

ARBORICULTURALIST'S REPORT

Terms of Reference

- 1.1 This report was requested by Richard Bailey of The Design Collective Architects on behalf of Avery Healthcare Group, 3 Cygnet Drive, Swan Valley, Northampton, NN4 9BS.
- 1.2 The instruction to inspect trees at The Ascot Arms, Gravesend was received by email.
- 1.3 The purpose of my inspection and report is to:
 - 1.3.1 make a visual appraisal of the overall condition of the trees
 - 1.3.2 identify potential hazards and establish severity
 - 1.3.3 make recommendations for remedial work
 - 1.3.4 ensure the duty of care is observed by the tree's owners and to provide recommendations for any work deemed necessary to prevent failure.

Limitations

- 2.1 The content of this report is valid for a period one year from the date shown above.
- 2.2 The report is for the sole use of the client and its reproduction or use by anyone else is forbidden unless written consent is given by the author.
- 2.3 This is not a full arboricultural survey. This can be supplied but will be subject to a further fee. Any safety implications identified during the inspection are of course noted.
- 2.4 This is an arboricultural report and as such, no reliance should be placed on comments relating to buildings or soil data. My observations and comments are based upon experience with previous cases. I have no formal engineering qualifications.
- 2.5 No tree can ever be guaranteed to be 100% safe and even trees in good condition can suffer damage under normal conditions. Any tree can be hazardous due to decay or structural weakness, but the risk posed by that hazard is determined by its size and location in relation to the potential target. Frequent inspections can help to identify potential problems before they become acute and allow for intervention.

- 2.6 Trees are living organisms and even a mechanically perfect tree can be damaged or caused to fail. Inspection after extreme weather events is essential and professional advice should be sought whenever there is concern for a tree's condition.

The Site

- 3.1 I carried out my inspection on Tuesday 16th July 2024 and the weather was dry with adequate visibility.
- 3.2 The site is currently undergoing construction and will be a residential care home once completed.
- 3.3 My inspection was of a visual nature, using the principles of visual tree assessment and was carried out from ground level. I looked for signs of decay, disease, structural weakness, internal dysfunction and instability. I also assessed the suitability of the trees for their new environment.
- 3.4 The attached tree schedule gives details of those trees requiring attention and includes tree number, species, dimensions, comments, recommendations and urgency category.
- 3.5 The urgency categories are:
- 1 Requires immediate action to fulfil liability under duty of care
 - 2 Requires action with 12 months to fulfil duty of care obligations
 - 3 Requires action for aesthetic purposes and good tree management
- 3.6 Ivy colonisation of mature trees can be an issue. While it rarely kills a tree, it does change branch loading and tree dynamics as well as concealing problems and I have recommended it is severed on trees that are within striking distance of a target, or to allow inspection of the lower stems.

Prior to commencing any arboricultural work to trees, it is essential to liaise with the Local Planning Authority as they may be protected by a Tree Preservation Order or within a Conservation Area.

Any arboricultural work should be carried out by a competent arborist in line with BS3998 British Standards for Tree Work. Should you require details of suitably qualified contractors, the Arboricultural Association maintains a list which is available by calling 01242 522 152 or via their website (www.trees.org.uk).



All wild birds, their young, eggs and active nests are protected under law and it is an offence to damage a nest intentionally while it is in use or being built. Non-urgent tree work or hedge cutting should not be undertaken during the bird nesting or breeding season (March to July, but depending on seasonal temperatures, some birds continue breeding into August and September).

All bats and their roosts are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Natural Habitats and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Where bats are suspected to be present, seek advice from a licensed bat specialist before carrying out any major tree work or hedge cutting.

Should you have any questions or require any clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Hatton
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