

Tom Bird  
Savills  
33 Margaret Street  
London W1G 0JD



1<sup>st</sup> November 2023  
Re Trees at Bourn Quarter, Cambs.

Dear Mr Bird,

I have been instructed to assess a number of trees growing adjacent the property in question and to suggest management proposals, if required.

The trees grow in a plantation known as the New Barns Plantation to the immediate east of the subject site. The trees are legally protected by a woodland Tree Preservation Order (TPO) number 002 first made in October 1973, some 50 years ago, and are labelled as W12 within that order. The trees within the woodland are mature and are predominantly Ash with occasional other species.

The Ash trees, in common with numerous other Ash trees, both locally and nationally, are affected by Ash Dieback. This fungal condition is currently sweeping across the country affecting millions of Ash trees; no other species of tree are affected. The condition slowly kills the affected trees and as parts of the upper branch structure dies off, timber becomes very brittle and normally falls unexpectedly to the ground beneath. As the condition progresses, the size of falling material increases in size. No treatment is currently available to either slow the rate of decline or to prevent infection. The only course of action, ultimately, is removal of the affected trees.

Naturally the plantation trees are outside your control so removal is not currently an option. It was noted that a number of trees closest to the boundary line have limbs which reach over your site to quite some extent; these overhanging branches have the potential to drop onto your client's site at some point. Naturally, as the site is now coming into use, these overhanging limbs and potential for falling branches need to be addressed.



Photo showing Ash branches overhanging the site

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General view showing thin canopies of affected trees. Photo taken mid-August 2023



Photo showing degree of branch overhang in sections. Photo taken early 2023

The plantation of trees was presumably originally planted for timber. Given the infected nature of the trees, they are now of much lesser value for timber and will continue to decline in the coming years. They are likely to be removed in time and replacement trees planted.

People often consider woodlands to be a permanent feature of the landscape and this is usually the case. However, plantations are not woodlands. Plantations are areas heavily planted with trees, normally of a single species, which are planted as a crop with the specific intention of harvesting the timber at some point in the future. The likely intention was to harvest the timber and to then presumably plant a replacement crop. As a result of Ash Dieback, these trees are likely to be removed prematurely.

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Given the increased potential risk to users of the new site as a result of the overhanging branches, the only option available to you is to remove them. I have considered removal of the most affected material for now, with a view to removing further branches at some future date as they become more affected by the fungus. However, I consider that removal of further material is inevitable and for reasons of practicality, recommend the entire operation is carried out at one time. The proposed works will not affect any landscape value the plantation may have.

### Recommendations

Remove all branches overhanging the boundary line.

All tree works to be completed in accordance with BS3998:2010 Recommendations for Tree Work and by persons both experienced and qualified to do so.

Tim Pursey  
Chartered Arboriculturist