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Tree Inspection Report

Site:

6 Downshire Hill
London
NW3 1NR

Client:

Doreen Mitchell

Date of Report:

December 2023

Date Reference:

AR/MF/0187/21

Report Prepared by:

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report has been commissioned by Doreen Mitchell to survey, make assessment and provide recommendations for 3 no. trees (T1-T3) at 6 Downshire Hill, London, NW3 1NR.

1.2 A site visit was made on 27th November 2023 to survey and assess the trees. The weather at the time of inspection was overcast and mild with trees in early dormancy mode.

1.3 The details of the subject trees are set out in the tree survey table in Appendix A. The trees were surveyed on the date and time shown above and the tree survey assessment information for the trees describing size, condition and surroundings is found in this appendix.

1.4 The trees surveyed are shown in a site plan, Appendix B, and this corresponds to the tree survey schedule, Appendix A.

1.5 Photographs of the trees can also be found in Appendix C.

1.6 This report and the opinions within it have been produced without prejudice by Marcus Foster; a qualified arboriculturist and professional member of the Arboricultural Association (MArborA) holding a National Diploma in Arboriculture, and the Arboricultural Association's Technicians Certificate as well as the Professional Tree Inspection Certificate (LANTRA). Marcus Foster also holds a degree in History and Society (University of Exeter). Work experience within the industry includes work as a Contracts Manager for an Arboricultural Association Approved Company, a Local Authority Tree Preservation Officer and an independent Arboricultural Consultant.

2.0 Survey Details and Scope

2.1 The site survey for the purposes of this report includes 3 no. trees (T1-T3) as shown in the survey, Appendix A, and also highlighted on the site plan, Appendix B.

2.2 The survey and inspection has been undertaken to make a hazard assessment of the trees.

2.3 The trees have been surveyed from ground level only. The height of the trees have been estimated.

2.3 The following information was recorded for the trees and is shown in the Tree Schedule included in Appendix A - refer to full tree schedule key:

- Number: an identity number which cross references locations shown on the plan in Appendix A with the schedule in Appendix B.
- Species: listed by common names
- Tree Height: approximate height in metres
- Tree Spread: approximate height in metres
- Stem diameter: measured in millimetres (mm) and taken at 1.5m above ground level
- Age Class: Y (young); EM (early-mature); M (mature); OM (over-mature)
- Physiological Condition: G (good); F (fair); P (poor); D (dead)
- Structural Condition: G (good); F (fair); P (poor); D (dead)
- General Comments: Specific comments relating to each tree
- Management recommendations
- Work Priority Ratings
- Inspection Frequency

2.4 The information contained within the report reflects the condition of the specimens examined at the time of the inspection. Information recorded in the tree survey is expanded in the report findings and a management programme specified in the recommended schedule of works has been included.

3.0 Survey Limitations

3.1 No soil excavation or root inspection has been carried out.

3.2 All tree inspections were carried out at ground level using industry recognised 'visual tree assessment' techniques from ground level. Equipment used included binoculars, acoustic mallet, metal probe and tree measuring equipment. No internal decay devices were used during this site survey.

3.3 Soil conditions have been researched but have not been physically investigated.

3.4 Trees are dynamic organisms and are subject to environmental change / alterations further to site or condition changes and weather events. As a result there can be no one off inspection to assess the long term condition of trees. A programme of regular re-inspection intervals are detailed in the tree survey schedule and should be adhered to in order to retain the validity of the inspection programme. The re-inspection schedule applies to normal weather conditions prevailing during the period between re-inspections. Interim tree inspections should be carried out as soon as is practicable following any extreme weather event.

