

Arboricultural Consultancy for Aviva

Note: This report is intended for use between the client, Environmental Services and any parties detailed within the report. It is based on the understanding at the time of visiting the property that Engineers are satisfied that damage is attributable to clay shrinkage subsidence exacerbated by vegetation.

1. Case Details

Insured	Mr Robert Whitelaw	Address	12 West Meadows Road, Sunderland, SR6 7TX		
Client	Subsidence Management Services	Contact	Lou Tickle	Claim No.	IFS-AVI-SUB-25-0119858
ES Ref	SA-256073	Consultant	Nigel Chopping	Contact No.	0330 380 1036
Report Date	16/09/2025				

Scope of Report: To survey the property and determine significant vegetation contributing to subsidence damage, make recommendation for remedial action and assess initial mitigation and recovery prospects. The survey does not make an assessment for decay or hazard evaluation.

2. Property and Damage Description

The insured structure is a 2 storey detached house. It has been extended with a single-storey extension to the rear. The property occupies a level site with no adverse topographical features.

We understand that the current damage relates to the rear of the insured dwelling where cracking indicates downwards movement.

3. Technical Reports

No technical investigations are available at the time of reporting, therefore assumptions outlined in Note above apply: recommendations may be subject to change following evaluation of any investigations that may be forthcoming.

4. Action Plan

Mitigation	
Insured involved?	Yes
Local Authority involved?	No
Other third party Mitigation involved?	Yes
Recovery	
Is there a potential recovery action?	Yes

Treeworks	
Local Authority	South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
TPO / Conservation Area / Planning Protection Searches	Awaiting Searches from LA
Additional Comments	
Awaiting Further Instructions.	
A potential recovery action has been identified.	
Engineers should consider focusing investigations to strengthen factual evidence for disclosure to third party tree owners.	

5. Technical Synopsis

This report is based upon our understanding at the time of visiting the property that Subsidence Management Services have concluded, on a preliminary basis, that the current damage is due to differential foundation movement exacerbated by moisture abstraction from vegetation growing proximate to the property's foundations.

We have therefore been instructed to assess the potential for vegetation to be influencing soil moisture levels beneath the foundations of the property and, if deemed appropriate provide management proposals which will return long-term stability and allow effective repairs to be undertaken.

The potential drying influence of the vegetation on site, has been considered based on an assessment of overall size, species profile and the proximity of vegetation relative to the advised area of damage.

Based on our observations on site, it is our opinion that the footings of the subject property are within the normally accepted influencing distance of vegetation on site, thereby indicating the potential for the advised damage to be the result of clay shrinkage subsidence exacerbated by the moisture abstracting influence of vegetation.

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With due regards to species profile, size and proximity, T2 (Willow (Weeping)) is considered the dominant feature proximate to the focal area(s) of movement and accordingly, where vegetation is confirmed as being causal, we have identified it as the primary cause of the current subsidence damage.

T1 (Maple (Norway)), TG1 (Mixed species group) and T6 (Willow) cannot be discounted as contributing to the overall level of soil drying proximate to the advised area of damage and are therefore also considered to be exerting a contributory influence, albeit in a secondary capacity when compared to T2.

The size and proximity of the above vegetation is consistent with the advised location(s) of damage and it is our opinion, on balance of probability, that roots from the above vegetation will be in proximity to the footings of the insured property.

Note: additional minor vegetation has been noted on site and, depending on trial-pit location may be identified within future site investigations; however, unless specifically identified within this report, these plants are not deemed material to the current claim nor pose a significant future risk.

Given the above and considering the suspected mechanism of movement, in order to mitigate the current damage thereby allowing soils beneath the property to recover to a position such that an effective engineering repair solution can be implemented, we recommend a program of vegetation management as detailed by this report.

Please refer to Section 6 for management prescriptions.

Preliminary recommendations contained within this report are prescribed on the basis that site investigations confirm vegetation to be causal; management advice is designed to offer the most reliable arboricultural solution likely to restore long-term stability and also facilitate liaison with third-party owners and/or Local Authorities where necessary.

Consequently, we have advocated the complete removal of XXXXXXXXXXXX as it will offer the most certain arboricultural solution likely to restore long-term stability.

Consideration has been given to pruning only, as a means of mitigating the influence of the above, however this has been discounted in this instance.

Whilst it is accepted that pruning in accordance with BRE IP7/06 (and if repeated on a 3-year (max) basis) can be an alternative to removal, it is one with a high residual risk of future movement; in the context of the current claim we consider the above vegetation is too large and/or close for pruning to be viable in this instance.

We recommend the role of vegetation and the efficacy of management recommendations be qualified by means of monitoring.

