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ARBORICULTURAL

Ms Mali MacLennan  
Development Officer  
Dunvegan Community Trust  
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Our Ref: 241647 - Let 1

6 December 2024

Dear Mali

**Re: Tree issues at Cruachan Wood and Cnoc nan Craobh, Orbost, Isle of Skye**

I write to confirm my recent visit to the above site. You instructed me to inspect all the significant trees over 200mm diameter adjacent to the public highway and within the red line on the drawing accompanying my initial fee proposal (ecourban reference: 241647 – Proposal), provide brief comments on their condition and make preliminary recommendations on the works required to establish acceptable levels of tree safety.

I conducted my survey on 28 November 2024 and 2 December 2024. All my observations were from ground level without any diagnostic investigations and I estimated all dimensions unless otherwise indicated. The weather at the time of inspection was dull and windy, with intermittent rain. The trees I was asked to look at are common ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) located adjacent to the highway leading to the hamlet of Orbost on the north west coast of the Isle of Skye. The trees are located predominantly on the western side of the Orbost road, with some trees also located around the periphery of Cnoc nan Craobh, which is a small area of woodland located between the arms of the roads leading to Orbost and to the settlement of Roag.

I inspected each tree and have indicated the numbering on the attached plan (ecourban reference ECO 1). My observations, comments and recommendations are summarised in the tree schedule appended to the end of the report and which is also reproduced on the attached plan. The tree positions were captured on site using GPS technology, but the tree positions are not positioned using equipment with sub metre accuracy and so are approximate in nature. Consequently, the plan is for illustrative purposes only and no measurements should be scaled from it. To aid identification on site, a grey temporary plastic tag with tree identification numbering (which corresponds to the tree numbering in the attached tree schedule) has been attached to each tree trunk at around 1.5m above ground on the side facing away from the highway.

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In many instances, the ash trees were quite clearly dead or dying and I think it likely that they have succumbed to ash dieback disease (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), which is now endemic to the United Kingdom. Other trees also appeared to be in poor condition, with either structural deficiencies such that the trees were likely to pose unacceptable levels of risk to highway users through partial or whole tree failure, or dieback of branch extremities indicating likelihood of irreversible decline. These trees are shown on the plan and in the tree schedule in red and should be removed as soon as practicably possible.

For some trees, I have diarised another *pro bono* inspection in July 2025. This is because when surveying trees in winter it is sometimes difficult to make a judgement on levels of tree vitality, as indications of tree decline are often only visible through a careful assessment of tree canopy density in the summer months, when trees would be expected to be in full leaf. The trees to be resurveyed are indicated in green on the plan and in the attached tree schedule.

Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or located within a Conservation Area (CA) are subject to controls on pruning work and removal (subject to certain exemptions) and it would be necessary to apply to the local planning authority before any such works are carried out. However, I have checked the Highland Councils online mapping system (<https://tinyurl.com/3km78xwb>) and can confirm that the trees discussed in this report do not appear to be the subject of either TPOs or located within a CA. As discussed, trees indicated in this report for removal are either dead, or in such poor condition that their removal is required for highway safety reasons. Consequently, I believe that these trees would be exempt from the need for felling permission, as required under the Forestry and Land Management (Scotland) Act 2018. Consequently, I do not believe that there are any statutory controls on the removal of the trees indicated in this report.

Please call me if you need any further clarification on any of the points raised above.

Yours sincerely



Barrie Draper BSc (Hons) Arb TechCert(ArborA) CertArb(RFS)  
**Arboricultural Consultant**

**Attached:** 1: Tree Schedule  
2: Tree Plan

## Tree Schedule

Tree No.	Species	Survey Notes	Action Required	Timescale	Reinspection Period
T001	Common ash	3m high stump	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T002	Common ash	4m high stump.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T003	Common ash	Significant dieback upper canopy. Declining.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T004	Common ash	Cavity with decay at 3m. Unbalanced and declining.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T005	Common ash	Decayed high stump with regrowth.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T006	Common ash	Thin canopy with dieback of branch extremities.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T007	Common ash	Thin canopy and some dieback of branch extremities. Occluding longitudinal wound main stem at 3m with decay.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T008	Common ash	Small tree. Unbalanced canopy and dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T009	Sycamore	Small tree, unbalanced due to proximity to adjacent tree. Declining.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0010	Sycamore	Some deadwood in canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
T0011	Common ash	Small tree, unbalanced. Dead.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0012	Sycamore	Canopy symptoms indicating declining vitality. Extensively decayed at base.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0013	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0014	Sycamore	Some deadwood in canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
T0015	Sycamore	Extensive decay buttress root area extending into lower stem. Thinning canopy.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0016	Sycamore	Extensive dieback upper canopy. Dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0017	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0018	Sycamore	Dieback in upper canopy. Declining.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0019	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0020	Common ash	2.5m high stump.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0021	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0022	Sycamore	Some deadwood in canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
T0023	Common ash	Small dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0024	Sycamore	Wound at 1m with decay. Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0025	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0026	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a

Tree No.	Species	Survey Notes	Action Required	Timescale	Reinspection Period
To027	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To028	Sycamore	Extensive dieback upper canopy.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To029	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To030	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To031	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To032	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To033	Sycamore	Some indications of dieback in upper canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To034	Sycamore	Dead with extensive decay in buttress root area extending up into lower stem.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To035	Sycamore	Some dieback and deadwood upper canopy.	Reinspect in summer when tree in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To036	Sycamore	Some deadwood in canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To037	Sycamore	Some thinning of branch extremities in upper canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To038	Sycamore	Some thinning of branch extremities in upper canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To039	Sycamore	Some thinning of branch extremities in upper canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To040	Sycamore	Some dieback and thinning of branch extremities in upper canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To041	Sycamore	Extensive decay at base between buttress roots and extending up and into lower stem.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To042	Sycamore	Thinning canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
Goo43	Mixed conifer	Cluster of dead conifers.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To044	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To045	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To046	Common ash	Dead with extensive decay lower main stem.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To047	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
To048	Sycamore	Some canopy indications of declining vitality.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
To049	Sycamore	Some canopy symptoms indicating declining vitality.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months

Tree No.	Species	Survey Notes	Action Required	Timescale	Reinspection Period
T0050	Sycamore	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0051	Sycamore	Some thinning of branch extremities and dieback in upper canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
T0052	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0053	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0054	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0055	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0056	Sycamore	Twin stemmed. Some thinning of canopy density upper crown.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
T0057	Sycamore	Thinning canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
T0058	Sycamore	Some deadwood in canopy.	Reinspect in summer when trees are in full leaf.	No Action	6 Months
T0059	Sycamore	Extensive decay between buttress roots extending up main stem.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0060	Common ash	Dead with extensive hollowing main stem.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0061	Common ash	Dead/dying.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a
T0062	Common ash	Dead/dying with extensive hollowing main stem.	Fell to ground level.	ASAP	n/a

