

Cedar Chase Residents Society

Lower grounds - woodland thoughts

The Cedar Chase lower grounds have two significant areas of woodland; the smaller area is down the western boundary; the larger on the east of the estate. During the last year we have tagged all major trees and had Bartletts Tree Expert Company perform a survey of all our woodland trees. We have approximately 125 tagged trees.

In 2013 we arranged a visit by Dr Jan Woudstra, a lecturer at Sheffield University specialising in landscape history and theory, and an acknowledged expert on gardens designed by Preben Jakobsen (who was the architect of the Cedar Chase gardens). His comments on the woodlands area were:

Woodland belt: The woodland belt is of irregular width and consists of vegetation planted at the time of the conception of the Span development; most of the planting in the lower half of the site is clearly older, and mainly consists of evergreen planting, remnants of a Victorian planting scheme. There are some good holm oaks and yew trees. Cherry laurel is domineering the shrub layer and gives this belt quite a dark sombre impression. There is some dead wood and dieback showing evidence of out-shading but also of fungal disease, probably honey fungus. The trees are covered by TPOs and are within the Conservation area, so there are issues with tree management.

It ought to be considered to clear certain areas and gradually rejuvenate the belt gradually over a number of years. Variety in the planting ought to be pursued with a mixture of shrubs planted, including: hazel, Guelder rose, hawthorn, sloe, Prunus cerasifera, each in groups of five or seven. A number of trees could be introduced: oak, robinia and black pine to create variety in habit and age structure.”

The Bartletts survey noted about 20 trees for regular inspection but only four requiring removal. One concern was an immense sycamore (number 9 on the plan) which requires some work but, due to the surrounding holly (#67) and the northwest limb of a yew (#68) it isn't even possible to inspect this magnificent tree from ground level.

We would like to consider implementing Jan Woudstra's suggestions to clear some of the “sombre” holly and laurel to:

- Create a space for a new cedar, our lower grounds cedar (#1) having been seriously damaged by storm Doris in February 2017.
- Allow a better view of some of the mature deciduous trees, especially the sycamore (#9).
- Open up one or two areas with a view to replanting with deciduous shrubs and/or trees.

According to the Arboricultural Association (<https://www.trees.org.uk/Help-Advice/Public/A-brief-guide-to-legislation-for-trees>):

“You do not need to give notice of work on a tree in a conservation area less than 7.5 centimetres in diameter, measured 1.5 metres above the ground (or 10 centimetres if thinning to help the growth of other trees).”

