Tree Safety Survey & Report For:

St Raphael's Convent

Court Drive

Hillingdon

UB10 0BW

Client:	MCO Group Ltd
Job Ref.:	24 23491 St Raphaels Convent
Survey Date:	05/10/2024
Report Date:	08/10/2024
Rev. No.:	-
Checked By:	AA

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Document Details:

Site address:	St Raphael's Convent, Court Drive, Hillingdon, UB10 0BW
Ref:	24 23491 St Raphaels Convent
Site visit undertaken by:	Joseph Blackwell ND Arb
Date of site survey:	05/10/2024
Report prepared by:	Joseph Blackwell ND Arb
Revision:	-

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1 Instruction

1.1 GraftinGardeners Ltd was instructed by Mike Stokes of MCO Group Ltd to undertake a tree safety survey of all trees with a stem diameter greater than 75mm at 1.5m from ground level within falling distance of identified medium to high-risk target areas (e.g., site boundaries, structures and roads) at St Raphael's Convent, Court Drive, Hillingdon, UB10 0BW.

1.2 A ground-based inspection of the trees was undertaken as a matter of routine maintenance enabling our client to fulfil their duty of care as defined by both civil law and the Occupiers' Liability Acts of 1957 & 1984.

1.3 The trees were inspected to assess their overall condition and to identify the level of risk they potentially may pose to persons and property. Remedial works are recommended for trees where the level of risk is deemed unacceptably high and general management advice provided where appropriate.

2 Abbreviations

2.1 The following abbreviations will be used throughout this report:

BS 3998	British Standard - 'BS 3998:2010 Tree Work - Recommendations.'
LPA	Local Planning Authority
VTA	Visual Tree Assessment
TLP	Tree Location Plan
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
CA	Conservation Area

3 The Site

3.1 St Raphael's Convent (the 'site') is a occupied by a two-storey property and two detached garages. The main building is set to the northwest of the site with one garage set to the northwest corner of the site and the other nearer the southwest corner.

3.2 The property has two gated entrances, both fronting onto Court Drive and an access road leading to the main property, garages and parking areas.

3.3 Remaining areas comprise lawn and landscaped gardens.

3.4 An aerial photograph of the site is included below:

Aerial image of site (© Google Maps 2024)

4 The Subject Trees

4.1 The tree stock within the site was varied in species, age, and size. The surveyed trees were deemed to be of low to high amenity/landscape value with most trees appearing to be in average health and vigour at the time of the inspection. (Please see Appendix 3 for tree work recommendations within the Tree Survey Schedule).

5 Methodology

5.1 All trees were inspected in accordance with the VTA method as described by Mattheck, C. & Breloer, H., 2001. The Body Language of Trees - A handbook for failure analysis. London: TSO.

5.2 The inspection was carried out from ground level with the aid of binoculars where required. No tissue samples were taken, or any internal investigation of the subject trees carried out.

5.3 All trees were provided with an individual reference number recorded within the Tree Survey Schedule and on the Tree Location Plan (TLP).

5.4 The trees were inspected only from land within the client's ownership, or from public land. Where restricted access prevented full inspection, this was recorded within the Tree Survey Schedule along with future access and reinspection requirements.

6 Tree Works

6.1 Tree works shall be carried out in accordance with BS3998:2010 Recommendations for tree work (British Standards Institute, 2010), industry best practice and in line with any works already agreed with the relevant Local Authority.

6.2 If during the course of these operations the need for other work becomes apparent, then the advice of the project arboriculturist will be sought. No works other than those detailed within the report will be carried out without the prior written consent of the relevant Local Authority.

6.3 Attention is paid to the common law right to prune overhanging trees back to boundaries. Should this be required then all efforts will be made to contact the tree owner prior to the commencement of works and all work will be undertaken without access onto third party land.

6.4 The statutory protection afforded by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Amended) and Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (Amended) must also be adhered to. Where there is evidence that bats, nesting birds, or other protected species are present then specialist advice will be obtained prior to the commencement of work. Further advice on bats is available from the Bat Conservation Trust (www.bats.org.uk) and on birds from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (www.rspb.org.uk).

6.5 All operations shall be carefully carried out to avoid damage to the trees being treated or neighbouring trees. No trees to be retained shall be used for anchorage or winching purposes.

