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Roydon's Landmark Trees

A review

report

CLIENT: Epping Forest District Council

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This report is a review of the Landmark Trees in Roydon which were designated in 1996. The purpose of the review is to see if the designation as a Landmark Tree affords some protection against unnecessary felling. 88 trees were nominated (either as individuals or as part of groups), of which 79 remain (6 individual trees and three from two separate large groups)

The absence of a Landmark tree is due to a decline in tree condition, rather than a measure of the success of informal designation.

The survey provided an opportunity to trial the Heritage Tree Nomination Form developed by Barrell Tree Consultancy. I found that two trees are strong contenders for the nomination, and many more are reasonable contenders. I also carried out a CAVAT valuation of the tree population. The value of the total Landmark Tree population in Roydon is just under £4 million.

The value of the trees is, however, so much more than financial. The trees are integral to the rich social landscape and ecological heritage of the parish, and inspire awe.

1. Introduction

1.1. This report is an analysis of the Landmark Trees in Roydon carried out nearly 20 years after the initial survey. Results are favourable, and current academic practice in arboriculture enables other assessments to be made to quantify and qualify the importance of Landmark Trees.

1.2. There are some exceptional trees, due to their age, rarity and suitability in the landscapes. Others are pleasant specimens, but not particularly noteworthy outside of the parish arena.

2. The objectives and a statement of instructions

2.1. We were instructed in June 2015 by Epping Forest District Council to:

- To survey all trees previously identified in the Roydon Project and provide an assessment of their value under Heritage Tree Assessment and CAVAT
- To provide a short report with plans and photographs

2.2. The issues addressed are presence and absence, the importance of the trees in their setting and any unique features of the tree(s).

3. The background and summary of findings

3.1. Below is an extract from The Community Tree Strategy for Roydon 2004

3.2. *'The Landmark Tree programme undertaken by the tree wardens in 1996 recorded a total of 50 individual or groups of trees, considered the most important to the community. The owners were all contacted, and advice offered in the case of any future need. So far* (note 2004) *the initiative has been successful both as a way of publicizing the importance of trees locally and in giving a measure of informal protection to the nominated trees'*

3.3. 19 years later, the survey finds that of 88 trees (either notated as individuals or groups), 79 remain. Of the remaining 11, I am aware of reasons for removal of 4, on safety grounds. Missing trees are: 2 trees in RO 4/96, 1 tree in RO 5/96, RO 11/96, RO 13/96, RO 18/96, RO 22/96, RO 26/96 and RO 29/96.

