tree planted to replace the former tree 35, which was felled due to major decay. Not particularly vigorous, but healthy looking.  No work needed at Dresent.
Block	D					
maint	enance, althou	gh any tree se	edlings th	at appear sl	hould be	oses as the other blocks, none of which are likely to cause problems with normal removed. There are a Portugal laurel and a young cockspur thorn (35a) near the boiler ney are unlikely to affect it.
35a	Cockspur thorn	16m	5m	40mm	4+	Healthy young tree planted to replace a cherry plum that was felled due to major decay.  Slightly sparse but otherwise healthy.  Could be improved by mulching round the base.

Tree no.	Species	Distance	Height	Trunk dia.	Est. age	Comments and recommendations
36	Sycamore	25m	22m	480 & 450mm	80+	Well away from the buildings. Close to a retaining wall, which it could damage in the future, but there are no signs of problems at present. Crown reduced a few years ago and new growth is healthy and vigorous.  No work needed at present but remove the two severely suppressed ash tree under this tree's crown, particularly the closer one to the base, which is developing a heavy lean.
37	Birch	-	-	-	-	Removed
37a	Ash	lm	14m	250mm	10+	Well away from the Belsize Court block but close to the back wall of the school building. Self seeded and suppressed, but would damage the building if left.  • Remove.
38	Sycamore	25m	17m	570mm	60+	Slightly one sided due to the proximity of tree 39 and has some minor dead wood, otherwise sound and healthy.  No work needed at present.
39	Cappadocian maple	22m	19m	920mm	60+	Leans slightly towards the building, has some dead wood in the crown and a cavity in one of the main limbs on the lawn side, otherwise good. Sends up sucker shoots, which is normal in this species.  • Remove any sucker shoots that appear near the boundary wall or buildings.
40	Purple cherry plum	14m	7m	100 + 30mm	5+	Replaces the silver maple felled due to severe decay in 2008. One sided due to growing near tree 39, but good otherwise.  No work needed at present.
40a	Purple Norway maple	14m	10m	220mm	15+	Previous 40a was an ash removed a few years ago. Healthy, but close to the wall and could damage it if left to grow on for the long term.  No urgent work needed, but not suitable for long term retention.
40b	Leyland cypress	7m	I2m	220mm	10+	Healthy young tree, foliage slightly sparse due to fast upward growth.  • Remove ash sapling growing into 1b.
41	Lilac	5m	3m	m/s avg. 50mm	40+	Cut back to near ground level several years ago and is regrowing from the stump and sucker shoots from the root system.  No work needed beyond normal maintenance and trimming.
42	Ginkgo	9m	16m	370mm	30+	Healthy young tree, growing rapidly, but well away from any buildings and is one of the lower risk species.  No work needed at present.

Tree no.	Species	Distance	Height	Trunk dia.	Est. age	Comments and recommendations
43	Flowering cherry	8m	7m	320mm	30+	Healthy well established tree, not a major threat to the buildings at this range. Has had a root sucker removed. Has a small <i>Ganoderma</i> bracket at the base, indicating internal decay.
43a	Flowering cherry	6m	5m	150mm	10+	Test drill to assess decay. Looks like a sucker shoot from no.43. Leans but sound and healthy and has grown since 2021. No work needed at present.
43b	Flowering cherry	6m	5m	200mm	10+	Could also be a sucker shoot.  No work needed at present.
44	London plane	6m	30m	1.7m	100+	Large healthy tree, close to Block B, although there have been no signs or reports of any structural problems in the building. This time it was climbed again and a more detailed assessment is in the report on that.  Signs of decay in the upper crown caused by Inonotus hispidus were inspected by climbing in 2008 and found to be minor. After that the tree reduced lightly as a precaution and the area inspected regularly from the ground. A climbed inspection in February 2021, revealed that the decay had spread and a cavity had developed with a narrow opening at the point where one of the fungal brackets had appeared. However it was not large enough to be a significant weakness and had not worsened materially when the tree was climbed again in March 2023 although a branch that had been shed near that point had some decay. London planes are highly resistant to this fungus, unlike some other species, particularly ash. No signs of Massaria were seen on this occasion, but the tree has been affected in the past. The large low branch over the road has a decay cavity in the top and is carrying most of its weight at the end.  • Shorten the low branch over the road has a decay cavity in the top and is carrying most dead wood and check the crown for Mossaria.
44a	Cherry plum	6m	8m	100 - 180mm	30+	Has green foliage and probably originated as a sucker shoot from a purple cherry plum but there are no longer any obvious parent trees in the vicinity. Healthy and in good condition.  • Trim to keep footways clear.

Tree no.	Species	Distance	Height	Trunk dia.	Est.	Comments and recommendations
45 *(c)?	Horse chestnut	10m	16m	670mm	60+	In the pavement, probably a council tree. Under the plane, but is not unduly suppressed. Becoming one sided due to the plane, which can increase the risk of branch shedding as the timber is brittle. Regularly infested by leaf miner, which is not a major problem and the trunk bleeding has reduced steadily.  • Could improve by reducing end growth to give a more balanced shape, but that is not urgent.

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