7 Definitions

7.1 Survey

7.1.1 In the context of tree management services, the following meanings apply:

7.1.2 A tree survey should be conducted by a competent and experienced person and is used to obtain useful information about the subject trees. A survey usually involves the collection of information relating to a tree's species, height, diameter, general health, life expectancy and general management requirements. It also often requires the position of each tree to be plotted onto a plan and the use of a special tag to allocate an individual reference number.

7.1.3 The information collected during a survey can be very useful both as a record of what exists and as a basis for future management decisions and long-term monitoring.

7.2 Informal Observation

7.2.1 The informal observation of the subject trees should be undertaken by persons with good local knowledge and familiarity with the trees and their surroundings. Such people should be aware of potentially dangerous situations that may arise from unsafe trees and should be able to recognise gross defects or abnormalities should they occur.

7.2.2 Any person tasked with this responsibility should ensure that they remain aware of each tree's health and condition as they conduct their other daily tasks. They should identify any structural weakness or actual failure that poses an imminent threat to public safety and should report it or act upon it as required.

7.2.3 Any identified or reported tree-related safety problems arising from informal observations made by members of staff or the general public should be acted upon without delay. Initially, this may take the form of a formal inspection by a competent member of staff or an external inspector. This may then result in no further action being required, or in tree surgery, felling or implementing measures to manage the area within falling distance of the tree.

7.3 Formal Inspection

7.3.1 A formal inspection is undertaken with the specific purpose of performing an inspection that is not incidental to other activities. Formal inspections should be undertaken by persons with a general knowledge of trees and the ability to recognise abnormal features or serious signs of ill-health, should they occur.

7.3.2 Inspectors need the capacity to assess the area which may be at risk from a falling tree or tree part and must have the powers to request a detailed inspection should they believe that one is required.

7.3.3 A formal inspection will include a health and condition assessment and will comprise of ground-based visual checks. Whilst a formal inspection may not identify hidden features such as fungal fruiting bodies or internal decay it will be sufficient to recognise clear and present signs of immediate instability such as uprooting or other major structural failure.

7.4 Detailed Inspection

7.4.1 A detailed inspection will occur in two distinct stages. The first stage will comprise of a systematic and diagnostic process of visual inspection by a competent person from ground level using binoculars, mallet as required, with the aim of gaining an in-depth understanding of a tree's structural condition.

7.4.2 If deemed necessary by the inspector, and agreed by the client, then a second stage of more detailed investigations may be undertaken including soil and root condition assessments, aerial inspections of the upper trunk and crown or internal investigations using specialist diagnostic tools.

7.4.3 A detailed investigation will provide the information necessary in order to advise on a recommended reinspection interval and provide the detailed management recommendations necessary to adequately control any identifiable risk.

7.4.4 A detailed inspection must only be carried out by a competent and experienced person who is both qualified and insured to carry out this type of work. They should be familiar with a wide range of trees, their defects and decay fungi and should be capable of both assessing risk and recommending cost effective methods of mitigation.

8 Protection Status

8.1 Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas (Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

8.1.1 Our basic online searches suggest there to be TPO's pertaining to trees/vegetation on or adjacent to the site, and that the site is not located within a CA.

8.1.2 Further to the above, it must be stated that searches undertaken by GraftinGardeners Ltd with specific regard to the statutory protection status of trees are preliminary in nature and collated with information obtained from the respective LPA website. Such information is only a guide as LPA websites and the information provided within them are subject to continual change.

8.1.3 It is therefore strongly advised that information pertaining to the statutory protection status of a tree or trees, on and/or adjacent to development sites be fully investigated by contacting the respective LPA directly. Should a TPO or CA status be confirmed then full details should be obtained in writing from the respective LPA.

8.1.4 Where trees are protected by a TPO, or located within a CA, formal consent of the LPA should be obtained before any works are carried out. Failure to obtain the necessary consent is an offence and if convicted in a magistrates' court you could be fined up to £20,000 per offence. In serious cases, a person may be committed for trial in the Crown Court and, if convicted, is liable to an unlimited fine.

8.1.5 There are however some instances where the formal consent of the LPA is not required before carrying out works to protected trees. These 'exempt' works include urgent works to trees that are dead, or dangerous.

8.1.6 Although exempt, owners must still notify the LPA of your intention to carry out such works. Except in an emergency you are advised to give at least five days' notice before carrying out any pruning or felling and to record both the works completed and the reason(s) for those works. It is in your interests to do this as you may be prosecuted should the LPA think that you have carried out unauthorised work.

