TREE RISK ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Alconbury Weald
Key Phase 1 (Commercial), North Estate & Woodlands

ISSUE DATE
30.10.2024

SEED REF
1301-TRA-V1-B (2024)

CLIENT
Urban&Civic plc

ARBORICULTURAL CONSULTANCY

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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30.10.2024	[redacted] *BSc (Hons) Arb*	[redacted]	Rev A

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Trees are growing dynamic structures. Whilst reasonable effort has been made to identify defects within the trees inspected, no guarantee can be given as to the absolute safety or otherwise of any individual tree. No tree is ever absolutely safe due to the unpredictable laws and forces of nature. As a result of this, natural failure of intact trees will occur; extreme climatic conditions can cause damage to even apparently healthy trees.

Contents

1. **Introduction** 3
2. **Risk Zoning & Inspection Frequency** 4
3. **Tree Inspection** 5
4. **Personnel** 6
5. **Tree Assessment Summary** 7
6. **General Management** 9
7. **References** 10

Appendices

Appendix 1 Tree Survey Schedules

Appendix 2 Red Line Boundaries

Appendix 3 Tree Location Plans

Appendix 4 Risk Zoning and Inspection Frequency

1. Introduction

The benefits of trees

1.1.1. Trees are integral to natural ecosystems, providing a wide range of related benefits to humankind (ecosystem services), including mitigating the harmful effects of climate change. Trees are an important part of the economy, providing timber and non-timber forest products. They also bring communities together, with many cultural, social and historic values.

1.1.2. Their importance is recognised in national and local government policies, and many non-governmental organisations have policies dedicated to conserving trees and their biodiversity.

The risks from trees

1.1.3. The risk, per tree, of causing fatality is around one in 150 million for all trees in Britain or one in 15 million for those trees in, or adjacent to areas of public use. This is clearly significantly less than the 1 in 1 million threshold that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) considers 'broadly acceptable', within the Tolerability of Risk Framework.

1.1.4. The HSE have developed the Tolerability of Risk Framework which has been incorporated into the National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) guidance. Risks above 1/10,000 per annum are generally considered unacceptable when placed on the public. Risks between 1/10,000 and 1/1,000,000 per annum are tolerable, but consideration should be given to managing them 'as low as reasonably practicable' (ALARP), where it is cost effective to do so.

1.1.5. This risk therefore represents an extremely small proportion of the background risk that we commonly accept in our everyday lives, and the ongoing removal and general management of trees is probably the most important factor in keeping this figure at such a low level. However, there can be pressure to remove trees because of a perception of risk, which may be much greater than any actual risk a tree poses.

1.1.6. Trees are growing dynamic structures. No tree is ever absolutely safe due to the unpredictable laws and forces of nature. As a result of this, natural failure of intact trees will occur; extreme climatic conditions can cause damage to even apparently healthy trees.

1.1.7. Inspecting and recording every tree in an effort to completely remove the risk from trees is in practice unachievable and would be disproportionate to the risk.

Legal Framework & Guidance

1.1.8. As a landowner, Urban&Civic has a legal 'Duty of Care' under the Occupiers Liability Act 1957 & 1984, to ensure that users and neighbours of its land are reasonably safe. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 also requires that risks to employees and contractors must also be reduced as far as is 'reasonably practicable'.

1.1.9. The National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) provide a nationally recognised approach to tree safety management and guidance that is proportionate to the actual risks from trees. The NTSG released its latest guidance, 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees' following extensive industry and government consultation.

1.1.10. Further guidance for HSE inspectors and Local Authority is provided by the Health and Safety Executive (2007) Management of Risk from Falling Trees, which relates to duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

2. Risk Zoning & Inspection Frequency

2.1.1. In line with current guidance, the purpose of risk zoning is to prioritise the most used areas and those with the highest value targets, to form a cost-effective approach to tree inspection, focusing resources where most needed. Risk zoning contributes to sensible risk management and a defendable position in the event of an accident.

