



HILLOCK LANE WARRINGTON HILLOCK LANE TREE RISK SURVEY REPORT

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1.0 Scope

Site name and location

1.1 Hillock Lane, Woolston, Warrington, WA1 4PF

Using this report

- 1.2 This report presents a *summary* of the key findings of a tree risk survey, particularly the actions that are necessary in the interests of safety and the relevant timescales.
- 1.3 Everything that should be done to manage risks associated with tree failure is outlined in this report. It is intended to provide a written record of the completion of the survey and the key recommendations; in simple terms:
 - (i) What tree works should be done, and when, and
 - (ii) When the tree survey should be repeated to maintain reliability.

Accessing the results online

- 1.4 The survey was undertaken using a proprietary software system. This contains all of the survey results as well as tools to assist with interpretation and tree management.
- 1.5 The survey results can be accessed via https://uk.pg-cloud.com/RiskTEP/ with:
 - (i) Username: Woolston PC
 - (ii) Password: TEP Woolston
- 1.6 The main features of the online system that you should familiarise yourself with are:
 - (i) **Mapping interface:** The online system is map based; navigation is similar to other online maps. You can pan, zoom, change between Base Maps, and access your GPS location using the navigation bar in the upper left corner.
 - (ii) **Feature information:** Information about each survey feature (*Tree*, *Group* or *Woodland*) can be accessed by selecting it on the map.
 - (iii) Layer Controls: This tab in the lower right corner includes a key to the colours of trees on screen. It also contains a drop-down menu giving different 'Display By' options. The most important of these are:
 - Risk Rating: Shows the risk profile of trees. Those in red require an action (normally tree works); you should consider action for those in amber; those in green do not require any action. You should aim to have mostly greens, and no reds.
 - 2. **Survey Due:** Shows when the next survey is due; this varies based on the condition of each tree. Those in red are overdue; those in amber are due within 3 months and should be arranged; those in green are not due yet. You should check this periodically and aim to have mostly greens, and no reds.
- 1.7 If you need help accessing or using the online mapping system, please contact TEP.



2.0 Statutory protection, designations and guidance

Local authority

- 2.1 The local authority is Warrington Borough Council.
- 2.2 The local authority's tree officer can be contacted by email at Twigg, Simon stwigg@warrington.gov.uk; by direct dial on 01925 444108.

Tree Preservation Orders

- 2.3 Local authorities can create Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) to protect the amenity of trees, groups of trees, woodland or all the trees within a defined area1. Cutting down, lopping (including roots), topping, uprooting, and wilful damage or destruction are prohibited by TPO unless done with the Local Authority's written consent.
- 2.4 The council confirmed that there are no tree preservation orders on or adjacent to the site.

Table 1 Trees protected by TPO

Tree survey reference	TPO reference

Conservation Area

- 2.5 Trees within Conservation Areas are protected by Section 211 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The local authority must be notified 6 weeks before the any tree2 in a Conservation Area is removed, uprooted, lopped, topped, wilfully destroyed, or wilfully damaged. During this period the Council may consider serving a Tree Preservation Order to prevent the proposed work from being undertaken.
- 2.6 The council confirmed that the site is not within a Conservation Area.

Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees

- 2.7 Ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees are irreplaceable and amongst the most valuable and sensitive habitats. Ancient woodland is any area that has been wooded since at least 1600. Individual trees of exceptional age, size, biodiversity or cultural significance are regarded as 'veterans'. Neither category has legal protection but they have strong protection in planning policy. Any works to veteran or ancient trees and woodland should be undertaken with the utmost sensitivity and under specialist advice.3
- 2.8 Natural England's ancient woodland inventory4 shows no ancient woodland within or adjacent to the site. The inventory is provisional and may not show woodland smaller than 2ha. It is therefore possible that unmapped ancient woodland exists.

