TREE HEALTH & SAFETY AUDIT

at

Wren Grove, Havant

10 Southleigh Grove, Hayling Island, Hampshire PO11 0SH - mob: 07875 520881 - email: bernieharverson@gmail.com -

Section No.	Subject
1	INTRODUCTION & CLIENTS BRIEF
2	VISUAL TREE ASSESSMENT EXERCISE
3	RISK ASSESSMENT
4	CONCLUSIONS and MANAGEMENT STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix	Subject
BH1	Sketch Plan
BH2	Photographic Record
BH3	Qualifications & Experience

1.0 Introduction & Clients Brief

1.1 I am instructed by **Skyfell Tree Specialists** who act on behalf of the land owners who are **Trinity Estates Management Company**.

1.2 I have been advised by **Skyfell** that there is a Tree Preservation Order cover pertaining to both Turkey Oak trees at this location and that they have in the past made application to fell the tree with the larger open cavity and this was declined in favour of a very heavy crown reduction exercise.

1.3 The health and safety of these Oak trees is the paramount consideration as they have been retained on a piece of open space within a residential development.

1.4 My clients have sought my assistance in carrying out a Tree Safety Audit on these trees and then recommending an appropriate management strategy for the future.

2.0 Visual Tree Assessment Exercise

2.1 I conducted a Visual Tree Assessment exercise at this site on **Monday 8th & Monday 22nd June 2026.**

2.2 The subject trees are two mature Turkey Oaks which were inspected ‘by eye’ from ground level only.

2.3 The tools used for the purposes of this inspection were a rubber headed sounding hammer; a metal 500mm long auger probe and also high powered binoculars.

2.4 A series of digital photographs were taken at the time to record the findings of the inspection and some have been used in this report to identify and illustrate key points [see at Appendix BH2].

2.5 Tree Safety Audit Schedule

TREE SAFETY AUDIT NOTES

N.B. – Tree Safety Audits will comprise all of the following items :-

These Tree Safety Audit Notes have been prepared in accordance with current industry guidelines; utilising my fifty (50) years of experience in the arboricultural industry and applying common sense and a pragmatic approach, whilst at the same time recognising that safety is the paramount consideration.

- Each tree or group has been allocated a unique number ***but no tags have been applied*** – the numbering system is repeated on the site sketch plan which accompanies the safety audit schedule and the colour coding system applied to each grade will be repeated on the plans for ease of management. The sketch plan which normally accompanies a Tree Safety Audit Schedule will indicate the approximate location of each surveyed tree/group on site and also have the trunk circle colour coded, with a unique number positioned beside each one.
- Tree species are identified in both English Common Name and Latin Botanical Name.
- An assessment of a tree or groups age is made in terms of its site specific maturity as part of the surrounding landscape, taking into account its overall shape and form in that setting, and is recorded thus :-
  Y - Young tree or group
  SM - Semi Mature tree or group
  EM - Early Mature tree or group
  M - Mature tree or group
  OM - Over mature tree or group
  V - Veteran tree or group
- Height assessments are estimated and dimensions are provided in metres.
- The crown spreads are recorded (measured from the centre of the trunk).
- The category grading for each tree/group is assessed according to a simple **A, B, C, D and V** grading system.
  A - (Green) Trees of high amenity value of good shape and form and in a sound and healthy condition with a long life expectancy.
  The only exceptions to this might be rare tree species or historical value which might also merit an A grade.
  B – (Blue) Trees of high amenity value but which are slightly misshapen or suppressed or have some other minor defect which prevents it being categorized as an A.
  C – (Brown) Trees which are in good overall order but have limited amenity value with no special or outstanding features.
  D – (Red) Trees which are dead, dying, diseased, dysfunctional or dangerous and will require urgent attention.
  N.B. - Mid grades e.g. C/D may be applied where a tree does not clearly fall into one or other of the categories.
- Condition comments are included to describe the key features of a tree and any noted defects and health and safety issues – divided into distinct areas of the tree i.e. base; trunk and crown.

- Advice on the most appropriate course of management to render the tree(s) safe is given under the heading of Management Recommendations.

2.6

Tree No	Species	Tree Works Recommended
1 Height – 24m Age – Mature Trunk Diameter – 1300mm Crown Radius – North – 9 East – 3 South –14 West - 12 Grading – B Position – within a grassed open space area that is heavily used by residents/dog walkers and there is a dedicated Adventure Play Area to the west side. In addition to this there is a public footpath link that is within this trees Fall Zone.	**Turkey Oak** *Quercus cerris*	<u>Basal Area</u>: • The basal area was 'sounded' with a sounding hammer and no changes in sound resonance were detected that might indicate internal decay or hollowing of the trunk – other than at the edges of the basal cavity on the south side. • There are no signs of any fungal fruiting bodies at this time. • Roots exposed on the surface show signs of mower damage. • There is a basal cavity opening on the south side which measures 850mm at its lowest and widest point stretching 1.1m up the trunk and at its deepest is 600mm. <u>Trunk:</u> • Single stemmed to 4m above ground level at which point it becomes a multi branched crown. • Leans to the west side towards the Play Space. <u>Crown:</u> • Suppressed to the east side by tree 2. • Crown weighted primarily to the west side and is unbalanced in visual form – was once part of a co-dependent grouping with tree 2. • One large diameter dead branch located in the mid crown area on the southeast side of the tree. • One hazard beam damaged limb present (lowest major limb on west side) which has been shortened to make safe. • Comprised of long attenuated and heavily laden limbs. ***N.B. Prior knowledge of the site before it was developed means that I am aware that the original decay in the cavities has been exacerbated by vandals lighting fires within them.***

