



# TREE SURVEY & RISK ASSESSMENT

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Bicester Heritage  
Bicester, Oxfordshire

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## **1.0 Instruction & Remit**

We are instructed by GCK Treeworks to carry out a routine survey and risk assessment of all trees on the Bicester Heritage site.

## **2.0 Caveats**

All trees have been inspected from ground level only. Should further, more detailed inspection be deemed appropriate, this will be mentioned in the recommendations section of the appended schedule of works.

Trees are dynamic living organisms, whose health and condition can be subject to rapid changes, depending upon a number of internal and external factors. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based on the trees at the time of inspection. It should be noted that even completely sound, healthy trees, can fail, given sufficiently severe weather conditions.

Should new development of any kind take place on the site, this may have a bearing on the level of potential risk posed by any tree or group of trees, hence an early re-inspection may be necessary in the relevant area/s.

## **3.0 Survey Methodology**

- 3.1 All trees have been assessed for general condition and health & safety issues, using the recognised system known as VTA (Visual Tree Assessment) as popularised by eminent arboriculturists such as Dr. David Lonsdale (Ref. Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment & Management 1999) and Mattheck & Breloer (Ref. The Body Language of Trees 1999).
- 3.2 The system used to identify specific trees is based on numbered tags previously affixed to each tree. In addition, the indicative location of the trees is marked on the plan at Appendix 2. Where tags were found to be missing a new tag will have been affixed to the tree.

3.3 Management recommendations have been given for each tree (or group) based on the relevant risk zone and the probability of failure, and these recommended works have been prioritised as High, Medium or Low, as follows:

**High Priority :** Carry out works within 3 months

**Medium Priority :** Carry out works within 6 months

**Low Priority :** Works not immediately relevant to health & safety, but should ideally be undertaken for reasons of sound arboricultural practice or to avoid an increase in the probability of failure – 18 months is suggested as a maximum

3.4 The survey was carried out on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018 by Robert Yates (Principle Consultant), who holds the formal qualification Tech.Cert.Arbor.A and also the LANTRA Certificate in Professional Tree Inspection; he is a member of the Consulting Arborist Society, the Arboricultural Association and the Royal Forestry Society. He was assisted in the survey by trainee surveyor Mr. Kyle Tarla. The weather at the time of survey was fine and bright with excellent visibility.

#### 4.0 Re-Inspection Procedure

The recommended maximum period between formal risk assessments i.e. by a professional arboriculturist is **three years**.

**All trees should be included in routine risk assessments carried out by a suitably competent member of the permanent site staff – a risk assessment should always be undertaken immediately following any severe weather events i.e. high winds, heavy rain or snow falls. If in doubt regarding the safety of a particular tree always consult a qualified arboriculturist.**

#### 5.0 General Recommendations

5.1 It is always advisable to sever Ivy where it is growing on trees, since this plant can both hinder proper inspection and ultimately increase the risk of branch and/or whole tree failure.

5.2 Within the tree group numbered 1172-1207 there are several very large mature hybrid poplars; whereas there were no specific defects identified in these trees, it is to be recommended that in view of their inherent structural weakness, a long term plan for their removal and replacement is put into effect i.e. over the next 3 to 5 years.

5.3 For detailed and specific recommendations see Appendix 1.

## 6.0 Statutory Obligations

- Works to trees which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders [TPOs] or are within a Conservation Area [CA] require formal permission or consent from your Local Planning Authority [LPA].
- It is a criminal offence under normal circumstances to disturb or destroy - whether intentional or unintentional - the nesting sites of wild birds or the roost sites of bats, under the 'Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, the 'Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000' and the 'Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010' (as amended). *We strongly recommend that prior to commencement of any significant tree works, a thorough aerial inspection is carried out by a suitably competent arborist in order to check for signs of bat activity or occupied nest sites.*

**APPENDIX 1 : Schedule of trees requiring works (Jan 2018) - Page 1 of 2** (Tree No.s marked \* are new tags)

Tree ID/ tag No's	Species	Age class	Height (m)	Stem dia. (cm)	vigour	Structural Condition	Comments	Recommendations	Work Priority
1004	Whitebeam	Over- mature	9	50	low	poor	Pronounced crown die-back, major deadwood, terminal decline	Fell to ground level	Low
1006 / 1295*	Laburnum	Over- mature	10	90	normal	poor	6 stems from 1.6m, all stems have extensive wounding/decay, advanced lower stem decay ( <i>Laetiporus sulphureus</i> fungus present)	Fell to ground level	Medium
1032	Norway Maple	mature	24	35	normal	Fair/poor	Co-dominant stems from 3m, necrotic bark, large structural wound at 4m	Fell to ground level	Medium
1038	Norway Maple	mature	24	50	low	Fair/poor	Overall crown decline, co-dominant stems from 1.8m, overhangs pump house (86)	Fell to ground level	Medium
1098	Norway Maple	mature	18	60	normal	poor	Numerous stem cavities from 2m – 5m with associated decay, situated at busy road junction	Fell to ground level	Medium
1147	Silver Birch	mature	13	40	low	poor	Pronounced crown die-back/terminal decline, decay fungus ( <i>P. squamosus</i> ) on lower stem	Fell to ground level	Medium
1253	Cherry	mature	8	40	low	poor	Co-dominant stems from 2m, numerous cavities/decay in west stem, die-back in both stems	Fell to ground level	Medium

*N.B. Trees to be felled have also been marked with orange spray paint*

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Tree ID/ tag No's	Species	Age class	Height (m)	Stem dia. (cm)	vigour	Structural Condition	Comments	Recommendations	Work Priority
1264	Sycamore	mature	24	45	normal	fair	Major deadwood over entrance to shed 133	Remove dead & dying branches	Medium
1296*	Sycamore	mature	12	40	normal	poor	Co-dominant stems from 3m, Basal decay to north	Fell to ground level	Medium
1346	Hybrid Poplar	mature	25	45	low	Fair/poor	Co-dominant stems from 2.5m, pronounced crown die-back, major deadwood	Fell to ground level	Medium
1378	Sycamore	mature	12	35	low	Fair/poor	Co-dominant stems from 2m, pronounced crown die-back/major deadwood	Fell to ground level	Medium
1415	Hybrid Black Poplar	mature	30	100	normal	fair	3 large stems from 3m, moderate deadwood throughout crown, Hornet moth exit holes at base, species inherent risk of branch failure, close to car parking and recently refurbished hanger	Reduce height to 10-12m + remove any remaining deadwood	Medium
1431	Whitebeam	Over- mature	11	50	normal	Fair/poor	3 stems from 2m, Large structural cavity at base of north facing stem which overhangs parking area	Fell to ground level	HIGH
1523	Whitebeam	Over- mature	9	50	low	Fair/poor	4 stems from 2.5m, north stem has cavity/crack at 3.5m	Remove defective stem to 2.5m above ground	Medium

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