PATRICK STILEMAN LTD
ARBORICULTURAL CONSULTANCY

Institute of Chartered Foresters
Registered Consultant

Principal Consultant: Patrick Stileman BSc(Hons), MICFor, MRICS, Dip. Arb (RFS), CUEW, RC.Arbor. A

[redacted]

Tree Inspection Report

Site
22 Churchill Road, London NW5 1AN

Client
[redacted]

Prepared by
Patrick Stileman BSc(Hons), MICFor, MRICS, Dip. Arb (RFS), RC.Arbor.A

Date
13th March 2019

[redacted]

VAT Reg No. 827 3852 08
Logos shown relate to principal consultant only.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 I am Patrick Stileman, Director of Patrick Stileman Ltd. I have qualifications and experience in arboricultural consultancy and I have given details of this in Appendix 1. Patrick Stileman Ltd is instructed by Angie Tennant.

1.2 **Brief:** I have been instructed to undertake a condition assessment of two poplar trees located in the rear garden of 22 Churchill Road, London, NW5 1AN. I am to assess the risk that they pose of causing harm or damage from structural failure. I am to make recommendations for remedial work as I consider necessary.

1.3 **Report scope:** This report only relates to two trees identified in Section 1.4. An assessment of the possible effect that the trees may have to structures through changes in soil volume is not included in this report.

1.4 **Tree identification:** The trees inspected are black Italian poplars. Their approximate location has been shown on the Tree Location Plan included on Page 12.

1.5 **Statutory protection:** I have been advised that the site is within a conservation area and that consequently the trees have provisional statutory protection afforded by this. I have been told that the trees are not protected by a tree preservation order (TPO). I have not made contact with the local planning authority to seek confirmation of the trees' legal status.

1.6 **Previous inspection:** I previously inspected the trees in June 2017.

2 SITE VISIT

2.1 **Date of site visit:** I inspected the trees on 4th March 2019.

2.2 **Method of inspection:** My assessment of the trees was based on a technique called Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) in which growth features on trees (body language) are used to interpret internal defects and to assist the assessment of the likelihood of failure. In addition to a visual tree assessment, I used an IML *PD resi* to assess the extent of decay within the trees' stems, details of which are included in this report. The conclusions that I have reached are based on an interpretation of my observations using my knowledge and experience.

3 TREE 1 OBSERVATIONS

3.1 Details

• **Species:**	Black Italian poplar (*Populus x Canadensis* 'Serotina')	
• **Height:** (estimated)	10 metres	
• **Crown spread radius** (estimated)**:**	North	3m
	East	4m
	South	0m
	West	0m
• **Stem diameter at 1.5m** (estimated)**:**	1100mm	
• **Age class:**	Mature	
• **Vitality:**	Normal	
• **Target** (land use in fall radius of tree)	Gardens and out-buildings	
• **Target value**	Moderate	

3.2 General observations and comments:

3.2.1 The tree has a single wide stem with a pronounced lean to the north-east, overhanging the garden of 24 Spencer Rise. At a height of approximately 7 metres the stem divides and at this point the former crown structure was topped many years ago leaving extensive decay where the former large-diameter scaffold branches were severed. From the original topping points secondary growth stems emerge. These comprise several short stem sections with a length of approximately 1 metre and average diameter of around 150mm. The top of the secondary stubs has been managed through regular recent pollarding. At the time of inspection there is two season's growth emerging from the top of the stubs, having re-grown from pollarding following my previous recommendation.

3.2.2 A previous observation of the tree's base from 22 Churchill Road was that it was in good visual condition with no defects seen. On this latest site visit however I observed a *Perenniporia fraxinea* fungal fruiting body at a height of 0.2 metres above ground level on the south-west side.

3.2.3 Previous drill tests undertaken from the south, west and east sides indicated that the stem had a residual wall of sound wood with thicknesses of around 22-23cm at a height of 1 metre. During the most recent site visit, drill tests from 22 Churchill Road indicated wall thicknesses of around 12cm from the south side and 26cm from the west side (see Figures 2&3).