Please note that the footing of the insured property fall within the anticipated rooting distance of additional vegetation which we believe presents a foreseeable risk of future damage and accordingly we have made recommendations in respect of this.

The extent / impact of vegetation management required to restore and maintain long-term stability at this property is acknowledged. However, we consider the impact on the wider public amenity from the proposed tree works is mitigated by the presence of further trees and the scope for replacement planting.

Whilst replacement planting is considered appropriate, due consideration must be given to the ultimate size of the replacement and future management requirements. Species selection should be appropriate for the chosen site and consideration must be given to the ultimate size of the replacement species and any future management requirements.

Is vegetation likely to be a contributory factor in the current damage?	Yes
Is vegetation management likely to contribute to the future stability of the property?	Yes
Is replacement planting considered appropriate?	See Above
Would DNA profiling be of assistance in this case?	No

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6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Current Claim Requirements

These recommendations may be subject to review following additional site investigations.

Tree No.	Species	Age Cat	Approx. Height (m)	Distance to Building (m) *	Ownership	Action	Requirement
T1	Maple (Norway)	3	5	3.8	A - Third Party 6 West Meadows Road	Remove	Remove close to ground level and treat stump(s) to inhibit regrowth.
T2	Willow (Weeping)	3	8	10	A - Third Party 6 West Meadows Road	Remove	Remove close to ground level; do not treat stump(s) due to translocation risk. Where such a risk exists, we advise that any emergent regrowth is removed annually.
T6	Willow	3	6.5	1.5	A - Third Party 8 West Meadows Road	Remove	Remove close to ground level; do not treat stump(s) due to translocation risk. Where such a risk exists, we advise that any emergent regrowth is removed annually.
TG1	Mixed Species Group: includes Laburnum, Prunus, Lonicera and Ceanothus.	2	5	1.7	A - Third Party 6 West Meadows Road	Maintain as detailed	Remove Laburnum and Prunus and treat stump to inhibit regrowth. Do not allow remainder to exceed current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
Age Cat: 1 = Younger than property; 2 = Similar age to the property; 3 = Significantly older than property							

* Estimated

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6.2 Future Risk Recommendations

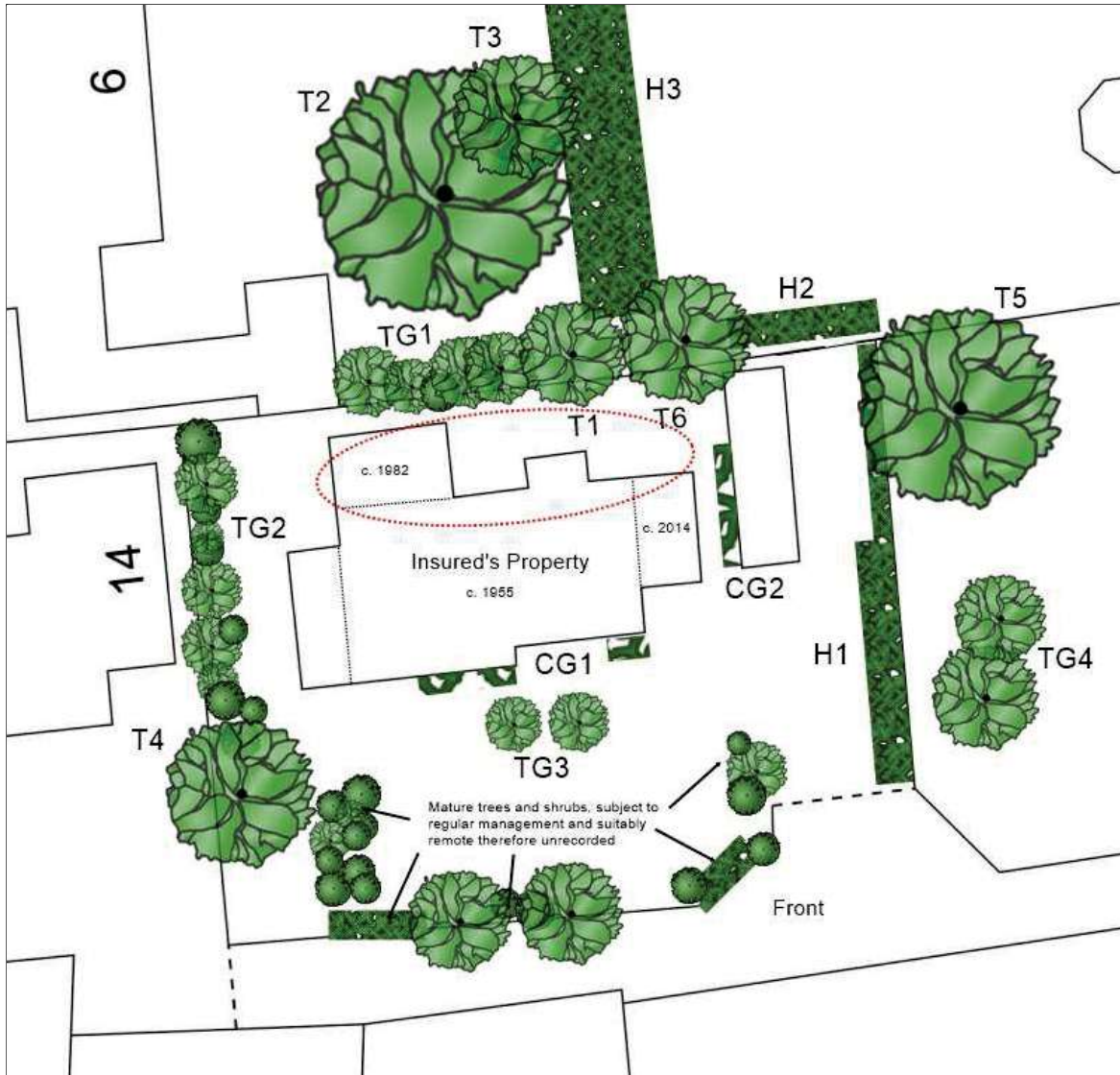
These recommendations may be subject to review following additional site investigations.