4.0 Tree Survey Findings

Overview

4.1 The trees being surveyed are located within the front and rear of 6 Downshire Hill, London, NW3 1NR. The property is located within the London Borough of Camden and the following statutory checks have been made:

CONSERVATION AREA STATUS

Hampstead Conservation Area

TPO STATUS

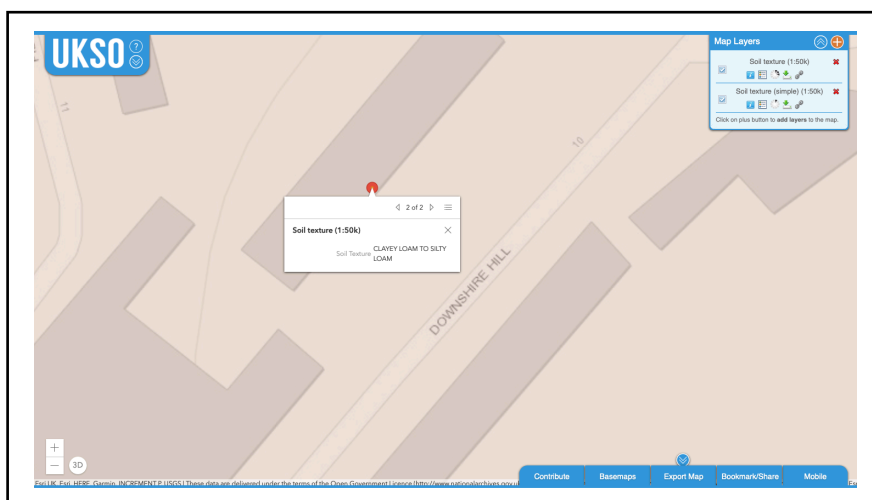
Not possible due to LB Camden online checks not available

4.2 The property is sited as follows with extract below from. Extract from map as shown below confirming aerial imagery:



Extract from Googlemaps

4.3 As viewed December 2021 <http://www.ukso.org> show the property to be located on a medium to heavy soil mix consisting mainly of clayey loam to silty loam meaning that plasticity levels of the soil are generally high.



Tree Survey Findings

Tree T1

4.4 Tree T1, Horse chestnut, has the following key characteristics being sited at the front of the property offering high visual amenity value and being a prominent element of the streetscape and green infrastructure for the area:

- Lean to south with accentuated buttresses to north within raised soft landscape of front garden; base flush with highway to east
- Cavity at 2m height to south with fruiting body (*Phellinus igniarius*) at least 3-4 years age; seepage from wound which is largely occluded. Probe enters within open cavity up to 150mm maximum. Decay sealant previously applied highlighting extent of occluding growth. It is noted that the fungus has greater vigour than when previously documented December 2021
- Cavities also exist within the main stem / union at
 - 3.0m to west - occluding w/ reaction wood
 - 3.5m to north west occluding w/ reaction wood
 - 4.0m to south to south east of branch union with limited occluding growth
 - 4.5m to south east
- Main branch framework union at 4-6m height.
- Large over-extended south west lateral over highway with weighted initial sweep
- Large over-extended north east lateral over no.7. Remaining crown element comprised from 6 upright leaders with limited crown shaping historically

4.5 The following is noted in relation to the form highlighted within the findings as above:

- (i) For area of decay on main stem relating to fruiting body *Phellinus igniarius* and absence of significant decay beyond this point as indicated by minimal incursion within the main stem by probe, it is likely that the area of decay has compartmentalised. The fungus characteristically is often restricted to dysfunctional areas – branch stubs or old wounds¹ as is the case with this historic wound relating to limb removal over the highway.
- (ii) Previous remedial works in recent history (last 10-20 years are minor; however major limb removal historically has resulted in significant decay pockets within 3.0 and 5.0m height within main union
- (iii) Where limbs are over-extended to the south west and north east the reduction of these limbs is specified to reduce extent of wind loading upon areas of the crown further exposed than that of the main crown element

4.6 Remedial works shall provide scrown reduction of the tree where end weighting is occurring over the highway and also over No.7 Downshire Hill to bgive compact form and retention.

¹ Fungi on Trees, Watson, G. & Green, T. (Arboricultural Association 2011)

Tree T2

4.7 This Holly is suppressed beneath T1 and offers amenity value at a lower height beneath mid crown of tree T1. There is gradual movement noted against front gate; no remedial action required at present.