3.2.4 During my previous inspection I noted that the tree's base was extensively decayed on the north-east side as viewed from the garden of 24 Spencer Rise. During the most recent site visit I observed that this had deteriorated further, with a surface root now dead and decayed. I undertook a drill test on this side of the tree which indicated that the sound wood around the outside of the stem has a thickness of 13cm (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. PD *resi* test. Tree 1. 0.3m above ground level on north-east side (from 24 Spencer Rise)

(Note – with all tests the outer edge of the tree is on the right side of the graph)

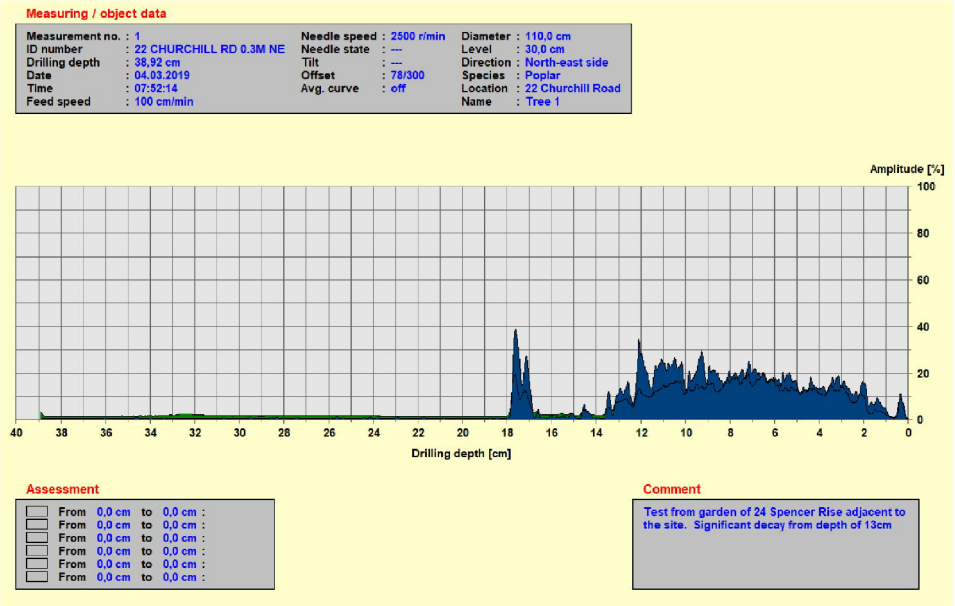


Figure 2. PD *resi* test. Tree 1. 0.3m above ground level on south side

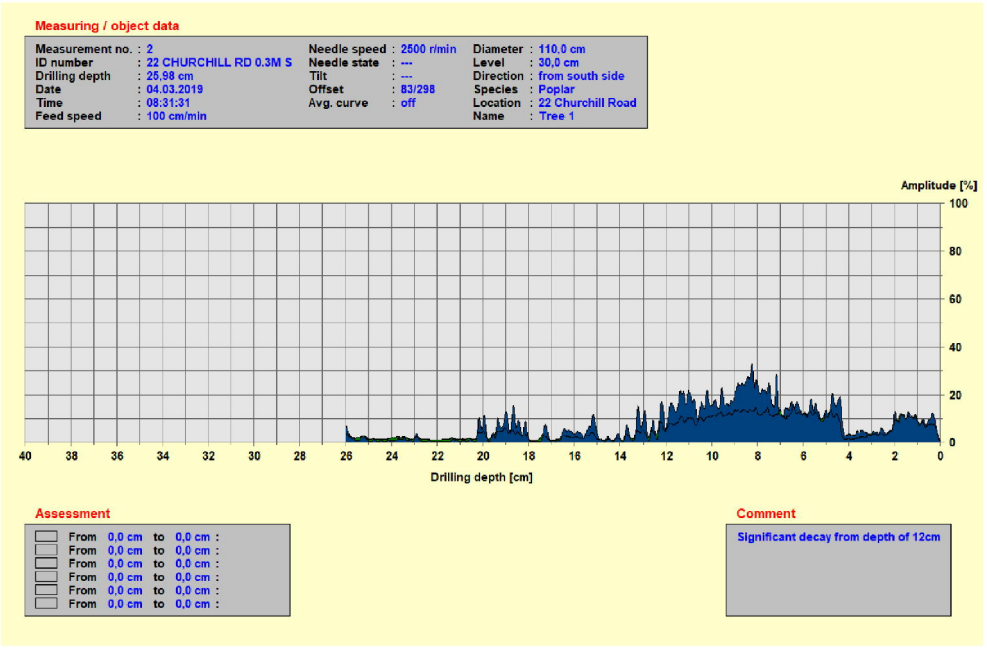
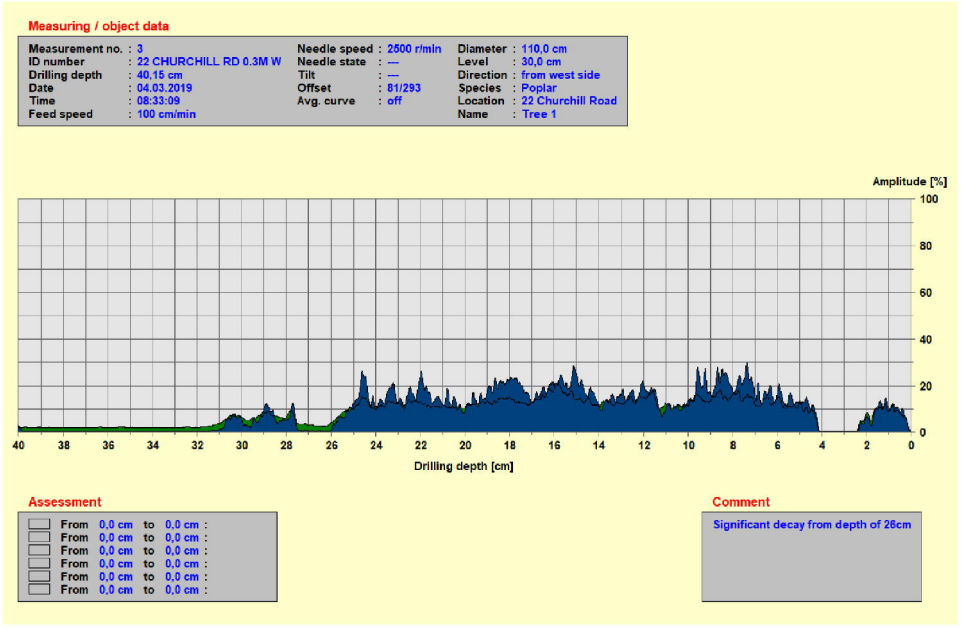


Figure 3. PD *resi* test. Tree 1. 0.3m above ground level on west side



4 TREE 1 APPRAISAL

4.1 In the previous report, which noted the presence of *Perenniporia fraxinea* on the north-east side, I concluded that the tree's stem appeared to have sufficient strength at that time though it is quite possible that this could change such that the tree's removal becomes necessary.

4.2 Since my previous inspection of the tree there are significant changes to its condition, notably:

- The presence of a *Perenniporia fraxinea* fungal fruiting body on the south-western side of the stem. This is a fungus that causes extensive decay and the emergence of a fruiting body on the tension side (the tree leans to the north-east) is a cause for concern.

- The apparent reduction in sound wall thickness on the southern side - previously this was noted at around 22cm; however the most recent drill test indicates it to be 12cm.

- The death and decay of a surface root on the north-east side in the garden of the property adjacent.