8.1.7 Except in the case of a woodland TPO, there is an automatic duty to replace any tree that is removed because it is dead or dangerous. The LPA has the powers to waive this duty and you are advised to contact them should you wish to avoid replanting.

8.2 Forestry Act 1967, and Felling Licences

8.2.1 Tree felling is a legally controlled activity.

8.2.2 Unless exempt you will normally need permission from the Forestry Commission to fell growing trees and they will normally provide this by issuing a felling licence.

8.2.3 The licence will allow you to fell identified trees and woodland legally.

8.2.4 Exemptions to the requirement for a felling licence are listed below:

- In any calendar quarter you may fell up to 5 cubic metres (m3) of growing trees on your property without a felling licence, as long as no more than 2m3 are sold.
- Tree pruning.
- If less than 8cm diameter when measured at 1.3m from ground level, or <10cm diameter for thinning to improve the growth of adjacent trees, or <15cm for understorey trees and coppiced trees.
- Fruit trees.
- Gardens, orchards, churchyards, public open spaces and trees growing within the inner London boroughs.
- Dangerous and nuisance trees where there is a demonstrable immediate serious risk of harm.
- Tree health where the felling of trees is necessary to prevent the spread of a quarantine pest or disease in accordance with a Statutory Plant Heath Notice (SPHN), as issued by the Forestry Commission under the Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005.
- Where felling is permitted to implement an approved planning permission.
- Where felling is undertaken directly by a statutory undertaker.

9 Recommended Works

9.1 Except in the case of a woodland TPO, there is an automatic duty to replace any tree that is removed because it is dead or dangerous. The LPA has the powers to waive this duty, and you are advised to contact them should you wish to avoid replanting.

10 Reasons for Works

10.1 The reason for works will be required by the Local Authority where the trees need permission to be pruned or felled.

11 Works Priority

11.1 The recommended time scales/priority for the works is as follows:

Within 24-Hours	Immediate action required	– failure is imminent/occurring.
Within 3-Months	Priority works	– there is a high likelihood of failure within 3 months or works are considered necessary within 3 months.
Within 1-Year	Works required	– failure is likely to occur and is foreseeable within 1 year or works are considered necessary within 1 year.

12 Reinspection Period

12.1 In the absence of any other type of inspection (e.g., informal), all trees that are within falling distance of any targets such as roads, or places where people may frequent, or objects of value should be formally inspected annually, or after any extreme weather event.

13 Caveats

13.1 The conclusions and recommendations in this report and survey are valid for a period of 1 year from the date of issue. Trees are living organisms subject to change; this validity period may be reduced should changes occur within the site or the surrounding area. All recommendations are given in the context of the site's current usage; any change would necessitate a reinspection.

13.2 Inherent in tree inspection is assessment of the risk associated with trees close to people and their property. Most human activities involve a degree of risk, such risks being commonly accepted if the associated benefits are perceived to be commensurate.

13.3 Risks associated with trees tend to increase with the age of the trees concerned, but so do many of the environmental benefits. It will be appreciated, and deemed to be accepted by the client, that the formulation of recommendations for all management of trees will be guided by a cost/benefit analysis.

13.4 A risk index of 10 or 1/10,000 is generally considered as acceptable in most industries. Ultimately, the landowner/site manager must determine their own thresholds and levels of acceptable exposure.

14 References

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The National Joint Utilities Group, 2007. Volume 4 - NJUG Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Apparatus in Proximity to Trees, s.l.: NJUG Publications.

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Mattheck, C., & Breloer, H. (2001). *The Body Language of Trees - A handbook for failure analysis.* London: TSO.