2.1.2. Risk zoning categorises areas by frequency and type of use and target value. Initially this should be carried out by those who are familiar with the land and its use.

2.1.3. There is no specific guidance of legislation determining the frequency for tree risk assessments or inspections. Therefore, the frequency of reassessment will be determined by the initial risk zoning and subsequent assessments on a site-by-site basis.

2.1.4. The tree safety zones detailed within **Appendix 4** determine the default level of inspection and frequency of inspection for trees in these areas. The level and frequency of inspection may be adjusted based on tree condition following an initial survey (i.e. mature trees or those with defects may require more frequent inspection / young trees or those regularly managed as pollards may be inspected less frequently).

3. Tree Inspection

3.1. Formal / Detailed Inspections

3.1.1. Trees will be inspected by a suitably trained and competent person using a) the Basic or Professional Level tree surveying methodology, which can be undertaken by an arboriculturist as set out by LANTRA and b) visual tree assessment (VTA) methodology (Lonsdale 1999).

3.2. Formal walk-through inspections

3.2.1. Where appropriate trees, groups and woodlands may be inspected by a formal walk-through. Trees requiring detailed assessment and those with defects requiring remedial work will be recorded individually and subject to a detailed inspection as described in Section 3.1.

3.3. Informal inspection

3.3.1. It is likely that Urban&Civic staff including contractors used by Urban&Civic to carry out tree work will be able to identify tree defects such as deadwood, storm damage and other defects that would be apparent to a non-expert. in their day-to-day business around the site. These are classified as informal inspections.

3.3.2. Informal inspections can form a valuable part of the tree management policy, when these sit within a wider management framework to respond and act upon defects reported by informal observations.

3.3.3. When an informal inspection finds a possible defect, a record should be made and reported to management to arrange a formal detailed inspection as soon as possible.

3.4. Inclement weather protocol

3.4.1. Following high winds or unexpected/prolonged bad weather conditions it is recommended that a brief walk-through/drive-by assessment of all areas is undertaken. This is to ensure that any damage to trees is identified, and the appropriate remedial action occurs. Following each assessment, a brief record should be made in relation to any hazards identified and appropriate remedial action taken.

4. Personnel

4.1. Formal Inspections

4.1.1. Formal inspections should be carried out by a ‘competent person’. Urban&Civic should be satisfied that the person has the required qualifications, experience and required insurance to carry out this work.

4.1.2. Generally, for this level of inspection it would be expected that the person holds a minimum RQF Level 6 Arboriculture e.g. BSc or Professional Diploma and LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection certificate.

4.1.3. All personnel with responsibility for inspecting trees should undertake regular training and be able to provide evidence of continuing professional development.

4.2. Informal Inspections

4.2.1. Typically, these do not require a tree specialist, but those associated with the estate and understand how regularly areas are accessed and the extent of danger that a defective tree may pose in each location.

5. Tree Assessment Summary

Survey Areas

5.1.1. This assessment was instructed to re-assess trees which were part of the existing tree survey (Tree Health & Safety Assessment – Seed Arboriculture 2023). This included a number of trees within the Key Phase 1 commercial area, North Estate and 4 woodlands known as Prestley Wood, Long Spinney, Lodge Spinney and Farm Spinney – See red line boundaries at **Appendix 2**

Survey Method

5.1.2. A detailed inspection was carried out by a suitably trained and competent person using a) the Basic or Professional Level tree surveying methodology, which can be undertaken by an arboriculturist as set out by LANTRA and visual tree assessment (VTA) methodology (Lonsdale 1999).

5.1.3. The survey was undertaken on 30th October 2024.

5.1.4. The approximate location of trees has been marked on the Tree Location Plans (**Appendix 3**) and full details of the assessment including remedial work are outlined in the Tree Work Schedule (**Appendix 1**).

