TREE RISK ASSESSMENT

Hele Valley Trail

Bude

Client: Marhamchurch Parish Council

Reference: EV-5190-TRA

Site visit Date: 22 August 2025

Report Date: 02 September 2025

Evolve Tree Consultancy
8 Duke Street
Truro
TR1 2QE

01872 276 099

office@evolvetrees.co.uk

TABLE OF CONTENTS

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

Evolve Tree Consultancy was commissioned by Marhamchurch Parish Council to undertake a tree risk assessment of the Hele Valley Trail, a 16-acre native woodland on the outskirts of Bude, Cornwall. The survey (22 August 2025) applied the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) methodology to balance public safety with tree and habitat value.

Key Findings

- The woodland comprises recently planted native and naturalised species alongside mature boundary and valley-bottom trees.
- Ash dieback is widespread among mature ash, particularly along paths and field boundaries. While some trees remain stable, continued decline is expected.
- Newly planted areas are too young and small to pose significant safety risks at present.
- Current overall risk to the public is below Health & Safety Executive thresholds for remedial action (<1 in 1 million annual risk of harm).
- The most sensitive zones are the car park and lower paths, where visitor use and mature ash presence coincide.

Management Recommendations

- No immediate remedial works are required at the time of survey.
- Larger ash trees adjacent to well-used paths should be monitored using the attached Ash Dieback Management Plan.
- Removals may be necessary in future as trees progress to advanced decline stages; these should be phased and budgeted.
- A re-survey of newly planted woodland is advised in 8–10 years, or earlier if significant growth or pest/disease pressures emerge.

Conclusion

The woodland remains safe for public use and provides important recreational and biodiversity benefits. Proactive monitoring of ash dieback, selective removals where justified, and long-term management planning are recommended to ensure resilience, continued public safety, and ecological value.

1 INSTRUCTION

1.1 Marhamchurch Parish Council instructed Evolve Tree Consultancy to provide a Tree Risk Assessment with recommendations for works as necessary.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The survey and report are intended to advise on an acceptable level of risk of harm occurring to people or property presented by the inspected trees.

2.2 The management of tree risk in this case relates to above-ground mechanical failure (of tree parts), which could result in harm to people or property and to assess the potential for damage, either direct or indirect, by tree root action.

2.3 The site is a woodland trail within a sixteen acre native woodland on the outskirts of Marhamchurch, a village south of Bude in North Cornwall.

