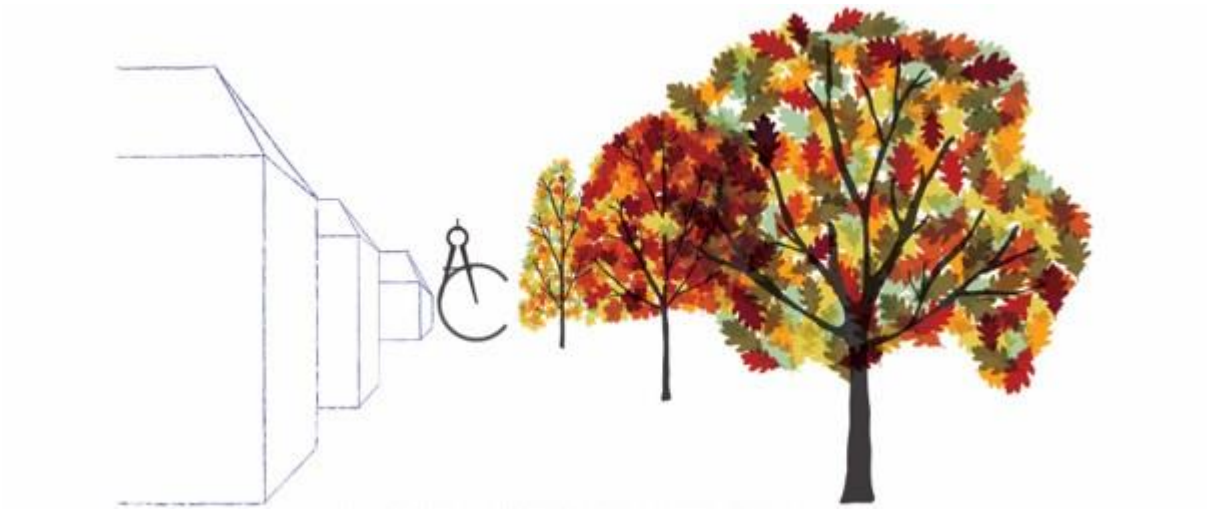
Tree Wall Damage

Report



Providing Expertise on Your Trees

OUR REFERENCE	**AC.2021.572**
CLIENT	**Mr Mohammad Osman**
SITE	**St Audrey's, Church Street, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 5AR**
SURVEY & REPORT BY	**Mr I S Thompson (known as Tom) BSc. (Hons.) Arb. MSc. (eFor) MArborA**
DATE	**4th November 2021**
DATE OF INSPECTION	**18th December 2021**

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1 Terms of Reference

1.1 I have been instructed in writing by Mr Mohammad Osman to inspect and report on the of trees near to the existing site boundary wall at St Audrey's, Church Street, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 5AR, and give advice on the risks of subsidence damage to adjacent structures.

1.1.2 This report was commissioned to find the best solution for the construction of the new wall and the implications of any retained trees on the new wall.

1.1.3 The results of this assessment are presented in below and with further detail in Appendix V of this report. This assessment is purely based on the risk to the construction of and future stability of the proposed new wall.

1.2 The report includes:

i) Assessment of the risk posed by the adjacent trees to the construction of a new wall.
ii) Assessment of the risk posed by the adjacent trees to their future impact on the proposed new wall.
iii) Recommendations on the immediate and future management of the trees, based on my assessment and these guidelines, and on my personal experience as an arboriculturist.

1.3 I confirm that I am a Professional member of the Arboricultural Association and the Consulting Arborist Society, hold the Honours Degree in Arboriculture and I am an ISA Certified Arborist.

1.4 I have based this report on my site observations and investigations, and I have come to conclusions in the light of my qualifications obtained and experience gained whilst working in the field of arboriculture. I have qualifications and practical experience in arboriculture and forestry and list the details in Appendix I.

1.5 Limitation and use of Copyright:

1.5.1 All rights in this report are reserved. No part of it may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means without our written permission. Its contents and format are for the exclusive use of Mr Mohammad Osman and his associates. It may not be sold, lent out or divulged to any third party not directly involved in this situation without the written consent of Arbor Cultural Ltd. It will remain the intellectual property of Arbor Cultural Ltd. until payment in full has been received.