5.1.5. Further inspection such as climbing inspections and decay detection have not been carried out, though may form part of the survey's management recommendations. All observations were made from ground level.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) & Conservation Areas

5.1.6. A check has been carried out with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to determine if any trees which form part of this assessment are subject to statutory protection by way of a TPO or Conservation Areas.

5.1.7. A search on 30/10/2024 using the interactive map provided by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) found that there is 1 TPO present on site - Tree Preservation Order number TPO 3.86 Grange Farm, Great Stukeley (Ref no. 003/86) W1, W2, W3 and W4 covering Prestley Wood and Grange Farm Woodlands.

5.1.8. The site is not situated within a Conservation Area.

5.1.9. **All statutory controls must be reviewed in detail ahead of undertaking any tree works relevant to this arboricultural report.**

Tree Survey Summary

5.1.10. A total of 8 individual trees and 1 group of trees were identified to require remedial works during the assessment.

Moderate Priority recommendations

5.1.11. A total of 8 trees and 1 group require remedial work which has been recommended as a **moderate priority** (within 6 months of the cover date of this report) as part of general tree

management. The full tree schedule which details trees which require Moderate Priority remedial work is provided at **Appendix 1**.

5.1.12. The works involve the removal of dead or poor quality trees

Re-Inspection

5.1.13. A default re-inspection frequency has been determined for trees within these areas of 12-18 months.

5.1.14. 8 individual trees and 1 group of trees are recommended to be removed / replaced and therefore no re-inspection is recommended at this time.

6. General Management

Ivy and Epicormic Growth

6.1.1. In most areas, where ivy and/or epicormic growth has obscured assessment, removal will be recommended within 6 months and re-assessment should be arranged within 12 months.

6.1.2. Where appropriate, ivy will be retained due to the habitat and foraging benefits provided to wildlife.

Deadwood

6.1.3. Deadwood occurs naturally within many trees. Deadwood provides a habitat and food resources for thousands of species of animals, plants, bryophytes, lichen and fungi (and unknown but enormous numbers of microbes). Therefore, removal of all deadwood is not desirable and in many instances, the removal of small diameter deadwood is not proportionate to the risk presented.

6.1.4. The size of deadwood is stated as small diameter (up to c. 40mm diameter), medium diameter (up to c. 80mm diameter) and large diameter (over c. 80mm diameter). Its significance depends on the value of the target area, the size of the deadwood and the species / characteristics of the tree.

6.1.5. Where appropriate, recommendations to remove deadwood are made within the survey.

Tree Pests & Pathogens

6.1.6. The damage to trees, woods and forests from insect pests and organisms such as bacteria and fungi is significant. The rapid increase in movements of goods and people between countries has increased the risk of spreading pests and diseases.

6.1.7. Some of these pests and diseases do little harm in their native environments, where predators, environmental factors and co-evolution with their host plants keep them in check. However, they can cause significant damage to trees and plants in other countries where those limiting factors are not present.

Trees and Ecology

6.1.8. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Conservation of Species and Habitat Regulations 2010 (as amended) provides statutory protection of birds, bats and other species that can inhabit trees.

6.1.9. Where the presence of such species is suspected, an ecological consultant should be contacted for advice.

Implementation of Tree Works

6.1.10. Tree work should be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998 Tree Work - Recommendations (2010) and all relevant health and safety legislation.

6.1.11. On undertaking the recommended works, the contractor must report any defects observed while climbing or working on the tree/s in question. This must be reported immediately to the relevant manager, landowner and/or the arboricultural consultant to enable the appropriate follow up action.

7. References

7.1.1. British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Works - Recommendations

7.1.2. Fay, N., Dowson, D., Helliwell, R. (2005) Tree Surveys: A Guide to Good Practice, The Arboricultural Association

7.1.3. Health and Safety Executive (2014) Management of the risk from falling trees or branches. Sector Information Minutes (SIMs).

