

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 10:19

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: 9 Rife Way - ash

Dear Mr Barnes,

Further to my visits of the 23rd June and 13th July 2020 I am writing with my comments on the mature ash in the far west corner of the back garden, overhanging Aldingbourne Rife, as requested.

TREE DETAILS

Species	Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)
Height	11.5m
Stem diameter	980mm at 1.5m above ground level
Crown spread	N – 6m E – 4m S – 5m W – 8m
Age class	Mature

A low, broadly-spreading tree, heavily branched on a framework of stout ascending stems above a short trunk; the crown is weighted to the west with low, large diameter branches overhanging Aldingbourne Rife; the multi-stemmed habit from a low trunk indicates probable

historic pollarding and I understand the tree also suffered extensive damage in the 1987 storms. The tree is included in tree preservation order **Bognor No. 5**.

APPRAISAL

- Apical dieback with a fine tracery of minor deadwood at the branch tips.
- Larger dead branches present within the crown.
- Some growth from dormant buds lower in the crown.
- An open cavity was noted low on the east side of the trunk; a probe extended laterally 700mm into decaying tissue and met no resistance when pushed down into the root crown.
- No fungal fruiting bodies were present.

CONCLUSIONS

- The apical dieback and minor deadwood at the branch tips are consistent with symptoms of Chalara dieback of ash (class 2 – with 75%-51% of the crown remaining).
- The larger dead branches within the crown are typical and not an indicator of Chalara dieback at present.
- The growth from dormant buds in the lower crown and on the stem is more likely to be in reaction to pruning than a symptom of later stage Chalara dieback.
- Decay of the lower stem is fairly extensive and the lack of resistance to the probe when pushed into the ground within the cavity indicates some loss of root structure.

COMMENTS

- The tree has class 2 symptoms of Chalara dieback of ash, a disease caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*.
- Results of European research concludes that seven or eight out of ten trees may die and although there is some potential for recovery the likelihood of recovery for this tree remains low.
- Although not attributable to a specific decay fungus the basal decay and loss of rooting means there is an increased risk of stem failure or windthrow.

- Failure of the stem is more likely to result in collapse of the tree into Aldingbourne Rife than into the gardens of 9 and 11 Rife Way; however, partial failure of the tree above ground level represents some risk to the properties.
- Removing the majority of the crown to leave a low branching framework will reduce the risk the tree poses, maintain a low decaying stump with good habitat potential and be less costly than having to remove the tree if it collapses in Aldingbourne Rife. This would not be an appropriate pruning recommendation for a healthy, viable tree but in this situation, with a declining tree in poor condition, retaining a low stump rather than felling the tree entirely will provide ecological benefits.

- **References** **BSI British Standards** (2010) *BS 3998:2010 Tree Work – Recommendations, Third (Present) Edition*. BSI

Lonsdale, D. (2005). *Principles of tree hazard assessment and management, third impression*. TSO

Mattheck, C. Bethge, K. Weber, K. (2015). *The body language of trees – encyclopedia of visual tree assessment*. Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

Strouts, R.G., Winter, T.G. (1994). *Diagnosis of ill-health in trees*. HMSO

Van Prooijen, G-J. (2010). *Urban trees vade mecum – tree inspection and examination*. IPC Groene Ruimte.

The Tree Council (June 2020) *Ash dieback disease: a guide for tree owners*

Felling, or cutting the tree down to a low framework as suggested above, will require the consent of the Local Planning Authority. I am very happy for the contents of this email to be used in support of a planning application.

Kind regards,

Jonathan Rodwell

Jonathan Rodwell Cert Arb LA(ABC); TechArborA



Beechdown Arboriculture Limited

Club Cottage, Top Road,

Slindon, Arundel

West Sussex, BN18 0RP

Email: jonathan.rodwell@beechdown.com

www.beechdown.com

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Jonathan Rodwell Cert Arb LA(ABC); TechArborA



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