

Tree Condition Survey

The Moorhens
Hitchin hill
Hitchin, Herts
SG4 9AJ
ER17217



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1.Introduction

- Lori Bratley of Greene King commissioned this report and deals with my assessment of the trees at Three Moorhens, Hitchin Hill, Hitchin, Herts SG4 9AJ. The inspection was carried out on Friday 10th October 2025. The weather was dry and overcast.
- The site falls under the jurisdiction of North Herts Council. After checking with them directly the site is within a conservation area and is not covered by any TPO's. A plan of the can be seen in section 9.0
- Under the Occupiers liability act and negligence within common law the owner of Land and trees have a duty to take reasonable care to protect those who may be affected from potential harm or damage. They must ensure they are aware of tree conditions by ensuring a regular tree survey is carried out by a profession tree surveyor.
- Tree health and condition can change rapidly. All observations and recommendations made and contained within this report are based on the trees at the time of inspection.
- Where trees cannot be inspected fully because of Ivy or other such issues it will be highlighted within the report.
- The inspection was visually and from ground level only, using small hand tools and binoculars. The inspection principles are based on Lonsdale's (1999) Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management and Claus Matthecks The Body Language of Trees (1st edition).
- The position of the trees is shown in a tree location plan in section 8.0 of this report.

2. Risk and Targets



- Trees naturally shed twigs and branches, sometimes they may even uproot and snap. This is part of the natural life cycle and contributes to life cycles of other organisms and ecosystems.
- These natural events can be classed as 'hazards', the potential to cause harm, when they affect people, property or the environment. Even so, trees only really require human intervention when there is a risk of harm to a 'target'. A target is the term used for anyone or anything that may be damaged. While risk combines the likelihood of harm and severity of its consequences.
- Main factors I have considered when assessing for tree risk and management recommendations include the probability of mechanical failure to all parts of the tree, the impact potential, and the probability that someone or something could be harmed or damaged as a consequence. My recommendations also take into the count the many benefits of trees and aim for well-balanced recommendations in helping you fulfil your legal duty of care under common law and statute.
- I assess the target occupancy to be moderate to high (scale being low, moderate, high, and very high) due to trees being close to property, roads and the public.

3. Caveat

This survey does not guarantee that the trees which have not been recorded for remedial works are safe and will not fail. Extreme climatic conditions can cause serious damage to even health trees. A survey of this kind therefor seeks to lower the overall risk of trees falling and fulfils the landowner's responsibility and duty of care in taking reasonable steps to manage their trees. However, regular surveys are recommended to manage the ongoing risk.



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4. References



British Standards (2010); BS3998:2010 Tree work- Recommendations



Mattheck, K. and Breloer, H. (1994); The body language of trees



Londsdale, D. (2000); Hazards from trees – a general guide



Londsdale, D. (2013); Principles of tree hazard assessment and management



National Tree Safety Group (2011); Common sense risk management of trees

5. Key for Tree Schedule

Ident No. – denotes each individual tree – T - and groups - G

Species – Latin name or common name

Age class

- **Young** – first 10 years of life
- **Early mature** – first 1/3 of life span
- **Mature** – 2/3 of life span
- **Over mature** – completed expected life span and starting to decline.
- **Veteran** – a tree that has outlived expected lifespan but still has biological and ecological benefits.

Structural condition

- **Good** -few minor defects, typical of species. Showing no adverse risk of failure
- **Fair** – may require work to mitigate a defect, such as Deadwood, broken branch.
- **Poor** - major structural defects such as decay or root damage
- **Dead** – a tree no longer alive that may still have some ecological biological benefits. Also, a tree that is becoming dangerous or has become dangerous.

Physiological condition

- **Good** – generally in good health, typical of species. Showing signs of good vitality. Minimal deadwood.
- **Fair** – showing some signs of stress or die back. Tree may recover given time.
- **Poor** – a tree showing signs of physiological decline, stress and excessive dieback. Unlikely to return to return to good health.
- **Dead** – treat no longer alive, could also apply to trees in decline with no chance of recovery, becoming dangerous

Recommendations – works in order to facilitate retention or recommendation to remove.

Timescale – period in which to complete works before further problems may occur.

Crown Reduction – A form of pruning in which the extent of the crown is decreased without (primarily) decreasing its density, to reduce loading, balance the crown, mitigate a nuisance, etc.

Deadwood Removal – The removal of any deadwood from within the tree canopy from 40mm in diameter

Crown Thinning – A form of pruning in which individual branches are removed from the crown to reduce its density without (primarily) reducing its **extent**.