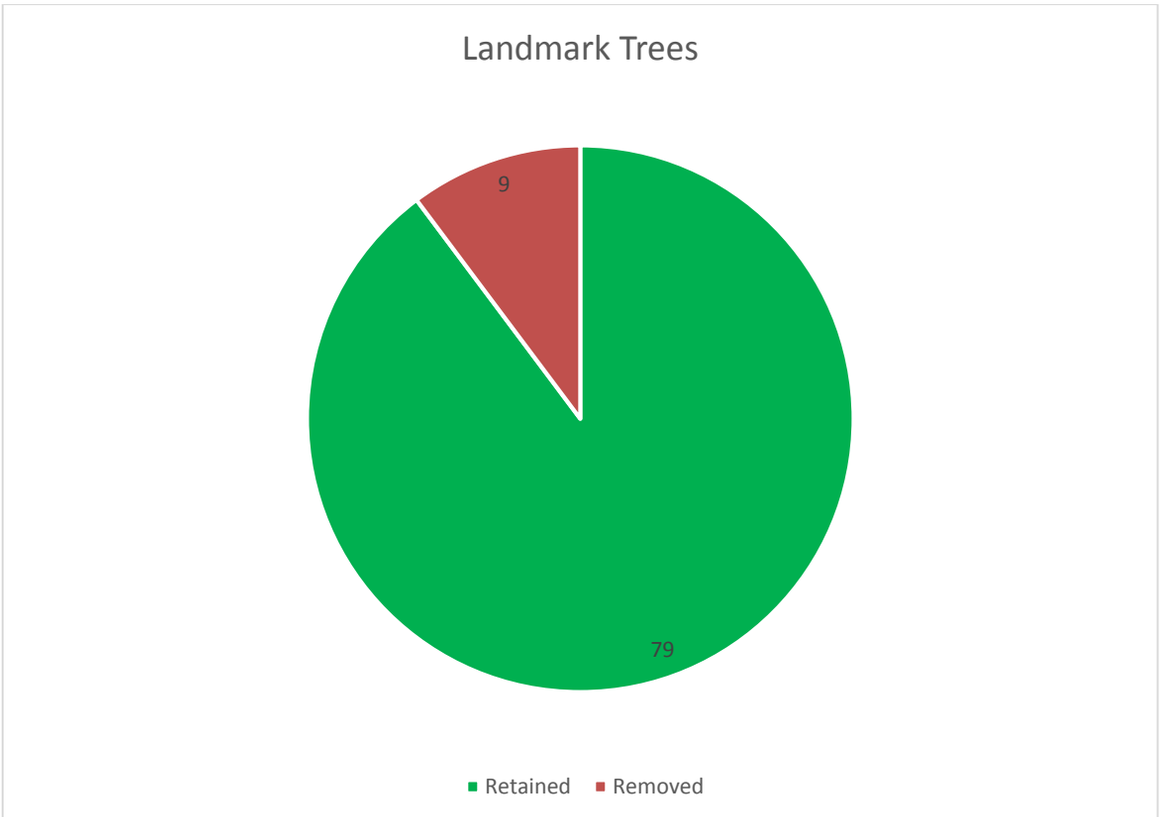


Figure 1 – tree retention 19 years after designation

3.4. The most prevalent species is oak. The majority are native trees.

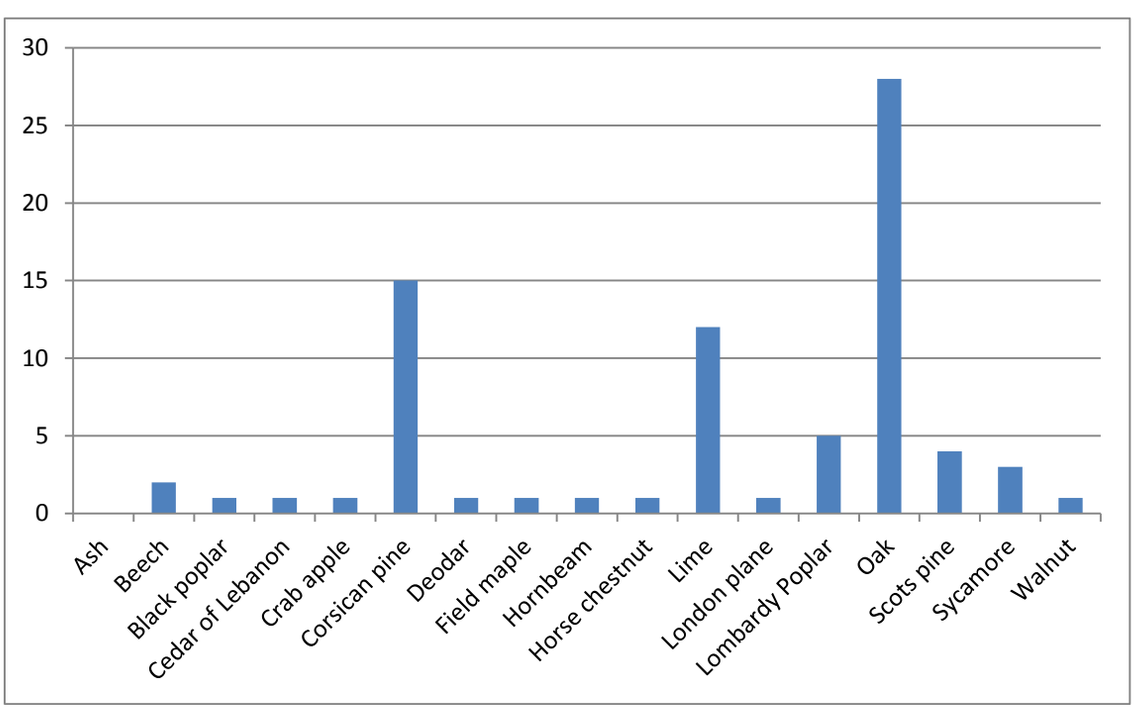


Figure 2 – species composition of retained trees

3.5. The effect of designation on retention

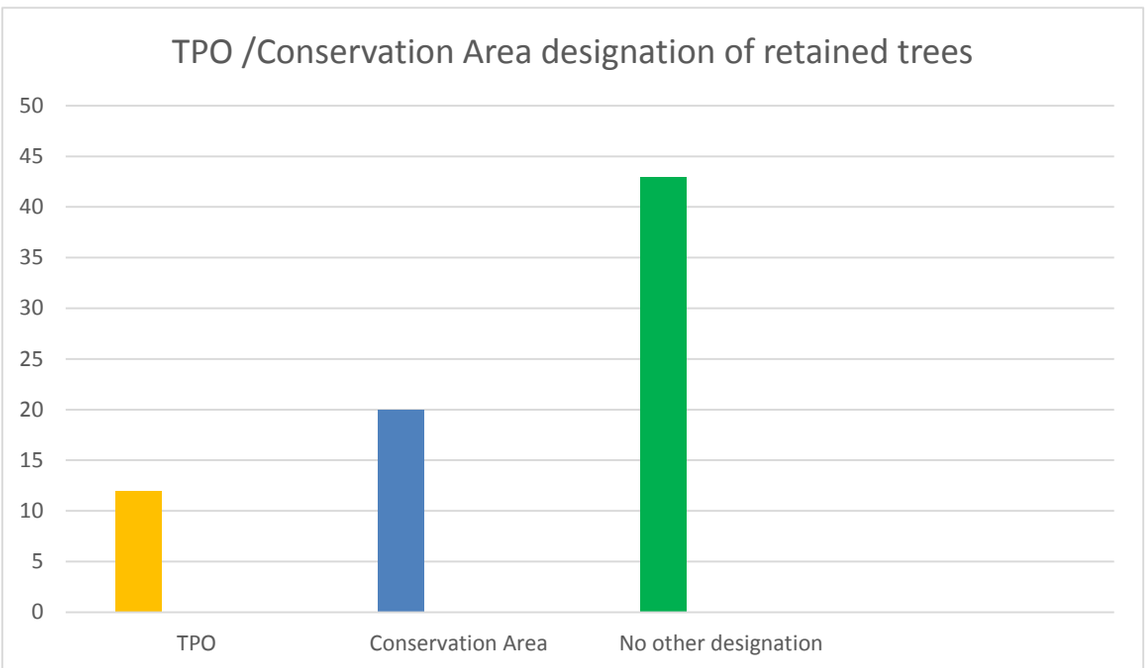


Figure 3 –protection designation of retained trees

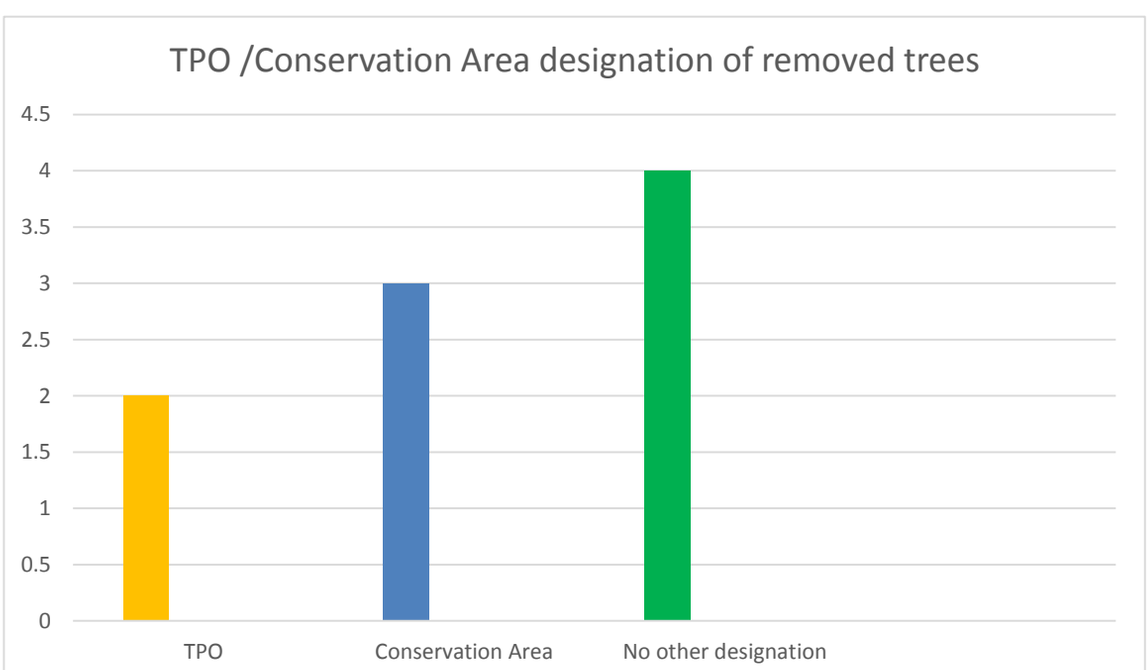


Figure 4 –protection designation of removed trees – ***there is no strong trend***

3.6. CAVAT valuation

Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees (CAVAT) provides a method for managing trees as public assets rather than liabilities. It expresses the amenity value of trees in monetary terms. There are five steps with associated variables in the CAVAT full method:

Step **1**: Basic value – unit value x size
Step **2**: CTI value – location, in terms of population and accessibility
Step **3**: Functional value – functional status
Step **4**: Adjusted value – amenity and appropriateness
Step **5**: Full value – safe useful life expectancy

Full details are found at: http://www.cavattv.org/cavat-methods.html

A full CAVAT assessment was carried out for all retained trees except RO 32/96 due to lack of access and RO 30/96 as I had difficulty in locating some of the trees.

The total value is **£3,818,848**. If the two other groups were included (accounting for 11 trees), then is would be reasonable to estimate that the total value would be just under £4,000,000.

4. The trees

For each retained tree, or group of trees, the following is included in order:

- Photographs
- The original plan
- The Heritage Tree Nomination Form (Barrell Tree Consultancy)
- Full CAVAT assessment