1.5.2 This report contains all my advice and opinions and any representation and/or statements that have or may have been made which are not specifically and expressly included in this report should not be relied upon and no responsibility is taken for the accuracy of such statements.

1.5.3 The Inspection was carried out on the basis of ground level, Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) examination of external features of each individual tree. Binoculars were used to assess the aerial parts. Should a more detailed climbed inspection be required this will be highlighted in the recommendations.

1.5.4 The report and recommendations relate to the condition of the trees and their surroundings at the time of inspection only. All measurements, proportions and assessments of age are approximate, except where stated.

1.5.5 Visual assessment, in accordance with accepted arboricultural practice, was based on apparent vitality (leaf cover, extension growth), presence of deadwood and die back, fractured, and detached limbs, evidence of excessive basal movement and external indications of stem and basal decay likely to affect the structural condition of the tree. No decay detection equipment either invasive or non-invasive was employed.

1.5.6 The survey findings are of a preliminary nature with regard to assessment of risk of direct damage (by contact) and indirect damage, from trees to built structures. This is owing to the time constraint imposed by the client. If further details are required these will be highlighted in the recommendations.

1.5.7 I did not examine the soil or remove samples for analysis as this report is of a preliminary nature. If samples are required, then this will be highlighted in the recommendations.

1.5.8 No parts of the drainage or service systems were inspected on site as I am not qualified to do so.

1.5.9 If you, or your advisers, have at your disposal any information to suggest that the property is or has been suffering any tree related structural defect, I would ask that you release the information to us. All relevant data is presented within this report together with any recommendations for further analysis, as appropriate.

1.5.10 Trees are living organisms whose health and condition can change rapidly. The conclusions and recommendations in this report are only valid for one year. The health, condition and safety of trees should be checked on a more regular basis, preferably at least every three years, and those conclusions and recommendations are only valid for a period of one year.

1.5.11 These periods of validity may be reduced in the case of any change in conditions or proximity to the trees to the built structures. Any changes to the site as it stands at present will invalidate this report, e.g., building of extensions, excavation works, importing of soils, extreme weather events etc.

1.5.12 The Local Planning Authority has not yet been contacted to establish whether any Tree Preservation Order (TPO) covers any of the trees, or to determine if the site is situated within a Conservation Area (CA). It would be necessary to determine whether either of these planning controls are in operation before commencement of any works and submitting the required notifications or obtaining the required permissions.

1.6 Documentation

1.6.1 The following documentation was provided when the work was commissioned.

- Letter/Email to confirm commission of the work.
- Wall Inspection Report from ASP Consulting requesting Arboricultural Report

1.7 Disclaimer

1.7.1 I have no connection with any of the parties involved in this situation that could influence the opinions expressed in this report.

2 Site Details

2.1 I attach a plan in Appendix IV, showing the location of all the significant trees in relation to the boundary wall.

2.2 The information related to the significant trees is specified in Appendix II, Tree Survey Process and is recorded in Appendix V ,Tree Survey Records.

2.3 There is a historic boundary wall wit he adjacent site that has fallen into disrepair and the St Audrey's are looking at the best way to address this.

2.4 There is a change of level with the adjacent land approximately one meter higher up. As such the boundary wall is a retaining wall.

3 Findings

3.1 I visited the site on 18th November 2021 and was given access by the manager. The significant vegetation is recorded in more detail in Appendix V with the risk of direct recorded below.

3.2 There were five trees ranging from semi-mature to mature and from small to large within the site and on the adjacent land that are within or just outside of influencing distance of the wall area.

3.3 T 308 was a multi stemmed ash tree, see Image 1, It was growing on top of the wall, see Image 6 and 7. It had four stems with stem diameters of 25 cm, 22 cm, 20 cm,14 cm. There were two stems either side of some wire, which appeared to be a historic site boundary fence, see Image 8. This would indicate that this is a genuine boundary tree.

3.4 It had a low stem on St Audreys' side which was covered with dense ivy. There were tight unions with included bark. There was ivy establishing on the other stems. It had a crown spread of 6 m, 3 m, 4 m, and 4 m to the four cardinal points. There was crown suppression from beech tree to the east and walnut to the west.

