

Planning Officer: Charlotte Easton

Planning Application Ref: AW/15/19/T

Location: 4 Grangefield Way, Aldwick, PO21 4EG

Description of works: Reduce crowns by 2.5m, remove dead branches & remove crossing branches to 2 no. ash trees

Reasons Given: None given

Comments on Application:

2x Ash / *Fraxinus excelsior* Average height: 11m Average spread: 4m Age class: Early-mature

- Both trees are in close enough proximity to be considered companion trees with a developing shared crown profile. They appear to be in a fine physiological state with high growth potential.
- The removal of crossing/rubbing branches is considered good practice where it seeks to prevent/limit the presence of abrasion wounds that might facilitate ingress of harmful decay fungi.
- The removal of dead branches is an exception and does not require consent from the local planning authority.
- These trees dominate the front aspect of this property and are highly visible from surrounding properties and public highway (footway and carriageway).

Conclusions:

- While it is acknowledged that it may not be reasonable to allow these trees to achieve their full growth potential and a degree of 'containment pruning' is therefore appropriate; they are trees of public amenity value that can be satisfactorily managed without recourse to such extensive crown reduction work at this time.
- The proposal to reduce both the height and lateral spread on all aspects (the correct interpretation of *crown reduction*) by 2.5m respectively does not comply with 'British Standard (BS3998:2010) Tree work – Recommendations' and would be likely to result in harm to the health and vitality of the tree with large pruning wounds being formed as well as undermining its visual amenity value and impact in the landscape.

Recommendations:

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

Advisory:

- I would like to see the applicant submit a revised specification seeking lesser work, such as detailed below, which would seem to address their concerns whilst preventing undue detriment to the tree's landscape and public amenity value:
 - Overall crown reduction to a maximum of 1m from top-height and all other aspects.
 - Removal of crossing branches.

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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 conditions:

Conditions To Be Applied to Approved Work: -

- 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
- 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.
- The long-term vitality of this 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 must only be undertaken during this period.

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.