2.4 The land surveyed comprises Lot 1 illustrated in image 1.

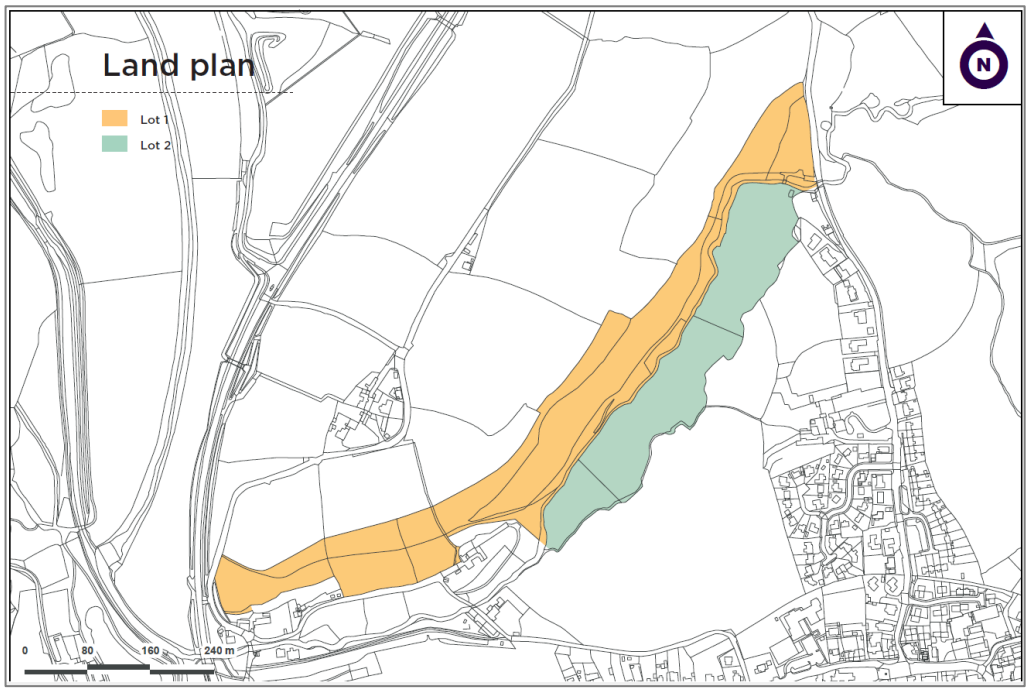

Image 1. The site. Extract from the sales particulars supplied by Carter Jonas.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 My inspection and report are prepared in a way consistent with national advice on managing the risks posed by trees[1].

3.2 My survey was a visual one made from ground level. The Trees were inspected using the Visual Tree Assessment method as described by Mattheck and Breloer[2]. VTA is a method for tree inspection and hazard recognition which gives information about the body language and the mechanics of trees. It advises on failure criteria and instructs on the correct use of invasive testing techniques.

3.3 No climbing or invasive tests form part of this inspection, but they will be recommended, if required.

3.4 I did not have access to trees outside the boundaries or on other private properties. Any observations of these trees are confined to what is visible from within the property.

3.5 Inspecting and recording every tree in an effort to completely remove the risk from trees is in practice unachievable and would be disproportionate to the risk.

3.5.1 The National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) provide a nationally recognised approach to tree safety management and guidance that is proportionate to the actual risks from trees. The NTSG released its latest guidance, 'Common Sense Risk Management of Trees' following extensive industry and government consultation.

[1] National Tree Safety Group (NTSG). 2011. Common sense risk management of trees.
[2] Mattheck and Breloer. 1994. The body language of trees Research for Amenity Trees No. 4. DoE.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

4 STATUTORY PROTECTION & OTHER CONTROLS

4.1 Statutory Protection: I have used the information provided by the Cornwall Council Interactive Map on the assumption this is a true and accurate record. Should any tree be identified for removal confirmation must be obtained from the local planning authority (LPA) in writing as to the protected status of the trees.

4.2 Tree Preservation Orders: Trees on site are not protected by a Tree Preservation Order nor is the site is within a designated Conservation Area.

4.3 The site is not adjacent to or designated Ancient & Semi-natural Woodland or Ancient Replanted Woodland.

4.3.1 A landowner has a legal 'Duty of Care' under the Occupiers Liability Act 1957 & 1984, to ensure that users and neighbours of its land are reasonably safe.

4.3.2 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires that risks to employees and contractors must also be reduced as far as is 'reasonably practicable'.

4.4 Planning Conditions/Covenants: I did not investigate whether any planning conditions or legal covenants relevant to the trees are in place.

4.5 Further advice on Legal Constraints is presented as Appendix C.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

5 THE SITE

5.1 The Hele Valley Trail at Marhamchurch lies within a sheltered valley to the west of Marhamchurch. The topography is undulating with a gradual fall towards the stream corridor, producing a mix of sloping valley sides and flatter ground at the base. This creates localised variations in drainage and soil moisture, with lower-lying areas tending to hold more water during wetter periods.

5.2 The valley form offers a degree of shelter, reducing direct exposure compared with more open coastal plateaus nearby, though ridgelines and upper slopes remain subject to prevailing south-westerly winds off the Atlantic.

5.3 The soils are derived from Devonian slates and shales, part of the Denbigh 1 association. These soils are seasonally wet, slowly permeable and of moderate fertility and capable of supporting the mixed deciduous woodland present.

5.4 Wind exposure will be a notable factor on the upper margins of the valley where storms can funnel through gaps with the potential to create occasional windthrow and edge damage (when the wood develops). Within the valley itself, the woodland canopy provides mutual shelter, with trees showing generally balanced crowns, though exposed edges demonstrate some asymmetry.