3.5 T309 was a copper beech tree which was growing in adjacent property, 8 m from the boundary, see image 2. There were no significant observations.

3.6 T286 was a walnut tree in the grounds of St Audreys, see Image 3. It is 9 m away from the wall. It had sustained historic damage to its roots and had minor cavities and minor deadwood and was exhibiting crown dieback. It also had branch stubs from previous pruning operations. All these were recorded in previous surveys. It had also been previously cut back from the building.

3.7 T310 was a semi mature multi stemmed dogwood, see image 4. It was located in the adjacent land, just 3.5 m back from the boundary. It had five stems with an average of 10 cm stem diameter. It was a low spreading multi stemmed shrub. It has a low crown that extends over the boundary into St Audreys. It had a crown spread of 4 m, 2 m, 2 m, and 4 m to the four cardinal points. It had tight unions and included bark.

3.8 T311 was a semi mature multi stemmed dogwood, see image 5. It was located in the adjacent land, just 2.5 m back from the boundary. It had five stems with an average of 5 cm stem diameter. It had a crown spread of 3 m, 2 m, 3 m, 3 m to the four cardinal points. It had tight unions and included bark.

4 Discussion and Opinion

4.1 The ash tree T308 is growing right on the boundary. As such it is considered to be a genuine boundary tree. This means that its seed germinated, or it was planted on or as part of the boundary.

4.2 This means that the tree will be jointly owned by the properties either side of the boundary. This would mean that both parties are jointly responsible for tis management and liable for any injury or damage.

4.3 From checking the maps this would appear to be land belonging to the church hall, although this was not investigated any further.

4.4 It can be clearly seen from the Image 6 and 7 that the tree is growing on top of the existing wall. Indeed, T8 shows wire presumably from an old fence, running through the centre of its four stems.

4.5 I consider that it would be impossible to remove the existing dry-stone wall without impacting on this tree's roots and in all likelihood destabilising the tree, leading to its failure or partial failure.

4.6 Even if the wall was to be built inside the line of the old wall with the old wall retained, there is still a potential hazard from the tree in the future.

4.7 It is heavily shielded from any wind load by T309 the copper beech and T286 the walnut and to a lesser extent the two dogwoods, T310 and T311. If these were to be removed or decline and die at any point in the future the altered load on the ash tree T308, with effectively only half a root zone, could lead to it failing or partially failing.

4.8 It is considered that the best course of action is to remove this tree.

4.9 The joint owners of the tree should be contacted to inform them of the situation and get their agreement. This should be agreeable to them given the situation. They may be unwilling to share the cost, but that is a separate conversation.

4.10 If the owners cannot be contacted or traced, then records of all the client's attempts to contact them should be recorded along with photos of the tree being removed and the wall replaced. This is a precaution just in case they raise any concerns in the future.

4.11 Both the copper beech tree T309 and the walnut tree T286 are far enough away so as not to be impacted significantly by the construction. If the British Standard, BS5837 Trees in Relation to Construction were to be applied, then the root protection areas of both trees would not extend into the footprint of the wall.

4.12 The two dogwoods are closer. T311 is too small to be considered in relation to BS5837. T310 would be a consideration but would only be a C1 category tree. The mitigation measures would be that only handheld tools would be used within its RPA. Only handheld tools are being used in the construction of the new wall.

4.13 The crown of T310 extends over the boundary and into St Audrey's This hangs down quite low. This causes a potential obstruction to the use of the garden area, btu more significantly to work access for the wall construction. This tree is recommended to have any overhanging branches cut back to the boundary. I would suggest going to the back of the existing wall, to allow sufficient access for all the construction activities.

4.14 There is also a lot of leaf litter presumably mostly from the copper beech tree T309, the ash tree T308 and the walnut tree T286. This could be addressed with the installation of a gutter hedgehog or similar product to allow water through but to prevent the build up of debris in the gutters. Hedgehog Gutter Brush – Genuine Leaf Guard https://hedgehog-gutter-brush.co.uk.

4.15 With T308 the ash tree removed a well-constructed wall would not be impacted significantly by any of the other trees that are recommended for retention with no action at this time.

