

Arboricultural Report:
Pine trees at School Court, 99–101 Main Street, Stanton under Bardon

Prepared for:
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99–101 Main Street
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Markfield
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1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 I received instruction from Dr Bevis Heap on 19 January 2026. I have been commissioned to undertake a repeat inspection and provide an updated report in respect of two mature pine trees standing to the frontage of School Court, 99–101 Main Street, Stanton under Bardon, Markfield, Leicestershire, LE67 9TN.
- 1.2 I originally surveyed the trees in 2020 and most recently in June 2023, at that time preparing a report under document reference 793/23. The objective of my assessment was to reassess the current condition of the trees and, if appropriate, recommend any management necessary to ensure that they remain at an acceptable risk to both the report property and neighbouring house plus users of the highway adjacent.
- 1.3 The report trees are protected by virtue of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Tree Preservation Order understood to be named *Trees at 97 Main Street, Stanton under Bardon*. However, no further details as to the designation of the trees within the Order were known at the time of reporting.
- 1.4 Due to the protected status of the trees, under normal circumstances it is necessary to apply for and receive written consent from the Council ahead of undertaking management works, ensuring compliance with any pursuant conditions. On arboricultural grounds, certain exemptions apply. However, arboricultural advice should be sought in the first instance if proceeding under such an exemption.
- 1.5 I reinspected the trees from ground level only on 3 March 2026. Weather conditions were bright with good visibility from ground level. Photographs reproduced within this document were taken during this visit to site.
- 1.6 The smaller of the two pine trees recently suffered damage during stormy weather which I understand to have been around 12 January 2026. I understand that it was snowy and blustery at the time of the branch failure. Dr Heap provided me with some photographs of the fallen and partially processed branches ahead of them being removed. The aerial part of the tree remains in-situ.

2. General setting and the trees

- 2.1 School Court and neighbouring School House are currently residential but clearly were once a village school. It is understood that the original part of School Court was constructed in around 1850 with a later extension forming the property fronting Main Street.
- 2.2 The two report trees stand to the frontage of the property to either side of the drive entrance. One of the trees is a Scots pine located closest to the boundary with neighbouring property 95 Main Street, appropriately named Pine View.
- 2.3 The second report tree is a Corsican pine located to the downhill side of the drive where a raised herbaceous planting bed leads down to a garage. With the exception of the raised bed area, the ground at a lower level is all covered with tarmac.
- 2.4 The Corsican pine is closest to the report property, standing a little over 4m off the gable end with branches in its crown slightly overhanging the roofline of the property.

Photograph 1: The report trees as viewed from the uphill side to the north with the smaller tree in the foreground being the Scots pine and the taller tree the Corsican pine (taken in 2023).



Photograph 2: Showing the two report pine trees in 2026. Red arrow points to recent area of damage.



Photograph 3: Looking towards the two trees from within the report property (taken in 2023), before the storm damage. The section of crown outlined with a dashed red line has failed.



Tree 1: Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)

- 2.5 The tree stands at an approximate height of 13m and, at around 1.5m above ground level, has a measured trunk diameter of 56cm. At its greatest, the radial spread is around 6m due north.
- 2.6 The lower trunk has had numerous branches removed in the past, resulting in a clean trunk height of around 6m but featuring a number of old unoccluded pruning wounds. When viewed through binoculars, there is clearly some minor associated decay. However, this does not appear to have substantially worsened since my previous inspection and the crown of this tree has limited radial spread and receives significant companion shelter from the neighbouring pine.
- 2.7 The trunk of the tree is adjoined by a brick wall of around 0.8m in height with a further fence located beyond.
- 2.8 To the back of the pavement, BT distribution pole 442 hosts numerous wires including those servicing the report and neighbouring properties. The various wires are routed just beneath the live crown height. Where one of the wires runs adjacent to the trunk, a service loop has been added, spliced into a pigtail to help avoid chafing damage.
- 2.9 A bird's nest was noted in the upper crown at the time of my inspection. In physiological terms, current vigour was fair to good. Overall, the tree has a relatively consolidated modest crown, albeit part reliant upon the companion shelter provided by the larger adjacent pine.
- 2.10 Historically, the tree has been heavily crown lifted, removing all side branches to a height of 7–8m, at which point, the crown is borne from two stems. That to the driveway side measures around 25cm in diameter and it is at this point that the main branch has failed, leaving a truncated stub of around 0.6m radiating out from the trunk. This torn stub exhibits brown cubical decay occupying around 70% of the cross-section of the stem.