Mark Warwick

Tree Officer / Parks and Greenspace Team

Figure 4 Diagrammatic illustration of crown reduction

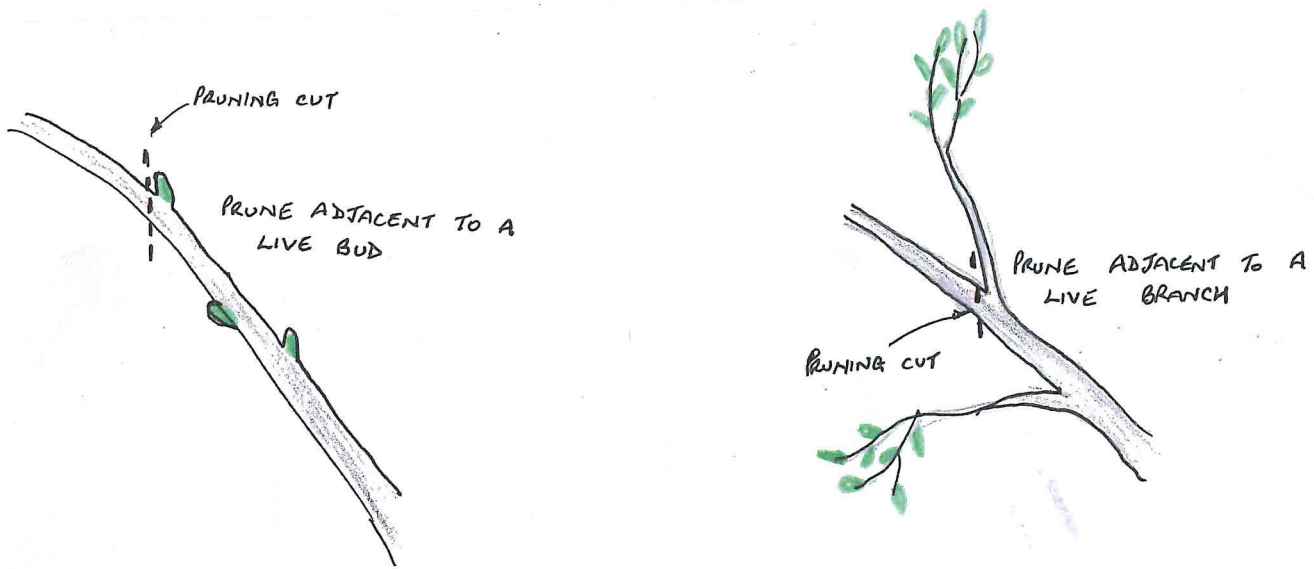
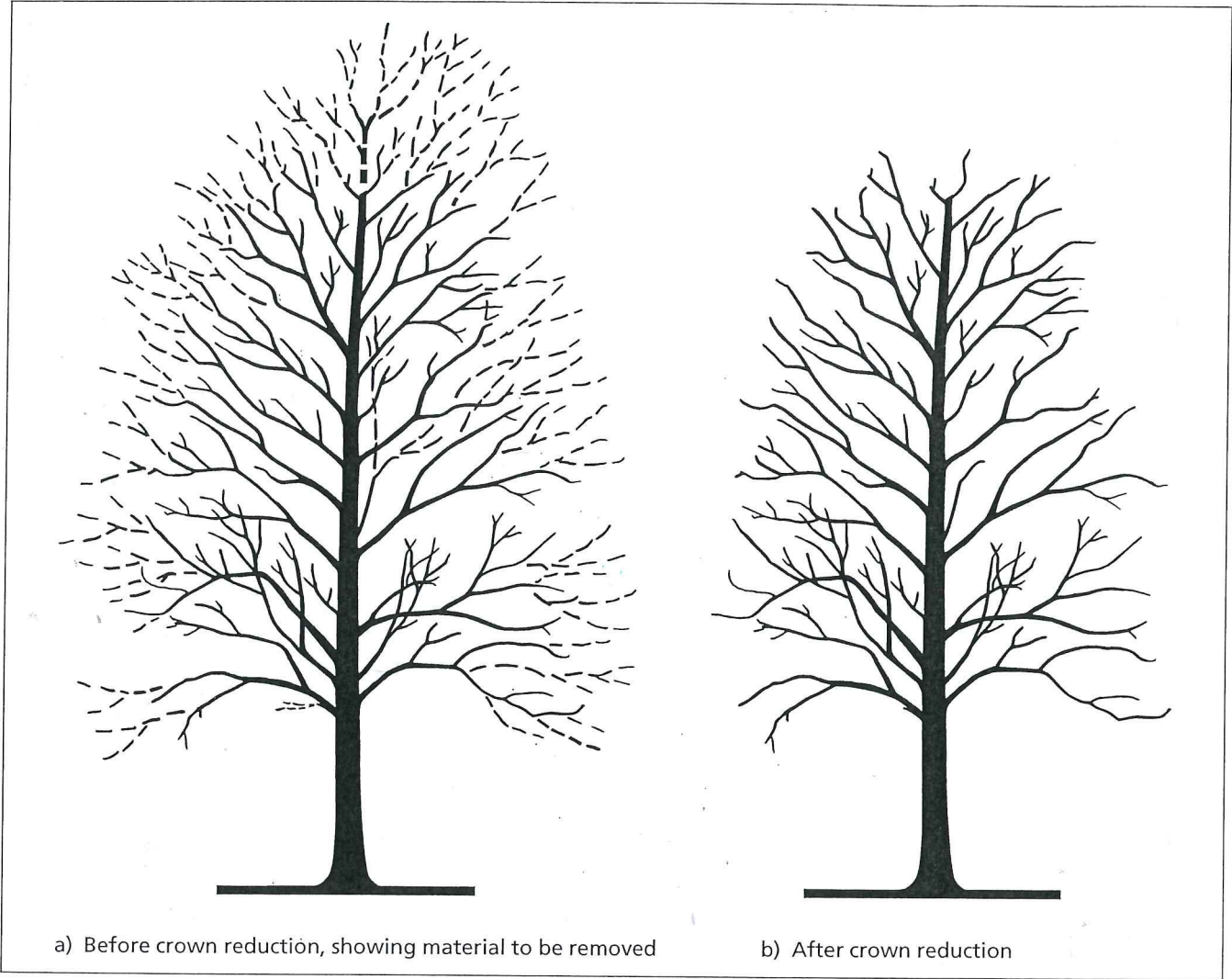


Figure 2 Positions of final cuts