5 Conclusions

5.1 T308 the ash tree should be removed prior to any construction activity relating to the wall is undertaken.

5.2 I consider that it would be impossible to remove the existing dry-stone wall without impacting on this tree's roots and in all likelihood destabilising the tree, leading to its failure or partial failure.

5.3 I believe that T308 is a genuine boundary tree. The joint owners of the tree (believed to be the church hall) should be contacted to inform them of the situation and get their agreement. This should be agreeable to them given the situation.

5.4 The crown of T310 I would recommend being cut to the rear of the existing wall, to allow sufficient access for all the construction activities.

5.5 I would recommend the installation of a gutter hedgehog or similar product to prevent the clogging of the gutters with tree debris.

5.6 With T308 the ash tree removed a well-constructed wall would not be impacted significantly by any of the retained trees.

5.7 Apart from the removal of T308 the ash tree on the wall and the cutting back of the overhanging branches of T310, the is not further tree surgery recommended at this time.

5.8 The retained trees should all be re-inspected within the next three years at the latest.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Contact the neighboring landowners to inform them of your plans

6.2 Remove the ash tree T308 prior to the commencement of the wall construction**.**

6.3 Cut back T310 to the the rear of the existing wall, to enable construction access.

6.3 Install a gutter hedgehog or similar product in the adjacent gutters.

6.4 Re-inspected all retained trees within the next three years.

All tree pruning works should be conducted to British Standard 3998: 2010 Recommendations for Tree Works, unless otherwise specified with a clear justification for the variation from the British Standard.

I hope you find this report satisfactory, please do not hesitate to contact me at my office if I can be of further assistance.

Sign… ……Date……4th December 2021……

Mr I. S .Thompson

References and Bibliography

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Appendix I Abridged CV; Qualifications and Experience

I S Tom Thompson BSc (Hons Arb), MSc eFor, MArborA Cert Arb

1 Qualifications

Subjects	Level	Dates	
Bond Solon Expert Witness Training (CUBS)	Pass		2017
International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist	Pass	May	2012
Professional Tree Inspection Course (LANTRA)	Pass	April	2011
BSc Hons Arboriculture	(2.1)	2008	2009
FdSc Arboriculture	Distinction	2004	2007
MSc. Environmental Forestry (MSc eFor)	Pass	2001	2002
BSc. Hons Env Science (Conservation Management)	(2.2)	1997	2000
Environmental Studies	Access Course	1996	1997
Forestry & Practical Environmental Skills	NVQ I & II	1996	1997

2 Career Summary

Tom Thompson is a professional member of the Arboricultural Association (AA), an International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist, Chairman of the Consulting Arborist Society (CAS), and an associate member of the Institute of chartered Foresters (ICF).

He was worked in the private and public sector, before setting up Arbor Cultural in 2014, to promote the value and benefits of trees.

He currently heads up the BIM4Arb group promoting Building Information Modelling (BIM) to the arboricultural industry.

He then spent five years working in new woodland creation, firstly for ADAS in the National Forest and then for 18 months with the Forestry Commission in Cobham, Kent. During this time, he began a degree in Arboriculture through Myerscough College.

This course enabled him to make the transition from forestry to arboriculture where he spent 5 years as a tree officer, firstly at St Albans and then more recently at King's Lynn and West Norfolk. He joined Connick Tree Care in May 2012, where he worked as their Principal Arboricultural Consultant.

Having worked as the principal tree consultant at Connick tree care for two years he established Arbor Cultural Ltd. In 2014, with the intent to provide professional advice in all aspects of tree consultancy, to enable clients to obtain planning permission, house purchase completion, and successfully address all tree related health and safety matters. He is passionate about trees, and he is keen to promote the economic value and benefits of the urban forest.

