

Trees and Ecology Management Plan for Howard Park

Arboricultural Management Plan

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Howard Park is a major park within Glossop, it is of local historical and landscape importance. It is Victorian urban park and is mainly used by local residents for passive recreation. The park is on a hill to the north of Glossop's central area and it offers views across Glossop to the open moorland to the south and east.
- 1.2 A management plan for the park has been prepared and this document supplements this overall plan with a detailed assessment of the arboricultural aspects of the park. A 5 year action plan has also been prepared which prioritises action that needs to be taken to achieve the aims as set out in the Park Management Plan.
- 1.3 A survey of the trees in the park has been undertaken the results of which have informed this document.

2.0 The Planning perspective

- 2.1 Howard Park is located to the North of Glossop's residential area close to fringes near open countryside.
- 2.2 The whole of the Park is within Howard Park Conservation Area (Local Plan Policies BC7 and BC 8).
- 2.3 In the High Peak Local Plan Howard Park is designated as a Protected Major Park (Local plan policy LT3).

3.0 Historical Development of the Landscape

- 3.1 Prior the establishment of a park on this site the area was open countryside known as Barber's Clough. It comprised a number of enclosed fields with a stream running through the centre of the site. An Ordnance survey map from 1880 shows that there were trees on the field boundaries some of which may have been retained in the original landscaping of the park.
- 3.2 The land was donated by Lord Howard, as a jubilee gift to the town and the money for its landscaping was provided by the Wood family who were wealthy local mill owners. Howard Park was opened in June 1888.

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- 3.3 The park was laid out by Henry Milner, the son of Edward Milner who had designed the winter gardens and pleasure grounds of Pavilion gardens in Buxton in the 1870s. Milner like his father favoured the 'gardenesque' style promoted by Joseph Paxton, another landscape designer who had contributed to the development of the landscape at Pavilion Gardens. The undulating levels of the park and vistas and views created are typical of this style and the location of tree planting was carefully considered. Henry Milner in his book '*The Art and Practice of Landscape Gardening*' gives instructions on tree planting; it directs that trees should be used to emphasise undulating ground and be planted on the summit of a hill or mound, with the tallest trees at the top. He also notes the pleasing effect of small groups or striking specimens planted at the junctions of paths.

A detailed description of the park was recorded in the Glossop Chronicle when the park opened including '*an example of almost every species of plant that will succeed in this district*' and '*some of a rare kind*'. Although no plans of the original layout of species list have been found, the ordinance survey map from 1921 shows a general layout of trees very similar to the present day distribution on site.

- 3.4 Some of the original features of the park have been removed and there has been some deterioration in the overall infrastructure, but the main structure of the planting has remained largely unaltered since its original conception, although it is possible that some of the original variety of trees many have declined over the years as the diversity of trees species is not as great as the original description of the park suggests.

4.0 Survey Technique Howard Park

- 4.1 A detailed tree survey was undertaken in the summer of 2005. The aim of the survey was to establish the condition of the trees in the park. The survey also recorded any works that are required to manage health and safety, improve the aesthetics and longevity of the trees. The survey established the approximate age of the trees to help pinpoint the original planting and identify those that are of historic or cultural importance.
- 4.2 Trees were recorded as individuals or as a distinct group. The approximate location of the trees has been recorded on a plan. It should be noted that this is will be illustrative only and to help to identify the location of specimens and it cannot be relied upon as an accurate plotting of the trees.

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5.0 Results of survey

The survey has established the following key issues:

- The park has is essentially formal with a structured landscape in which the trees provide a framework which enhances views and vistas. It is important for the character of the part that the original landscape intentions are retained.
- The park probably has in excess of 300 trees; 169 trees were recorded as individuals and the 16 groups of trees account for the rest.
- The graph below (Fig. 1) shows the estimated date of planting of the trees. Only one tree has been assessed as possibly of an age that would predate the landscaping of the park. The majority of planting occurred between 1850 and 1950, most of these mature trees would have been part of the original planting. Although there is a lot of evidence of more recent planting.