RO 2/96 20 Roydon Lodge Chalet Estate

RO 3/96 48 Roydon Lodge Chalet Estate

RO 4/96 Midfield, Lodge Farm

RO 5/96 Winter Cottage, Lodge Farm

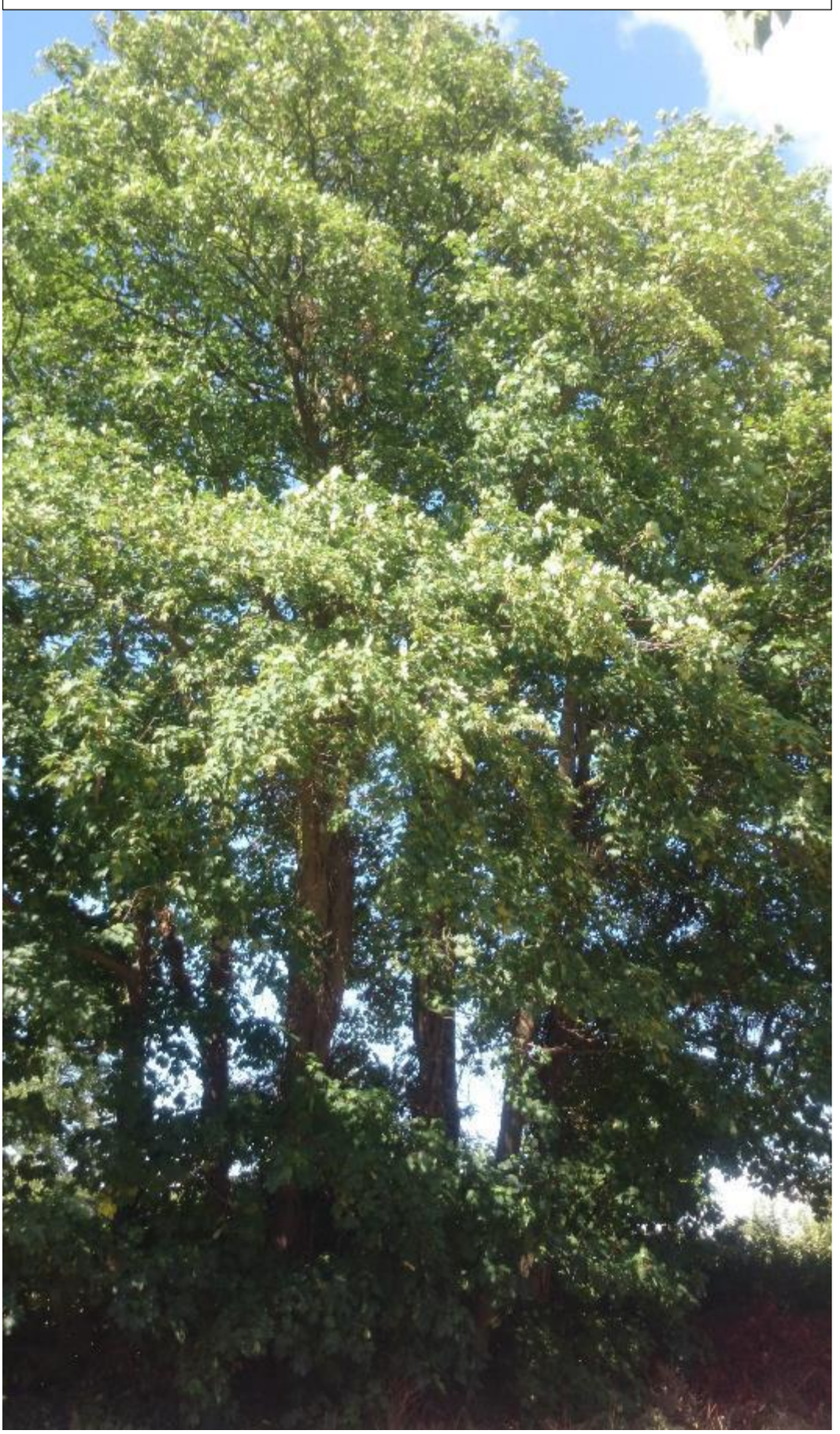
RO 6/96 198 High Street

RO 7/96 218 High Street

RO 8/96 155 High Street

RO 9/96 122 High Street

RO 10/96 Dower House, High Street



RO 11/96 felled and replaced

RO 12/96 Cambridge House

RO 14/96 White Cedar, Grange Lane

RO 15/96 Roydon School

RO 16/96 6 Beaumont Drive

RO 17/96 Beaumont Hall

RO 19/96 40 Hansells Mead

RO 20/96 Chalet Du Pre

RO 21/96 East End Farm

RO 23/96 62 Parkfields

RO 24/96 Kingsmead House

RO 25/96 New Barns Farm

RO 27/96 Highfields

RO 28/96 Thomazines

RO 30/96 Rozel

RO 31/96 Harkendown

RO 32/96 The White House

RO 33/96 Old House Lane

RO 34/96 Moonrakers

RO 35/96 Sunnyside

RO 36/96 High Trees

RO 37/96 Twin Oaks

5. Relevant policy and documentation

5.5. Epping Forest Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 – 2012 (BAP)

This report recognizes the importance of Veteran Trees and black poplars. The objective of the plan was to record the Veteran Trees in a database. This has been carried out (or at least as far as is practical) on the website http://www.favouritetrees.com/

The EFDC BAP makes black poplars a priority habitat. Aims 9 and 9.4 are to take cuttings of individual trees for inclusion in a clone bank nursery.