5.5 There is a car park at the northern end of the wood off Pitch Hill adjacent to where the river passes under the road or through public parking areas closer to Bude and the canal corridor, where the trail can be joined. Parking near the woodland is therefore informal, usually limited to small numbers of vehicles in laybys or roadside pull-ins at the village edge.

5.6 Management and contractor vehicles occasionally gain access via adjoining farmland or permissive tracks, but there is no dedicated operational compound or standing area for machinery within the woodland.

5.7 The Hele Valley Trail follows a designated public right of way that runs along the valley floor. The woodland is well used for recreational walking as part of the Hele Valley Trail, linking Marhamchurch with Bude and the wider canal and countryside network. The paths are heavily used and regularly managed as is evident by their worn nature (example in image 2).

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

Image 2. The well-worn path in the upper, western part of the woodland.

5.8 The paths are unsurfaced in sections and can become muddy and uneven during wet periods, which constrains ease of access for less mobile visitors. Timber footbridges and boardwalks are provided at key stream crossings and wetter sections to maintain continuity of the trail. Waymarker posts guide walkers along the designated trail, and occasional benches are placed at points with views or rest opportunities.

5.9 Visitor numbers are moderate to high during peak holiday periods, with local use throughout the year for informal dog walking and exercise. The woodland also forms an important corridor for wildlife, connecting fragmented habitats in an otherwise agricultural setting.

5.10 Overall, access is suitable for recreational walking and light management activity but is not designed for intensive or heavy-duty woodland operations.

5.11 Structures & facilities: Within the Hele Valley Trail comprisesthere are very few built structures, reflecting its semi-natural character and function as a recreational green corridor. No lighting, surfaced car parks, or large-scale recreational facilities are provided within the woodland itself.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

6 THE TREES

6.1 The trees fall into two broad categories of groups. Along the western side of the woodland, where it slopes down to the river, is new planting of native and naturalised trees. These have been planted with the assistance of various schemes and groups.

6.2 Species: The species mix of the new planting is typical standardised selection including species native to other areas of UK and not commonly found in Cornwall, e.g. field maple, some exotic species including Monterey pine.

6.3 The species list comprises:

Species	Scientific Name
Tree Species	
Sessile oak	Quercus petraea
Ash	Fraxinus excelsior
Sycamore	Acer pseudoplatanus
Elm	Ulmus stricta & Ulmus glabra
Alder	Alnus glutinosa
Monterey pine	Pinus radiata
Scots pine	Pinus sylvestris
Wild cherry	Prunus avium
Sweet chestnut	Castanea sativa
Rowan	Sorbus aucuparia
Field maple	Acer campestre
Shrub Species	
Blackthorn	Prunus spinosa
Apple	Malus spp.
Willow	Salix caprea, S cinerea, S. aurita
Spindle	Euonymous europea
Guelder rose	Viburnum opulus
Hazel	Corylus avellana

Table 1. Species found on site.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

6.4 Despite the exotic and naturalised nature of some of the species, most of the trees appear to be establishing well even in the upper parts of the site. However, the restrictions of the exposed maritime climate are clearly visible in some species, especially the rowans.

Image 3. Younger rowans and wild cherry struggling to grow in the upper parts of the site.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

Image 4. Typical rowan struggling to establish.

6.5 Age Class: The newly planted woodland is, necessarily, all of the same age-class, in this case semi-mature trees that have established successfully in most species. Where there are remnants of field boundaries, typically Cornish hedge banks, and along the valley bottom, the tree cover is more mixed in age-class and dominated by mature and late-mature trees. There is natural regeneration present where sufficient light allows.

6.6 There was very little evidence of browsing damage either by squirrels or deer though both are present within the woodland.

6.7 Evidence of management: There has been little active management, apart from routine path clearance. Given the age of the woodland, none is yet needed. There has been some reactive pruning for access adjacent to the car park and occasionally along the paths.

6.8 Evidence of disease: The ash trees are suffering in great part with ash die-back. Ash dieback is caused by a fungus (Hymenoscyphus fraxineus) which originated in Asia. It does not cause much damage on the species of ash in its native range. Its introduction to Europe about 30 years ago has devastated the European ash (Fraxinus excelsior) which has no natural

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

defence against it. It is likely to kill around 80% of ash trees across the UK. It can kill young trees and recently coppiced trees quite quickly. Older trees can resist it for some time, but prolonged exposure, or another pest or pathogen, such as Armillaria (honey fungus) can cause them to succumb.