¹ Exemptions apply, see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas

² Exemptions apply, see https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas

³ See https://www.forestry.gov.uk/anwpracticeguide for further information

⁴ http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/magicmap.aspx



2.9 The survey recorded no veteran trees within the site.

Felling Licences

- 2.10 It is an offence under the Forestry Act (1967) to fell trees without a licence unless an exemption applies.
- 2.11 Pruning; small scale felling; and felling in a domestic garden, orchard, churchyard or designated open space are amongst those works that may be exempt.⁵

Hedgerow Regulations

- 2.12 The Hedgerow Regulations (1997) protect hedgerows that meet certain criteria⁶. This report does not include an assessment to determine which, if any, features would be protected under the Regulations. Hedges less than 20m long, in domestic gardens, or younger than 30 years are less likely to be protected.
- 2.13 Any removal of a protected hedgerow or a section of a protected hedgerow must only be done with the written consent of the Local Authority.

Protected Species

- 2.14 Several protected species of animals are associated with trees and woodland and may therefore be affected by tree works, if present. The protection comes from a range of statutes and directives including both European and domestic law⁷.
- 2.15 This report does not include an assessment of the presence or absence of any protected species. The protected animal species most associated with woodland are: bats, dormouse, otters, great crested newts, smooth snakes and sand lizards, badgers, and all nesting birds.
- 2.16 Most trees are a potential habitat for nesting birds. For this reason, tree work should ideally be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March to August, inclusive). If this is not possible, an inspection of each tree prior to works should be undertaken by a competent person to confirm the absence of nesting birds.
- 2.17 Trees with cavities, holes, flaking bark, splits and old growth ivy may offer potential habitat for roosting bats. A preliminary ground level appraisal of each tree was undertaken by a trained layperson as part of the arboricultural survey. Where observations incidental to the primary purpose of tree surveying have a possible interest to bats they are recorded in Appendix A.
- 2.18 If you know or suspect that any protected species may be present and/or affected by tree works, the advice of an ecologist should be sought.

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⁵ See https://www.forestry.gov.uk/england-fellinglicences for details

⁶ See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/countryside-hedgerows-regulation-and-management for details

⁷ Including The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); Protection of Badgers Act 1992; Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010



Invasive Species

- 2.19 Invasive plants are defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act, Schedule 9, Part 2. Under provisions made within the Act, it is an offence to spread invasive plants; liability may also extend in situations where a landowner has permitted the spread of a plant onto neighbouring land. It is therefore prudent to control or eradicate such species wherever they are found.
- 2.20 This survey did not seek to identify invasive species and should not be relied upon as a comprehensive record. However, some invasive plant species are likely to be recorded incidentally during a tree survey because they are woody, large or grow on trees and hedges. Such observations as were made are listed below.

Table 2 Invasive plant species

Species	Observations
False acacia (Robinia pseudoacacia)	None
Giant hogweed (Heracleum mantegazzianum)	None
Himalayan balsam (Impatiens glandulifera)	None
Cotoneaster (5 species)	None
Virginia creeper (Parthenocissus quinquefolia; P. inserta)	None
Japanese knotweed (Fallopia japonica)	None
Giant knotweed (Fallopia sachalinensis)	None
Rhododendron (Rhododendron ponticum) and hybrid with R. maximum	None
Japanese rose (Rosa rugosa)	None



3.0 Survey methodology

- 3.1 The survey was undertaken on 25th May 2021 by Eddie Chandler, an experienced arboriculturist and Associate member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters and certified member of the International Society of Arboriculture.
- 3.2 The survey was by visual inspection from ground level according to the industry standard VTA survey method. The extent of the survey is shown by a red line boundary at https://uk.pg-cloud.com/RiskTEP/.
- 3.3 The survey was non-invasive and did not include an assessment of soils. A nylon sounding mallet, metal probe, and binoculars were used at the surveyor's discretion to corroborate observations or eliminate ambiguity.
- 3.4 All trees within the survey area were surveyed but may be recorded collectively to most usefully reflect common characteristics or management requirements.
 - (i) *Tree:* A single tree, normally with one conjoined rooting system, which is distinct from surrounding trees either by virtue of size, condition, species or location.
 - (ii) *Group:* Trees occurring collectively, but not necessarily in contact or immediate proximity, with common function, form, management requirements, or purpose.
 - (iii) Woodland: Areas of tree cover, not necessarily unbroken, that are more structurally complex than 'Groups', and comprising a natural and self-sustaining arboreal habitat.

