

Arboricultural Assessment

1 Kensington Gate, London W8

Survey Date: 18/10/2019

Report Reference: AA/001/KEGA



Report produced by: Paul Zepler / FdSc Arb, NC Arb, LANTRA PTI – Production date: 20/10/2019

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2.0 Executive summary

- 1.1 This arboricultural report has been compiled to analyse the physiological condition and long-term cohabitation between a London Plane (T1) and adjacent retaining structure. A significant displacement of the partition wall on Queens Gate Mews as a result of direct root interaction and stem expansion has provoked a dangerous structures notification under the Occupiers Liability Act 1984. T1 is within a conservation area and under LPA preservation. Any recommended tree works within this report will require LPA notification, but can be done so by submitting this report as part of the notification process.
- 1.2 This investigation will include:
 - Analysis of onsite tree related data obtained during a survey undertaken 18/10/2019
 - The site context and analysis of constraints
 - Discussion
 - Recommendations
- 1.3 Conclusions will take into account all relevant wildlife and conservation legislation. Categorisation of trees under BS5837 will take into account stem diameter as a means to judge age and represent condition of the individual tree(s) where possible.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 This survey has been undertaken by Paul Zepler: I have worked within the arboricultural industry for the last fifteen years in both a practical and advisory capacity. I currently hold a practical qualification: N/C Arb, a scientific qualification: FdSc Arb and a professional qualification: LANTRA PTI. I have studied for a total of five years in addition to my working practices. During my career I have been arboricultural officer for Enfield, Ealing and am currently the principal tree officer for Islington. I consulted for Longacre Tree Surgery for the past three years.

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Site Description:

- 2.2 Set within central London, close to the Victoria and Albert Hall, 1 Kensington gate has a very manicured and preserved feel. All arboricultural features in situ add value to the area as a whole and their maturity is of note. There is a London Plane standard throughout the area in keeping with the Victorian façade.

1 Kensington Gate has an antiquated and relaxed presence, though the London Plane between the rear garden area and adjacent housing appears to be outgrowing its



location. It is obvious that trees are of importance to the area and should be preserved until it becomes unreasonable.



3.0 Professional Standard References

- 3.1 I have referred to the following standards and act as a framework to ensure good practice and tree evaluation in relation to trees throughout this project:
- 3.2 British Standard 5837:2012 (Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction: recommendations) as a good practice guide for trees in relation to structure
- 3.3 British Standard 3998:2010 (Tree works recommendations) for pruning recommendations.
- 3.4 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for wildlife protection law and good practice.
- 3.5 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 as point of reference for the protection of bats due to the documented presence of cavities within the tree survey.
- 3.6 Natural Environment and Rural Community's act 2006 as point of reference for the protection of bats due to the documented presence of cavities within the tree survey.
- 3.7 NHBC 4.2 2010 as a point of reference with regards to the capacity for trees to have an impact upon adjacent structure.

Arboricultural Assessment**4.0 Summary of tree data**

Map REF	Species	DBH	Crown-Spread N/E/S/W				Age	SULE	Condition	BS5837 Cat	Root crown	Main stem	Crown break	Crown	Proposal	Wildlife
T1	<i>Platanus x hispanica</i>	875mm	3	3	3	3	M	5-10 years	Reasonable	C	Poor	Poor	Good	Reasonable	Remove	None identified at time of survey

Legend:

AGE:

M: Mature**DBH:** Diameter at breast height, taken at 1.5m**BS5837 Category:** A category assigned by the 'British Standards' document 5837 to qualify condition of individual or grouped specimen, definition can be found on page 9 of the BS5837 document.**SULE:** Safe useful life expectancy**Wildlife:** Any nesting or roosting potential identified during survey.

Comments and observations:

T1 has a large cavity that stretches into the root-ball. The level of degradation leaves little supporting heart-wood and no support through the vacant root-ball.

The structure of T1 is being managed through re-pollarding for its potential for failure.

The BS5837 category for this specimen has been assigned based upon its longevity in situ, this is for physiological issues and the potential to seriously outgrow its location.



5.0 Observations and factors

1



T1: Close proximity to adjacent dwellings May 2019.

2



T1: Impact upon adjacent dwellings October 2019.



3

T1: Stem expansion approximately 8cm from retaining wall.



4

T1: Root-crown directly affecting structure.



5

T1: Limited rooting volume.

6



T1: Stem expansion and root proliferation displacing wall.

7



T1: Structural displacement as a result of direct root and stem expansion.

8



- 5.1 Root proliferation and stem expansion has directly affected the retaining wall, partitioning Queens Gate Mews and the rear of 1 Kensington Gate.
- 5.2 The displacement of the Queens Gate Mews wall has led to a dangerous structure that has a temporary retention in place.
- 5.3 T1 appear to have been managed as a result of lower stem decay. This has been implemented in the form of a continual pollarding and re-pollarding regime.
- 5.4 T1 structural mitigation in the form of re-pollarding has led to a crown spread that directly interacts with adjacent, neighbouring structure.
- 5.5 T1 has a very low rooting volume and therefore will continue to expand within the available substrate.
- 5.6 T1 is within the NHBC 4.2 area of theoretical influence (3.7).
- 5.7 No wildlife or nesting birds were identified during the survey of T1 (3.4. 3.5, 3.6)

5.8 Any recommended tree works need to be taken out in accordance with BS:3998 (3.3)

6.0 Discussion

The mitigation in place for the structural concern of T1 has left the canopy at a level that will continually cause neighbourly conflict (image 1&2). Unless this specimen is re-pollarded every year it will continue to grow into adjacent building at window level. Re-pollarding every year would be effectively managing its decline and remove the retention value of this specimen.

The rooting volume potential for T1 will continually bring rhizome expansion into direct conflict with the retaining wall, partitioning Queens Gate Mews and the rear of 1 Kensington Gate. Any root removal works would limit the structural stability of an already compromised structure and should not be considered as a mitigation.

Any building works to integrate the cohabitation between T1 and the retaining wall would be temporary. A lintel cannot be constructed over the root expanse as that would put the root expansion into the public carriageway at 0.5m above highway level, stem expansion would also continue to displace the structure. An open wall construction is not an option in this instance as the tree is already being managed for decline.

7.0 Conclusion

In this instance Evertree agrees with the analysis of MMA Report Ref: 19090. T1 requires removal to mitigate the stated factors within the engineering report as well as the arboricultural reasons stated within this report. However, to offset loss, a replacement strategy should be in place that takes into account all the restrictive factors of the site. This will give a longevity to the prospective replacement and *should* be a condition discharged by the LPA.

This report can be submitted in evidence to the LPA as part of a conservation area tree-works notification and/or TPO tree works application.

Unless otherwise stated this arboricultural report is valid for a period of no longer than one year. Should there be any period of extreme weather, construction or excavation works within the RPA vicinity of any trees stated within this document a structural analysis will be required to validate this period of time. If this report be submitted as part of a planning application it is valid to be submitted for a period of up to six months after compilation. Should this report be coordinated with a mortgage application then only the information provided by the client and a site survey will be incorporated. Should this report contain recommendations as a result of potential property structural related issues then it is highly recommended that a structural engineers report be obtained to validate removal or reduction options. The rest is based on experience and standards compiled by governing bodies and professional recommendations.