6.8.1 The mature ash trees along the field boundaries and river valley are likely to decline over time. Because of their maturity, location (along historic field boundaries), many of the mature ash trees are of interest for biodiversity and cultural reasons. This biodiversity and cultural value are diminished due to the likely effect of the disease. Because the oldest and largest trees will continue to valuable in nature conservation terms whilst they decline it should be recognised that they are a declining asset.

Image 5. Ash die-back in the younger trees.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

Image 6. Dead ash trees by grassed area adjacent to car park at northern end of the woodland.

Image 7. Ash tree with Stage 2 ash die-back on path from norther car park.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

Image 8. Ash tree with Stage 1 ash die-back. No management required at this stage.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

7 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 When considering risk and how it is best managed, we must also consider the benefits of trees.

7.1.1 Trees are integral to natural ecosystems, providing a wide range of related benefits to humankind (ecosystem services), including mitigating the harmful effects of climate change. Trees are an important part of the economy, providing timber and non-timber forest products. They also bring communities together, with many cultural, social and historic values.

7.1.2 Their importance is recognised in national and local government policies, and many non-governmental organisations have policies dedicated to conserving trees and their biodiversity.

7.1.3 The risk, per tree, of causing a fatality is around one in 150 million for all trees in Britain or one in 10 million for those trees in, or adjacent to areas of public use. This is clearly significantly less than the 1 in 1 million threshold that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) considers 'broadly acceptable', within the Tolerability of Risk Framework.

7.1.4 The HSE have developed the Tolerability of Risk Framework which has been incorporated into the National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) guidance. Risks above 1/10,000 per annum are generally considered unacceptable when placed on the public. Risks between 1/10,000 and 1/1,000,000 per annum are tolerable, but consideration should be given to managing them 'as low as reasonably practicable' (ALARP), where it is cost effective to do so.

7.1.5 This risk therefore represents an extremely small proportion of the background risk that we commonly accept in our everyday lives, and the ongoing removal and general management of trees is probably the most important factor in keeping this figure at such a low level. However, there can be pressure to remove trees because of a perception of risk, which may be much greater than any actual risk a tree poses.

7.1.6 Trees are growing dynamic structures. No tree is ever absolutely safe due to the unpredictable laws and forces of nature. As a result of this, natural failure of intact trees will occur; extreme climatic conditions can cause damage to even apparently healthy trees.

7.2 A hazard is something that can cause harm, in this case a tree. Risk is the likelihood that a negative effect will occur. It is often expressed as a combination of an event's consequences and the likelihood of it occurring. In this case, a potential consequence is death, serious injury or damage to property. The key parts of the assessment are the magnitude of the consequence and the likelihood of it occurring.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

7.3 When assessing a tree, owners and managers need to judge whether the measures they adopt will fulfil society's reasonable expectations. "Reasonableness" is a key legal concept when considering the risks of trees and a tree owners' obligations. Deciding what is reasonable is influenced by the trees' place within the wider management context and how that context influences local decisions. The Health and Safety Executive presented this expectation in its risk philosophy. Please see image 9.

7.4 Where the risk falls within the 'tolerable' region, risk reduction measures may be recommended to ensure that they remain as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP). The benefits of risk reduction will be measured against the sacrifice (cost, amenity value etc). Control measures will be recommended if the risk is unacceptable.