Survey attributes

- 3.5 The survey recorded the following attributes, which are summarised in Appendix A.
- 3.6 Reference: Trees, Groups and Woodland are assigned a reference number in the format T1, T2, T3... Tn. Groups are referenced in the format Gn, and Woodlands as Wn.
- 3.7 Species: The common name and Latin name is given. Multiple species may be recorded for groups and woodlands. Where tree condition or location prevented identification to species level, genus was recorded.
- 3.8 *Dimensions:* Basic dimensions are estimated to assist with identification of trees on site and to inform the risk assessment.
 - (i) Number of Stems:
 - (ii) DBH Range: The 'diameter at breast height' (1.5m above ground level) is estimated visually and given within a 100mm accuracy. A single stem equivalent diameter is given for multi-stemmed trees; for groups and woodlands, an estimate is given for the smallest and largest trees in the feature.
 - (iii) Height Range: The top height of the crown is estimated visually and given within a 5m accuracy. For groups and woodlands, an estimate is given for the smallest and largest trees in the feature.



- 3.9 *Life Stage:* The developmental stage of a tree or group of trees is defined by tree size and the rate of growth. By indicating physiological maturity (as opposed to age) trees that are relatively small due to immaturity can be distinguished from those that are small due to species or conditions and unlikely to grow much taller:
 - (i) Young trees within the initial establishment phase and growing rapidly;
 - (ii) Middle-aged trees established and growing steadily; and
 - (iii) Mature trees at or close to full size for the species in that location.
- 3.10 *Condition:* The condition of each feature was recorded as Good, Fair, Poor, Dead or Veteran⁸. This is a combined assessment of vigour, health, structural condition and characteristics.
- 3.11 Significant Physiological Defects: These may be described, where present and liable to influence safety or management. They would typically include symptoms like reduced vigour, poor leaf flush or dysfunctional sapwood.
- 3.12 Significant Structural Defects: These may be described, where present and liable to influence safety or management. They would typically include symptoms like cracks, root plate instability and cavities.
- 3.13 Significant Pests or Diseases: These may be described, where present and liable to influence safety or management. They would typically include symptoms like fungal decay, bacterial or viral diseases, or insect damage.
- 3.14 *Principal Liability:* Where relevant, an assessment of what part of the tree and/or type of failure represents the most significant hazard?
- 3.15 *Compounding Factors:* Where relevant, an assessment of what factors make tree failure more likely or more consequential?
- 3.16 *Principal Target:* Where relevant, an assessment of what would be most vulnerable to harm in the event of a tree failure?
- 3.17 The risk assessment process, recommended works, their objective and priority are described in the following section.



4.0 Risk assessment methodology

- 4.1 The main purpose of this survey is to assess and manage risk associated with hazardous trees. According to the Health and Safety Executive:
 - (i) 'A hazard is the potential for harm arising from an intrinsic property or disposition of something to cause detriment'; and
 - (ii) 'Risk is the chance that someone or something that is valued will be adversely affected in a stipulated way by a hazard'.
- 4.2 Landowner owe a duty to take reasonable care to avoid reasonably foreseeable risk of injury to persons or property. In general terms, they should act as a 'reasonable and prudent landowner'. However, there is no duty to eliminate all risk but to achieve 'tolerable risk': sometimes described by the acronym ALARP (as low as reasonably practicable). What constitutes a 'reasonable' response to risk must be informed by the context of each tree and the benefits it provides, as well as the availability, practicality and affordability of intervention options.
- 4.3 Overall, the risk of death or serious injury caused by tree failures in the UK is extremely low, broadly tolerable, and many times less than the threshold regarded as 'trivial'9. However, the risk associated with an individual tree may be much higher and unacceptable. This variability and the dynamic nature of trees are the reason for regular surveying, which is the most common basis for tree risk management in trees.

Methodology

4.4 At the most basic level, tree risk management comprises a competent survey to assess risks; recommended measures to mitigate unacceptable risks; and the timely implementation of those recommendations. This process must also be repeated at an appropriate frequency because trees and land use are dynamic.