Photograph 4: Recent limb failure in tree 1. Note the sparse needle density and brown cubical decay.



- 2.11 The entirety of the remaining crown is now supported by a sole stem on the northern side which has a diameter of around 35cm and entirely overhangs the neighbouring property 95 Pine View.
- 2.12 At a height of around 1.2m above the main fork, there is a further old, longstanding bark wound upon the remaining stem and it is entirely plausible that there is underlying localised aerial decay similar to that exhibited within the failed main branch on the drive side.

Photograph 5: Showing the heavily offset crown of tree 1 over the neighbouring property, post storm damage.



- 2.13 Needle length, density and functionality are much reduced in the centre of the crown when compared with outer, more illuminated growth that overhangs the road and, to some degree, the lower outer growth extending towards the corner of the neighbouring property.
- 2.14 A dead side branch of around 10cm in diameter by around 3.5m in length (albeit contorted) extends on the drive side over the recent failure point in the major branch.

Tree 2: Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra* var *maritima*)

- 2.15 This tree stands at an approximate height of 19m and features a measured trunk diameter of 80cm. The radial branch spread in the crown varies from around 6m to almost 8m with the greatest extent being due south.
- 2.16 The base of the trunk is only visible from the report property side as the raised bed itself and the masonry support pier to the frontage wall obscure the remainder of the trunk circumference at ground level.

- 2.17 The trunk extends around 7m before the main fork occurs. The road side of the crown features a more central stem continuing upward but, on the side of the report property, there is a primary branch supporting a lower section of the crown that also has a bias over the roof, having been cut back in the past and currently providing around 1.5–2m clearance off the roof/eaves.
- 2.18 The upper crown is developing a slightly flattened, double bellowing form with two distinct strata becoming evident. Although the upper vigour is still reduced, it has not significantly changed since my previous assessment.

Photograph 6: Showing the upper crown formation (taken in 2023). Note the reduced growth density in the upper crown region.



- 2.19 The upper crown has previously suffered some wind damage with some partially folded, part broken branches. However, these remain relatively well attached with no obvious pathway to freefall through the crown should they become detached.
- 2.20 Physiologically, the tree is considered in fair overall condition. However, it is evident that growth in the upper crown has thinned out with a less than optimum current needle density. This species of pine is commonly impacted by a number of fungal needle blight pathogens. However, there is no peripheral branch dieback at present in the report tree and a review of recently cast needles from the floor did not reveal any obvious needle band blight. Overall, only very small diameter deadwood was noted.

3. Appraisal

- 3.1 Tree 1 has been significantly negatively impacted by recent substantial branch loss. Taking into account its age, reduced vigour and suppression on the downhill side by the adjacent tree, there is no realistic prospect of any significant new growth rejuvenation. This means that in addition to its general growth list on the uphill side, the entirety of the crown is borne on this side with at least 80% of it overhanging the neighbouring property and/or the public pavement and road.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding that the tree inherently has some shelter from oncoming winds from a south westerly direction (from the downhill side), taking into account the urban environment with the road corridor and roofs at different alignments and orientations, there is now increased pathways for oncoming winds to load individual branches within the crown and an increased likelihood of future storm damage to remaining branches that would almost certainly occur on either the highway side or where overhanging the neighbouring property.
- 3.3 The trees are protected primarily by virtue of their visual amenity contribution. When approaching from the centre of the village to the downhill side of the report property (level with the school and church), it is only the upper crown of tree 2 that is visible and, indeed, this is a prominent feature above the roof lines.

Photograph 7: Distant view towards the upper crown of tree 2 (red arrow) from the village centre to the south.