4.3 From these observations it appears that the stem has deteriorated in quality within a relatively short time scale. The tree has a very wide stem, particularly below the pollard point with weight imbalance caused by its lean, and I consider that failure is now foreseeable. Given the nature of the tree species and the fungus involved I consider it entirely likely that deterioration in wood quality will continue, resulting in an ever-increasing hazard of tree failure.

4.4 I do not consider that realistic pruning options remain, and I recommend that the tree is removed within the next three months.

5 TREE 2. OBSERVATIONS

5.1 Details

• **Species:**	Black Italian poplar (*Populus x Canadensis* 'Serotina')	
• **Height:** (estimated)	8 metres	
• **Crown spread radius** (estimated)**:**	North	2m
	East	1m
	South	2m
	West	2m
• **Stem diameter at 1.5m** (estimated)**:**	850mm	
• **Age class:**	Mature	
• **Vitality:**	Normal	
• **Target** (land use in fall radius of tree)	Gardens and out-buildings	
• **Target value**	Moderate	

5.2 General observations and comments:

5.2.1 The tree has a single, upright, ivy-covered stem to a height of 7 metres. The view of the tree's top is obscured by ivy; however it is apparent that it has been subjected to the same management as Tree 1, and it is likely that there are large decaying wounds where the primary scaffold branches where severed in the past. The tree has re-grown from past pollarding undertaken since the previous inspection with 1-2 seasons' re-growth.

5.2.2 Use of a sounding mallet implied the presence of decay on the east side. I undertook drill tests in three locations where the tree could be accessed on the north, east and south sides (see Figures 4-6)