7.1.4. Lonsdale D. (1999). Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management, Research for Amenity Trees No. 7, Stationary Office London

7.1.5. Mattheck, C. (2007) Field Guide for Visual Tree Assessment

7.1.6. The National Tree Safety Group (2024) Second Edition – Common sense risk management of trees, Forestry Commission, Edinburgh

7.1.7. Weber, K., Mattheck, C. (2003) Manual of Wood Decays in Trees, The Arboricultural Association

7.1.8. Health and Safety Executive (2001) Reducing risks – protecting people, HMSO, Norwich

Appendix 1

Tree Schedules

Tree Survey Schedule

TREE SURVEY SCHEDULE - Full Survey

DATE	CLIENT	SITE	REFERENCE
30.10.2024	Urban&Civic	Alconbury Weald	1301b-TS-001-B (2024)

Tree No.	Tag No.	Common Name	Height (est. m)	Stem Dia (est. mm)	Crown Spread (est. m) N	E	S	W	Life stage	Phys Con	Struc Con	Target Rating	Additional notes	Work Recommendations	Work Priority	Inspection Frequency
T1	No Tag	Sycamore	10	410	3	4	4	4	E/Mat	Poor	Declining	Moderate	Standing on edge of wider screening group. Informal path passes at base to south. Tree is heavily declining with large deadwood associated.	Fell tree to ground level.	Moderate (6 months)	None
T2	No Tag	Sycamore	11	450	5	4	5	5	E/Mat	Poor	Declining	Moderate	Standing on edge of wider screening group. Tree is heavily declining with large deadwood associated. Only a small portion of the canopy remains.	Fell tree to ground level.	Moderate (6 months)	None
T3	No Tag	Sycamore	10	400	4	4	4	4	E/Mat	Poor	Declining	Moderate	Standing on edge of wider screening group. Tree is predominantly dead with large deadwood associated. Only a small portion of the canopy remains. Ganoderma ffb at base of tree.	Fell tree to ground level.	Moderate (6 months)	None
T4	560	Common ash	10	450	4	4	4	4	Mat	Declining	Poor	Low	Located within spinner woodland next to farm track. Large cavity at base from base to 4m with visibility through stem. Main structural limbs showing evidence of extensive decay with splits and Inonotus present. Good habitat value	Fell tree to ground level	Moderate (6 months)	None
T5	No Tag	Common ash	10	300	4	4	4	4	E/Mat	Poor	Declining	Low	Heavily decayed stem with multiple units ffb present and woodpecker holes. Limited future contribution.	Fell tree to ground level	Moderate (6 months)	None
T6	No Tag	Common ash	12	467.44	5	4	5	5	E/Mat	Poor	Declining	Low	Heavily decayed stems with multiple units ffb present and woodpecker holes. One stem has previously failed. Limited future contribution.	Fell tree to ground level	Moderate (6 months)	None
T7	No Tag	Common ash	15	400	2	3	1	1	E/Mat	Poor	Poor	Low	Heavily decayed tree leaning towards field	Fell tree to ground level	Moderate (6 months)	None
T8	No Tag	English elm	12	200	2	2	2	2	Dead	Dead	Poor	Low	Standing dead tree	Fell tree to ground level	Moderate (6 months)	None
G1	No Tag	Pedunculate oak	Ave 12	Min 300 - Max 400	See associated plans				Dead	Dead	Poor	Low	Group of 4 dead trees on edge of woodland.	Fell group of 4 trees	Moderate (6 months)	None

Appendix 2

Red Line Boundaries



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RED LINE BOUNDARIES

SITE: Alconbury Weald (Commercial)

CLIENT: Urban&Civic

DATE: 30.10.2024

REF: 1301b-RLB-001-B **Version:** V1

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SK10 5JB

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RED LINE BOUNDARIES

SITE: Alconbury Weald (North Estate)