Winter, R. S. (2000). *Diagnosis of ill-health in trees* (2nd ed.). Norwich: TSO.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Site Photographs

Photograph 1: T1, viewed from the northwest

Photograph 2: G2, viewed from the northwest

Photograph 3: T3, viewed from the northwest

Photograph 4: T4 and T5, viewed from the west

Photograph 5: T6 and T7, viewed from the northwest

Photograph 6: T8, viewed from the northeast

Photograph 7: T9, viewed from the north

Photograph 8: G10, viewed from the northwest

Photograph 9: G11, viewed from the south

Photograph 10: T12, viewed from the west

Photograph 11: T13, viewed from the west

Photograph 12: G14, viewed from the north

Photograph 13: T15, viewed from the west

Photograph 14: T16, viewed from the west

Photograph 15: T17 and T18, viewed from the southeast

Photograph 16: T19, viewed from the east

Photograph 17: G20, viewed from the southeast

Photograph 18: T21, viewed from the east

Photograph 19: T22, viewed from the south

Photograph 20: G23, viewed from the southeast

Photograph 21: T24, viewed from the northeast

Photograph 22: T25, viewed from the east

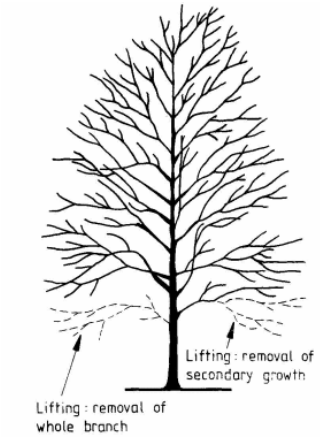
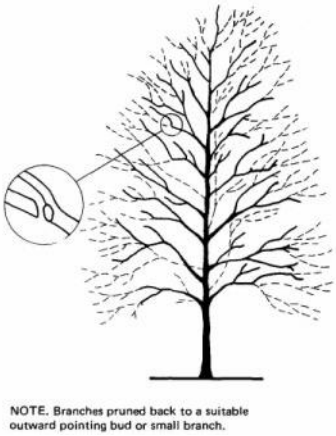
Photograph 23: T26, viewed from the east

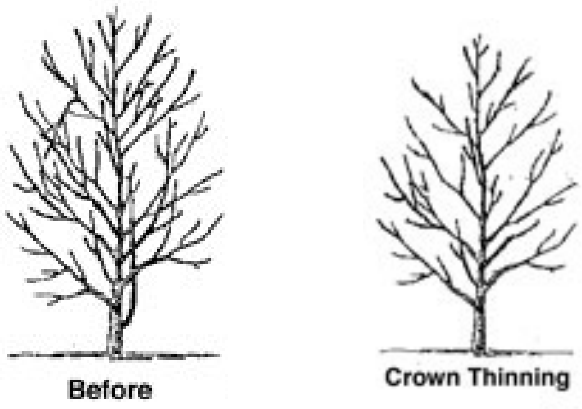
Photograph 24: T27 and G28, viewed from the northeast

Photograph 25: G29, viewed from the northeast

Photograph 26: T30, viewed from the northeast

Appendix 2 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Management Prescription	Explanation
Bracing	The installation of cables, ropes and/or belts to reduce the probability that weakened part of the tree will fail because of excess movement.
Coppice Tree	The cutting down of the stem or stems (usually of a previously coppiced tree or species that is commonly coppiced) to within 300mm of ground level to promote the regrowth of fresh shoots.
Crown Clean	Removal of unsightly features within the tree; for example, climbing plants, dead or dying and damaged branches, accumulations of leaf litter and rubbish.
Crown Lift	Removal of the lowest branches or parts of these branches which extend below a particular height, usually necessitate access. Removal of branches greater in diameter than one third the diameter of the stem from which they are removed should be avoided. 
Crown Reduce	A crown reduction is a very common arboricultural operation performed to reduce the height and/or spread of a tree by selectively cutting back smaller branches. This can be done to help prevent damage to the tree caused by 'wind-loading', but more commonly is performed when a tree is outgrowing its confines, or for purely cosmetic reasons. Crown reductions are specified as a reduction of total leaf area. Reductions of greater than 30% should be avoided except in exceptional circumstances as this can be detrimental to the health of the tree. Also, the branch removed should not leave a wound diameter greater than a ⅓ of the diameter of the branch from which it has been cut, at the pruning point. 