Figure 4. PD *resi* test. Tree 2. 0.3m above ground level on east side

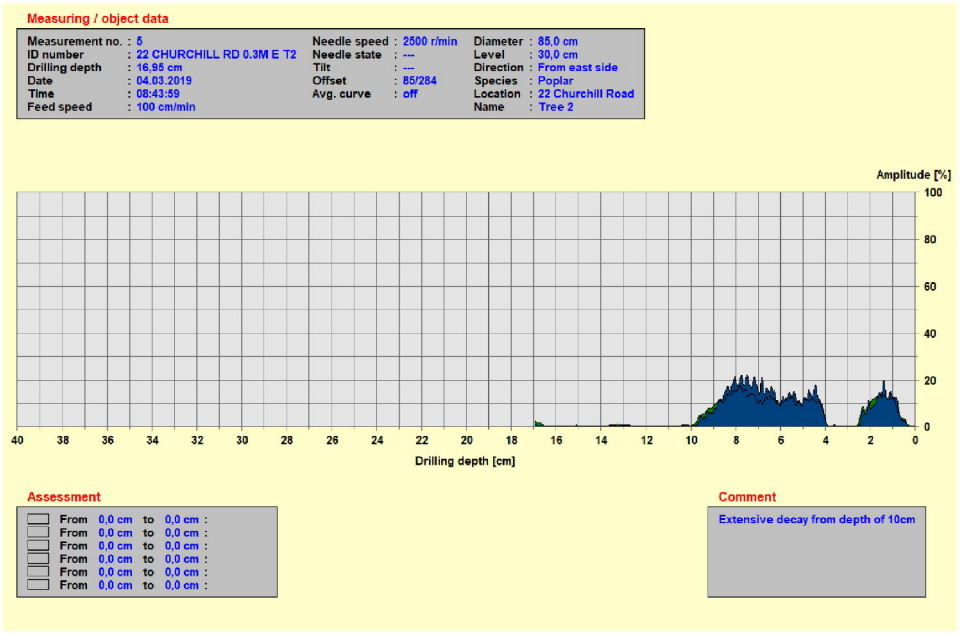


Figure 5. PD *resi* test. Tree 2. 0.3m above ground level on north side

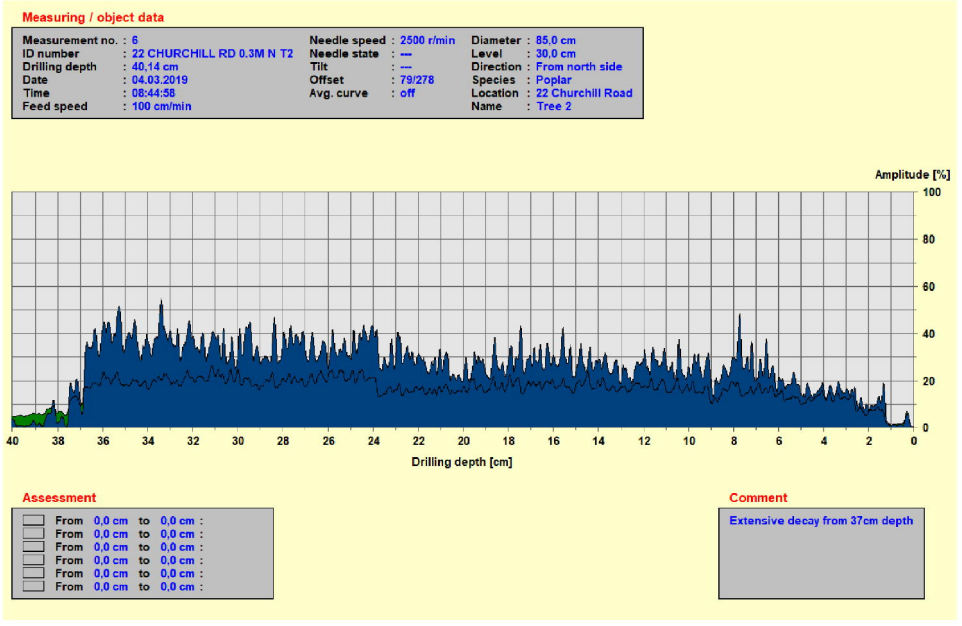
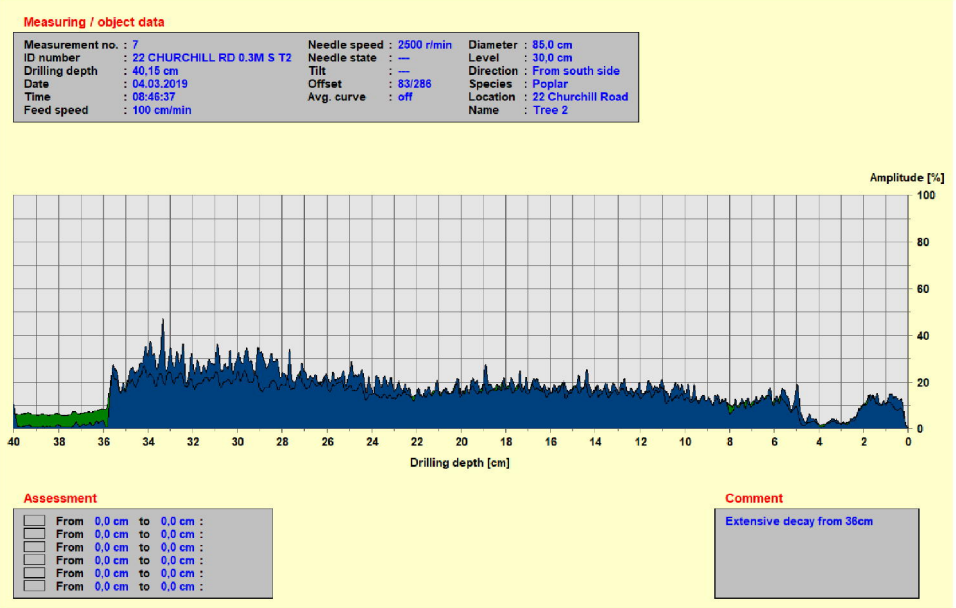


Figure 6. PD *resi* test. Tree 2. 0.3m above ground level on south side



6 TREE 2 APPRAISAL

6.1 It is apparent that the tree has significant decay on its eastern side; however from the north and south sides it has sound wall thickness of 36 - 37cm which I consider provides good support, particularly given the tree's small size and upright form.