Risk assessment

- 4.5 In order to identify where action must be taken to mitigate risk, it is necessary to characterise the profile of risk across the tree population, define what level of risk is tolerable, and identify which trees do not meet this standard.
- 4.6 The methodology used by this survey requires the surveyor, having considered the attributes described in Section 3.0, to describe the risk associated with each feature according to three criteria: Failure Potential, Potential Damage, and Target Occupancy.

Failure Potential

4.7 This is an evaluation of the likelihood of a failure event occurring. It is largely based on the condition of the tree. It is defined as either:

Table 3 Failure Potential definitions

Low	No failure foreseen under normal conditions
	A

9 HSE

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Medium	Possible under a foreseeable range of conditions
High	Imminent and likely without remedial action

Potential Damage

4.8 This is an evaluation of the significance of the harm that could be caused in the event of the failure type that is being assessed. It is defined as either:

Table 4 Potential Damage definitions

Small	Inconsequential structural impacts
Moderate	Minor physical injury, minor structural damage, or obstruction of minor infrastructure
Large	Loss of life or serious injury, significant damage to property, obstruction of critical infrastructure

Target Occupancy

4.9 This is an evaluation of the likelihood of the anticipated harm being realised in the event of a failure. It is expressed in terms of how commonly the area around the tree is occupied by a person, vehicle or structure that is vulnerable to tree failure and is defined as either:

Table 5 Target Occupancy definitions

Intermittent	Occasional occupancy of area affected by most risky part
Frequent	Regular occupancy of area affected by most risky part
Constant	Permanent occupancy of area affected by most risky part

4.10 This assessment includes an evaluation of each survey feature against the above risk assessment criteria. This has been made using professional judgement, in accordance with the definitions provided, and in anticipation of a reasonably foreseeable range of conditions.

Risk Management

4.11 The risk assessment criteria above provide a means of describing the profile of risk across a tree population, with certain combinations of outcomes being inherently more or less risky than others. In order to manage risk, it is also necessary to decide when to *act* in response to the results of the assessment.



- 4.12 A scoring matrix¹⁰ based on *Failure Potential*, *Potential Damage* and *Target Occupancy* has been used to generate an *Outcome Score* for every survey feature. This approach ensures a robust and systematic approach to characterising risk consistently across the tree population.
- 4.13 A higher *Outcome Score* expresses a higher confidence in the safety of the survey feature and a lower *Outcome Score* expresses a lower confidence.
- 4.14 Wherever an *Outcome Score* has failed to meet a defined minimum standard, an intervention is necessary to increase safety and mitigate the 'excess risk'. A recommendation for what such interventions should be has been made wherever this occurs¹¹. Typically these tree works comprise pruning or tree removal, but they can also include measures such as restricting access or changing adjacent land use.
- 4.15 Wherever an *Outcome Score* meets the minimum standard, but only just, the surveyor has considered whether an intervention might be necessary and made recommendations where this is judged to be the case.
- 4.16 Outcome Scores are given within the details for each survey feature. To view which trees meet, narrowly meet, or fail to meet an acceptable standard of safety, access the online survey at https://uk.pg-cloud.com/RiskTEP/¹² and select Display By > Risk Rating in the Layer Controls tab.

Resurvey frequency

- 4.17 The frequency of resurveys is an expression of confidence in the condition of each tree, and the survey data that describes it. Therefore trees that are less liable to change, or which would be less liable to cause a hazard in the event of a change, can reasonably be surveyed less often.
- 4.18 The scoring matrix that is used to identify trees that present an unacceptable risk is also used to establish an appropriate timescale for resurvey, with more hazardous trees and those more capable of causing harm tending to be surveyed more often.
- 4.19 The resurvey date for each feature may be between 6 months and 5 years, depending on its condition and circumstances. Surveys should be completed on or before the *Resurvey Date*.
- 4.20 Resurvey Dates are given within the details for each survey feature and also in Appendix A.

Completion of tree works

4.21 The central objective of tree risk management is to ensure that the management of trees by the landowner is effective and defensible. It is essential to this aim that interventions that are necessary are completed to the appropriate standard, within an appropriate timescale.

