



Arboricultural Survey Report  
on an Ash tree at :  
42 Hurst Road  
Hassocks  
West Sussex  
BN6 9NL

Client: Mr Colin Brace

Date: August 2026

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# **1. Introduction**

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## **1.1 Scope of report**

1.1.1 David Archer Associates are instructed by Mr Colin Brace to undertake a survey and inspection of an Ash tree (*Fraxinus excelsior*) located in the garden of 44 Hurst Road, Hassocks, adjacent to the boundary of 42 Hassocks Road.

1.1.2 We are asked to inspect this tree taking into account the following:-

- Species, dimensions, maturity and general physiological/structural condition.
- Approximate extent of crown dieback/defoliation.
- Whether the apparently bare branches are viable or dead.
- Whether the tree is healthy, declining, severely declining, moribund or dead.
- Any identifiable disease, including whether there is evidence of ash dieback or another cause.
- Likely prognosis and remaining useful life expectancy.
- Whether meaningful recovery is reasonably likely.
- Any current safety implications and risk of branch or whole-tree failure.
- Whether pruning, monitoring or removal is recommended and, importantly, whether any recommendation for removal would apply irrespective of the proposed development.
- Having regard to the dated photographs and present inspection, whether there is evidence that the disease or decline was already established before or at the time of the planning decision in July 2026 and, if so, the likely duration of that process.

1.1.3 The date of our instruction was Thursday the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2026.

## **1.2 The site**

1.2.1 42 Hurst Road is a large two storey detached property that is currently subject to a planning consent (Mid Sussex Council DM/25/2626) that is being challenged by judicial review. The neighbouring property at 44 Hurst Road is also a large detached two storey property that has recently had extensive landscape works in the garden and a rear extension to the main house. The Ash subject to this report is within the curtilage of 44 Hurst Road but immediately adjacent to the boundary of 42 Hurst Road.

## **1.3 Purpose of survey**

1.3.1 The principal purpose of the survey is to determine its present condition and safety for the occupants and to recommend any necessary works. Consideration is also to be given to the likely condition of this tree when planning consent was granted in July 2026 for the proposals to 42 Hurst Road. This survey was conducted in line with the recommendations of the

National Tree Safety Group ('NTSG')<sup>1</sup>, the British Standard 5837 (2012) Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations

## 1.4 Statutory protection

1.4.1 The interactive mapping facility of Mid Sussex District Council's website indicates that no trees within the area of survey are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order ('TPO').

1.4.2 No part of the survey area is within a designated Conservation Area.

## 2. Results of survey

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### 2.1 Survey dates, personnel and method

2.1.1 The survey was carried out by David Archer M.Arbor.A. an experienced arboricultural consultant of this practice, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2026. Weather conditions were clear, dry and bright.

2.1.2 The inspection was an external visual inspection from the ground only, assisted where necessary with binoculars. As the tree was 'off-site' in the garden of No 44 Hurst Road, I was only able to inspect it from one side. Accordingly, I was unable to determine if there were any cavities, structural defects or areas of decay at the base of the trunk.

2.1.3 The nature of a visual inspection is such that no guarantee can be given as to the structural integrity or safety of a tree, or of its internal condition. Also, as trees are dynamic organisms subject to growth and change, the findings of an inspection as to the structural integrity or safety of any tree should not be relied upon for more than 24 months from the date of survey.

2.1.4 At the time of inspection, the Ash was approx. 95% defoliated. There was no obvious cause for the leaf loss but is likely to be a combination of this summers drought and an early infection of Ash Dieback (AD). There was no definitive evidence of AD but the congested conformation of the twig structure seen in the upper crown is a typical response to an AD infection. Small twigs collected on the ground also showed small lesions typical for AD.

2.1.5 Deadwood levels in the crown appeared to be nominal and I saw no evidence of dieback in the crown or excessive levels of deadwood that would indicate death in the twig structure of the upper crown.

2.1.6 **Safety.** From a safety point of view, I did not see anything that would suggest that this tree is immediately dangerous, however, there was a bi-furcation in the main trunk at 4m high

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<sup>1</sup> The National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) is a cross-disciplinary group which formed in 2008 and has since published three guides to "Common sense risk management of trees".

which could have included bark within it; an obvious point of weakness and warrants further investigation.

