Hamps Valley Limited

Tree Inspection Report

Monksilver. Silver Birch,

Betula pendula.

Location;
Monksilver, The Mount
Leek,
Staffordshire.

Date of Inspection;
15th December 2015

Commissioned by;
.Mr & Mrs Goodwin

Survey carried out by;
Kristian Turner FdSc Arb.

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1:0 Introduction

1.1: This inspection is being undertaken to assess the health, structure and longevity of a Silver Birch, *Betula pendula* in relation to planning permission for an extension to the property.

1.2: The inspection upon which the report is based was carried out on the 15.12.2015. On this day there was no wind and the weather was over cast. Due to the seasonal time of year there was no leaf cover on the tree

2:0 Report Outlines and Limitations

2.1: Produce a report based upon a professional inspection of the tree.

2.2: The inspection only consists of a visual tree assessment, no decay detection or other specialised equipment was used. The survey was carried out from ground level.

2.3: Trees are dynamic living organisms and although their health and structure can be assessed, an absolutely safe assessment is not realistic as unpredictable failure can never be ruled out. Trees are also susceptible to climatic conditions and more extreme weather, including high winds, drought and snow. These conditions can cause healthy trees to fail. Hamps Valley Ltd cannot be held liable for any such failures. It would be advisable to re-inspect after any period of severe weather. Therefore this report is only valid in relation too; the weather, the condition of the trees and the condition of the site on the day of the investigation.

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2.4: No soil samples were taken for analysis on this investigation.

2.5: Any site information, history or legal descriptions given are taken as accurate.

2.6: The report is only valid as a whole, any alterations or omissions invalidate it entirely. The report is valid for six months only. Any legal matters that arise from this report are not the responsibility of Hamps Valley Ltd and the consultant is not required for any further testimony or investigations unless relevant new arrangements are made.

3:0 Key to report3.1: Species name is given as the common.

3.2: Measurements are given in metres (m) and millimetres (mm).

3.3: The height is the estimated measurement from ground level to the highest point of the tree.

3.4: The age of the tree is categorised into one of the following age brackets;

Young (Y), Early mature (EM),

Mature (M), Over mature (OM), Veteran (V).

3.5: Physiological health and structural condition are given as good, fair, poor, dead. This is assessed by the leaf coverage & density, size of leaves, new growth increments and the amount of dieback or deadwood, the overall wellbeing of the tree. Decay, branch unions and other defects

4.0: Site details

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4.1: The tree is within the garden of Monksilver, located high on the south side of a ridge of land over looking Leek. This area of high ground can experience very strong winds that are predominantly from the south-west. The garden slopes from north to south with a drop of approximately 1in2 leaving the tops of some of the trees southerly roots exposed. 1.5m north of the tree is a Beech hedge, running east to west, which marks the property boundary. 1.2m to the west is a retaining wall and a further 1m west is the property dwelling.

5.0: Tree investigation

5.1: The tree is a mature Silver Birch, *Betula pendula.* The crown spread measures 5m north, 3m east, 2m south and 3m west. The tree is 12-14m in height with a DBH (trunk diameter at 1.5m) of 380mm.

5.2: The general appearance of the tree is that it has a slight lean to north and the crown is weighted to the north. The crown starts at 5m and has minor deadwood throughout with some broken branch stumps. The trunk has several cavities with patches of epicormic growth and a patch of basel suckers at the base. The health of the tree appears fair but could be better assessed when in leaf.

5.3: At the base of the trunk, on the south side, is a patch of epicormic/basel suckers. These look to have grown from a large historic pruning wound, the size of which is unknown due to the new growth. At 0.5m on the south of the trunk is a cavity, 120mm long, 20mm wide and 15mm deep. At 1.5m-2m on the south of the trunk is a patch of epicormic growth. At 1.5m on the west of the trunk is a cavity from an old branch union 30mm diameter and 30mm deep. At 2m on the south of the trunk is a cavity from an old branch union, 100mm diameter and 250mm deep. At 2.5m on the south is a cavity 250mm diameter with decayed wood. At 2,5m on the east of the trunk cavity 20mm diameter with decayed wood.

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5.4: The trunk forks into two large scaffold stems at 5m and from there branches out into the crown of the tree. Throughout the crown there is minor deadwood no bigger than 20mm diameter. There are two broken branch stumps on the north side at 7m and 8m of 70mm. The forks within the crown look fair and there are no major visible defects.

6.0: Conclusion and recommendations

6.1: The overall physiological health of the tree is good however the structural condition is poor. The combined factors of the lean of the tree, the shape of the crown and the basel suckers at the base of the tree point to the tree once being twin stemmed. This leads to the conclusion that there is a large historic pruning wound at the base of the tree. Given the amount of cavities on the trunk, although some are quite small however there is a strong possibility that the decay from these individual cavities could join up to form a stem of decay which, with the large wound at the base means the strong possibility of a serious internal defect. The added factor that this defect is on the side most exposed to high winds must also be taken into consideration.

6.2: Although the tree is not an immediate risk to safety, with the above mentioned factors taken into account an approximate safe life expectancy for this tree is given at 10 years.

6.3: **Recommendation;** The reports finds a healthy tree with poor structure and a short life expectancy. Given the situation with planning and the owners' willingness to replant at a later date in an appropriate location within the garden with a suitable species, I would recommend felling the tree.

Any work recommended should be carried out fully insured and qualified arborists to the British Standards for tree work BS: 3998. 2010.

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