Tree T3

4.8 Tree T3 sited within the rear garden has the following key characteristics:

- Lean to south with good buttress roots to north
- Crown break at 5-9m height
- Decay to south east at 0.2-2.5m from likely bonfire damage; occluding with reaction growth - decay extends maximum 200mm within open cavity at base / 100mm within at 1.5m height
- Decay pocket at 8m height from poor pruning wound holding water
- Main wounds on main stem and branch framework generally occluded
- Over-extended lateral to east at 5m height extending to north east. Previously crown reduced; lapsed 6-8 years by 4-5m branch lengths

4.9 The following is noted in relation to the form highlighted within the findings as above:

- (i) For area of decay on main stem relating to bonfire damage, significant occluding growth and reaction is evident
- (ii) Previous crown reduction works have been undertaken to manage the tree in relation to highlighted structural defect and large species of tree for rear garden location
- (iii) Works have been undertaken within 10 years but open crown sections have developed where lapsed pollard points remain

4.10 Remedial works shall provide crown reduction of the tree to manage lapsed previous reduction points in relation to the location and form.

Summary

4.11 The recommended management plan as included within *Section 5* is for cyclical management works to be continued with priority ratings recommended as shown within the survey schedule. A summary of these is as follows:

- (i) Tree Works to T1 to be carried out as a 'Moderate' priority (within 90 days) to dispense with duty of care
- (ii) Tree Works to T3 to be carried out as a 'Moderate' priority (within 90 days) to dispense with duty of care
- (iii) Re-inspection of T1 - T3 to be carried out as follows:
 - T1 as a 'Moderate' priority annually
 - T2-T3 as a 'Low' priority within 3 years

5.0 Tree Works Schedule

5.1 Any tree work shall be carried out to BS 3998; 2010 Recommendations for Tree Work. Permissions from the Local Authority, are applicable as tree protection applies by virtue of location within a Conservation Area.

TREE WORKS SCHEDULE: 6 Downshire Hill, London, NW3 1NR			
Tree No.	Common Name	Tree Works	Reasons for works
T1	Horse chestnut	Crown reduce height and spread by branch lengths of height 4-4.5m and spread 3-3.5m branch lengths to give compact shape and retain even / flowing canopy outline For south west lateral and north east lateral previously reduced crown reduce by branch lengths of 1.5-2.0m Crown lift to 6m height by pruning maximum 100mm branch diameters. Remove major deadwood	In line with good arboricultural practice
T3	Ash	Crown reduce height and spread of lapsed pollards by up to 4.0m branch lengths to give compact form. Crown reduce north west leader 4-5m branch lengths Remove major deadwood	In line with good arboricultural practice

NOTE: Wildlife & Habitat Protection Guidelines

The tree work specifications included within this report do not provide an exemption from the requirements to comply with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Habitats Regulations 1994 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, or any acts offering protection to wildlife. Of particular note is the protection offered to bats, birds and their nests, whilst being built or in use. It must be noted that failure to comply with the Acts may result in a criminal prosecution.

Appendices

Appendix A: Tree Schedule

Key to Tree Schedule

Number:

Identity number which cross reference locations shown on the plan in Appendix A with the schedule in Appendix B also

Species:

Listed by Latin name and / or common names as deemed appropriate

Tree Height:

Height in metres

Tree Spread:

Height in metres

Stem diameter:

Measured in millimetres (mm) and taken at 1.5m above ground level

Age Class:

Y (young)

Recently planted or established tree - less than 150mm diameter

SM (semi-mature)

Established tree but with significant growth to reach optimum size and form

EM (early-mature)

A tree at maturity but with potential for increased girth and spread which will continue to develop size and form

M (mature)

A mature specimen within final third of lifespan; limited increase in size and/or development of form

OM (over-mature)

A declining tree within latter stages of lifespan. Increased frequency within crown of structural defects and/or lower vigour are likely

V (Veteran)

A tree of significant physical, biological, cultural or aesthetic value which has lived beyond the typical lifespan relative to species. Structural defects are likely a prominent feature and require appropriate management in relation to the importance of the tree

Dead

The tree is dead and cannot be categorised within any of the above

Vitality:

G (good)

Generally in good health and condition - relative to species - and requiring no remedial action

Minor deadwood may be evident although extent relative to species

Leaf size, extension growth and crown density normal for species

F (fair)

Tree is showing signs of stress including, although not exhaustive of - lowered crown density, excessive deadwood, excessive epicormic growth, selective dieback, pests and diseases, abnormal leaf size / extension growth

