

Planning Officer: Richard Sherman

Planning Application Ref: **AW/117/21/T**

Location: **Southmead, Canons Close, Aldwick, PO21 4EB**

Description of works: **To fell 1no. oak tree in rear garden. Resubmission of AW/24/21/T**

Reasons given: Health and safety

Comments on Application:

Pedunculate oak / *Quercus robur* Height: 10-15m Radial spread: 5-10m Age class: Early mature

- I was offered access to the rear of the property, where I was able to make a close ground-level assessment of the tree. The triangular wound (partially occluded) at the base is consistent with historic stem removal/separation. Decay appears confined to the outer wood and there was no audible cavity/extensive decay revealed when I tapped around with a nylon hammer. No pathogenic fungal growth or other significant ailment was observed, nor any evidence of root-plate instability.
- It has previously been the subject of whole crown reduction pruning (and subsequent pruning of lateral branches only) from which it appears to have grown-on well. It is visible from surrounding properties and in part from publicly accessible land; as such it has amenity value.

Conclusions:

- The applicant has not submitted any diagnostic information from an appropriate expert in support of the reasons given for the proposed works. My own observations did not reveal any obvious cause for concern in respect of its health and structural integrity.
- The tree is a significant feature in the local landscape and assumed to be in adequately sound and healthy condition. Its removal would have a detrimental impact on the landscape.

Recommendations:

- As it stands, I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.
- **I would like the applicant to be invited to agree to a revised proposal for lesser works** (such as described below) as part of the current application so as not to incur further delay. Such work would go some way to addressing their concerns whilst preventing a detrimental effect on the landscape and loss of amenity:
- *Reduce overall height and spread on all aspects by repeating the whole crown reduction work, last undertaken c2010.*

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- If the applicant is prepared to re-submit in line with this advice, then I would be able to recommend APPROVAL subject to the following condition:

Condition to Be Applied to Approved Work: -

- Part a) Where whole branches are to be removed and final cuts made close to the trunk or branch union they are to be made as shown in Figure 2 of BS3998:2010
- Part b) Where branches are to be shortened back the final cuts are to be made at the correct angle shown in BS3998:2010 and adjacent to a live bud or lateral.
- Part c) The removal of crown material which has developed since the last operation must be done sympathetically and with respect to established 'knuckles' so as not to extend beyond the point of origin.

Reasons: In the interest of the tree's continued health and vitality and to accord with current industry guidelines and sound arboricultural practice.

- See also the standard pruning guidance notes issued with the consent letter

Advisory:

- The long-term vitality of this oak tree is best respected when significant pruning work such as proposed, is undertaken during the late spring to summer period (May to August). The work proposed should only be undertaken during this period.

Mark Warwick
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team

Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