3 Areas of Competence

- Tree hazard risk assessments for tree owners
- Decay assessment and mapping
- Mortgage and Insurance reports to assess the influence of trees on buildings
- Pre-development site surveys and arboricultural implication studies
- Tree management reports to prioritise maintenance programs
- Tree related insurance claims
- Diagnosis of tree disorders
- Arboricultural Expert Witness

4 Selected Continual Professional Development

Training	Provider	Date
Public Speaking Training	Progressive Training	Feb 2020
Digital Integration Workshop	Landscape Institute	Jan 2020
Tree Planting conference	Palmstead Nursery	Jan 2020
Climate Change	Westminster Briefing	Dec 2019
Subsidence Report Writing	Consulting Arborist Society	Nov 2019
London Plane Conference	London Tree Officer Association	July 2019
VALID Tree Inspection Procedures	David Evans	June 2019
Expert Witness Conference	Bond Solon	Nov 2018
AA Registered consultant Workshop	Arboricultural Association	Nov 2018
iTree Seminar	Barcham Nursery	Nov 2018
Tree Officers Conference	LTOA and ICF	Nov 2018
Tree Safety and Beyond	MTOA & Frank Rinn	Sept 2018
Hollow Tree Workshop	AA with Ted Green & Frank Rinn	July 2018
Claus Mattheck Workshops	Sorbus	June 2018
Expert Witness Conference	Bond Solon	Nov 2017
Decay Workshops	MTOA & Frank Rinn	Sept 2017
Mortgage Report Writing	Lantra and CAS	June 2017
Tree Biomechanics (Germany)	Claus Mattheck, Symbiosis	May 2014
Young Tree Establishment	CAS Various	May 2014
Mortgage Report Writing	Tree Life Training	April 2014
Tree Biomechanics (Germany)	Claus Mattheck	Oct 2013
Risk Assessment; D Lonsdale & J Barrel	ISA & CSA	June 2013
BS5837 Training	Tree Life Training	May 2013
Pests and Diseases Road Show	Arboricultural Association	April 2013
Subsidence; Giles Biddle Part 2	Arboricultural Association	April 2013
Arboricultural Consultancy Course	Arboricultural Association	April 2013
Subsidence; Giles Biddle Part 1	Arboricultural Association	June 2013
Tree Pruning – Ed Gilman	Barcham Nursery	June 2012
Up By Roots – James Urban	ISA	May 2012
Tree Biomechanics – Claus Mattheck	Symbiosis	May 2012
BS 5837 2012 & Tree Regs Changes	Arboricultural Association	May 2012
BS 3998 Changes to Standard	London Tree Officers Association	May 2012
Bat Course for Arboriculturalists	AA & Bat Conservation Trust	April 2012
Tree Biomechanics (Germany)	Claus Mattheck	Oct 2011
Designing with Trees	T Kirkham & P Thurman	Sept 2011
Urban Forest–Climate Change, Shade & SUDS	Peter McDonagh	Sept 2011
Arb Consultancy Report Writing	Consulting Arb Society	July 2011
Fungal Management Strategies	Barcham Nursery	Nov 2010
Perfect Roots & Tree Growth	Gary Watson	June 2010
Fungi Recognition and Response	Tree Life Training	May 2010
Trees and the Law - Charles Minors	Barcham Nursery	Oct 2009
CAVAT as a management tool	NATO	Sept 2009
THREATS Tree Assessment	JFL Arboriculture	Aug 2009

5. Professional Affiliations

Arboricultural Association (AA) Professional Member	since 2008
International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist	since 2012
Consulting Arborists Society (CAS)	since 2014
Institute of Chartered Foresters Associate Members	since 2018
Royal Forestry Society	since 1999

Appendix II Tree Survey Process and Detail

2.1 The Survey Schedule

- Tree/shrub/hedge number shown on plan
- Tree/shrub/hedge species
- Approximate tree height in metres.
- Average crown diameter
- Tree stem diameter, in millimetres, measured at 1.5m*.
- Age class.
- Observed physiological/structural condition
- Assessment of direct damage to built structures excluding drains.
- Management recommendations.
- Works priority.