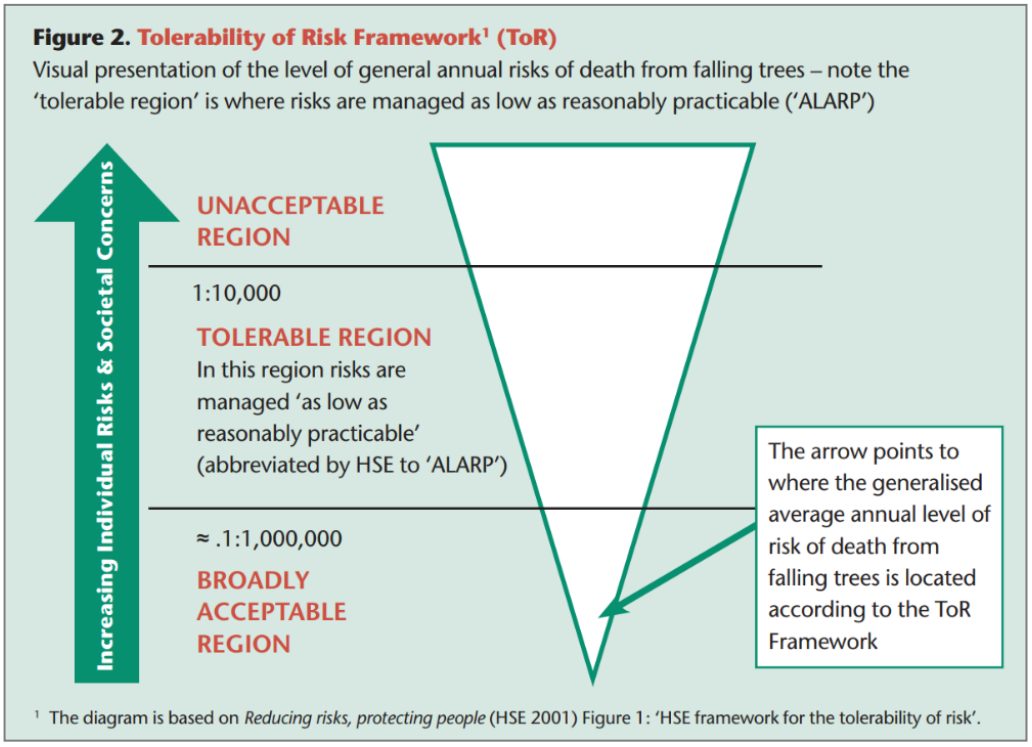

Image 9. Figure 2 from Health & safety Executive framework.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

8 THE RISK

8.1 The Risk Zones.

8.1.1 The risk from trees only requires management when failure is likely to cause damage to people or property. To assist with this assessment I have assessed the car park and the lower path as the highest risk and in the terms off QTRA provide a range of values for pedestrian use. I believe these areas of occupancy period to fit into Category 3, a maximum of 7 people per hour when considered over a 24 hour period.

8.1.2 The next consideration is the size of part and I have chosen category 2, parts of the tree with a greater diameter than 450 mm to 260 mm. This, of course, only applies to the larger trees at the northern end of the site as no trees in the newly planted woodland have achieved this size.

8.1.3 The Probability of Failure for is between the 1/10k to 1/1M range.

8.1.4 This results in a Risk of Harm of less than 1 in 1 million and therefore no work required at this time.

8.1.5 The development of ash die-back will increase this risk as it develops.

8.2 Risk to People and Property

8.2.1 As discussed in the methodology, I have walked the site, assessed the use and the tree cover. In terms of risk the newly planted areas, the majority of the woodland cover, is too small to present a risk that warrants further consideration. This woodland should be re-surveyed in 8 to 10 years' time, depending on growth rates.

8.2.2 However, the trees adjacent to the paths, especially the lower paths and in the areas shown on the plan, contain much larger ash trees with ash die-back reaching stage 2 as indicated in the ash die-back management guidance (attached at Appendix B).

8.2.3 I do not believe these trees currently require action as the risk they pose remains below the threshold advised by the NTSG. However, they will continue to decline and their removal would constitute reasonable management. However, this is costly and would need undertaking as and when resources allow. These trees are identified on the plan and at Section 9.

8.3 The Risk to the Woodland

8.3.1 The primary risk is from disease and the most significant of these is ash die-back. However, the proportion of ash within the woodland is too small to present an overall threat to the integrity of the woodland as a whole and I do

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

not recommend any management of these trees where they are in the new woodland areas.

9 MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 I understand much of the new woodland was established under the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme (FWPS). This will carry with it certain legal obligations but without having sight of the agreement I can make no further comment at this stage.