CLIENT: Urban&Civic

DATE: 30.10.2024

REF: 1301b-RLB-002-B **Version:** V1

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RED LINE BOUNDARIES

SITE: Alconbury Weald (Woodlands)

CLIENT: Urban&Civic

DATE: 30.10.2024

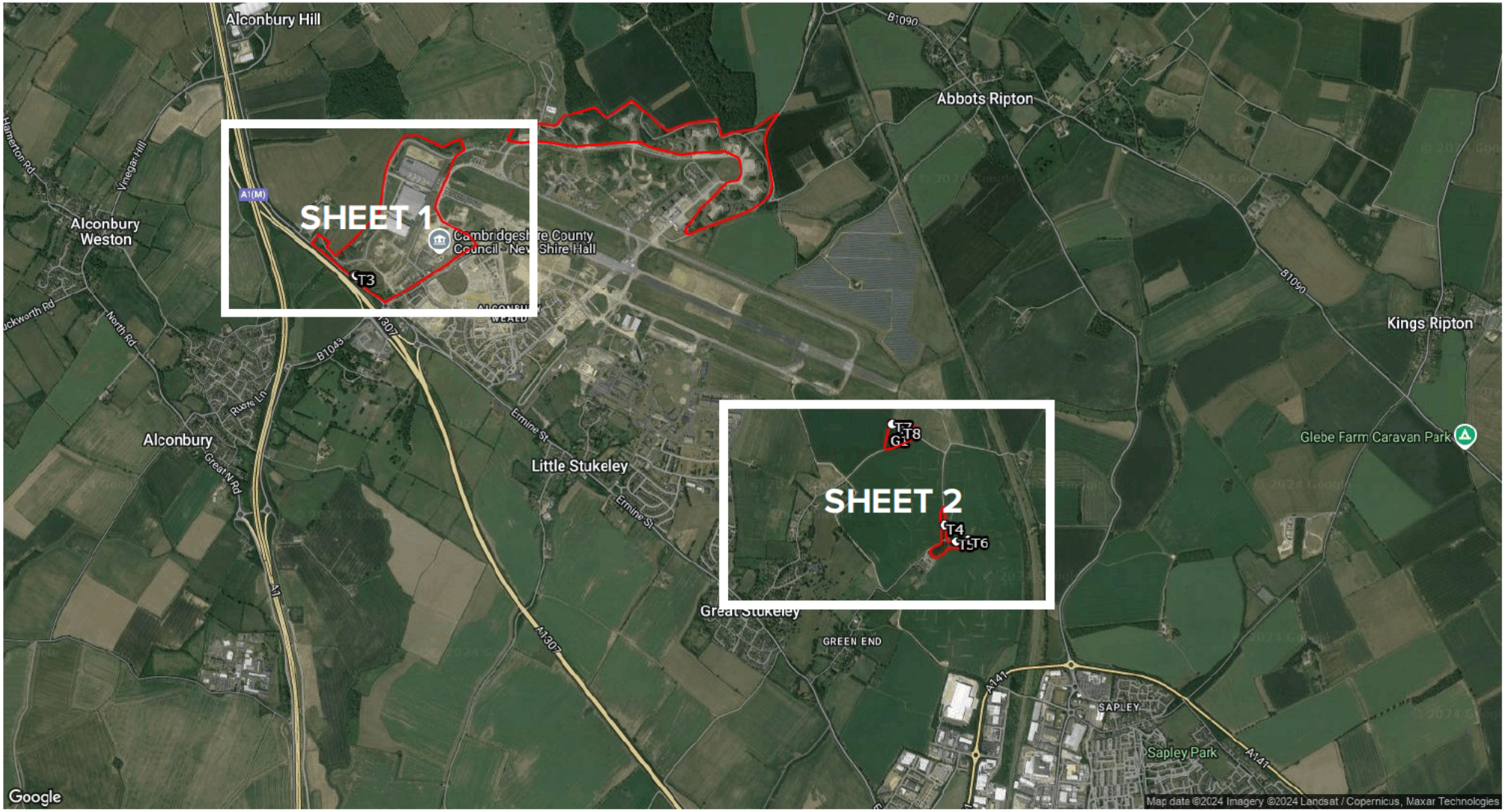
REF: 1301b-TSP-003-B **Version:** V1

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Appendix 3

Tree Location Plans



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TREE SURVEY PLAN

SITE: Alconbury Weald

CLIENT: Urban&Civic

DATE: 30.10.2024

REF: 1301b-TSP-001-B (Overview) **Version:** V1

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TREE SURVEY PLAN

SITE: Alconbury Weald

CLIENT: Urban&Civic

DATE: 30.10.2024

REF: 1301b-TSP-002-B (Sheet 1) **Version:** V1

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TREE SURVEY PLAN

SITE: Alconbury Weald

CLIENT: Urban&Civic

DATE: 30.10.2024

REF: 1301b-TSP-003-B (Sheet 2) **Version:** V1

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Appendix 4

Risk Zoning & Inspection Frequency

RISK ZONING & INSPECTION FREQUENCY

RISK ZONING AND INSPECTION			
Zone	**Target Rating**	**Target Example**	**Inspection Freqency**
Zone 1	Very High	• **Constant access** • Buildings with 24-hour use / use by those of reduced awareness / mobility • Major, high-speed roads and/or those under constant use (motorway / dual carriageway / town or city centre) • Busy school / playground (frequently unsupervised or partially supervised children)	**1 - 2 years** Driven by tree condition Frequency may be reduced for young trees / trees managed as pollards.
	High	• **Frequent access** • Buildings with frequent daily use / use by those of reduced awareness / mobility • Busy road / junction / bus stop with peak times traffic where cars or pedestrians are static under trees • School grounds (regularly unsupervised or partially supervised children)	