* If multi-stemmed then measures at ground level B.D. (Basal Diameter)
If not possible to measure, then estimated and recorded with the **#** symbol

2.2 Survey Procedure

2.2.1 The survey was conducted to industry Best Practice.

2.3 Description of Tree Categories

Age Class:

NP	Newly Planted – A tree that is still receiving post planting maintenance and still has a stake supporting it.
Y	Young – Recently planted or establishing tree that could be transplanted without specialist equipment, i.e., up to 12-14cm stem diameter.
SM	An establishing tree which is still exhibiting strong apical dominance and has significant growth potential.
EM	A tree that is reaching its ultimate potential height and losing apical dominance, whose growth rate is slowing down but will still increase in stem diameter and crown spread and has safe life expectancy remaining
M	Mature tree with limited potential for any increase in size but with reasonable safe useful life expectancy
OM	Over mature – A senescent or moribund specimen with a limited safe useful life expectancy
V	Veteran – Trees of great age for species with important biological, aesthetic, conservation, or cultural value. Trees are in a state of decline due to old age.
D	Dead tree

2.4 Tree Condition

P = Physiological	**Good**	No significant health problems
	Fair	Symptoms of ill health that can be remediated
	Poor	Significant ill health
	Dead	Dead Tree
S = Structural:	**Good**	No significant defects
	Fair	Significant defects that can be remediated
	Poor	Significant defects no remedy

2.5 Deadwood Categorisation

Minor Deadwood Less than 50mm in diameter or less than 3m in length

Major Deadwood Greater than 50mm in diameter or greater than 3m in length

Appendix III Images

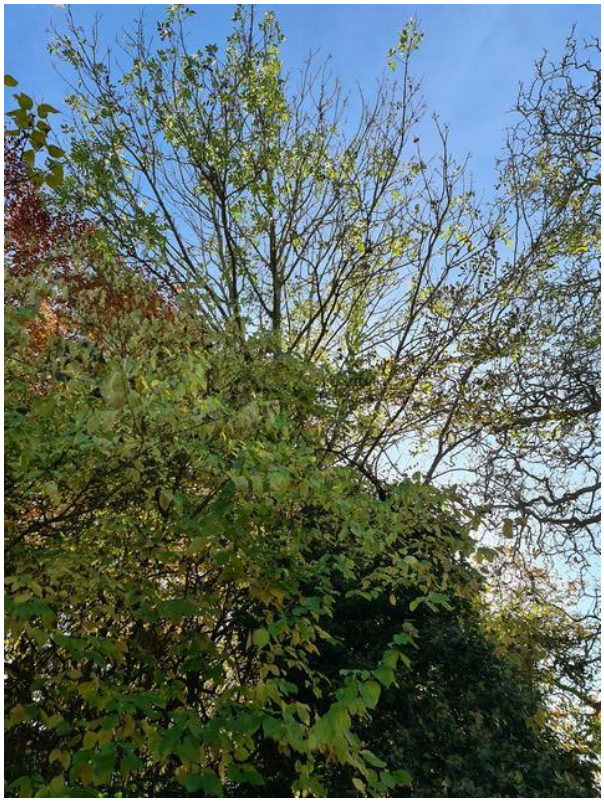


Image 1 T308 the multi stemmed ash tree with T310 front left in the foreground.

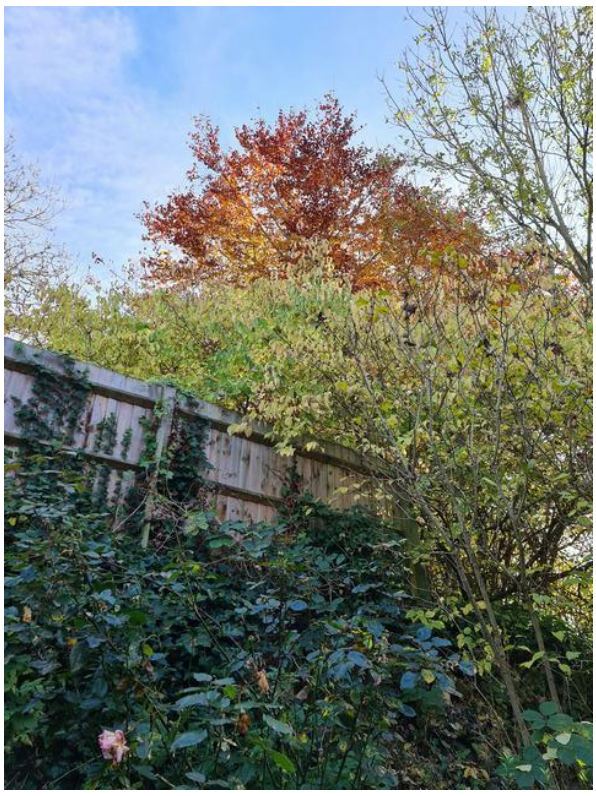


Image 2 T309 the copper beech tree at the rear.