5.2. The Epping Forest Landscape Character Assessment by Chris Blandford Associates 2010

This classifies Roydon as Landscape Character type C6. Key characteristics of the area are described as follows: *'Veteran Trees are a feature of the area and contribute to historic landscape patterns. Fields are lined with a network of mature hedgerows, often with hedgerow trees'*. The important of female black poplars are noted in section 3.4.34. A key point in the Suggested Land Management Guidelines is the conservation of veteran trees as key landscape and ecological features.

5.3. The community tree strategy for Roydon 2004

The strategy discusses the role of the landmark tree designation and picks out individual trees. I have included photos of the trees from this booklet in the individual assessments.

5.4. Native black poplars in Roydon – as study by year 9 at Roydon School 2001

This wonderful booklet includes photos, diaries and drawings by the pupils. Reference is made to black poplars, in particular the one at East End Farm (RO 21/96 T19).

5.5 Favourite Trees – Tricia Moxey and John Price, EFDC 2008

The 50 Favourite Trees projected was launched by Epping Forest District Council in 2006, when local people nominated favourite trees. 50 were selected, and two are in Roydon; World's End Black Poplar and Boundary Oak. Neither are Landmark Trees.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 The study found that 90% of the trees were retained nearly 20 years after their designation. Reasons for removal for all trees are due to a decline in their condition. This includes the following:

RO 11/96 – a horse chestnut that had the decay fungus Ganoderma applanatum. The tree was only felled after extensive efforts to reduce the crown to a safe, sustainable size, failed.
RO 13/96 – a horse chestnut which had become extensively decayed and felled for safety reasons
RO 15/96 – a copper beech which was retained for a substantial period by agreement with the owner, including a survey by PICUS. The progressive decay lead to the tree being felled for safety reasons.
RO 22/96 - a willow. This tree collapsed a few winters ago
R0 26/96 – an ash. This tree collapsed as a result of internal decay.
R0 29/96 - an elm. This tree died from Dutch elm disease

R0 38/96 – an oak is at 62 Parklands, not as described as at 21 Parklands. The tree warden, Alan Burgess, says that the tree is alive and healthy.

Every owner I spoke to knew of the designation, and without exception, had a sense of pride about their tree. Interestingly, there was no change in trend between the powers of the statutory designation (TPO/Conservation Area) over the non-statutory Landmark Tree Status. It must then be about condition, appreciation and the lack of change within the parish.

6.2 The tree stock has a high financial value. The less tangible values of reiterating and informing landscape character, and enriching biodiversity are arguably more important. The female black poplar has a high genetic value due to its scarcity. The older and veteran trees provide peculiar ecological niches, which in many cases, are made more viable by the connectivity of woodland belts and hedgerows and proximity to other old trees. It would be interesting to assess the eco-system services the tree population of Roydon provides using **i-tree eco**.

6.3 Within the village, non-natives are included as Landmark Trees. In my opinion, this is appropriate as the landscapes we, as a society, admire include mature introduced species. There is a reasonable cross section of species, building some resilience in the landscape. I conclude that in my opinion, Landmark Tree Status is useful in celebration, raising awareness, and simply expressing the multitude of roles that trees play.

6.4 Particular trees of note are:

RO 6/96 – London plane at 198 High Street
RO 21/96 – T19 black poplar at East End Farm

Other trees suitable as nominations for Heritage Trees are indicated by the forms. I found the form produced by Barrell Tree Consultancy logical and easy to use. It would be suitable for use by a lay-person.

6.5 If the scheme were to be extended, I recommend the inclusion of two trees in the 50 Favourite Trees. I recommend that the tree wardens have the opportunity to review and comment on this report.