Zone 2	Moderate	• **Peak times access** • Buildings with regular - low use / occasional use by unsupervised children / people of reduced mobility or awareness. • Peak times traffic / secondary roads including main access to frequently used buildings and most car parks. • Regularly used Public Open Space	**2 - 3 years** Driven by tree condition Frequency may be reduced for young trees / trees managed as pollards.
Zone 3	Low	• **Sporadic access** • Unoccupied / low-value buildings • Quiet / rural roads with infrequent use • Regularly used public footpaths, woodland paths, private gardens etc.	**3 years** Driven by tree condition Frequency may be reduced for young trees / trees managed as pollards.
Zone 4	Very Low	• **Rarely accessed** • Infrequently used Public Rights of Way (PROW) inc. minor footpaths, woodland paths, bridleway, permissive paths etc. • Peripheral areas of Public Open Space	**5 years** Driven by tree condition
	None	• **Access not foreseeable** • No PROW, formal public access. • Within dense / largely inaccessible areas of woodland / POS	Assessment unlikely to be required / possible. Review area use as required.

WORK PRIORITY

WORK PRIORITY	
Priority	**Timescale**
1 - Emergency*	24hrs - Close / exclude access from risk area immediately. Failure has occurred. *** Client will be informed of emergency work at the time of assessment.**
2 - Urgent*	7 Days - Where practical close site. *** Client will be informed of urgent work at the time of assessment.**
3 - High	1 Month - Arrange works as soon as possible within 4 weeks.
4 - Moderate	6 months – Re-inspect following high winds or unexpected/prolonged bad weather while awaiting work.
5 - Low	2 years - Re-inspect following high winds or unexpected/prolonged bad weather while awaiting work.
6 - Very Low	3 years – Preventative work for minor defects
7 - General	Non-essential work / general management to be undertaken if budget allows e.g. formative pruning, removing stakes. Plan work as desired.

NOTE: Timescales given for remedial work are a maximum not a minimum, work should be undertaken as soon as is reasonably practical.