- 3.4 Within a few hundred metres, although part of the lower crown of tree 1 is visible, it is plain that it is the more prominent and larger crown of tree 2 that constitutes the significant visual amenity contribution that makes the protected status justifiable.

- 3.5 When viewed from the north to the uphill side, the compact crown of tree 1 is less defined against the backdrop of the taller pine's crown.

Photograph 8: Looking towards the two report trees from the uphill side, noting the dominance of the larger pine tree 2.



- 3.6 When viewed at close quarters, the lopsided nature of the crown as a result of the long term suppression/dominance of the neighbouring taller pine and the recent major branch loss is such that a Scots pine is not considered a high quality example of the species in its own right, although obviously it is appropriate to acknowledge that the tree has considerably wider contributions beyond that of normal visual amenity.
- 3.7 The most significant point is the reduced vigour of the tree associated with its suppression and life phase and its intrinsic lack of ability to regenerate with new growth on the drive side, leaving a somewhat unbalanced crown with a relatively high centre of gravity due to the previous crown lifting pruning which occurred many years ago and is considered to have been detrimental by modern arboricultural standards. It is considered that Scots pine tree 1 has limited longevity and while it remains there is an increased likelihood of future branch shedding during stormy weather including future snowfall given the heavily asymmetric crown, increased localised exposure from oncoming winds and multiple points of suspected aerial decay.
- 3.8 In respect of tree 2, the taller pine, although it is not in optimum physiological condition, it has not declined further since my previous inspection and overall remains a high quality tree with considerable potential longevity.
- 3.9 The taller pine would not be directly or indirectly negatively impacted by the removal of tree 1 and arguably would be more conspicuous as a standalone specimen when viewed by approaching traffic on the uphill side.

- 3.10 It is unlikely that tree 2 would benefit from additional light illumination but it may indeed benefit from additional soil moisture availability during future drought conditions as there is no doubt that both trees are competing for the same soil water resource.
- 3.11 In respect of the longstanding surface heave of the tarmac area, it is not possible to be categoric as to which tree features the implicated roots, albeit it is most likely a combination of the two. Closest to the public footway, it does indeed appear more plausible that some of the surface rooting is associated with the Scots pine and I understand that the section of the public footway adjacent to the drive entrance threshold had to be repaired due to a surface trip hazard as a result of such roots in the past.
- 3.12 Unfortunately, it is not plausible to replant a replacement tree in situ as it would either be too close to the wall (table A1 of BS 5837:2012 - *Minimum distance between young trees or new planting and structure to avoid direct damage to a structure from future tree growth*) or would impede the use of the drive.

Photograph 9: Tree 1 is too close to the boundary wall to plant a replacement tree in-situ.



4. Conclusions and recommendations

- 4.1 Tree 1, the Scots pine has been substantially damaged during a recent winter storm. A leading stem supporting a significant proportion of its crown has failed at the point of some historic decay. This has left a heavily asymmetric remaining crown, which entirely overhangs the neighbouring property, pavement and road.
- 4.2 Due to the age, reduced vigour and species characteristics, there is no prospect of significant new growth forming around the point of damage. The part-compromised crown itself remains at heightened risk of future wind damage, and this hazard cannot be appropriately addressed by way of crown pruning in this instance.
- 4.3 Tree 2 was found to be in generally fair to good condition and remains the principal amenity provider of the two preserved trees. This taller pine will not be negatively impacted by the removal of the Scots pine and requires no works at present.
- 4.4 It is recommended that an application be made to the Council for the proposed removal of Scots pine tree 1 of this report. A low stump should remain and will not rejuvenate.
- 4.5 The vigour of the upper crown of tree 2 should continue to be considered during ongoing monitoring.
- 4.6 Where applicable, tree works should comply with BS3998:2010 *Tree work – Recommendations* and be carried out by suitably experienced and qualified specialist arboricultural contractors, ensuring any necessary consent is in hand prior to commencement. If bird nesting activity is noted within tree 1, it would be appropriate to wait until this has ceased, before undertaking the removal of the tree.
- 4.7 It is recommended that the remaining pine, tree 2, should be reviewed in summer 2028.

Signed:



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