Image 3 **T386 the walnut tree that is regularly inspected.**

Image 4 **T310 a multi stemmed dogwood.**

Image 5 **T311 a multi stemmed dogwood.**

Image 6 **T308 the ash tree growing on top of the existing wall.**

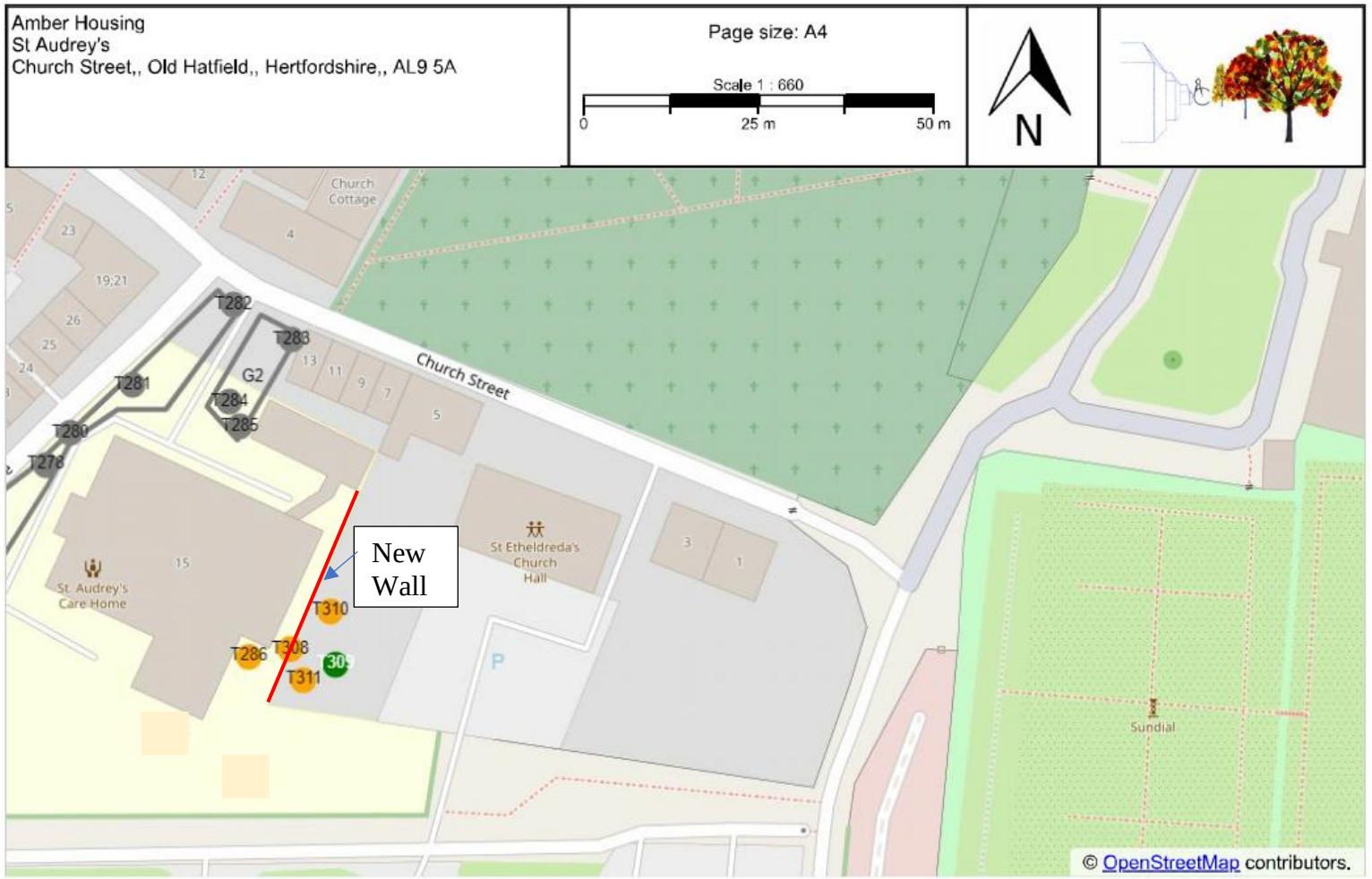
Image 7 **T308 the multi stemmed ash tree growing on top of the existing wall.**