Management Prescription	Explanation
Crown Thin	Crown thinning involves the removal of some of the branches and leaf area of the tree with the intention of creating an even and balanced tree structure. This may include the removal of damaged, crossing and crowded branches. As with reductions, removal of more than 30% of the leaf area should be avoided and the branch removed should not leave a wound diameter greater than a ⅓ of the diameter of the branch from which it has been cut. 
Epicormic Growth	Epicormic growth is the proliferation of young shoots around the stem and branches from adventitious buds present beneath the bark.
Fell to ground level	Complete removal of the tree leaving a stump at ground level.
Remove Hanger	Removal of a partially or completely loose branch which presents a hazard, especially in high wind.
Monolith	Removal of all side branches and treetop leaving a standing trunk at a given height which may then be left to decay and fall apart.
Pollard to original points	Pollarding involves the removal of the upper part of the stem and ends of the branches to create a robust framework from which new shots can grow. Pollarding should only be carried out on a young tree as the same work on an older tree often causes extensive decay. Pollarding to original points is to make a new series of cuts at the same position as the cuts of the previous cycle.
Resistograph and further detailed inspection	The second phase of a detailed inspection. This may include, but is not limited to, decay mapping, root and soil assessments and climbing inspections. These may be required when specific defects are identified whose full significance cannot be determined by visual assessment, probing, or tapping alone.

Appendix 3 Tree Schedule

Site: St Raphael's Convent Surveyor: Joseph Blackwell ND Arb Date of Survey: 05/10/2024

DATE	TREE NO.	TYPE	SPECIES	HEIGHT RANGE (m)	DBH RANGE (mm)	AGE	CROWN SPREAD AVERAGE (m)	OBSERVATIONS	WORKS SPECIFICATION	REASONS FOR WORKS	RISK	WORKS PRIORITY
05/10/2024	1	T	Deodar Cedar	15-20	1250-1500	Mature	8	No significant recent management, past storm damage, numerous tear wounds, multiple 'dogs-leg' boughs, branch end cavities with decay, old pruning wounds to primary scaffolds and stem, large 'flush-cut' to lower stem, lower stem appears swollen	Undertake detailed safety inspection with the use of mechanical apparatus	To reduce risk of structural failure	High	3-Months
05/10/2024	2	G	Leyland Cypress	10-15	200-300	Early Mature	4	No significant recent management			Low	
05/10/2024	3	T	Holly	5-10	200-300	Mature	3	No significant recent management, slightly sparse crown, growing within hedge, full VTA not possible due to dense ground vegetation	Clear 1m of vegetation around stem base	To enable next annual inspection	Medium	3-Months
05/10/2024	4	T	Ash	5-10	100-200	Early Mature	3	No significant recent management, exposed surface roots			Low	
05/10/2024	5	T	Rowan	0-5	75-100	Semi-Mature	1	No significant recent management, tree tie and stake	Remove tree tie and stake	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year

DATE	TREE NO.	TYPE	SPECIES	HEIGHT RANGE (m)	DBH RANGE (mm)	AGE	CROWN SPREAD AVERAGE (m)	OBSERVATIONS	WORKS SPECIFICATION	REASONS FOR WORKS	RISK	WORKS PRIORITY
05/10/2024	6	T	London Plane	10-15	700-800	Mature	8	No significant recent management, historical pollard, old pruning wounds to primary scaffolds and stem, burring to primary scaffolds and stem, lower stem appears swollen, potential fungus on lower stem thought to be *Kretzschmaria deusta*	Undertake detailed safety inspection with the use of mechanical apparatus	To reduce risk of structural failure	High	3-Months
05/10/2024	7	T	Horse Chestnut	10-15	500-600	Mature	4	No significant recent management, evidence of lightening past strike, sparse crown short shoots, old pruning wounds to primary scaffolds and stem, burring to primary scaffolds and stem, epicormic growth, growing within hedge, full VTA not possible due to dense ground vegetation	Clear 1m of vegetation around stem base	To enable next annual inspection	Medium	3-Months
05/10/2024	8	T	Liquidambar	5-10	75-100	Early Mature	3	No significant recent management, suppressed			Low	
05/10/2024	9	T	Ash	5-10	100-200	Early Mature	3	No significant recent management			Low	
05/10/2024	10	G	Liquidambar	5-10	100-200	Early Mature	4	No significant recent management, tree to western end of group has bifurcated stem with split	Fell tree at western end of group to ground level	To minimise risk to persons and property	Medium	3-Months