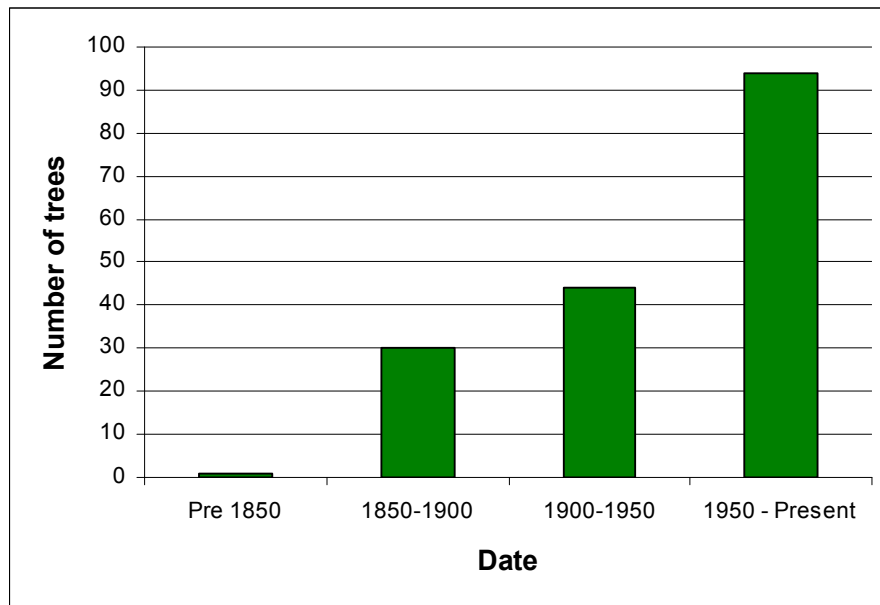


Fig. 1. The estimated planting date of trees in Howard Park

- It is desirable to retain as much of the original planting for as long as possible, most of the trees are in reasonable health. The survey identified a few trees that require felling and replacement either due to safety reasons or generally declining health. Some of the groups of trees require some thinning as they have been dense and overcrowded.
- It is notable that there has been a reasonable amount of recent planting in the last 50 years in the park.

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- The graph below (Fig. 2) shows the distribution of tree species in the park. Sycamore is the most common species although some may have been planted as part of the original scheme it is likely that most has seeded its self.
- As well as broad leaf species there is a lot of evergreen trees such as Cypresses, Pine and holly this along with the Rhododendron makes up much of the structural planting in the park. The majority of planting in the park is of common species and varieties and the overall the arboricultural interest of the park could be improved.

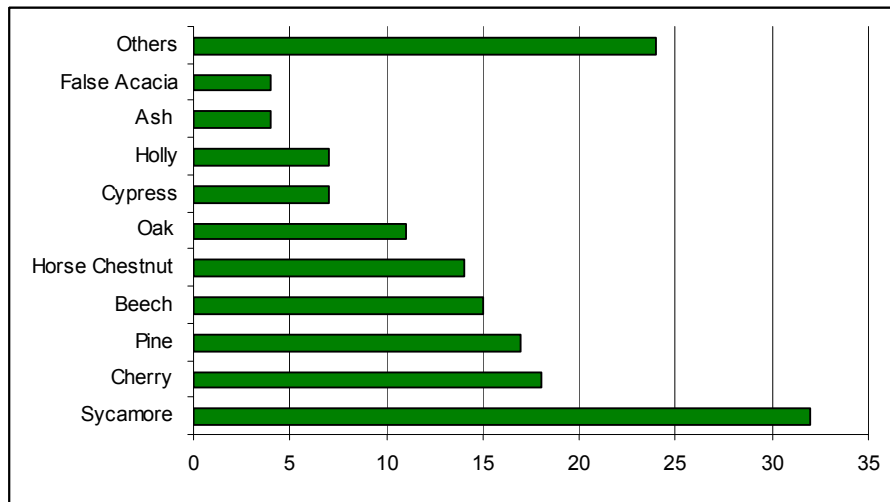


Fig. 2 Distribution of species of trees in the park

6.0 Management principals

6.1 Sustainability

The key principal of the management of the trees in the park is sustainability; to ensure that the original trees that were planted and are now mature specimens are there for the next generation to enjoy. Unfortunately, it will be necessary from time to time for trees to be felled because they are unsafe. Where felling occurs the wood and arisings from the tree works will be reused within the park wherever possible and trees felled replaced with suitable planting to reflect the heritage of the park.

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6.2 Programmed tree works

The survey has identified tree works that are required in the park and this includes some limited tree felling due to condition and potential hazard. The detailed schedule of work is identified on the tree survey which is available for viewing on request.

Approximately £7000 worth of tree work, including replacement planting will be required over the next 5 years. This work will be phased according to how essential it is and to ensure that the resources are efficiently used. An additional £1000 per year has been allocated for undertaking reactive works such as storm damage or in response to comments or complaints from the public.

The programme of works will be subject to review in response to comments from community and changing circumstances. All trees will be re-inspected before programmed works are issued to ensure that the recommendations are still appropriate.

6.3 Planting

The park has good tree cover for its size and planting need only be undertaken on a 1 for 1 basis to ensure continuity of tree coverage. Therefore when a tree is felled another one will be planted as a replacement, any such replacements that fail to establish will also be replaced. At least some replacement trees will be selected to increase Arboricultural interest in the park although consideration will need to be given to the original landscape concept of the park.

6.4 Risk assessments and re-inspections

As the park is constantly used by the public, it is important that the risk from falling limbs etc. is assessed, and action is taken to minimise the hazard. All trees in the park will be inspected every 5 years using the current survey as a basis. In addition to this some trees require more frequent inspections due to their location and/or their condition, these are likely to be given particular attention during and an annual walk over survey of the park. In addition reactive inspections will be undertaken if any issues are brought to the attention of the Arboricultural Officer by staff working in the park or members of the public.

7.7 Standard of Tree works

All major works to trees in the park will be undertaken by the council's approved contractor to the current industry standards and best practice. Some minor works will be undertaken by the parks staff.

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References

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