Image 8 **T308 multi stemmed ash tree with two stems growing both side of wall.**

Image 9 **T9 (left) T10 centre and T11 (right) viewed from park to the rear.**

Image 10 **T11 viewed from the rear garden showing distance to building.**

Appendix IV Tree Location Plan



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APPENDIX V - TREE SURVEY RECORDS

Abor Cultural Ltd.

Tree Survey

Site -	**St Audrey's, Church Street, Old Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 5AR**
Client -	**Mr Mohammad Osman**
Survey Date -	**18th November 2021**
Surveyor -	**Mr I S Thompson (known as Tom)**

Ref	Species	Description	Measurements	Survey Notes	Struct Con	Risk Rating	Inspect Period	Recommendations
T286	Walnut *(Juglans sp.)*	Target # - dwelling.	Height (m): 14 Crown Radius (m): 7 DBH (cm): 60 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 40+ Years	Historic damaged roots, Cavities (Minor), Deadwood (Min), Crown dieback Branch stubs. Previously cut back from the building.	Fair	Low	1 Year	No Action Recommended at this time (NAR)
T308	Common Ash *(Fraxinus excelsior)*	Wall, patio, seating area and flats.	Height (m): 14 Crown Radius (m): 5 DBH (cm): 20 Stems: 4 Life Stage: Semi Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	The four stems are 25 cm, 22 cm, 20 cm,14 cm. The tree is growing on the wall. Two stems are this side of a wire fence and two the other. Genuine boundary tree. Low stem this side is covered with dense ivy. Tight unions and included bark. Ivy establishing on the other stems. Crown spread is 6,3,4,4 m. Crown suppression by beech tree to the east and walnut to the west.	Fair	Low	3 Years	Remove tree to enable wall repairs or rebuild.

APPENDIX V - TREE SURVEY RECORDS

Ref	Species	Description	Measurements	Survey Notes	Struct Con	Risk Rating	Inspect Period	Recommendations
T309	Copper Beech *(Fagus sylvatica purpurea)*	Wall, patio, seating area and flats.	Height (m): 16 Crown Radius (m): 7 DBH (cm): 60 Stems: 4 Life Stage: Early Mature Life Exp.: 40+ Years	The tree is growing in adjacent property 8 m from the boundary. No significant observations.	Good	Low	3 Years	No Action Recommended at this time (NAR)
T310	Common Dogwood *(Cornus sanguinea)*	Wall, patio, seating area and flats.	Height (m): 6 Crown Radius (m): 3 DBH (cm): 10 Stems: 5 Life Stage: Semi Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	In adjacent land. 3.5 m back from the boundary. The five stems average 10 cm stem diameter. Low spreading multi stemmed shrub. Low stem this side is covered can be cut back to the boundary. In would suggest going width of wall beyond to allow access for construction. Tight unions and included bark. Crown spread is 4 m, 2 m, 2 m, 4 m.	Fair	Low	3 Years	Cut back low growth to just beyond the boundary to allow space for wall repair or rebuild.

APPENDIX V - TREE SURVEY RECORDS

Ref	Species	Description	Measurements	Survey Notes	Struct Con	Risk Rating	Inspect Period	Recommendations
T311	Common Dogwood *(Cornus sanguinea)*	Wall, patio, seating area and flats.	Height (m): 5 Crown Radius (m): 3 DBH (cm): 5 Stems: 5 Life Stage: Semi Mature Life Exp.: 20+ Years	In adjacent land. 2.5 m back from the boundary. The five stems average 5 cm stem diameter. Low spreading multi stemmed shrub. Low stem this side is covered can be cut back to the boundary. No conflict for access for construction. Tight unions and included bark. Crown spread is 3 m, 2 m, 3 m, 3 m.	Fair	Low	3 Years	No Action Recommended at this time (NAR)