Tree No.	Species	Age Cat	Approx. Height (m)	Distance to Building (m) *	Ownership	Action	Requirement
CG1	Mixed species climbers: Includes Jasmine, Hydrangea and Clematis.	1	3	0.1	C - Insured	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain at broadly current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
CG2	Pyracantha	1	2.2	0.1	C - Insured	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain at broadly current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
H1	Cypress (Leyland)	1	2.5	3.3	C - Insured	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain at broadly current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
H2	Cypress (Leyland)	1	3	1.5	A - Third Party 8 West Meadows Road	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain at broadly current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
H3	Privet	1	3.5	5.5	A - Third Party 6 West Meadows Road	No action	No works.
T3	Willow (Weeping)	1	6	12	A - Third Party 6 West Meadows Road	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain below 8m max height / spread by way of regular pruning.
T4	Beech (Copper/Purple)	2	5.5	5.7	C - Insured	Action to avoid future risk	Do not allow to exceed current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
T5	Willow (Weeping)	3	10	12	A - Third Party 10 West Meadows Road	Action to avoid future risk	Reduce back to 8m in height (previous pollard points) and maintain at reduced dimensions by way of routine re-pollarding to restrict regrowth below pre-pruning dimensions.
TG2	Mixed Species Group: includes Cypress, Himalayan Birch, Yew and Fatsia.	1	4.5	4	C - Insured	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain at broadly current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
TG3	Holly	1	2.2	3.1	C - Insured	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain at broadly current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
TG4	Mixed Species Group: includes Cherry and Weeping Birch	1	5	8	A - Third Party 10 West Meadows Road	Action to avoid future risk	Maintain at broadly current dimensions by way of regular pruning.
Age Cat: 1 = Younger than property; 2 = Similar age to the property; 3 = Significantly older than property							

* Estimated

Third party property addresses should be treated as indicative only, should precise detail be required then Environmental Services can undertake Land Registry Searches

7. Site Plan

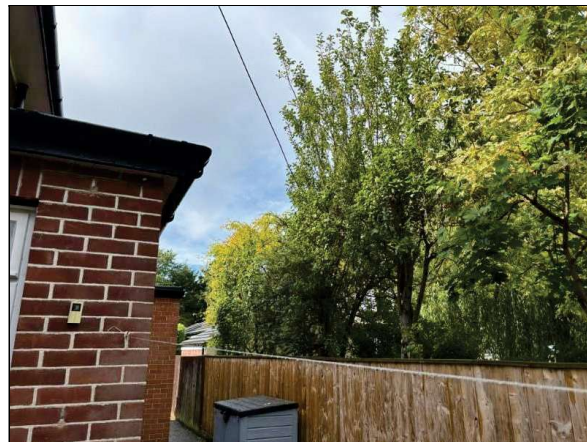


Please note that this plan is not to scale, OS Licence No. 100043218

8. Photographs



T1 - Maple (Norway)



TG1 - Mixed Species Group with Damson trees in fore



TG1 - Mixed Species Group showing Laburnum in group



TG2 - Mixed Species Group

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T4 - Beech (Purple)



TG3 and CG1



View looking towards H1, TG4 and T5