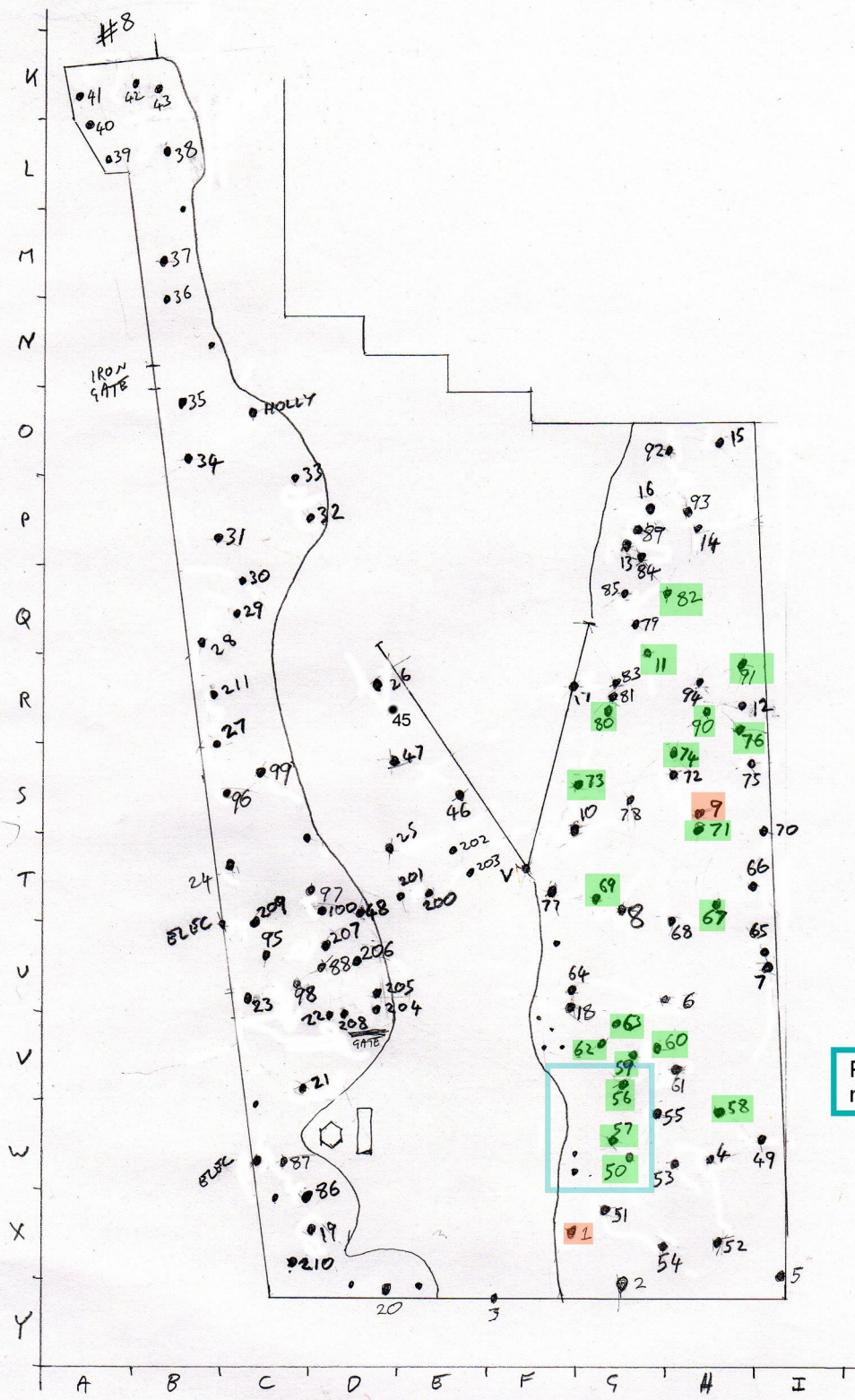
Much of the low-level holly and some of the laurel comes into this category; other specimens would need to be included on an application to the Local Planning Authority in a ‘section 211 notice’.

Detailed list of suggested clearances

1. Remove dead tree south of the fallen tree house in the southeast corner
2. Yew (#11) ("kid's tree") - remove broken eastern limb
3. Laurel (#50) by main wood pile - remove low southern limb to provide more light and space for cedar (#1). Or remove the entire laurel?
4. Holly (#56) - remove.
5. Remove the twin-stem holly between #50 and #55 (oak)
6. Ash (#57) - remove large limb overhanging grass area (recommended by Bartletts). Perhaps remove entire tree?
7. Holly (#58) - remove? Bartletts quote its condition as "poor". This might be a good candidate area to open up for new planting.
8. Remove low-level holly scrub around trees 59 (horsechestnut), 60 (holly), 62 (holly), 63 (yew)
9. Holly (#67) - Bartletts quote its condition as "poor". This is one of the trees obstructing visibility of the major sycamore (#9). Remove entirely?
10. Yew (#68) - Bartletts suggested removing the lower northern limb to provide visibility of the major sycamore.
11. Laurel (#69) - remove to provide light.
12. Yew (#71) - remove. growing against major sycamore.
13. Remove small laurel north of horsechestnut (#73)
14. Beech (#74) - remove holly and laurel at base
15. Cherry (#76) - remove western stem
16. Remove laurel between holly (#80) and horsechestnut (#73)
17. Maple (#82) - remove laurel scrub to east and west
18. Laurel (#90) - remove
19. Laurel (#91) - remove west limbs. Or remove entire tree.

In general, we might preserve laurel and holly along the eastern boundary and create further wood pile habitats along that boundary.

The following page has the woodlands map with tree numbers marked.



Potential area for new cedar

Cedar Chase Woodland

Scale 1:500
when printed at 200dpi
on A3 paper

Andrew Findlay
6th June 2017