Sharon Hosegood FICFor FArborA BSc (Hons) Tech. Cert. (Arbor A)

Director
Sharon Hosegood Associates Ltd

Appendix 1

Statement of methodology and reference material

Statement of methodology

Early discussion with Chris Neilan on the scope of the survey

Early discussion with Jeremy Barrell on the Heritage Tree Nomination process

Planning and preparation for the site visits

Site visits made by Sharon Hosegood on a number of days in July 2015, using a bike for one of the days.

Assessments:

Open access trees were measured where possible. In some cases, dense undergrowth prevented a girth measurement from being taken.

Trees in gardens where assessed from a public place where possible. In many cases, I knocked on the door, and when the owner was in, I was invited to look at the trees

In all cases, crown spread and tree height were estimated based on experience. Where it was not possible to measure the girth, an estimate was made.

A basic assessment of tree condition was made, but in many cases, the base of the tree could not be made. Therefore this report is not an assessment of tree health or hazards.

An assessment of the trees' role in the landscape, and visibility, was made in each case.

Photographs taken.

Background work:

A CAVAT calculation made where possible

A review of Epping Forest District Council policies and documents.

Review of the document by the tree warden, Alan Burgess. Revision A is based on his helpful observations and comments.

Received material

The file from Epping Forest District Council for Landmark Trees –reference 16.4.4.1

Reviewed text

Landscape Character Assessment for Epping Forest District Council – Chris Blandford Associates 2010

Epping Forest Biodiversity Action Plan 2008 – 2012

The Community Tree Strategy for Roydon 2004.

Native Black Poplars in Roydon - a study by year 6 at Roydon School 2001

Favourite Trees by Tricia Moxey and John Price for EFDC 2008

Explanatory notes for Heritage Tree Nomination Form – Barrell Tree Consultancy

CAVAT full users guide – Chris Neilan

Appendix 2

Caveats

Specific report caveats

1. At the time of writing this report, the protected tree status is correct. However, this can change. Therefore I advise that a further check is made with Epping Forest District Council before any works to trees takes place.
2. The survey is concerned solely with arboricultural issue relating to Landmark Trees.
3. As trees are a dynamic living organism this report is only valid for a period of 12 months, in respect to their health and condition.
4. Only the trees listed in this report have been examined.
5. The base and trunk of many trees could not be examined, and therefore a full assessment of the trees condition could not be made.
6. Dense ivy and undergrowth prevent a full condition survey being carried out the vegetation may be hiding structural defects.
7. This is not a tree health and condition report and cannot be used to make recommendations for tree management.

Appendix 3

My experience and qualifications

Sharon Hosegood
ASSOCIATES

Sharon Hosegood

FICFor FArbor A BSc (Hons) Tech Cert Arbor A

Profile

Institute of Chartered Foresters
Registered Consultant

Sharon is an Expert Witness, chartered arboriculturist and Director of Sharon Hosegood Associates Ltd. Sharon had eleven years' experience as a local government tree and landscape officer before joining DF Clark Contractors as a tree consultant in 2005. In 2007 she formed an environmental practice in Essex with the owner. As managing director, she built up the ecological and arboricultural consultancy to a team of 20. She is a regular presenter and an occasional trainer for Trevor Roberts Associates. She appeared on BBC1 television in 'Britain Beneath Your Feet' in July 2015 demonstrating tree radar at the Burghley Country Park, Lincs, with Dallas Campbell.

Specialities:	Trees in relation to development, including appeals and planning hearings
	Tree root investigations, including TreeRadar
	Tree hazard evaluation
	Tree preservation orders
	Trees and well-being with community engagement
Professional bodies:	Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) Councillor for the ICF East England ICF regional committee Assessor for the ICF examination board
	Fellow of the Arboricutural Association
Qualifications:	Cardiff University Law School Bond Solon Civil Expert Certificate Arboricultural Associations Technicians Certificate BSc (Hons) Geography and Landscape Studies
Awards:	Top student award for the Technician's certificate in 2005
	The Broomfield Hospital Woodland Management project she has managed since 2009 has won the following awards:
	The Essex Biodiversity Awards (nomination) The Excellent Community Engagement Award (NHS Forest) Green Flag and Green Apple Award Highly commended for the Health Sector Journal Award 2013

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