6.2 It is possible that with time the tree's condition might deteriorate to a point where the stem becomes unstable; however this is unlikely to occur for several years at least and I consider that the tree can reasonably be retained on the basis that it is re-pollarded every two to three years.

7 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 I recommend that Tree 1 is removed within the next three months.

7.2 I recommend that Tree 2 is re-pollarded within the next twelve months, and that this be repeated every 2-3 years.

7.3 I recommend that Tree 2 is re-inspected in three years' time.

8 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 If the trees are located within a conservation area and not protected by a TPO as I have been advised, the work recommended can only be undertaken after a period of six week has elapsed following submission to the LPA of formal notification in writing of the work intended (Section 211 Notice). If the trees are protected by a TPO, consent to undertake the pruning work is required.

9 IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 All work is to be carried out in accordance with BS3998 (2010) *Recommendations for tree work*. The contractors should be trained in the work that they are performing; carry public liability insurance (it is for the client to satisfy themselves that a suitable level of cover is held by the contractor; however £5 million is a minimum level generally considered to be acceptable); and undertake written risk assessments for the work being undertaken. I recommend that a certificate of insurance and site specific risk assessments should be seen by the client prior to the contractor commencing work. If a reputable contractor is not known, a list of Arboricultural Association approved contractors can be viewed on line at https://www.trees.org.uk/ARB-Approved-Contractor-Directory

10 WILDLIFE

10.1 Nesting birds, bats and bat roosts are protected by law. It is the duty of the contractors to satisfy themselves prior to commencement that neither these, nor any protected species, shall be adversely affected by the proposed work. Work should be undertaken in accordance with BS8596:2015: *Surveying for bats in trees and woodland – Guide.*

11 REPORT LIMITATIONS

11.1 The hazard of retained trees (or parts of trees) failing cannot be removed entirely, and by their very nature all retained trees pose a certain level of risk. This report is based on my assessment of the tree and the risk of it causing harm or damage through structural failure; it provides recommendations for management which I consider to be reasonable and acceptable in arboricultural terms.

Patrick Stileman

PATRICK STILEMAN BSc(Hons), MICFor, MRICS, Dip.Arb(RFS), RC.Arbor.A
Chartered Arboriculturist. Arboricultural Association Registered Consultant

Director Patrick Stileman Ltd

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1

View of Tree 1 from 24 Spencer Rise

Photograph 2

Tree 1. View of base from 24 Spencer Rise. Arrow points to dead and decaying surface root