Crown Lifting – The removal of lower branches of a tree, whether complete branches or those arising from the lower limbs, to increase the headroom to the base of the crown.

Remove – The cutting down of a tree, generally close to ground level, to leave a low stump.

Stump Grinding – To grind stump 150mm below ground level. Unless otherwise stated.

Occluded - A process where a tree's bark or wood grows over a wound, pruning cut, or foreign object

6. Schedule

TreeNo	What3Words	Species	AgeClass	Physiological Condition	Structural condition	Comments	Recommendations	Time frame
T1	///chops.limit.crush	Ash (Fraxinus excelsior)	Om	Poor	Poor	Twin stem from base, heavily Ivy clad. Hazardous tree located on entrance to pub. Upper canopy partially dead	Remove - this tree is not to be climbed	Urgent
T2	///such.trap.ruby	Hawthorn (Crataegus monogyna)	Om	Dead	Dead	Ivy clad tree now dead overhanging footpath and driveway entrance.	Remove to ground level	3 months
T3	///silly.museum.give	Sycamore (Acer pseudoplatanus)	M	Good	Fair	Ivy clad trunk leading into the canopy. Lateral branches blocking street lamp over roundabout. Deadwood present.	Reduce to clear street lamp by 1.5m. Remove deadwood	12 months
T4	///rips.jazzy.clot	Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)	M	Good	Good	Lower stem pruning wounds with decay, reaction wood present. Lateral branches blocking street lamp.	Prune to clear street lamp over roundabout by 1.5m	12 months
T5	///laying.mostly.yarn	Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)	M	Good	Fair	Black staining on trunk symptomatic of phytophthora, some bark disfunction. Deadwood in canopy.	Remove deadwood	6 months
G1	///nurses.nature.scared	Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)	M	Good	Good	Last 6 trees in the row have significant deadwood over road and parking area.	Remove deadwood	12 months
T6	///lofts.down.upgrading	Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)	Om	Poor	Poor	Exposed roots, girdling roots around basal area. Low stem wound, black staining symptomatic of phototherapy. Upper canopy decline with large areas of dead, also displaying symptoms of sooty bark disease.	Remove to ground level	12 months
T7	///useful.sculpture.stores	Norway Maple (Acer platanoides)	M	Fair	Fair	Growing on raised mound. Minor lower stem damage. Large volume of deadwood throughout crown, over parking bays.	Remove deadwood	6 months

7. Gallery

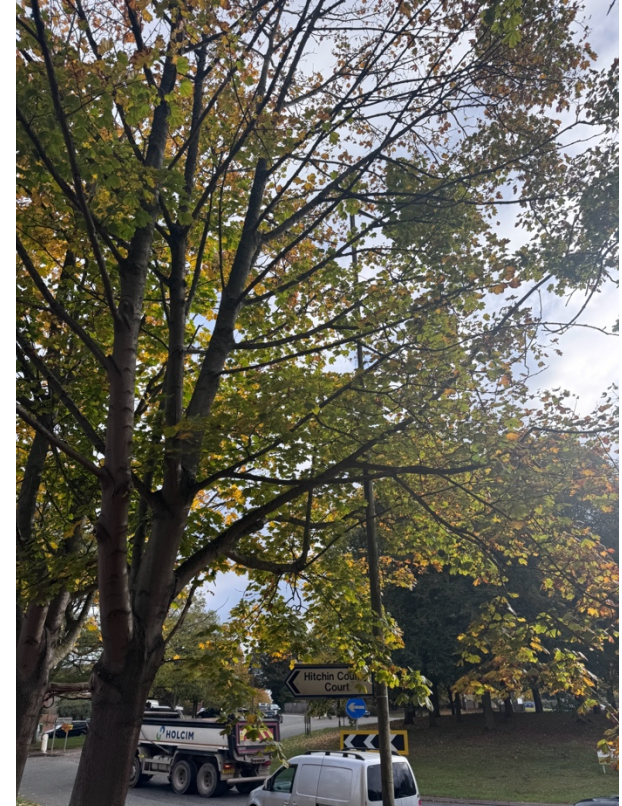
T6 – Silver Birch



T9 – Horse Chestnut



T22 – Tree of Heaven



Three Moorhens, Hitchin Hill, Hitchin, SG4 9AJ

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8. Site plan



Three Moorhens, Hitchin Hill, Hitchin, SG4 9AJ

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9. Council Plan

North Herts Council do not have an interactive map. An email from the planning team confirmed that the site is within a conservation area. However, there are no trees covered by TPO's.

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