

**Planning Officer:** Lynnyrd Wolfe

**Planning Application Ref:** **AW/153/20/T**

**Location:** **54 Pinehurst Park, Aldwick, Bognor Regis, PO21 3DX**

**Description of works:** **Crown reduction of 2No. poplar trees to height 5m and spread 3m**

**Reasons given:** Excessive shade

**Comments on Application:**

|                                                                     |                     |                     |                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>T1 West - Western balsam poplar / <i>Populus trichocarpa</i></b> | Approx. height: 11m | Radial spread: 0-5m | Age class: Mature |
| <b>T2 East - Western balsam poplar / <i>Populus trichocarpa</i></b> | Approx. height: 13m | Radial spread: 0-5m | Age class: Mature |

- Both trees are the subject of TPO/P/1/78 (Group 9). Outwardly and from a distance they appear to be in a fine physiological state. They have previously been the subject of reduction pruning, involving stem truncation at around 9m height (c.2014).
- Further reduction pruning will be necessary throughout the remaining lifespan of these trees, to achieve a reasonable degree of structural integrity appropriate for their location.
- The applicant proposes crown reduction to improve light levels to properties although the majority of their crown spreads are to the north and their existing height is proportionate to their size and distance from dwellings. That said, they will be exerting considerable influence on ground conditions by virtue of their established and extensive root systems.
- The applicant has also indicated concern about the potential for these trees to fail. My own restricted ground-level visual assessment did not reveal any obvious signs of pathogen activity, structural defect or root-plate displacement to suggest either could be wholly structurally unsound and/or present an unacceptable level of risk for its location.

**Conclusions:**

- The proposal to reduce their overall height and spread with a view to restricting growth is in principle justified and consistent with previous works approved by the Local Planning Authority although the extent is excessive.
- The applicant proposes 6-8metre reductions in top height. This would exceed the recommendations in British Standard 3998:2010 – Tree Work and would be likely to result in harm to the health and vitality of the trees with large pruning wounds being formed. Such wounds are readily colonised by fungi which can cause extensive decay making the tree hazardous and so reduce life-expectancy.

**Recommendations:**

- As it stands, I recommend **REFUSAL** for this application.

**Advisory:**

- I would like to see the applicant submit a revised work specification such as detailed below, which would seem to address their concerns whilst preventing excessive reduction of the trees landscape impact and undue detriment to the visual amenities of the locality.
  - Reduce top-height to approximately 9metres, which in any event does not exceed the dimensions of the last reduction pruning exercise.
  - Reduce radial spread by no more than 1m on any aspect and leaving a minimum of 2metres radial spread.

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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 interests of the trees 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 these trees is best respected when significant pruning work such as proposed, is undertaken during the mid-winter (late-December to early-February) period. The work should only be undertaken during this period.

Mark Warwick  
Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team