The condition may be alleviated with remedial works / plant health care although these works should not be prioritised in relation to health and safety

P (poor)

Tree is showing signs of significant physiological decline including overall crown dieback, stag headed form, very poor crown density, limited extension growth, bud burst and decline thereafter, pest infestation

Remedial work is unlikely to provide improvement in physiological condition

D (dead)

- The tree is no longer alive with no physiological attributes evident

Structural condition:

G (good)

Few minor defects with overall good structural condition

Showing no adverse risk of failure/s

F (fair)

A tree which has a structural defect (major in early / semi maturity or developing stages of life and minor in full maturity) which requires remedial action

Structural defects could include significant compression forks, co-dominant stems, major deadwood, poor previous pruning, storm damage, limb failure, cavities, decay

Tree may repair via self optimisation which could be dependant on species / age of tree. Or remedial tree works specified for management of defect

P (poor)

Tree's structural integrity compromised from poor structural condition

Major structural defects may include decay, cavity, fungal fruiting bodies, significant dead wood, hanging limbs, major storm damage, excessive and significant pruning wounds

D (dead)

Tree is dead

Comments & Observations

Further to inspection comments which relate to both the physiological and structural condition of the tree and any important site factors also

Management recommendations

Tree Works Specification in accordance with BS3998:2010 and where appropriate BS8545:2014

Work Priority Rating:

U (Urgent)

Immediately / Make safe within 24 hours

VH (Very High)

Within 5 Days

Also appropriate where significant site constraints / infrastructure organisation exists to enable implementation, including 5 day notice

H (High)

Within 30 Days

M (Moderate)

Within 90 Days

L (Low)

Within 12 months

May refer to works related to aesthetics of the tree where deemed appropriate / previously implemented

Inspection Frequency

U (Urgent)

Carry out as soon as possible - likely for an aerial inspector

VH (Very High)

Within 30 days

H (High)

Within 6 months

M (Moderate)

Annually

L (Low)

Every 3 years

MARCUS FOSTER - ARBORICULTURAL DESIGN & CONSULTANCY - TREE SURVEY
SITE: 6 Downshire Hill, London, NW3 1NR | DATE: 27th November 2023