Tree No	Species	Tree Works Recommended
2 Height – 12m Age – Mature Trunk Diameter – 1250mm Crown Radius – North – 10 East – 8 South –3 West - 1 Grading – C/D Position – within a grassed open space area that is heavily used by residents/dog walkers.	**Turkey Oak** *Quercus cerris*	<u>Basal Area</u>: • The basal area was 'sounded' with a sounding hammer and no changes in sound resonance were detected that might indicate internal decay or hollowing of the trunk – other than at the edges of the basal cavity on the south side. • There are no signs of any fungal fruiting bodies at this time. • Roots exposed on the surface show signs of mower damage. • There is a basal cavity opening on the north side which measures 500mm at its widest point stretching 2.2m up the trunk and at its deepest is 500mm with some active (but unidentified fungal; brackets attached at various positions within the cavity. <u>Trunk:</u> • Single stemmed to 3m above ground level at which point it becomes a multi branched crown. • Leans to the east side towards open ground. <u>Crown:</u> • Very heavily suppressed to the west side by tree 1. • Crown weighted to the east side and unbalanced in visual form - was once part of a co-dependent grouping with tree 1. • Has been very heavily topped out to a trunk and scaffold framework with some live foliage now emanating from the large diameter pruning wounds ***N.B. Prior knowledge of the site before it was developed means that I am aware that the original decay in the cavities has been exacerbated by vandals lighting fires within them.***

3.0 Risk Assessments

Tree No.	Species	Risk Factor : High / Moderate / Low	Reason(s)
1	Turkey Oak	High	• Contains one large diameter dead limb which is at high risk of failure. • The crown is unbalanced and the tree leans with a crown weighting towards a Childrens Adventure Space and Public Footpath link - both of which are within the 'Fall Zone' of this tree. • The fact that this was once half of a co-dependent pairing is of concern especially given the presence of the large cavity opening on the south side. It will now be subject to exposure to the elements and has a very full crown which would act as a 'sail' in high winds. • Is of a species which is noted to be brittle at maturity and susceptible to branch failure which is normally put down to 'Summer Branch Drop Syndrome'

Tree No.	Species	Risk Factor : High / Moderate / Low	Reason(s)
2	Turkey Oak	Low	• This tree comprises a trunk and scaffold framework with no appreciable crown area as yet – the result of some very heavy lopping that was Council approved presumably to counter the undermining impact of a very significant cavity opening on the north side. • My understanding is that this may have been selected as a more acceptable option by the Council as opposed to felling the tree. • The crown is unbalanced and the tree leans towards the open space but at its present proportions this is not an issue. .

4.0 Conclusions and Management Strategy Recommendations

No.	Species	Recommended Tree Works
1	**Turkey Oak**	• The set of risks associated with this tree mean that the option to do nothing and accept the risk is not a viable solution for safety reasons. • The Council could insist on a PICUS Tomograph Inspection but this is expensive and in this instance excessive as I do not think it would get us any closer to a definitive decision as regards this trees future. • Therefore the options for managing the risks associated with this tree are :- 1. Fell the tree to ground level and plant a suitable sized replacement tree - under the TPO legislation. 2. Heavily reduce and reshape the canopy by at least 40% - this would leave large wounds which would not comply with BS3998 recommendations, but this is absolutely necessary for safety reasons. Thus a height reduction of 9.6m to 10m and lateral spread reductions as follows :- 3. North – by 3.6m down from the current 9m radial spread to 5.4m. East – by 0m South – by 5.6m down from the current 14m radial spread to 8.4m West – by 4.8m down from the current 12m radial spread to 7.2m **IF** the pruning option is selected then the future management of this tree will follow the same cycle of events that have been recommended for T2 below.

No.	Species	Recommended Tree Works
2	**Turkey Oak**	• The risks originally associated with this tree have been dealt with by the current level of crown reduction and no further works are recommended at this time. • I would suggest that future management will involve periodic and cyclic pruning events to in the first instance thin out the mass of regrowth to leave the better branches to continue on growing and then a few years later on from that carry out another crown reduction event such that this trees growth potential is stunted for safety reasons. This cycle of pruning events would need to be repeated for the life of the tree.

Bernie Harverson
arboricultural consultant

BH 1

Sketch Plan

BH 2

Photographic Record

BH 3

Qualifications & Experience

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

- My name is ***Bernie Harverson*** and I am a self employed independent arboricultural consultant in private practice. I take instructions primarily in the South of England but also on occasions work nationwide and abroad and have offices at : – ***10 Southleigh Grove, Hayling Island, Hampshire PO11 0SH***
- I hold the following arboricultural qualification – **National Diploma in Arboriculture** (Royal Forestry Society – 1976)
- I have **fifty five (55)** years of practical and managerial experience in the arboricultural industry including periods in both the public and private sectors.
- My Local Government sector experience comprises one year as a tree surgeon with Brighton Parks and nine years spent in Arboricultural Officer posts with both Westminster City Council and Portsmouth City Council
- My past practical experience in the private sector includes two years at Tilhill Forest Nursery and over ten years for various companies as a Climbing Arborist/Tree Surgeon.
- Managerial work in the private sector includes two years as manager of Beechings Tree Surgery Company and twelve years with CBA Trees as Managing Director and Senior Arboricultural Consultant.
- As an independent self employed Arboricultural Consultant since 2006 I now provide a comprehensive range of services including :-
  tree surveys, appraisals, assessments and inspections with particular reference to planning and development and tree safety audits with a service offered as a climber to undertake full climbing inspections to better understand the condition of a given tree before prescribing a management strategy.
- I also on occasion undertake litigation work appearing as an Expert Witness in Court Actions and at Planning Appeals, Hearings and Public Inquiries.

- ***10 Southleigh Grove, Hayling Island, Hampshire PO11 0SH*** ***mob: 07875 520881 - email:*** ***bernieharverson@gmail.com*** -