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## **ARBORICULTURAL REPORT**

### **Health & Condition Survey**



**Client: Mr I. Anthony**

**Location: St Thomas Church Neath**

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**Date: 24/06/2020**

**The Arb Team - Specialists in the preservation and maintenance of trees**

# **ARBORICULTURAL REPORT**

## **Health and Condition Survey**

***Saint Thomas's Church  
Church Place  
Neath***

**Grid reference : SS752976**

***24<sup>th</sup> June 2020***

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

At the request of Mr Anthony a tree survey was undertaken at St Thomas's Church, Neath on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

The purpose of the survey was to evaluate the biological health and structural condition of the trees which are shown on the attached plan. A total of 17 trees were individually tagged and inspected and consist of the following species.

**TABLE 1**

| <b>TREE SPECIES – English / Botanical</b>                      | <b>NUMBER OF TREES</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Almond / <i>Prunus dulcis</i>                                  | 1                      |
| Birch / <i>Betula pendula</i>                                  | 1                      |
| Corsican Pine / <i>Pinus nigra</i>                             | 4                      |
| Evergreen Oak / <i>Quercus ilex</i>                            | 1                      |
| Goat Willow / <i>Salix caprea</i>                              | 1                      |
| Holly / <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> 'Variegatum'                    | 1                      |
| Japanese Cherry / <i>Prunus</i> spp.                           | 2                      |
| Purple Beech/ <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> 'Purpurea'                | 1                      |
| Tree daisies / <i>Olearia</i> spp.                             | 1 (G)                  |
| Red flowering Horse Chestnut / <i>Aesculus carnea</i>          | 1                      |
| White flowering Horse Chestnut / <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i> | 1                      |
| Yew / <i>Taxus baccata</i>                                     | 2                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                   | <b>17</b>              |

Where possible all numbered tags have been fixed at approximately two metres above ground level on the west facing side of the trees main stem. The 17 trees listed above and in the tree schedule (TABLE 2) are the only trees that were inspected for the purpose of this report.

For the duration of the survey the weather was sunny and calm.

Please note that this is a health and condition survey and is not intended as a substitute for a structural engineers report. Unless otherwise stated no information was received and no evaluation of the trees roots in relation to their effect on underground services, utilities or structures has been considered in this report. This report is a basic tree survey with its conclusions and recommendations drawn from the visual evaluation as seen at the time of the inspection / survey.

All inspections were undertaken from ground level using the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) system with no tree climbing or invasive testing techniques. A steel rod and nylon hammer were used to probe and sound any existing and potential areas of wood decay.

Due to unpredictable weather conditions and unforeseen events the information in this report is as seen during the time of the inspection and is valid for a period of one year from the date of the

inspection. The condition of any tree can change suddenly and dramatically therefore any observations and recommendations may require amendment. Any tree(s) in high risk locations should be regularly inspected especially after a storm and high winds. The frequency of inspections can be extended for trees in areas of low use and traffic or where there are low value targets. The fixed time periods are usually between six months and two years and for maximum accuracy and benefit consecutive surveys should be completed during different seasons / times of year.

## **2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**

The church of St Thomas is within Neath town centre and is surrounded by the pedestrianised areas of Church Place, New Street and Wind Street.

There are a broad range of age classes, deciduous and coniferous trees. The majority of the trees are located near the perimeter of the site. A number of the trees are large specimens which provide a significant visual impact in the local area.

A number of the trees are protected with a tree preservation order which is administered and enforced by the local planning authority of Neath Port Talbot CBC.

The static targets include the church, neighbouring buildings, access roads / footways and boundary walls and railings. Mobile targets include parked and low level passing vehicles and pedestrians within and external to the site.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Due to their location and condition all recommended tree work in the tree schedule – TABLE 2 should be completed within the stated time periods.
2. To reduce the trees wind resistance and aid future tree inspections sever all Ivy near ground level on all affected trees. To avoid any damage to the bark of the trees this work should be undertaken primarily with hand tools and the use of a chainsaw should be limited to the larger Ivy stems with the appropriate care taken to avoid any contact with the bark of the trees. Due to its ecological benefits Ivy should only be severed on trees which are in high risk locations and require regular inspections.
3. To evaluate any change in their health and condition and the effects of any tree pruning work all the trees should normally be re inspected within two years of this report. It would be advisable to complete the next inspection by no later than the 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022.
4. The trees are protected by tree preservation orders therefore prior to any tree work operations the local planning authority must be consulted and permission obtained.
5. Prior to any tree pruning or removals the structure of the trees should be checked for roosting, nesting or hibernating species such as bats and birds. (Refer biodiversity section).

## **4.0 BIODIVERSITY**

Trees have the potential for bat roosts and nesting birds. Various legislation such as the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CroW) 2000 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 make it a criminal offence to interfere with bats, birds or their roosts and nests.