9.2 I have included at Appendix B a suggested ash die-back management plan. This is based on the latest advice from the Tree Council and current best practice. It need only apply to trees that are capable of falling and causing damage, i.e. those adjacent to the footpath and larger than 8 metres in height.

9.3 This advice clearly identifies when trees need to be removed and can be readily assessed by the lay practitioner. I recommend that this matrix be used to assess when trees are removed. At my time of survey none required immediate work.

10 CONCLUSION

10.1 The risk presented by the trees is below the threshold recognised for remedial action. However, some of the larger ash trees will require removal over the next few years and this should be accounted for in your budgets.

10.2 Should you have any queries I am happy to provide further advice and opinion.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

Tim Scott-Ellis BSc Hons (For), Dip Arb (RFS), FICFor, FArbor A, MRICS
Evolve Tree Consultancy

I am a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Foresters and a Chartered Arboriculturist. I am also a Fellow of the Arboricultural Association and a Chartered Surveyor. I hold an honours degree in Forestry and the Royal Forestry Society Professional Diploma in Arboriculture. I have been working as a full-time, professional arboriculturist since 1999 with experience in both the public and private sector.

RICS

Institute of Chartered Foresters
Registered Consultant

Arboricultural Association
Fellow Member

The authority of this report ceases when any site conditions change or pruning or other works unspecified in the report are carried out to, or affecting, the subject tree(s). The statements made in this report do not consider the effects of extremes of climate, vandalism, or accident, whether physical, chemical or fire. Evolve Tree Consultancy cannot accept any liability about these factors and/or where prescribed work is not carried out in a correct and professional manner in accordance with current good practice.

The recommendations within this report remain valid for the period stated for re-inspection or twelve months from the date of survey.

The limit of Evolve Tree Consultancy's indemnity over any matter arising out of this report extends only to the instructing client; Evolve Tree Consultancy cannot be held liable for any third-party claim that arises following or out of this report. This report remains the intellectual property of Evolve Tree Consultancy.

8 Duke Street
Truro TR1 2QE
01872 276 099

APPENDIX A SITE PLAN

APPENDIX B ASH DIE-BACK MANAGEMENT PLAN

MANAGEMENT OF ASH DIE-BACK

DRAFT ASH TREE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

Introduction

Ash dieback is a significant disease of ash trees in the UK. It has recently spread to the south-west and is now a minor presence including the land owned and managed by Gwinear Gwithian Parish Council. The disease kills most of the trees if infects but there will be a proportion of the population that is likely to be resilient. There can be a risk of harm to people and property associated with this disease.

This plan is intended to provide some information about the disease, the likely impacts and assessment of the risk. The plan will provide guidance as to how this disease can be managed, assessing the impact on biodiversity and aiming to create a resilient treescape in the future.

Appendix Image 1. Row of ash trees in varying states of decline.

What is Ash Die-back? Ecology and Symptoms

Ash dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) is a fungus which may have originated in Asia. It does not cause much damage on its native hosts, the Manchurian ash (*Fraxinus mandshurica*) and the Chinese ash (*Fraxinus chinensis*) in its native range. However, its introduction to Europe about 30 years ago has devastated the European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). Our native ash species did not evolve with the fungus, and this means it has no natural defence against it. It is believed that it is likely to kill around 80% of ash trees across the UK. It can kill young trees and recently coppiced trees quite quickly. Older trees can resist it for some time, but prolonged exposure, or another pest or pathogen, such as *Armillaria* spp. (honey fungus) can cause them to succumb.

Ash colonised by Honey fungus (*Armillaria* spp.) may pose risks to tree-workers and visitors within two years of basal necrosis formation, and after five years, about half of affected trees are likely to have sufficient decay to be assumed hazardous.

Ash die-back is spread by fungal spores from infected leaf litter during late spring and summer of the year after leaf fall. Symptoms are visible all year round as lesions. The infection is most easily spotted during the summer months when the trees are in leaf.

Symptoms include bark lesions (Appendix image 2.), basal lesions (Appendix image 3) and leaf loss, crown die-back (Appendix image4). The fungus can colonise both branches and, in some cases, the base of the tree stems. Woodland areas may show higher levels of infection due to the presence of higher spore levels.

