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Mr & Mrs Lee
31 East Drive
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Date: 5 February 2012

Dear Mr & Mrs Lee,

I would recommend applying to remove the two pine trees in your rear garden for safety. I do not consider that with the excessive lean toward your house and the fact that they are exposed to the prevailing westerly winds that they can be considered safe. If the trees were to fall they would definitely strike and cause major damage to your house.

The trees in your neighbouring property have in the past been topped, which is inappropriate for this type of tree. Since there is no longer any tree canopy the trees in your garden no longer have any protection from westerly wind. The two trees in your garden are leaning toward your house due to the way in which they grew in relation to the trees in the neighbouring property. Had those trees not been topped they would have formed a canopy with yours much like if they were one single tree. This is one factor in the failure of the lowest branch on your northern tree. Another factor was rot due to a previous pruning wound to the top of the branch . this wound had not healed properly allowing water ingress and woodlice to get in. I believe you have photographs of the rot running through the branch to show this. Unfortunately when the branch failed it tore deep enough into the main trunk that it is certain that rot will eventually occur and the top of this trunk will eventually fail.

This tree has a double trunk from about eighteen feet up the main trunk, however removal of the trunk would not be appropriate because a much larger pruning wound and rot and the eventual failure of the second trunk. I f evidence of how quickly rot will occur you only need to look at the rotten stumps at the top of the trees that have been topped. These trees have been topped within the last few years. If you look on google earth images the trees that have been topped are still pictured with their canopies intact. From these images it is clear to see why your trees are now so exposed and why they have such a lean toward your house.

I am recommending that both trees be removed because although the tree with the failed branch is your imminent problem ,with it gone the southern most tree would be further exposed and unbalanced.

There is another factor related to the safety of both trees. Related to their exposure to westerly wind.It is not just the risk of the branches within the canopies failing but root failure. Now that the trees are not afforded any protection from the neighbouring trees there is a significantly increased risk this could happen. The root system on the trees will be quite shallow as there is not much soil depth before the roots connect with chalk. Enough rain to soften soil combined with high winds could very easily cause both trees to fail at their roots.

In conclusion had the neighbours trees never been topped your trees would have been as safe as any other tree. No tree can be regarded one hundred percent safe, but yours would have been an acceptable risk. The removal of these trees would not effect the overall look of the area as there are still a large number of pine trees that don't appear pose a threat to surrounding properties left in the original group.

Yours sincerely



Peter Cox