

Briefing: Chalara Dieback of Ash

Date of issue: 9 November 2012

Landscape architects are now aware that Ash Dieback disease is established in the UK and threatens to destroy large numbers of ash trees. On 29th October 2012 the UK Government passed emergency legislation restricting imports into, and movements within, Great Britain of ash plants, seeds, and trees in a bid to prevent the spread of the disease.

Details of the legislation and advice on identification of the disease is available from the sources listed below.

The disease has clear implications for the work of landscape architects. As the situation develops, further guidance will be provided by the LI.

1. Existing trees

- 1.1. All existing ash trees (all *Fraxinus* spp. including small regeneration and recent planting) should be inspected on a regular basis on all current projects. Advise clients accordingly.
- 1.2. Forestry Commission information on spotting the disease and reporting is available here: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara>
- 1.3. Forestry Commission questions and answers are available here: <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-8w9euv>
- 1.4. Legislation: The Plant Health (Forestry) (Amendment) Order 2012: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2707/contents/made>
- 1.5. Guidance from Food and Environment Research Agency
- 1.6. YouTube video from Defra: How to spot dieback of ash

2. Implications for LVIA/EIA/Planning

Be aware that potential loss of Ash trees in the landscape is likely to:

- alter baseline conditions or “trends for change”;
- require review or re-assessment, particularly where planning decisions have not yet been determined;
- require advice to clients on implications for design, assessment and management.

3. Specification of ash

- 3.1. Suspend specifying ash (all *Fraxinus* spp) in all planting schemes for the time being.
- 3.2. Note that the extent of the effect on other species of ash is currently unclear.

4. Where ash has already been specified

- 4.1. Change the species where a contractor has yet to be appointed.
- 4.2. Agree revised planning consents.

5. Where the contractor has been appointed

- 5.1. The contractor will not legally be allowed to supply ash.
- 5.2. Negotiate species change with the contractor and planning authority.

A sub-group of the Landscape Institute Technical Committee has been represented on the Forestry Commission Tree Health and Bio-security Action Working Group since June 2012. It has contributed to a Bio-security Action Plan which will be launched shortly and will continue to contribute to the implementation of the Plan.

The group has also contributed to best practice protocols which are available here:
www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/plantHealth/bestPracticeProtocols.cfm

For further updates visit www.landscapeinstitute.org/knowledge/technical_guidance.php and follow the Landscape Institute on twitter: @talklandscape.