Prior to any tree work all trees and the land around them must be checked for protected species by a suitably qualified and competent person. If protected species are identified all work must stop and the appropriate authority contacted for further advice.

**TABLE 2 : TREE SCHEDULE**

| Tree #  | Species                | Age | Size | Pc | Sc | Observations / Recommended works                                                                                                                                     | Cat. | Risk |
|---------|------------------------|-----|------|----|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------|
| 981     | Corsican Pine          | M   | L    | F  | F  | Reduce 3 large branches by 2 to 2.5 metres on west side which overhang building.                                                                                     | 2    | M    |
| 982     | Horse Chestnut         | SM  | M    | G  | F  | Remove all branches near building on west side to provide a minimum two metre clearance.                                                                             | 2    | M    |
| 983     | Almond                 | M   | S    | P  | P  | Poor form.                                                                                                                                                           | 0    | L    |
| 984     | Corsican Pine          | M   | M    | F  | F  | Remove all major deadwood, remove 2 lower branches directly above tree 983, reduce 1 branch on north side near building by removing one lower lateral.               | 2    | M    |
| 985     | Japanese Cherry        | M   | M    | F  | F  | Remove deadwood.                                                                                                                                                     | 3    | L    |
| 986     | Yew                    | SM  | S    | G  | F  | Multi stemmed                                                                                                                                                        | 0    | L    |
| 987     | Purple Beech           | SM  | M    | G  | F  | Remove all minor branches within 2 metres of church.                                                                                                                 | 3    | L    |
| 988     | Yew                    | SM  | S    | G  | F  | Multi stemmed.                                                                                                                                                       | 0    | L    |
| 989     | Silver Birch           | SM  | S    | G  | G  |                                                                                                                                                                      | 0    | L    |
| 990     | Goat Willow            | SM  | S    | G  | F  | Growing adjacent to stone boundary wall with risk of future structural damage. Remove tree and poison stump with a suitable herbicide to prevent regrowth.           | 3    | M    |
| 991     | Evergreen Oak          | SM  | M    | F  | F  | Large wound and compartmentalised decay at base of main stem. Reduce lower over extended branch on west side by 2 to 2.5 metres.                                     | 3    | M    |
| 992     | Corsican Pine          | M   | L    | F  | F  | Remove deadwood.                                                                                                                                                     | 3    | M    |
| 993     | Holly                  | M   | S    | D  | P  | Poor form, sparse foliage and crown dieback – monitor.                                                                                                               | 0    | L    |
| 994     | Corsican Pine          | M   | L    | F  | P  | Number of large over extended branches. Reduce 1 large branch on west side and 2 large branches over building on south side by 2 to 2.5 metres. Remove deadwood.     | 2    | M    |
| 995     | Japanese Cherry        | SM  | S    | F  | P  | Poor form, suppressed by tree 994. Small area of basal decay – monitor.                                                                                              | 0    | L    |
| 996     | Red Horse Chestnut     | M   | M    | P  | P  | Thinning foliage in upper crown, numerous burrs on main scaffold branches and stem. Reduce 1 major branch on north side and 1 major branch on west side by 2 metres. | 2    | M    |
| 997 (G) | Tree daisies / Olearia | OM  | S    | F  | P  | Group of 4 multi stemmed shrubs. Sever Ivy.                                                                                                                          | 3    | L    |

## KEY TO TREE SCHEDULE

|                       |                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tree / Group #</b> | Numerical order                                                                                                     |
| <b>Species</b>        | Table 1 – Common English name followed by botanical title.<br>Table 2 – English name only.                          |
| <b>Age</b>            | Y – Young SM – Semi mature M – Mature OM – Over mature                                                              |
| <b>Size</b>           | S - Small M – Medium L – Large VL – Very large                                                                      |
| <b>PC</b>             | The general physiological condition of the tree :-<br>G – Good F – Fair P – Poor D – Dead, dying or / and dangerous |
| <b>SC</b>             | The general structural condition of the tree :-<br>G – Good F – Fair P – Poor D – Dead, dying or / and dangerous    |

### **Observations / Recommended works – As stated**

#### **Cat. Recommended time periods for works :-**

**Category 1 (Red)** – If combined with a high risk (H) due to the possibility of imminent failure or danger all recommended works should be completed as soon as possible / practicable. If combined with a lower risk category the recommended works can be downgraded and completed within six months of the date of this report or sooner if possible.

**Category 2 (Blue)** – Trees with various structural weaknesses or problems which require remedial works. Works should be completed within one year of the date of this report or sooner if possible.

**Category 3 (Green)** – Trees with minor defects and problems which require remedial works. These works should be completed within two years of this report.

**Category 0** – No works specified or recommended.

**Risk** The level of evaluated risk taking into consideration the surrounding static and mobile targets and the physiological and structural condition of the tree.

L – Low      M – Medium      H - High

## **5.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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