- 2.1.7 If the tree does not re-foliate next spring, then there is an increased risk of large branch failure as Ash timber loses its structural strength very rapidly after death.
- 2.1.8 Our survey, carried out to the criteria set out in BS5837 (2012), has determined that this Ash would be categorised as 'Cat U'. This means that the tree does not have a safe useful life beyond 10 years.
- 2.1.9 If this tree is to be retained and the development proceeds in No 42 then protection to the Root Protection Area (RPA) will need to be provided. I was not able to access the tree to accurately measure the trunk diameter but estimated it to be approx. 400mm. This gives an RPA diameter of 4.8m. The topography of the site does lend itself to the building of an above existing ground construction for any access driveway. I think it is worth noting that from the photographs provided to me it is evident that no protection measures for the RPA were put into place for the landscape works in No 44.

## **2.2 Survey data**

- 2.2.1 The basic survey details of the Ash may be seen in the Tree Schedule in the Appendices at the end of this report.

## **2.3 Discussion**

- 2.3.1 It is not possible to determine if this tree will re-foliate next spring, but if it does, it's vitality is highly likely to be of a low order rendering it vulnerable to further attacks from Ash Dieback or any other fungal pathogen that may infect it.
- 2.3.2 This means its recovery and life expectancy is unlikely to exceed 10years.
- 2.3.3 A large dying Ash in the front garden of No 40 clearly has advanced symptoms of Ash Dieback; accordingly, this would be a viable source of infection to the subject tree as the infection is carried by airborne fungal spores. If the subject tree did not have Ash Dieback at present, then there is a very high probability it would do so in the very near future.
- 2.3.4 I have been given a photo (see Appendices) of this Ash taken on the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2026. It appears to have foliage distributed throughout the crown, albeit somewhat thin; approx. 25% less than comparable trees in the neighbourhood. The photographic detail is not fine enough to determine if there are early stages of AD within the crown. So, based on this evidence, I am unable to comment with any degree of certainty on the condition of the tree over the previous 12 months.

## **2.4 Recommendations**

- 2.4.1 This Ash should be reinspected next spring (May onwards) to see if it has refoliated; if not then it may be considered biologically dead and should be removed immediately. If this tree

does refoliate during the coming season then, again an appraisal of its vitality should be made and recommendations applied for the immediate future.

- 2.4.2 Notwithstanding the recommended next inspection dates, however, this tree should also be checked after any extreme weather events (lightning storms, high winds, or heavy snowfalls) for any signs of damage or for any significant changes.
- 2.4.3 If in doubt as to the significance of any changes noticed in these circumstances, appropriately qualified professional advice should be sought.

### **3. Summary and conclusion**

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#### **3.1 Summary**

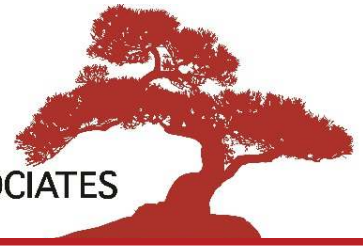
- 3.1.1 In accordance with our instructions, we have undertaken a survey of the Ash tree in accordance with industry standard guidelines. The tree is 95% defoliated but I am unable to determine if it is fully dead and incapable of rejuvenation. There is a high probability that the tree has or likely to have Ash Dieback which makes its retention value less than 10 years.
- 3.1.2 The photographic evidence provided did not show clearly if any AD infection was present in the previous 12 months.
- 3.1.3 An assessment has been made of its safety and recommendations made for future assessments, if required.

#### **3.2 Conclusion**

- 3.2.1 This tree has been categorised as 'Cat U' when using the criteria set out in BS5837 (2012) and should be removed for sound arboricultural reasons within the next 12 months. This should be carried out in accordance with the requirements pertaining to the relevant operations set out in British Standard BS 3998: 2010, *Tree work – Recommendations*, by qualified and competent tree surgery contractors only, with appropriate Public Liability insurance.
- 3.2.2 No clear determination was possible for its condition in the previous 12 months. Notwithstanding the recommended next inspection dates, however, the trees should also be checked after any extreme weather events (storms, heavy snowfalls) for any signs of damage or for any significant changes.