A proportion of the ash tree population will be tolerant or resistant to this disease. Though we do not yet have figures the consensus is that this will be between 5 and 10% of the population.

The speed of the development of the disease cannot be accurately predicted. In some cases, woodland groups with ash die-back have stood for several years. In others, trees have succumbed within 1-2 years. This presents further uncertainties when it comes to planning removals.

Appendix image 2. Typical lesion on branch union.

Appendix Image 3. Basal lesion.

ASH HEALTH ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (adapted from Suffolk County Council/Tree Council)

This assessment is used to assign a tree to a category below. This informs the subsequent action.
This is to be used where trees have the potential to fail onto a significant target, i.e. main roads, busy parks and where people are working.

	Stage 1 100%-75% remaining canopy	Stage 2 75%-50% remaining canopy	Stage 3 50%-25% remaining canopy	**Stage 4** >25% remaining canopy
				
High Risk Zone	Monitor condition as part of passive assessment	Consider crown management of large trees	Fell and replace with suitable species.	Fell and replace with suitable species.
Medium Risk Zone	Monitor condition as part of passive assessment	Monitor condition as part of passive assessment	Consider crown management of large trees	Fell and replace with suitable species.
Low Risk Zone	Monitor condition as part of passive assessment	Monitor condition as part of passive assessment	Monitor condition as part of passive assessment	Consider crown management of large trees

APPENDIX C LEGAL CONSTRAINTS

Trees outside the site or property

A landowner has a legal 'Duty of Care' under the Occupiers Liability Act 1957 & 1984, to ensure that users and neighbours of its land are reasonably safe.

Landowners and managers have a duty of care not to damage trees on the neighbouring land. The common causes of damage (root damage, compaction, physical damage and inexpert pruning) must be avoided through good planning and site management. However, branches and roots from trees on adjacent properties that extend over boundaries can be pruned back to the boundary line without the permission of the owners. However, the branch material belongs to the tree owner and should be retuned where appropriate.

Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires that risks to employees and contractors must also be reduced as far as is 'reasonably practicable'.

Further guidance for HSE inspectors and Local Authorities is provided by the Health and Safety Executive (2007) Management of Risk from Falling Trees, which relates to duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Statutory Wildlife Obligations

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended by the Countryside Rights of Way Act 200 provides statutory protection to birds, bats and other species that inhabit trees. All wild birds are protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and it is an offence to disturb, injure or kill a nesting bird intentionally or to take, damage or destroy an occupied nest or egg. If nesting birds are discovered, works on the trees should be deferred until the nests are abandoned. Care should be taken during any felling operation, or surgery works to trees to avoid damage or disturbance to birds during the nesting season.

Tree Preservation Orders and Conservation Areas

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that wilfully cutting, uprooting, damaging or destroying a protected tree without the council's permission is a criminal offence.

Exceptions to this law are:

- Cutting down a tree when it is already dead,
- Cutting down a tree that presents "an immediate risk of serious harm",
- Pruning part of a tree that presents "an immediate risk of serious harm",
- Removing dead branches from a living tree,
- Preventing or controlling a "legal nuisance",
- When requested by an organisation listed in the council's regulations,

- When it is the interests of national security,
- Where the tree is a fruit tree being pruned in accordance with good horticultural practice, or where the tree is in a commercial orchard,
- Cutting down trees in accordance with a grant or felling licence obtained from the Forestry Commission,
- Where the tree is directly obstructing development for which full planning permission has been granted (not including permitted development).

Important: Exceptions for tree work relating to planning permission and permitted development from the Planning Practice Guidance 15 April 2012 paragraph 36-083-20150415

Under the heading "Is there an exception for the tree work relating to planning permission and permitted development?", the PPG states:

"The authority's consent is not required for carrying out work on trees subject to an Order so far as such work is necessary to implement a full planning permission. For example, the Order is overridden if a tree has to be removed to make way for a new building for which planning permission has been granted.

