

FAO Ciaran Andrews,
John D Clarke Architects

19th November 2019

Dear Ciaran,

RE. Inspection of 1x Hinoki cypress at rear of The Almonry, High Street, Battle.

Site and tree location: The tree is located at the rear of The Almonry, High Street, Battle. Situated in a public garden, on the southern boundary adjacent to an old stone wall beside Western Avenue, a public footpath.

Survey methodology: A site visit was carried out by Lewis Rumsey on 19th November 2019. The tree was surveyed following the principals of Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) practices as defined in the publication Principles of Tree Hazard Assessment and Management by Dr David Lonsdale. The tree was surveyed from ground level. No invasive decay detection or specialist decay detection methodologies were utilised as part of this survey.

Appraisal: The tree, a Hinoki cypress (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*) with height of 10m and stem diameter of 430mm, has been planted in a raised stone planting bed, no more than one metre from a stone wall that forms the boundary between the garden of The Almonry and Western Avenue. A gate in the wall, which provides access into the gardens from Western Avenue, leads onto a brick path and stone steps at the base of the raised planter. The garden is relatively sheltered with the cypress receiving protection from two large oaks to its southwest and The Almonry to the northeast. The tree appeared to be in good health with no major visible defects. Very minor dead foliage was visible within the crown and one pruning wound on the stem, which was healing over.

It was noted that, in addition to the recently reported cracks in the wall bounding Western Avenue, a number of bricks in the path, stones in the planter and stone treads on the steps had been lifted. Whilst it was not possible to identify exactly when this damage had been caused, historic repairs to the stairs and planter suggest that this has been a progressive occurrence and not necessarily sudden. Guidelines in BS5837:2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations*, states that a tree's root protection area ("the minimum area around a tree deemed to contain sufficient roots and rooting volume to maintain the tree's viability") can be calculated as an area equivalent to a circle with radius 12 times the stem diameter. In this instance that would equate to a circle with radius 5.16m. As such, the roots have been squeezed into a space that is too small and are pushing against the wall, planter and steps as they grow and spread, causing the lifting, movement and cracks to appear.

Whilst Hinoki cypresses planted in the UK do not grow to heights much beyond the current height of the one located at The Almonry; they can reach heights of 35m with a 1m stem diameter in their native Japan. Suggesting that there is potential for continued growth and further disruption to the garden features, however, this is likely to be over a many number of years as this species is slow growing.

If you have any queries regarding the above, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Lewis Rumsey FdSc Arboriculture
Arboriculturist

Photographs



Photograph 1 – Proximity of the tree to the wall



Photograph 2 – Lifting bricks on the path



Photograph 3 – Movement of the stone planter



Photograph 4 – Lifted stone treads, historically repaired



Photograph 5 – Steps being pushed away from the path



Photograph 6 – Large basal growth