**David Archer | Practice Principal**

**August 2026**



## Appendix 1 – Tree Schedule

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## Notes for the Tree Schedule

This schedule is based on a tree survey carried out in accordance with the recommendations of British Standard, BS 5837 (2012) "Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations" ('BS 5837') by David Archer on the 22/08/2026. Weather conditions at the time were dry with scattered cloud.

The information contained in this schedule reflects the condition of the trees at the time of the survey, based on visual inspection from the ground only; they were not climbed, and no internal investigations were undertaken. A BS 5837 survey for planning or development purposes is not a detailed tree hazard or risk survey. As such, no guarantee is given as to the structural integrity or safety of any trees included.

As trees are dynamic organisms and subject to continual growth and change, no dimensions expressed in this schedule may be relied upon for development planning purposes for more than 24 months from the date of survey. Estimated dimensions are marked 'est'.

1. **No.:** Expressed in sequential order starting from number 1 – woodlands, groups & hedges are prefixed as W, G, & H respectively.
2. **Species:** The common name as given in "Collins Tree Guide", Johnson & More (2004).
3. **Height:** Estimated with the aid of a 'Disto' laser rangefinder and expressed in metres, to the nearest metre.
4. **Trunk Diameter:** Measured at 1.5m above ground level and expressed in millimetres to the nearest 10mm; where multiple stems are present they are measured individually, and an aggregated equivalent single trunk diameter is calculated in accordance with BS 5837, in order to derive the tree's root protection area ('RPA').
5. **Radial Crown Spread:** Distance in metres from the centre of the trunk to the outermost edge of the crown at each cardinal point of the compass, rounded up to the nearest half metre; or in the case of uniform or symmetrical crowns, the average distance from the centre of the trunk to the outermost edge of the crown.
6. **Life Stage:** Young, Semi-mature, Mature, Over-mature, Veteran/Ancient.
7. **Physiology:** The tree's health and vigour in comparison to a typical specimen of the same species and age: Good, Average, Below average, Poor, Dead.
8. **Structure:** The tree's structural condition based on assessment of any visible roots, and of its trunk, main branches and crown, noting the presence of any obvious defects or decay: Good, Average, Below average, Poor, Hazardous.
9. **Estimated Years:** Estimate of the tree's likely remaining contribution expressed in years: < 10, 10-20, 20-40, 40+, Dead.
10. **Comments:** Notes relating to the tree's health and condition, structure and form, estimated life expectancy and importance within the local landscape; including notes of any restrictions to access for inspection, presence of potential habitat features (natural or artificial), or other significant observations.
11. **Category:** - A rating given to trees based on Table 1 in BS 5837, summarised below:

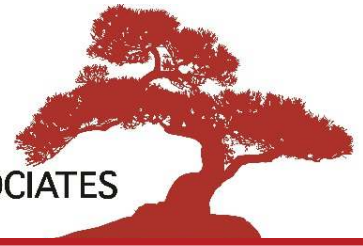
Category 'U' - Trees in such a condition that any existing value would be lost within 10 years and which should, in the current context, be removed for reasons of sound arboricultural management.

Category 'A' - Trees of high quality and value; in such a condition as to be able to make a substantial contribution (normally a minimum of 40 years).

Category 'B' - Trees of moderate quality and value; those in such a condition as to make a significant contribution (normally a minimum of 20 years).

Category 'C' - Trees of low quality and value; currently in adequate condition to remain until new planting could be established (normally a minimum of 10 years), or young trees with a stem diameter below 150mm.

| No. | Species | Height | Trunk Dia. | Radial Crown Spread      | Life Stage | Physiology | Structure | Landscape Value | Est. Years | Comments                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Category |
|-----|---------|--------|------------|--------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1   | Ash     | 16m    | 400mm est  | N5m<br>E7m<br>S7m<br>W8m | Dead       |            | Hazardous | Dead            |            | Off-site tree; trunk bi-furcates at 4m high - possible included bark within union; upper crown defoliated; lowest limbs to the west & north west defoliated to 95% with scattered dead leaves throughout; split hanging limb of 60mm diameter on west side at 5.5m high; old Ivy into centre of crown severed at base; main crown somewhat dense and busy and well above normal levels; small dead leaves retained in upper crown. | U        |



## Appendix 2 – Tree Location Plan

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