¹⁰ Further information can be provided if required

¹¹ See Section 5.0

¹² For login details, see Section 1.0



4.22 Wherever tree works are recommended, a description of what should be done has been given and each works recommendation is also given a *Priority*. All works should be completed within the relevant timescale, which is given as an order of magnitude rather than a specific date.

Table 6 Works Priority definitions

Emergency	To do immediately; within hours or days
Priority	To do as soon as reasonably practicable; within days or weeks
Routine	To do when convenience and budgets allow; within months
Discretionary	To consider doing, according to preference; without urgency

4.23 The Works Priority for each Recommended Works item is given in Appendix A.



5.0 Recommendations

5.1 This section sets out a summary of what you must do in order to comply with the recommendations of this report. It comprises two parts: Recommended Works and Resurveys.

Recommended Works

5.2 All recommended works are detailed in Appendix A. They must be completed within the prescribed timescale to ensure that they are effective. In summary, the survey identified the following interventions:

Table 7 Breakdown of recommended works

Works Priority ¹³	Number of works items
Emergency	0
Priority	0
Routine	0
Discretionary	0

- 5.3 There is sometimes more than one measure available to control an identified risk. It is therefore appropriate to consider other objectives alongside safety. Recommended Works have been specified in accordance with good practice and aim to minimise harms and balance a range of priorities whilst delivering the core purpose of managing risk. If any of the recommended works are undesirable or problematic, it may be possible to identify alternative measures to deliver an equivalent outcome.
- Works defined as *Discretionary* are not essential to the management of tree risk. However, they are opportunities for proactive intervention and completing them may mitigate future problems more economically.
- To view Recommended Works information and locate trees, access the online survey at https://uk.pg-cloud.com/RiskTEP/¹⁴ select any tree and open the *Details* window. All *Recommended Works* for the tree are shown in the Recommended Works tab.

Works procurement

5.6 All works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified, competent and insured contractor¹⁵. It is recommended that at least three quotations should be sought for works

¹³ See Table 6 for definitions

¹⁴ For login details, see Section 1.0

¹⁵ See Appendix B



Permissions

- 5.7 In order to undertake the works recommended in Appendix A, it may be necessary to secure the appropriate permission before commencement.
- This section outlines the main types of permission that could be required, but cannot be guaranteed to be accurate or comprehensive. This information is liable to change over time; it should therefore be established whether permission is required before undertaking any tree works.

Ownership

The permission of the owner of the land around the base of the tree must be sought. For trees on boundaries, this may be more than one party.

Tree Preservation Order

5.10 The proposed works will not affect TPO trees.

Conservation Area

5.11 The proposed works will not affect trees within a Conservation Area.

Felling licence

5.12 The recommended works will not require a felling licence as they would fail to exceed the timber volume threshold set by the Forestry Act 1967 as amended16.

Hedgerow Regulations

5.13 It is considered unlikely that recommended works will affect protected hedgerow.

Other

5.14 Additional consenting mechanisms may apply in certain circumstances including for works affecting protected species; close to overhead lines; in churchyards; close to airports and railways; and for which access is required across or above land owned by third parties (including the Highways and Local Authorities).

Resurveys

- 5.15 The results and recommendations of this survey have a time-limited warranty which may vary between trees, depending on their condition and circumstances. In order to ensure defensible and effective risk management, it is necessary to resurvey each tree before the current survey expires.
- 5.16 The Resurvey Date for each tree is listed in Appendix A. The table below provides a breakdown of when these will occur across the tree population.

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Table 8 Forecast of future survey requirements

Resurvey by	Trees	Groups	Woodland	Total due
25/05/2026	0	4	0	4

- 5.17 To view a map of all trees showing whether a resurvey is due, overdue or not yet required, access the online survey at https://uk.pg-cloud.com/RiskTEP/17 and select Display By > Survey Due in the Layer Controls tab. It is advisable to do this periodically; the online map is updated daily so it provides a means of monitoring when resurveys are required.
- 5.18 It may sometimes be desirable to undertake surveys *sooner* than the prescribed date, particularly where the efficiency of a single visit to assess all trees would outweigh the cost saving associated with a deferred survey of some trees. This is more likely to be the case on smaller sites where multiple visits would be inefficient. Completing surveys sooner than required does not undermine the defensibility of tree risk management and you may wish to take advice on whether this would be appropriate.