DATE	TREE NO.	TYPE	SPECIES	HEIGHT RANGE (m)	DBH RANGE (mm)	AGE	CROWN SPREAD AVERAGE (m)	OBSERVATIONS	WORKS SPECIFICATION	REASONS FOR WORKS	RISK	WORKS PRIORITY
05/10/2024	11	G	Apple	0-5	100-200	Mature	3	No significant recent management, old pruning wounds to primary scaffolds and stems, trifurcated and bifurcated stems			Low	
05/10/2024	12	T	Lawson Cypress	5-10	400-500	Mature	4	No significant recent management			Low	
05/10/2024	13	T	Apple	0-5	400-500	Mature	4	No significant recent management, old pruning wounds to primary scaffolds and stems, hollow stem to ground level	Reduce tree significantly leaving 0.5-1m growth above crown break	To minimise risk of structural failure	Low	1-Year
05/10/2024	14	G	Apple	0-5	200-300	Mature	4	No significant recent management, sparse crowns, old pruning wounds to primary scaffolds and stems, bifurcated stems, degraded bracket fungus on tree central to group			Low	
05/10/2024	15	T	Horse Chestnut	0-5	100-200	Early Mature	4	No significant recent management, multi-stemmed			Low	
05/10/2024	16	T	Holly	5-10	100-200	Mature	2	No significant recent management, sparse crown short shoots, trifurcated stem, growing within hedge, full VTA not possible due to dense ground vegetation	Clear 1m of vegetation around stem base	To enable next annual inspection	Medium	3-Months

DATE	TREE NO.	TYPE	SPECIES	HEIGHT RANGE (m)	DBH RANGE (mm)	AGE	CROWN SPREAD AVERAGE (m)	OBSERVATIONS	WORKS SPECIFICATION	REASONS FOR WORKS	RISK	WORKS PRIORITY
05/10/2024	17	T	Hornbeam	5-10	100-200	Early Mature	2	No significant recent management, epicormic and basal growth, tree tie and stake	Remove epicormic and basal growth, remove tree tie and stake	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year
05/10/2024	18	T	Goat Willow	0-5	75-100	Early Mature	4	No significant recent management, multi-stemmed			Low	
05/10/2024	19	T	Larch	0-5	75-100	Semi-Mature	1	No significant recent management, low branches	Lift crown to 1.5m	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year
05/10/2024	20	G	Yucca	0-5	100-200	Mature	1	No significant recent management, minor stem wound to one tree, single and multi-stemmed trees			Low	
05/10/2024	21	T	Yew	5-10	200-300	Mature	2	Subject to regular management, full VTA not possible due to dense lower growth			Low	
05/10/2024	22	T	Ash	0-5	100-200	Early Mature	4	No significant recent management, branches close to structure, low branches	Cut back to achieve 2m clearance from structure, lift crown to 2.5m	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year
05/10/2024	23	G	Crab Apple	0-5	75-100	Early Mature	3	No significant recent management, low branches	Lift crown to 2.5m	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year

DATE	TREE NO.	TYPE	SPECIES	HEIGHT RANGE (m)	DBH RANGE (mm)	AGE	CROWN SPREAD AVERAGE (m)	OBSERVATIONS	WORKS SPECIFICATION	REASONS FOR WORKS	RISK	WORKS PRIORITY
05/10/2024	24	T	Oak	15-20	800-900	Mature	10	No significant recent management, moderate deadwood, woodpecker holes, old pruning wounds to primary scaffolds and stem some with decay, full VTA not possible due to limited access	Remove deadwood/climbing inspection to assess woodpecker holes, major scaffolds and pruning wounds with decay	Routine maintenance/To minimise risk of structural failure	Medium	3-Months
05/10/2024	25	T	Ash	0-5	100-200	Early Mature	3	No significant recent management, branches close to structure	Cut back to achieve 2m clearance from structure, lift crown to 2.5m	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year
05/10/2024	26	T	Leyland Cypress	0-5	75-100	Semi-Mature	1	No significant recent management			Low	
05/10/2024	27	T	Cherry	5-10	75-100	Semi-Mature	2	No significant recent management, branches close to structure, bifurcated stem	Cut back to achieve 2m clearance from structure	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year
05/10/2024	28	G	Leyland Cypress	0-5	100-200	Early Mature	1	Subject to regular management, managed as low-level hedge				
05/10/2024	29	G	Leyland Cypress	5-10	100-200	Early Mature	3	No significant recent management, branches close to structure	Cut back to achieve 2m clearance from structure	Routine maintenance	Low	1-Year
05/10/2024	30	T	Leyland Cypress	5-10	200-300	Mature	2	Subject to regular management			Low	

Appendix 4 Tree Location Plan