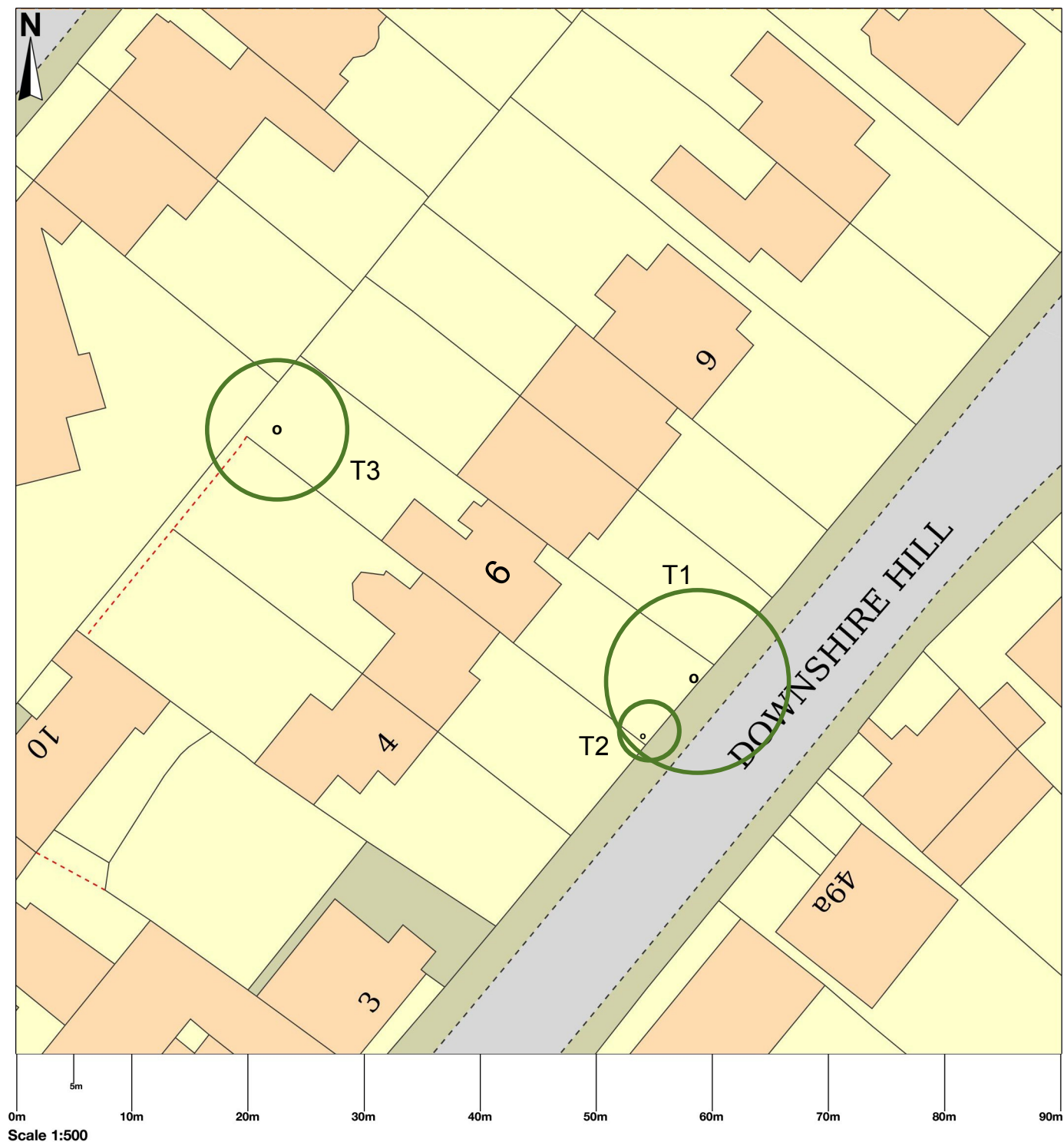
Tree No	Species	Height (m)	Stem Diameter (mm)	Crown Spread (m)	Age Class	Structural Condition	Vitality	Condition Comments	Recommendations	Tree Works Priority Rating	Inspection Priority Rating
T1	Horse chestnut	20	1240	N: 7 E: 9 E: 9 W: 8	M	F	F	Lean to south with accentuated buttresses to north within raised soft landscape of front garden; base flush with highway to east. Cavity at 2m height to south with fruiting body (Phellinus igniarius) at least 3-4 years age; seepage from wound which is largely occluded. Probe enters within open cavity up to 150mm maximum. Decay sealant previously applied highlighting occluding growth. Further cavities at - 3.0m to west - occluding w/ reaction wood and seepage - 3.5m to north west occluding w/ reaction wood - 4.0m to south to south east of branch union with limited occluding growth - 4.5m to south east Main branch framework union at 4-6m height with debris collected. Large over-extended south west lateral over highway with weighted initial sweep - reduced: lapsed approx 2 years. Large over-extended north east lateral over no.7 - reduced: lapsed approx 2 year. Remaining crown element comprised from 6 upright leaders with limited crown shaping historically. Generally over-extended	Crown reduce height and spread by branch lengths of height 4-4.5m and spread 3-3.5m branch lengths to give compact shape and retain even / flowing canopy outline For south west lateral and north east lateral previously reduced crown reduce by branch lengths of 1.5-2.0m Crown lift to 6m height by pruning maximum 100mm branch diameters Remove major deadwood	M	M
T2	Holly	8	250	N: 2 E: 3 E: 2 W: 1	M	F	F	Leans to south from base. Main stem growing on line of fence post. Tight union at 2m height - bifurcates with included bark. Retains compact form from supression	No action required at present	/	L
T3	Ash	16	790	N: 7 E: 7 E: 5 W: 6	M	F	F	Lean to south with good buttress roots to north. Crown break at 5-9m height. Decay to south east at 0.2-2.5m from likely bonfire damage; occluding with reaction growth - decay extends maximum 200mm within open cavity at base / 100mm within at 1.5m height. Decay pocket at 8m height from poor pruning wound holding water. Wounds on main stem and branch framework from lifting generally occluded. Over-extended lateral to east at 5m height extending to north east. Previously crown reduced; lapsed pollards (by 10-15 years) of 4-5m lengths have been reduced selectively. Open crown sections remain with major deadwood. South west leader over extended over Pilgrims Lane properties	Crown reduce height and spread of lapsed pollards by up to 4.0m branch lengths to give compact form. Crown reduce north west leader 4-5m branch lengths Remove major deadwood	M	L