APPENDIX A: Tree Survey Data





Surveyor Eddie Chandler
Survey Date 25/05/21
Site 8752.01
Drawing Ref

Italicised Feature Ref: Inspection of this feature was restricted Italicised Values: Feature value was estimated

Ref	Species	Height	Stem Diameter	Number of Stems	Maturity	Condition	Recommended Works	Works Priority	Resurvey Date
		(m)	(mm)		Young, Middle Age, Mature	Good, Fair, Poor, Veteran		Emergency, Priority, Routine, Discretionary	
Groups									
G1	Silver birch, Downy birch, Common hawthorn, Pedunculate oak, Goat willow, Crack willow	5-15m	100-400mm	40	Mixed Age	Fair			25/05/2026
G2	Common hawthorn, Goat willow	5-10m	100-200mm	100	Middle Age	Fair			25/05/2026
G3	Silver birch, Pedunculate oak, Goat willow, Crack willow	5-15m	100-300mm	50	Mixed Age	Fair			25/05/2026
G4	Silver birch, Downy birch, Common hawthorn, Pedunculate oak, Goat willow, Crack willow	5-20m	100-300mm	60	Mixed Age	Fair			25/05/2026

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APPENDIX B: Minimum Contractor Standards



Minimum Contractor Standards

A tree works contractor ('tree surgeon') should hold the relevant National Occupational Standard Level 2 or Level 3 Awards for the operation they are undertaking, that they are competent to perform the operation, and that they have a clear plan, all necessary permissions and the proper equipment to do so safely.

A tree surgeon should be required to demonstrate for each operation:

- That tree works will be undertaken according to British Standard 3998:2010 (or later);
- That the works are covered by adequate public liability insurance (typically at least £5 million);
- That a risk assessment of the works will be undertaken before commencement;
- · How they will identify and manage risk of harm to protected species;
- How they will identify and manage the risk of spreading invasive species;
- That appropriate biosecurity measures will be put in place;
- How traffic and/or pedestrian movements will be controlled;
- A certificate of LOLER inspection for all lifting equipment (e.g. ropes and harnesses);
- That individuals are appropriately qualified for the task being undertaken.

For basic tree pruning, felling and chainsaw work, 'appropriate qualification' normally means holding a Licence to Practice via qualification in the relevant National Occupational Standards. National Proficiency Test Council 'CS units' are common but are being replaced by equivalent Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) Level 2 and Level 3 Awards. It may also be possible to demonstrate competence in other ways. The most common Awards that pertain to tree works are:

- Level 2 Award in Cross-cut Timber Using a Chainsaw
- Level 2 Award in Chainsaw Maintenance and Cross-cutting
- Level 2 Award in Felling and Processing Trees up to 380mm
- Level 2 Award in Remove Branches and Breakdown Crowns Using a Chainsaw
- Level 3 Award in Severing Uprooted or Windblown Trees Using a Chainsaw
- Level 3 Award in Assisted Fell Operations
- Level 3 Award in Emergency Treework Operations
- Level 2 Award in Chainsaw Maintenance
- Level 3 Award in Felling and Processing Trees over 380mm
- Level 2 Award in Supporting Colleagues Undertaking Off Ground Tree Related Operations
- Level 3 Award in Preparing and Agreeing Emergency Treework Operations
- Level 2 Award in Using a Powered Pole Pruner
- Level 2 Award in Accessing a Tree Using a Rope and Harness
- Level 3 Award in Aerial Tree Rescue Operations
- Level 3 Award in Aerial Cutting of Trees with a Chainsaw Using Free-fall Techniques
- Level 3 Award in Aerial Tree Rigging
- Level 3 Award in Using a Chainsaw from a Mobile Elevated Work Platform
- Level 3 Award in Aerial Tree Pruning
- Level 3 Award in Aerial Cutting of Trees Using a Crane
- Level 3 Award in Installation and Maintenance of Structural Tree Supports
- Level 4 Award in Thorough Examination of Arboricultural Lifting Equipment



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