Photograph 3

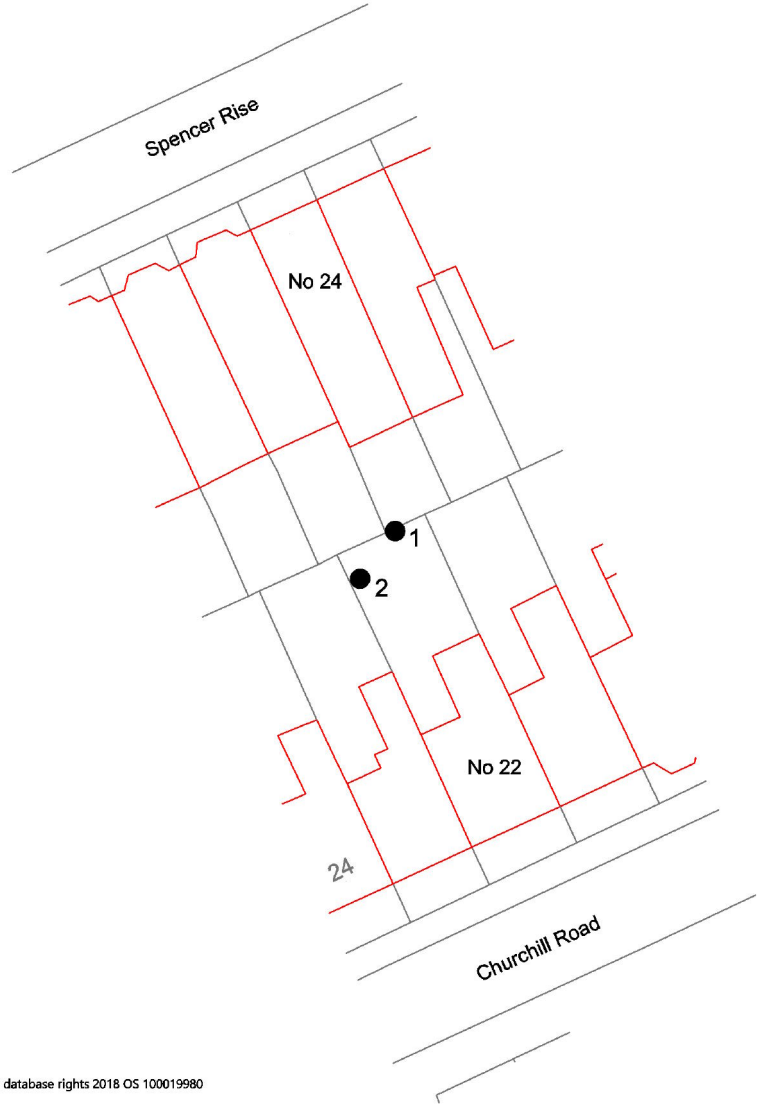
Tree 1. View from 22 Churchill Road

Photograph 4

Tree 1. *Perenniporia fraxinea* fruiting body on south-west side

Photograph 5

Tree 2



TREE LOCATION PLAN

SITE ADDRESS
22 Churchill Road, NW5 1AN

PROJECT REF
TI21021901

DRAWING NO
TI21021901.1

DATE
13/03/2019

Patrick Stileman Ltd
9 Chestnut Drive, Berkhamsted, Herts,
HP4 2JL 01442 866112

N

KEY

● Approximate position of inspected tree

APPENDIX 1

Qualifications and experience of Patrick Stileman BSc(Hons), MICFor, Dip.Arb(RFS), M.Arbor.A

I am Patrick Stileman, director of Patrick Stileman Ltd Arboriculltural Consultancy.

My qualifications in arboriculture are as follows:

National Certificate in Arboriculture *Nch(arb)*

The Arboricultural Associations Technicians Certificate *Tech.Cert (Arbor.A)*

The Royal Forestry Society's Professional Diploma in Arboriculture *Dip.Arb(RFS)*

In addition to the qualifications listed above which are specific to the field of arboriculture, I also hold an honours degree in Environmental Science *BSc(Hons)*.

I hold chartered status, being a Chartered Arboriculturist and professional member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters *MICFor,* and a professional member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, *MRICS*.

I am a Registered Consultant with the Arboricultural Association.

I am a trained expert witness, and hold the Cardiff University Bond Solon Expert Witness Certificate.

I am a member of the Royal Forestry Society.

I have been working within the arboricultural industry since 1994 and as a consultant since 2001. I am frequently instructed by professionals to provide advice and assistance relating to trees within the planning process; I have a wide client base in this field including developers, architects, planning consultants, and Local Planning Authorities. I am experienced with providing arboricultural input in planning appeals as written representation, informal hearing and public local inquiry.

I am regularly instructed to assist with tree risk assessments, and to provide guidance relating to tree safety. Past clients for this work include Local Authorities, schools, residents associations, large organisations including zoos and estates, and private individuals.

I provide advice in relation to alleged tree-related damage to buildings. Clients for this work are typically domestic homeowners, but have also included local authorities. Other work that I undertake involves the provision of tree planting schemes; and advice relating to the general management of trees.

I have worked as an arboricultural expert witness for public and private sector clients.

Prior to running my current consulting practice, I was a partner in an arboricultural contracting business in which I was involved with the practical aspect of organising, and execution of contract tree work.