However, the authority's consent is required for works on trees subject to an Order if:

Development under a planning permission has not been commenced within the relevant time limit (i.e. the permission has 'expired'):

Only outline planning permission has been granted; and

It is not necessary to carry out works on protected trees in order to implement a full planning permission

Forestry Commission Felling Licence

In any quarter (1 January to 31 March, 1 April to 30 June, 1 July to 30 September and 1 October to 31 December), you may fell up to 5 cubic metres on your property without a licence if no more than two cubic metres are sold. Contact your local Forestry Commission office if you are not certain whether these exemptions apply.

Exemptions: Certain types of felling do not need permission from the Forestry Commission. The Forestry Act 1967, as amended, and related regulations give these exceptions in full.

The main categories are listed below:

- Lopping and topping (which usually includes tree surgery, pruning and pollarding).
- Felling included in an approved dedication plan.
- Felling fruit trees, or trees growing in a garden, orchard, churchyard or designated public open space(e.g. under the Commons Act 1899).
- Felling trees which, when measured at the height of 1.3 metres from the ground: have a diameter of 8 centimetres or less; or if thinnings have a diameter of 10 centimetres or less; or if coppice (i.e.

managed by cutting to promote multi-stemmed growth arising at or near ground level) or underwood, have a diameter of 15 centimetres or less.

- Felling trees immediately required for carrying out development authorised by planning permission (granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or for work carried out by certain providers of gas, electricity and water services and which is essential for the provision of these services.
- Felling necessary for the prevention of danger or the prevention or abatement of a nuisance (e.g. which may involve the threat of danger to a third party). This exemption will only apply if there is a real rather than perceived danger. We may be able to give you advice that would minimise the danger without felling the trees in these circumstances. You may be prosecuted for illegal felling if it is shown that the tree did not present and real or immediate danger.
- Felling necessary to prevent the spread of a quarantine pest or disease and done in accordance with a notice served by a Forest Commission Plant Health Officer (under the Plant Health (Forestry) (Greta Britain) Order 1993, as amended.

The felling is done in compliance with any obligation imposed by or under an Act of Parliament.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The hedgerow regulations do not apply to the boundary of a domestic curtilage but will affect those hedgerows that border land used for keeping horses or agriculture. The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 make it an offence to remove most countryside hedges without first giving the local planning authority 42 days' notice.

APPENDIX D QTRA NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

What is Quantified Tree Risk Assessment?

Tree safety management is a matter of limiting the risk harm from tree failure while maintaining the benefits conferred by trees. Although it may seem counter-intuitive, the condition of trees should not be the first consideration. Instead, tree managers should first take account of the usage of the land on which the trees stand, which in turn will inform the process of assessing the trees.

The Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) system applies established and accepted risk management principles to tree safety management. Firstly, the targets (people and property) upon which trees could fail are assessed and quantified, thus enabling tree managers to determine whether to assess trees and to what degree of rigour a survey or inspection of the trees is required. Where necessary, the tree is then considered in terms of both size (potential impact) and probability of tree branch failure. Values derived from the assessment of these three components (target, size and probability of failure) are combined to calculate the probability of significant harm occurring.

The system moves the management of tree safety away from labelling trees as either 'safe' or 'unsafe' and requiring definitive statements of tree safety form either tree surveyors or tree managers. Instead, QTRA quantifies the risk of harm from tree failure in a way that enables tree managers to balance safety with tree value and operate to predetermined risk thresholds.

QTRA Advisory Risk Thresholds

Threshold	Description	Action
<1/1000	Unacceptable Risks will not ordinarily be tolerated	Risk reduction works will be recommended
1/1000-1/10,000	Unacceptable (where imposed on others) Risks will not ordinarily be tolerated.	Control the risk Review the risk
	Tolerable (by agreement) Risks may be tolerated if those exposed to the risk accept it, or the tree has exceptional value	Control the risk unless there is broad stakeholder agreement to tolerate it, or the tree has exceptional value Review the risk
1/10,000- 1/1,000,000	Tolerable (where imposed on others) Risks are tolerable if as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP)	Assess costs and benefits of risk control. Control the risk only where a significant benefit might be achieved at reasonable cost Review the risk
>1/1,000,000	Broadly Acceptable Risk is already ALARP	No action currently required Review the risk