APPENDIX B: TREE SURVEY SITE PLAN

SITE: 6 Downshire Hill, London, NW3 1NR

DWG REF: T001

DATE: 29.11.23



*Scale 1:500 @ A4
Trees not plotted via GIS*

Arboricultural Report Reference: AR/MF/0222/23
Site: 6 Downshire Hill, London, NW3 1NR
Date: December 2023

Appendix C: Tree Inspection Photographs



Tree T1 as viewed in a north westerly direction



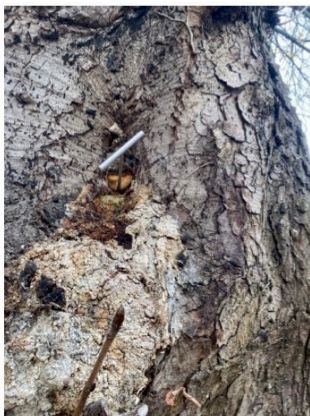
Tree T1 as viewed in an easterly direction



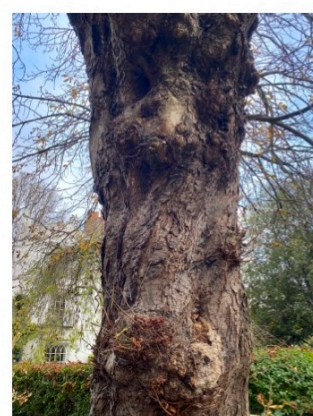
Tree T1 as viewed in a westerly direction



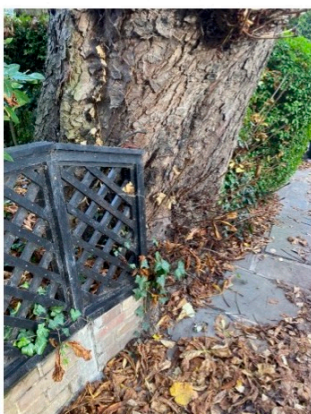
Cavity and occluding growth at 2.2m to south east of main stem



Phellinus igniarius fruiting body within previous pruning wound (historic)



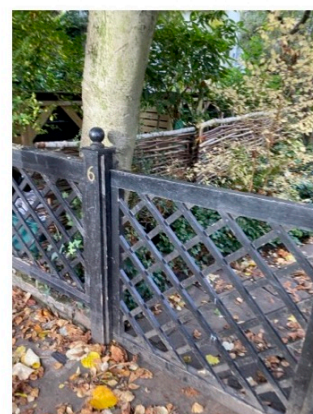
Main stem of tree T1 as viewed in an easterly direction



Base of tree T1 as viewed in an easterly direction



Tree T2 as viewed in a northerly direction



Initial stem of tree T2 as viewed in a north westerly direction



Tree T1 as viewed in a westerly direction



Cavity to south / east of main stem with occluding growth



Base of tree to north



Lapsed pollard points to north and open crown sections



Lapsed pollard points and open crown sections of mid - upper crown viewed vertically

Taken by M Foster 27th November 2023 (AM)

Appendix D: **References**

1. Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management, Lonsdale, D. (Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions, 1999)
2. The Body Language of Trees, Mattheck, C. and Breloer, H. (HMSO, 1994)
3. Fungi on Trees, Watson, G. & Green, T. (Arboricultural Association 2011)
4. Trees in Britain, Philips, R. (Pan Books, 1978).
5. Diagnosis of Ill Health in Trees, Strouts, R. and Winter, (TSO, 1994)
6. Bats & Trees, D. Jackson (Bat Conservation Trust, 2015)
7. NHBC, Chapter 4.3 (2013)

END OF REPORT
PREPARED BY Marcus Foster MArborA